



TIDINGS



Reverend Gale Grayson

September/October 2019

Call for a Special Annual Meeting

If it's September, it must be time for our traditional Annual Meeting, where we take stock of where we have been since last September before turning our faces toward the future. This year's Annual Meeting, however, will have a special place in our church history. Along with the usual call for acceptance of the annual report, there will be the opportunity to move forward with the next in the series of steps that lead us to once again having a "settled" pastor. For a bit of history, it was just a bit more than a year ago that we called Pastor Gale to join us as our Designated Interim Minister. This meant that at the end of a year of service as our interim, Pastor Gale could be asked to consider becoming our settled pastor.

Where has this past year taken us with Pastor Gale at the helm? Along with the christenings, weddings, funerals, Sunday services, outreach activities, and looking out for one another that make up our church life, we have also undertaken some important initiatives in which we should take pride.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A Special Message.....	1 & 3
Save the Date, Celebrations.....	2
Call for Annual Cong Meeting.....	3
Venture Smith Day, Tues Quilters.....	4
Rally Day.....	5
VBS Report, Quilt Show.....	6
Restoration Committee Update.....	7
From The Trustees.....	8
Knitting, Prayer Chain.....	9
Sanctuary, Fuel Bank, Clothing Bank.	
Monday Morning Guys.....	10
Calendars (hard copy only).....	11 & 12
From the Editor, online Mailing List, email.....	inside page
Contact us, Lectionary....	outside page

With Pastor Gale's guidance, we finalized and formalized our covenant with the UCC to become an Open and Affirming church. This says proudly to the world that we are committed to affirm every person because they are children of God -- all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, those of any age, ability, race, culture and ethnicity, family configuration, health status, and immigration status, as well as any other description that might separate us. This covenant will guide us as we move ahead. Meanwhile, moving ahead has also meant saving our past. The challenges of maintaining a two-century-old architectural treasure have called upon us to mount a major restoration campaign, and a Pastor with a degree in engineering has been a very valuable asset as we confront these issues together. Gale has also undertaken to build new bridges with outreach to marginalized communities, and on the home front, she organized a reconfiguration of our space needs to better serve

(cont'd on page 3)



SEPTEMBER

September 7th-Venture Smith Day. See page 4.



September 8th-Rally Day! Welcome back to church! See page 5

September 22- Congregational Annual Meeting, See Call on page 3.

OCTOBER

October 12- Quilt Show, 10am-5pm

October 13- Quilt Show, 1pm-5pm, see page 5.



September

*1 Bud Haines
5 Patti Lombardo
10 Lou Faraci
13 Hillary Ballek
20 Erica Conover
21 Myra Brandt*

October

*6 Tony Boyce
12 Autumn Smith
13 Robert Charney
19 Eric Bernard
25 Kevin Osalza
29 Gerald Sjoblom*



September

*5 Alan Ponanski & Susan Kinsman, Arlene & Gerald Sjoblom
8 Gary & Barbara Bernard
18 Dave & Debbie Tajmajer
29 Michael & Kathy Sewell*

October

10 Lou & Carol Faraci

(cont'd from page 1)

how we live and work in our building space.

Moving each of these initiatives forward...as well as the day-to-day running of our church... needs a pastor with a steady hand. That is why the Pastoral Relations Committee, working closely with the Deacons, was very pleased to learn that Pastor Gale is willing to take the next step toward becoming our Settled Pastor. That next step will come on Sunday, September 22, when the call will include the motion required by our bylaws to call Pastor Gale Grayson (see call below).

The pastoral Relations Committee and the Board of Deacons hope that you will come and support this step forward. We have come a long way in the past year. With God's grace, we will continue this journey forward together.

**First Ecclesiastical Society of East Haddam, Connecticut
First Church of Christ, Congregational in East Haddam**

□ NOTICE OF CALL FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, September 22, 2019, immediately following worship service in the sanctuary

-
- To consider and act upon the Annual Report 2018/2019**
-
- To consider and act upon the Membership List 2019/2020**
-
- To consider and act upon calling The Reverend Gale Grayson as our Settled Pastor. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Membership present in a Congregational meeting is required. If accepted, to act upon accepting Reverend Grayson's and Terry Grayson's membership to FESEHC by letter of transfer.**
-
- To recommend amending the Constitution Article IX, 9.1. to read, "In the event that the Chair of a Board or Standing Committee is unable to attend a Church Council meeting, the Vice-Chair or Designated Representative of that Board or Standing Committee may act as an alternate member of the Church Council, being counted toward the necessary quorum requirement with voting privilege on all matters during that meeting. A second call for a Congregational meeting needs to be determined to vote on the Constitutional amendment. Two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Membership present is required.**
-
- To consider any additional business that may be brought to Membership in Congregational Meeting**

First Church Cemetery News

Venture Smith Day 2018 is Saturday, September 7th, 1-4pm.

Dr. Karl Stofko will do an overview of the afternoon and introductions.



We will be unveiling a life size wooden statue of Venture Smith by sculptor Weymouth Eustis of Chester.

Speakers;

Maisa Tisdale will talk about Little Liberia in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Rep. Bobby Gibson will tell us about the House Bill that mandated that African American History be taught in public schools.

Liz Wood and Beth Moore from the Stonington Historical Society will speak about Venture's homestead on Barn Island.

There will be family displays of photos and artifacts left at the grave, Venture Smith genealogy chart and the fabulous quilts by "Sisters in Stitches Joined by the Cloth". Copies of Venture's Narrative will be on sale by the East Haddam Historical Society.

This is a wonderful event! We normally host 40-60 people!

Andrea Pascal and Kathy Sewell will organize the refreshments. Please contact them if you can bake or provide finger foods.

Tuesday Quilters

We continue to meet on Tuesday mornings to make items for the Quilt show boutique.

We sew from 9:30am—noon.

Contact Margaret Charney at 860-537-3323



RALLY DAY!



Welcome Back
to

God's Garden

Sunday, September 8, 2019
10am



Vacation Bible School Report by Myra Brandt

Vacation Bible School was only one night this year but it was a star filled evening. We had a visit from the one and only **Noah**, you know Noah from Noah's Ark? He joined us and told us about his journey and showed us how to actually build an ark, just in case we ever needed one! One important thing we learned was to never play with pine pitch in the church, it can make a big mess!

He was a bit nervous because the weather was rainy, and he could hear the thunder outside! Then he remembered that God made a promise not to flood the whole earth again! God gave us the Rainbow! I wonder if Noah saw a rainbow when he finished his visit with us? We learned what a cubit was, if you see one of the Children that were there ask them to explain it to you.

I want to thank the Angels that made this night such a success, Lydia, Holly, Joyce, and Kathy I. Awesome Job!!! I look forward to next year and hope to see you all at Vacation Bible School!

24th Annual Quilt Show

Our 24th Annual Quilt Show will take place October 12th, 10am-5pm & October 13th, 1pm-5pm.

We will have vendors, quilts and needlework on display and for sale. Our Café will be open with home-made soups and fall deserts. The Boutique will have many handmade items for sale.

This year's Raffle Quilt is called Midnight Reflections. It was machine pieced and hand quilted by Betty Haines.

The Quilt Raffle tickets went on sale July 13th. They are selling for \$1.00 each. Ticket books have ten tickets, so take a book to sell to your family & friends.

We will be at various locations around the area selling tickets. These are fun opportunities to volunteer and help raise money for our church. There will be sign-up sheets in the Fellowship Hall. Pick a date and place that works for you!

The Quilt Show is always looking for unique and new items to display. If you are a quilter or needle artist, or have these treasures made by others, please consider loaning them for display at the show.

The Exhibitor applications are still available, so contact Margaret Charney to get one, 860-537-3323 or email; monkeywrench52@sbcglobal.net.



Restoration Committee Update

The restoration committee met once this summer and we need to get back on track in September.

Meanwhile, there have been a few positive developments. We received a planning grant from the State Department of Economic and Community Development's State Historic Preservation Office to help offset the expense of design documents for the parish hall roof replacement. Our architect, Tom Gribbin, of Noyes-Hoyt Architects of Chester has completed that work and included design work, at additional cost, for repairs to the meeting house roof to mitigate any possible leaks.

Tom has twice crawled into our attic space above the meeting house – definitely not for the faint of heart – to measure our insulation and to check for any wet spots. Except for one spot near the tower, water doesn't appear to be getting in. He thinks the peeling paint may be an issue with condensation forming in the winter months when we turn off the heat to the sanctuary. We are exploring how best to address that problem, but the meeting house roof repainting will be a separate project.

Meanwhile, Tom would like to call in a consultant to test for asbestos and lead in the area around the parish hall roof (siding may have to be removed to install necessary flashing) and also on the meeting house ceiling. With that information, we can better address the issue safely.

With the design documents for the parish hall roof, we could move forward to the bid stage. However, the state suspended new restoration grant applications through the summer. We're waiting for that window to open so that we submit a grant request for the repair work. It would reimburse us for work done on the roof, but needs to be approved before the project is bid and the work actually begins. Frankly, we need that money, so we can move ahead with another project on our check list, as the roof repair will largely deplete our funds raised to date.

We were also invited to submit a grant application to the National Fund for Sacred Places. Only 33 churches were invited to submit, out of more than 218 letters of intent. The National Fund will choose 12-15 of those and will announce the grant awards on Oct. 1. We have proposed the grant for exterior work on the steeple. The advantage to being accepted for this program is they provide hands-on training for fundraising and management of large projects.

Behind the Scenes: Board of Trustees

There are no “dog days” of summer for the Board of Trustees. May and June are spent finalizing the operating budget, winning approval at a congregational meeting and getting the spending plan in place for July 1.

Meanwhile there are always unexpected surprises to deal with – such as the plugged sink in the kitchen, requiring removal of the grease trap; the demise of the church computer, requiring a replacement with more memory and operating system speed –we’re looking at various options for around \$800.; dealing with intermittent false alarms of our fire alarm system because of line work being done by Frontier in our area; and most recently, a water treatment tank that will need to be replaced for approximately \$1,700. That’s through August and does not include the extra work being done in preparation for restoration.

Think of the board of trustees as the church’s chief operating officer – keeping the budget on track and the church building running smoothly. In the corporate world, the COO is one of a corporation’s top officers and is paid commensurately for the responsibility.

While our responsibilities are many at First Church, our trustees are volunteers and capable individuals. We have accountants, a builder, a lawyer, an engineer and a nurse. But there is room at the table for other church members to share their gifts. You don’t have to have corporate experience – just a good working knowledge of the world, some common sense and did I mention a sense of humor?

As we move into our restoration phase, we are looking for a few enthusiastic new members who can help with the workload. We meet the second Sunday of the month after worship in either the new or old parlor. Please join us.

If you can’t join the board now, we would appreciate your guidance and expertise with any of the above issues. You can talk to us at coffee hour or reach us by email. Thank you for your consideration.

Susan Kinsman, chairman; Carol Faraci, vice-chair; Larry Fraser; Seph Adams; Roy Butler, Treasurer and Christina Adams, Financial Secretary.

(cont’d from page 6)

The National Fund is a matching grant and we would have to raise twice what we have requested: \$150,000. Only funds raised after Oct. 1 can be counted toward our goal, so if you were thinking about making a contribution or multi-year pledge, please wait until Oct. 1 when we learn about the outcome of our application.

We are also looking for fundraising ideas – ideally big splash events that can draw attention to our project. Ideas so far include outdoor concerts, like Music on the River; a juried art show; a berry festival and bazaar. Please send suggestions to SEKinsman161@comcast.net; or to Karan Conover, the Restoration Committee recording secretary, KaranCon@yahoo.com

Respectfully submitted by Susan E. Kinsman, chairman, Board of Trustees



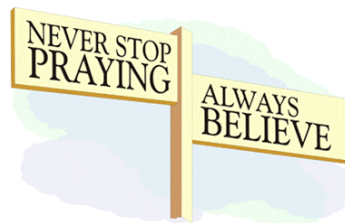
News from the Knitting ministry.

Dear knitters, The knitting ministry is a booming success! We are close to making 2,000 shawls! Please help us get there as we are in need of prayer shawls!

So if you knit, want to learn how or know someone who likes to knit, we meet the **third Wednesday of each month at 7 PM** in the room directly behind the sanctuary. We would love to see you there! Come for good conversation, prayer, knitting and fellowship!

We have the yarn and needles.

If you are unable to attend meetings but are willing to knit, please contact Myra Brandt for more information and yarn at myrabrandt3@gmail.com.



The Prayer Chain is one of the Ministries of First Church. If you would like to pray with this group, there is a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

Prayers for The Ibbotson Family for the loss of their son/grandson.

For more information

please contact Barbara Bernard at barbarabernard@sbcglobal.net or call 860-705-8842.

God is still listening to our prayers



Prayer

*How to do nothing
and still think you're helping*

From The Sanctuary Committee

**Beautiful Fall flowers are in bloom!
Please share your Garden flowers
with us!**



If you have questions about the Sanctuary Committee, see Holly Coleman or Kathy Sewell.

The East Haddam Fuel Bank

The next Fifth Sunday for Fuel is September 29th.

Look for the pink envelopes.

For more information about the East Haddam Fuel bank, contact Karl Stofko, manager and treasurer.



The East Haddam Clothing Bank

The East Haddam Clothing Bank is located on the lower level of the church. You may enter through the back entrance.

The hours for April-December are 2:30pm-5:30pm the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month. You may drop off your clean, gently used clothing during these hours. As there isn't any storage space available, they ask that you bring seasonal clothing only.

Note: The East Haddam Clothing Bank is run by the town. We just give it a home. Any questions or concerns about the clothing bank should be directed to the town office.



The Monday Morning Guys

The Monday Morning Guys are a group of gentlemen who love this church and lovingly maintain it. Their numbers are getting smaller and they need some new blood!

Are you retired?

Do you work 2nd or 3rd shift?

Do you have a couple of hours on Monday mornings?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, call one of the gentlemen named below;

**Larry Fraser, Don Messmer, Roy Butler,
Joe Dawson**





From the Editor



Our special Front Page article was written by Sue Merrow. Please make it a point to attend the Annual Congregational Meeting on September 22!

You can contact me at
schleppsister35@gmail.com.

**The deadline for the November/
December 2019 Tidings is October 15,
2019.**

This is a good advertising tool for any
events coming up!

Blessings,

Kathy Sewell

Our email has changed!

Please note that the general church email
address has changed

to

contact@firstchurcheh.org

Join Our Online Mailing List

If you would like to receive The Tidings on line, please email me at
contact@firstchurcheh.org,
Attention Kathy for Tidings in the
subject line. I will add or subtract
you from the Tidings email list.

Our mailing list is never shared or sold. We may, however,
occasionally pass along an offer from affiliated organiza-
tions that we think you may be interested in.

Read the Tidings on our Website!

Tidings is available to read on our
website and our events calendar is,
also, posted. **firstchurcheh.org.**



First Church of Christ, Congregational
 499 Town St
 PO Box 445
 East Haddam, CT 06423



TIDINGS
 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER
 2019

Lectionary Series		Contact us
September 1 Heb 13:1-8, 16 Luke 14:7-14 8 Ps 139:1-6 Deut 30:15-20, Ps 1 15 Ps 51:1-10 1 Tim 1:12-17 22 Ps 113 1 Tim 2:1-7 29 1 Tim 6:6-19 Luke 16:19-31	October 6 Ps 137 Luke 17:5-10 13 Jer 29:1, 4-7 & Ps 66:1-12 Luke 17:11-19 20 Jer 31:27-34 & Ps 119:97-104 Luke 18:1-8 27 Joel 2:23-32 & Ps 65 Luke 18:9-14	Minister Rev. Gale Grayson 860-837-4606 revgalegrayson@gmail.com Church Office Phone Number 860-873-9084 (Leave message) Chair of Deacons Barbara Bernard barbarabernard@sbcglobal.net Tidings Editor Kathy Sewell schleppsister35@gmail.com Church Email address (Best way to contact us) contact@firstchurcheh.org Church Website firstchurcheh.org Like us on facebook facebook.com/fccceh