So Much to Celebrate!
MY WEEK AT THE NATIONAL UCC GATHERING IN CLEVELAND
by Rev. Matt Laney

As I write this, I am on my way back to Hartford from Cleveland following the semi-annual national gathering of the United Church of Christ known as “General Synod,” where some five thousand members of UCC congregations filled the Cleveland Convention Center from Thursday, June 25 to Tuesday, June 30.

What happens at something as peculiar and stuffy-sounding as a “synod?” Lots! Think of it as part family reunion, part pep rally, part business meeting. We experienced great worship, fellowship, workshops, educational seminars, listening to noteworthy speakers and doing the business of the wider church such as electing officers, voting on bylaw changes, adopting resolutions and discerning our future according to the challenges and opportunities of the day.

For videos of some of the main events, go to synod.ucpages.org/video. Equally joyful for me was the opportunity to see many old friends and colleagues. Mia Douglas, AHCC’s new Director of Discipleship, was also in attendance and Jolie Rocke Brown was a featured singer for Sunday worship.

I was one of three people invited to offer a “theological reflection” following a couple chunks of plenary sections of the day. This means I was called upon to give (hopefully) meaningful and Christ-centered commentary on what we had

Meet Meredyth Aregood, Bookkeeper

We are pleased to announce that Meredyth Aregood joined us as bookkeeper at the end of April and is extremely excited to be a member of our team here at AHCC. She comes to us with a background in both bookkeeping and church administration. She served as the office manager of Unity Church of Greater Hartford for 3 years and is grateful for the opportunity to bring her knowledge and experience to our church home.

Outside of the office, Meredyth spends most of her time enjoying her two children, Starla, 10 and Dexter, 8. Residing in the Crystal Lake area, they like to camp, cook, bike, hike, kayak and fish together.

Meredyth is in the office Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:30am-2:30pm and can be reached at maregood@ahcc.org or 860.216.9825.
Upcoming Worship - Women of the Way

Sunday, July 19  Canaanite Woman, Matthew 15:21-28
Jesus belittles an unnamed, gentile woman seeking healing for her daughter and she calls him on it. For her chutzpah and faith, her daughter is made well.

Sunday, July 26  Woman Who Touches Jesus’ Cloak, Mark 5:24-34
A woman, bleeding for twelve years, and at the end of her rope, seeks out Jesus. She touches his cloak, and Jesus knows that power leaves him. Commended for her faith, Jesus proclaims her healed of her disease.

Sunday, August 2  Woman at the Well, John 4
Known only as the “woman at the well,” she is a most unlikely disciple: an outsider from Samaria, married too many times, “living in sin.” Yet Jesus meets her where she is and as she is. In return, she goes forth proclaiming the Messiah, and many believed because of her testimony.

Sunday, August 9  Tabitha, Acts 9
Before she died, she was known as a woman devoted to works and acts of charity, especially to widows, which means they mourned her death as they missed her kindness. However, it was through her resurrection by which many came to believe in the Lord!

Sunday, August 16  Damaris, Acts 17:22-34
An Athenian woman of high social status is converted to Christianity after hearing Paul preach at the Aeropagus before a statue to “an unknown god.” Paul uses the statue as a contrast to the God who has become known not in a stone, but in the human flesh of Jesus Christ.

Sunday, August 23  Lydia, Acts 16:11-15
While sitting along a river bank, Lydia, a business woman of the first century, hears Paul’s proclamation of Jesus the Christ. She and her entire household are baptized, and immediately move into action and invite Paul to come and stay at her house.

Sunday, August 30  Priscilla, Acts 18:1-4, 18-20
The first tent making evangelists, Priscilla and her husband Aquila were known for the church communities they created in their homes. It seems no matter where they landed, they were engaged in radical hospitality – creating extraordinary disciples of the Risen Christ.
# FAITH & JUSTICE SUMMER FILM SERIES

**TUESDAYS, 7 PM, through AUGUST 11**  
**IN THE AIR-CONDITIONED AHCC REEL TO REAL ROOM**

**FREE! ALL FILMS FOLLOWED BY A FACILITATED DISCUSSION**

Each film topic in our third annual Faith and Justice Film Series relates to AHCC’s 150 year of helping children and families in the Asylum Hill neighborhood, our Statement of Inclusiveness and Diversity, our recently adopted core value of peace and nonviolence, our efforts at providing better access for people with disabilities, and the pressing issue of race and racism in our country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Film/Discussion Topic: CHILDREN IN POVERTY; EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JULY 14</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE RAISING OF AMERICA (2015)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | ‘The Raising of America’ is a newly released documentary which aims to reframe the way Americans look at early child health and development. It illustrates how a strong start for all our kids leads not only to better learning, earning, and physical and mental health, but also to a healthier, safer, better educated, more prosperous nation. We will be showing two of the five episodes: ‘Are We Crazy About Our Kids?’ and ‘Wounded Places’.
| | HOST: Karen Dibala  
| | FACILITATOR: Elena Trueworthy, Director  
| | Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Film/Discussion Topic: DISABILITY RIGHTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JULY 21</strong></td>
<td><strong>ON A ROLL: FAMILY, DISABILITY AND THE AMERICAN DREAM (2005)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | ‘On A Roll: Family, Disability and the American Dream’ is an award-winning documentary of the life of strength coach Greg Smith. The film chronicles Smith’s personal journey to develop relationships, find employment, raise a family and participate in the community of his choice. ON A ROLL, Smith’s upbeat, tough, and often humor-filled message closes the gap between the abled and disabled by stressing that we all need help from each other, every day.
| | HOST: Nancy Kirchmyer  
| | FACILITATOR: Candace Low, Executive Director  
| | Independence Unlimited Inc |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Film/Discussion Topic: IMMIGRATION AND OPPORTUNITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JULY 28</strong></td>
<td><strong>PAPERS: The Movie (2009/2013 Update)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | “Papers” is the story of undocumented youth in the US and the challenges they face when they turn 18 without legal status. There are approximately 2 million undocumented children who were born outside the US and raised in this country--educated in American schools, hold American values and know only the US as home. Currently, there is no path to citizenship for these young people. The producers worked in collaboration with immigrant youth who want to tell their stories and change immigration policy.
| | HOST: Ann Colloton  
| | FACILITATOR: Alison Martinez-Carrasco, Community Organizer  
| | Connecticut Students for A Dream |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Film/Discussion Topic: INCLUSIVENESS AND DIVERSITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUGUST 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>PRAYERS FOR BOBBY (2009)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | Academy Award nominee and Golden Globe winner Sigourney Weaver stars in this emotional true story about a deeply religious suburban housewife and mother who struggles to accept her son’s homosexuality. What happens to Bobby is tragic and causes his mother Mary to question herself and her Church’s interpretation of Scripture. Through her long and emotional journey, Mary slowly reaches out to the gay community and discovers unexpected support from them. She continues her searching until she decides the true value and contribution of Bobby.
| | HOST: Kylee Sartwell  
| | FACILITATOR: Representative from PFLAG Hartford (Parents, Families, & Allies United with LGBTQ People) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Film/Discussion Topic: RACE/RACISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUGUST 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>SOMETHING THE LORD MADE (2004)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | “Something the Lord Made” explores the complex partnership between Vanderbilt surgeon Alfred Blalock and his black assistant Vivien Thomas in 1930’s Nashville, and how together they become pioneers in the field of open-heart surgery. Outside the lab, however, they are separated by the prevailing racism of the time. The award-winning film stars Mos Def and Alan Rickman.
| | CO-HOSTS/FACILITATORS: Kathleen Graham and Ed Barlow |
all experienced together during a particular portion of the day before the assembled masses. It was a big honor for me to do that but I don’t mind telling you it was nerve-racking! Go to this link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2A7cXoWfhw and advance to 3:51:00 to view my reflection for Monday, or visit AHCC’s Facebook page.

Here are a few of the actions and resolutions take during this synod:

- We celebrated the historic, consistent role of the UCC in advocating for marriage equality recently affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court.
- We welcomed 67 new congregations into the UCC.
- We voted to enter a relationship of “full communion” with the United Church of Canada to strengthen the relationship and connections of two like-minded denominations.
- We called upon the professional football team in Washington D.C. to change their name, imagery and mascot out of respect for the expressed concerns of native peoples and hand delivered a similar call to the offices of the Cleveland Indians.
- We celebrated the ministries of Geoffrey Black, retiring UCC general minister/president and Linda Jaramillo, Minister of Justice and Witness Ministries.
- We elected John Dorhauer as the new general minister and president of the United Church of Christ. He is currently conference minister of the Southwest Conference.
- We confirmed a resolution of witness in support of our brothers and sisters in faith at Mother Emmanuel AME church in Charleston, S.C.
- We voted to divest holdings from American companies profiting from the occupation of Palestinian territories.
- We affirmed the South Dakota Conference of the UCC’s return of tribal lands in South Dakota and Nebraska to Native Americans.
- We celebrated the national offices success in ending the year in the black for the first time in many years.

Although all of the above items enjoyed wide support, there was energetic, respectful disagreement on most points. In one case, a motion for a significant revision of the bylaws, did not pass. I myself did not support the divestment resolution but because I was not a delegate there was no opportunity to state my objection which was fine because others offered similar concerns. Even though that resolution was affirmed, I left with a greater appreciation for those who supported it and a deeper love for the wider church that is my extended family of faith. And yours.

In the UCC we sometimes say, “In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty and in all things charity.” The essentials of who we are as the UCC do not change. They cannot be voted upon. They are simple who we are at the deepest level. The essentials of the UCC include our common commitment to Christ as the center and head of the church, our congregational way of discerning God’s will, our covenantal relationship one with another, our grounding in the sacraments of communion and baptism and the priesthood of all believers. It strikes me that while all of the above decisions and actions are important and timely, they are non-essentials. And, happily, even in the discussion and debate of the non-essentials, the essentials were abundantly present.

We have much to celebrate and be thankful for by being a part of the United Church of Christ. We are known and loved for our prophetic witness on a host of important issues, well ahead of other denominations. For example, we were the first denomination to ordain a woman, an African American and an openly gay person. Today, those things seem obvious (although some denominations still have not embraced them) but at the time they were very controversial and even divisive. But the UCC church stood strong in its commitment to an inclusive, justice-seeking gospel, as we do today, with an abiding commitment to the transforming power of the gospel to save lives and change the world. If you are still not sure what the UCC is all about, go here: ucc.org/about-us_what-is-the-united-church-of for a brief but highly informative overview.

Finally, I want to thank you for affirming our covenantal relationship with the UCC, for your support of the important time I spent with our wider church family (although my trip cost AHCC absolutely nothing, financially speaking) and for continuing to model the values and message of our wider church. Perhaps you will join me next time, in two years!

May God continue to bless and lead the UCC!
**In General**

**Men’s Summer Bible Study**  
*Second and Fourth Tuesdays*  
*July 14, 28 and August 11, 25, 7:45am | AHCC*

In addition to time in the sun, would you like a spiritual shot in the arm (and heart!) every few weeks over the summer? I would! That’s why I’m offering Bible Study for men. Mark your calendar and join us as often as your summer schedule permits.

All you need is a Bible and an open heart, but if all you bring is an open heart, I can spot you the Bible. Coffee and Christ will be served. See you then! - Matt

---

**New Pledge Envelopes**

This year we will be distributing pledge envelopes differently than in the past. Starting in August, those who pledged and requested envelopes will receive them at home and will be delivered every 8 weeks.

If you have any questions, please contact Deb Holden at dholden@ahcc.org or 860.216.9833.

---

**MAKE THE RIGHT CALL …**

**JOIN US FOR A**

**TRIP TO CITI FIELD**

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 28 – 3:30PM SHARP**  
**LEAVING FROM AHCC PARKING LOT**  
**RETURNING AT THE END OF THE GAME**

**$60 PER PERSON**  
*(YOUR CHECK WILL RESERVE YOUR TICKET)*

MAIL OR DROP OFF YOUR CHECK IN THE CHURCH OFFICE  
814 ASYLUM AVE. HARTFORD, CT 06105

CALL 860.525.5696 FOR MORE INFORMATION
Adult Education

Summer Book Group
THE NEW JIM CROW: MASS INCARCERATION IN AN AGE OF COLORBLINDNESS
Wed, July 29 (Chapters 1–3) and Aug 26 (Chapters 4 – 6)
7:00pm

Michelle Alexander’s book describes the rebirth of a caste-like system in the United States, one that has resulted in millions of African Americans locked behind bars and then relegated to a permanent second-class status – denied the very rights supposedly won by the Civil Rights movement. Join with other church members and friends as we read, pray and discuss important themes from this book.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!
Community Bible Study
Mondays, 1:00pm OR 7:00pm

Beginning at the end of September, there will be a new Bible study initiative at AHCC. Three eight-week sessions will run over the course of the year. The study is focused on the theme of COVENANT with the choice of two sessions. Watch for further information and sign ups on Spirit Sunday!

AHCC Member Cori Mackey Answers God’s Call to Ordained Ministry

On Thursday, April 9, Cori Mackey talked with the Board of Deacons about her call to pursue ordained ministry, a call that was first planted in her heart and mind almost 20 years ago when she participated in a year-long, faith based volunteer program that required her to live in voluntary poverty in Cincinnati’s inner city.

Her deep conviction that working for justice is an essential part of the walk of discipleship, is a conviction that has grown and expanded over the years through ministry experiences and academic studies. Cori has served as the director of the Dayton Catholic Social Justice Office and executive director of the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry in Connecticut. She earned her Masters of Divinity from United Theological Seminary and began the process toward ordination prior to her move to Connecticut. She joined AHCC in December of 2012, and last August, was called as the executive director of the Christian Activities Council, where she is charged to set new priorities for the organization as it seeks to continue its more than 150 years of faithful ministry in the Greater Hartford area.

After conversing with Cori about her life and faith journey, including her desire to be involved with congregations and social justice, the Board of Deacons voted to recommend Cori to the Committee on Ministry as a Member in Discernment. The Deacons also affirmed creating a Discernment Committee, comprised of members of the congregation who will walk with Cori on this journey through shared prayer, faith sharing and supportive presence and participation.

The next steps in the process for Cori include meeting with the Committee on Ministry to determine if there are other requirements for her to seek ordination. Here’s what she wrote to the Committee about her understanding of her call to urban ministry:

Urban ministry needs to be about action. Whether it’s advocating for a new law that will bring about greater justice or rebuilding (a neighborhood), if our work is to be authentic and transformative, there needs to be concrete action for justice rooted in solidarity with those who are experiencing the injustice first hand.

Cori’s passion for faith and justice is exceeded only by her passion for her wife Megan, a professor at St. Joseph University, and their two sons, Connor and Riley.
Outreach & Volunteering

Summer Volunteer Opportunity
AHCC’s Crisis Food Support Program is in need of summer volunteers to assist in their ongoing ministry of providing emergency food to Hartford families. This is a great intergenerational volunteer opportunity for AHCC families through August 28. For more information, please contact Wayne and Sandi Lobell at sglobber@yahoo.com or John and Nancy Calderbank at calderbank-john-nancy@cox.net.

Drivers Needed for Hartford Home Hockey Games
AHCC member Larry Little may be one of Hartford hockey’s biggest fans. Larry attends all the home games – and would love YOUR company. Larry provides the tickets, but needs transportation to and from the game. He lives in West Hartford and games are at the XL Center in Hartford. If you would like to drive to and attend a game with Larry, please sign up at the Member Engagement Table.

Thrift Shop/Crisis Food Hosts Volunteer “Thank You” Reception
The Twichell Room echoed with laughter and expressions of gratitude, as words of welcome and thanks were offered by Peggy Winters to the volunteers and friends of AHCC’s Thrift Shop and Crisis Food Support. The volunteer “Thank You” reception, hosted on Sunday, June 14, recognized those who share the gift of time with the Thrift Shop and Crisis Food Support. By providing affordable wares to the Asylum Hill Neighborhood and emergency food for families with children, the Thrift Shop and Crisis Food Support continue to live into our call as disciples of Jesus, stepping into the space of our neighbor’s need.

Words of thanks were also offered by Sandi and Wayne Lobdell, current chairpersons for Crisis Food Support, and AHCC Outreach Committee Chair Wanda Williams-McCormack. Bill and Jessie Saxton were also recognized for 15 years of service as chairs of Crisis Food Support. To read more about these ministries, or find out how to volunteer, please visit ahcc.org.

Exploring Our Gifts!
What are you passionate about? What are your gifts for ministry? Are you just beginning to recognize your gifts and talents? Or are you wrestling – yearning to find something new or different about yourself? Maybe you seek to find enlivened ways to use your gifts and talents for the Body of Christ.

Throughout our lives, we are presented with moments of exploration and discovery, moments when we listen to God’s call and affirmation, identify our passions, our gifts, and our skills for the Body of Christ and our community. This coming fall, AHCC’s new Director of Discipleship, the Rev. Mia Douglas, will offer a study on Spiritual Gifts. Come and explore! Come and confirm! Come and affirm the movement of Spirit in your life. More information coming soon.

Outreach Committee to Sponsor Two Youth Delegates for Summer Justice Conference
Mahogany McBride and Jenna Westfall will represent AHCC at the National Conference for Community Justice (NCCJ) camp ANYTOWN August 16-21, 2015. NCCJ is a human relations organization that promotes inclusion and acceptance through its education and advocacy programs while building communities that are respectful and just for all. A five day residential camp, ANYTOWN is a nationally recognized, award winning leadership and social justice program for youth ages 14-18. Founded in 1957, ANYTOWN’s mission is designed to educate, liberate, and empower youth participants to become effective, responsible leaders and community builders. Congratulations Jenna and Mahogany! Your AHCC family is proud of you.
Music & Arts

A Geek Squad for God?
STEVE MITCHELL IS ASSEMBLING AN AUDIO-VIDEO MINISTRY TEAM

A-V Ministry? What’s that? Good question! As AHCC moves ahead with a needed upgrade to the sound and technical components of our worship space, it is apparent that we need intelligent and talented church members to step up to witness the installation, be trained on the equipment, and assist in the management and effective use of this new and valuable resource for worship and public events. Steve Mitchell is gathering church members with an interest, experience, or expertise in technology – sound reinforcement, recording, video, photography, movie editing and camera work. This A-V Ministry Team will meet to discuss their gifts and to assess the needs for the church and the new technology on the way. What gifts do you bring? Contact Steve Mitchell at smitchell@ahcc.org to find out more.

We Need Your TRASH!
SUMMER PARADE PROJECT CELEBRATES “FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD,” THIS AUGUST; PLEASE LEAVE DONATIONS ON THE STAGE IN DREW HALL

AHCC’s annual Community Art Project & Parade is getting its act together! But we need supplies and decorative items from YOU. As you do some spring cleaning, keep us in mind and bring usable items to church. We will reuse and recycle them into works of “moving art” and costumes for the neighborhood parade on August 22. This year’s theme is Food, Glorious Food. What can YOU offer to the collection? We are looking for the following items:

Fabrics: bed sheets, large pieces of colored fabric (1 yd. or more), animal prints, smocks and rags, T-shirts, pantyhose, tights or stockings;
Cardboard: large pieces – single ply (furniture/fridge boxes), toilet paper and paper towel rolls;
Decorative items: Colored paper, feathers, pipe cleaners, shiny and colorful things, yarn, bottle caps, egg cartons (paper or Styrofoam);
Paint Supplies: brushes, rollers, drop cloths (no paint, please);
Structural: egg crate foam (like a bed roll), water bottles: any size – with caps, aluminum cans, wire hangers, umbrellas, bicycle inner tubes, PVC pipe, wood poles, dowels, mop/broom handles;
Tools: pliers, hammers, wrenches, wire cutters, screw drivers, utility knives;
Rolling stuff: strollers, wheel chairs and wagons.

Start collecting now and bring it in as you get it together. Thanks for your “trash” and support!
The Summer Community Art Project is presented by the Worship & Arts Committee and funded by the AHCC Thrift Shop and the Greater Hartford Arts Council. For more information, contact Steve Mitchell at smitchell@ahcc.org or 860.216.9831.
Calendar of Events | July 12 - August 31, 2015

Sign up for all events at the Member Engagement Table or online at ahcc.org

July

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Summer Worship</td>
<td>7:45 AM Men’s Summer Bible Study</td>
<td>7:00 PM Faith and Justice Film Series</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Summer Worship</td>
<td>7:00 PM Faith and Justice Film Series</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Summer Worship</td>
<td>7:45 AM Men’s Summer Bible Study</td>
<td>7:00 PM Faith and Justice Film Series</td>
<td>7:00 PM Summer Book Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

August

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Summer Worship</td>
<td>7:00 PM Faith and Justice Film Series</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Summer Worship</td>
<td>7:45 AM Men’s Summer Bible Study</td>
<td>7:00 PM Faith and Justice Film Series</td>
<td>7:00 PM Parade Project Set-Up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Summer Worship</td>
<td>4:00 PM Parade Project Construction</td>
<td>4:00 PM Parade Project Construction</td>
<td>4:00 PM Parade Project Construction</td>
<td>9:00 AM Breakfast and Neighborhood Parade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Summer Worship</td>
<td>7:45 AM Men’s Summer Bible Study</td>
<td>7:00 PM Summer Book Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Summer Worship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coming up in September

7 | Labor day - office closed
14 | Spirit Sunday! One worship service at 10:15am
   Food, fun, fellowship and ice cream following worship
26 - 27 | AHCC’s 150th Anniversary Homecoming Weekend
**This Month in AHCC History**

Senior Minister Rev. David McKeith (1932-48) was active in the life of the community, the church, and other churches on Asylum Hill. Ecumenical summer services were held with Asylum Avenue Baptist and Immanuel Churches.

Rev. McKeith led the congregation through the war years of the 1940s and there were about 150 church members in the armed forces during World War II. The McKeiths wrote letters, sent packages, provided guidance, helped families in times of adjustment, stress or bereavement, offered welcomes and farewells, and helped with housing.

During his pastorate, as times and attitudes were changing, membership began waning as members moved to the towns west of Hartford. The church had to make a decision – follow the membership and flee to the suburbs or recommit to the City of Hartford and remain.

It was decided not only to remain in Hartford, but to undertake a significant remodeling and addition of the church. In 1939, over $121,000 was raised to build a chapel and for extensive improvements and additions to the parish house.

**Did You Know?**

- **23** baptisms performed in 2014
- **84.7%** of the way to AHCC’s 2015-16 Pledge Goal (as of July 6)
- **1912** year the organ pipes and console moved from front of church to its current location

**Visit the Youth Blog**

Members of the AHCC High School Youth Group are invited to visit our new blog at www.ahccyouth.livejournal.com. You can log-in using your Facebook, Twitter, or Google account.

This is a great place to give your feedback about youth group, share what you’re doing this summer, or continue one of our several hashtag meetings.

You’ll recall that our hashtag meetings discussed trending topics such as police shootings, gun violence and transgender issues. These controversies don’t go away during the summer, so let’s keep the conversation going in a positive place.

**Youth & Teens**

**Important Fall Dates**

- **SUN, SEPT 13**
  - Spirit Sunday

- **SUN, SEPT 20**
  - First Meetings

- **FRI, OCT 2 - SAT, OCT 3**
  - Confirmation Retreat

- **SAT, OCT 17 - SUN, OCT 18**
  - Middle School to Heifer Farms

- **FRI, OCT 30 - SAT, OCT 31**
  - High School Lock-in

**150th Anniversary | 1865 – 2015**
“Women of the Way: The Woman at the Well”
Outsider/insider, reconciliation, transformation, questioning, disbelief, acceptance and joy are words that can describe the story of the Samaritan Woman in John 4:7-42. Take time to read the scripture with your child and discuss how the Samaritan woman might have felt before and after her discussion with Jesus. Share if you or your child has had a similar experience.

Say this simple prayer with your child:
God of us all, we give you thanks for the people who spread your Word throughout the ages. We pray that we may be enriched by the knowledge of this story and the power of your love to transform lives. May the gifts of love we share today, become living water for those who receive them. Amen.

Marcie Jackson, Director of Children & Family Ministries

Spirit Hill Teachers & Shepherds Needed
We are looking for youth and adults to work with our Spirit Hill children in grades K-5 in the upcoming school year. No teaching experience is required, just a joy of working with children and a love of sharing the Word of God.

• Teachers: volunteer as many Sundays as your schedule allows. Curriculum and materials provided.
• Shepherds for grades K-5: a commitment of every other Sunday Sept – June. No teaching responsibility.

If you are interested, please contact Kyle Cannon at kcannon@ahcc.org, or complete the form below and drop off in the church office.

Yes! I want to volunteer for the Spirit Hill 2015/2016 year:

Name ____________________________________________________

Phone number ____________________________________________

Email address ____________________________________________

_____ Shepherd  _____ Teacher

Registration for Spirit Hill and AHCC Sunday Childcare will start Sunday, August 23. All children Infant – grade 5 are REQUIRED to have an updated registration form each year in order to provide the safest environment for all children. Please fill out one registration form per child. Pick up forms at the Spirit Hill table in Drew Hall starting August 23, or you can open the form electronically from the CFM weekly email. Please return completed forms to Kyle Cannon by Sunday, September 27.
Highlights

On Saturday, June 6, families with young children were invited to a casual BBQ at the home of Erica and Brian Thompson.