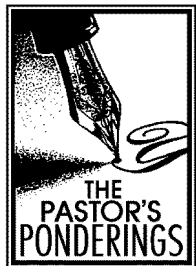


THE MESSENGER

The First Congregational Church of Pembroke, UCC; 301 Pembroke Street, Pembroke, NH 03275-3234

The Rev. Jim Howard, e-mail: pastor@pembrokechurch.org

Secretary, Nancy Jackson, (office: 603-485-9639), e-mail: secretary@pembrokechurch.org



We are co-creators with God in this adventure of life. Most likely you do not begin each day aware of this primary role you share with God in co-creating the outcomes of the day, but you do determine to a great extent what happens, how

it happens, and how you feel, react, respond, adjust, deal with it. The relationships, words, actions, calls, work, text messages, blogs, tweets, TV shows we watch, food we eat, sports we follow, all testify to who and what we are about, our values, our priorities, what matters to us.

Mother Teresa captures an aspect of this truth—that we are co-creators with God—in these words:

Life is an opportunity, benefit from it. Life is a beauty, admire it. Life is a dream, realize it. Life is a challenge, meet it. Life is a duty, complete it. Life is a game, play it. Life is a promise, fulfill it. Life is sorrow, overcome it. Life is a song, sing it. Life is a struggle, accept it. Life is a tragedy, confront it. Life is an adventure, dare it. Life is luck, make it. Life is life, fight for it!

Clearly, we are responsible for the life we create. When we lead our lives in isolation from God and others, then we create our own reality in the vacuum of self-centeredness, and become lost in the maze of our selfish ego. When we recognize that our life is set in the context of other lives, then we confront the truth that our lives are set in relationship with others, in community. When we realize that we lead our lives with our Creator, then we come to discover our true self, fulfilled ultimately and completely in and by the one who created and loves us. At such a point we may come to sense what an awesome responsibility it is to share the creation of our life with our loving Creator. And any who are parents know this truth profoundly, lovingly

nurturing the lives of children, seeking the best for them, letting their own talents emerge and find expression, holding the mirror so they can see themselves in the eyes of love (your love of them, a subset, of course of God's love for us all).

Father Solanus Casey often wrote to petitioners, "God condescends to use our powers if we don't spoil his plans by ours." Here you can glimpse the divine truth, that God loves us so much that he allows us to make our own way independent of him. But God also employs us to accomplish the very best, his will, through our actions, plans, behaviors, life. The choice is always ours, but seizing your role as co-creator with God opens you—and those you love—up to your greatest fulfillment, purpose, joy, and delight.

As we move from the busyness of the school/program year into the relative calm of summer and vacations, there is no more important moment to claim your role as co-creator with God who seeks to transform you and those around you. God seeks you and offers you an abundant life beyond any of your imaginings. Seize the opportunity!

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ...**

Our graduating seniors, **Chelsea Shuey, Brianna Ehler, Jennifer Jenkins, and Connor Chown!** A special dinner for the graduates and their families is planned for June 17th at 6:30pm!

your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”

Paul says that our giving demonstrates the sincerity of our love. Our giving is an expression of our love for God. Paul uses a prime example of this kind of giving: God gave his son in order to prove the sincerity of His love for us. Think of John 3:16. **“For God so loved the world that...”** that what? The completion of that verse is the proof of God’s sincerity in loving us: **“...that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but shall have eternal life.”** God gave us life through Christ’s grace—through His sacrifice, His giving.

Here is an easy question: are you sincere in your love for and faith in God? Here’s a harder one: does your giving match your love and faith?

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE ...

Giving Money as a Spiritual Act

Paul writes, in 2 Corinthians 8:7, **“But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”**

Paul was saying two things in this piece of his letter. First, he was complimenting the Christians of Corinth. They excelled in lots of things—they were faithful, and they could speak well about their faith. They immersed themselves in learning about Jesus’ way. And finally, they clearly supported, with love at least, Paul’s ministry. But in addition to the praise Paul gave, he also gave them a goal: to match their level of financial giving to their skills in faith, speech, knowledge, and love. (In this case, the money was needed to support poor churches.)

According to Paul, what we do with our money is as important a part of our faith as our faith in Christ, our sharing Christ’s message, our knowledge of Christ’s words, and our love for fellow Christians.

If we are to fully follow Christ, we need to make giving our money a spiritual act. Dr. David Jeremiah, author of *High Definition Giving*, said, “Spiritual stewardship is not just a necessary evil of being a Christian.” Spiritual giving is an act of faith, just as prayer, evangelism, Bible study, and love and service are.

In verses 8 and 9, Paul goes on to say, **“I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for**



SUNDAY FLOWERS ...

As always, donations of flowers are welcomed for our altar each Sunday morning. To contribute all you have to do is sign up on the Flower Sheet in the Parish Hall or let the flower committee member know. Please contact Doris Rowden 485-3664 (**June**), Lynn Matava, 485-8352 (**July**) and Robbe MacKenzie 485-7295 (**August**).



WORLD SERVICE ...

Our Family’s Table serves a free meal on Wednesdays at 5:30pm. See Pat Hill if you have questions or would like to volunteer to help.

The **Interfaith Food Pantry** is open on **Wednesdays** from **1-3pm** and **5:30-6:30pm**. We receive donations on the 2nd Sunday of the month. The pantry can always use rice and canned items, banked beans, macaroni & cheese and any kind of pasta, as well as personal hygiene items.

THE YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES ...

June 17, 6:30pm Senior Dinner – graduating seniors and their families are honored with dinner and surprises. Serving the meal will be the younger youth group members.

June 18, 6pm – Sort items for the church yard sale. pizza and soda provided!

June 19, 7am - Set up for yard sale which will take place from 8am-1pm. Bring family & friends!

June 24 - T shirt tie dying for Work Campers and anyone else who wants to make one. Non-work campers bring a white t-shirt to dye. Work Campers' t-shirts provided.

June 26 - Talent Show fundraiser – If you have an “act” or know someone who wants to participate please have them contact Chelsea Shuey, Eric Pearson, Eileen Herring or Jodi Ehler for an application. Look for posters around town and the church!!



CRAFT FAIR!

Yes, it's happening again! We will be holding another craft fair on **October 16, 2010!** If you are interested in renting a table/space, please contact Judy Pearson. If you are not crafty but are able to help that day, please let Judy know that, also.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT OUR CHURCH?

Then come to the **Orientation and Information** meeting after worship on **Sunday, June 20** in the Memorial Room!

This will also be a time to ask questions, have us learn about you, and invite you to consider officially becoming a member of the church.

In addition to regular membership, we also offer Associate Membership which is particularly designed for those who may also have an affiliation with another church.

Those who would like to join the church will be received into membership during worship on June 27.

If you are not able to be present but are interested in membership, please let Rev. Jim know, by email (pastor@pembrokechurch.org) or phone (485-9639 x 202).

CALLING ALL WOMEN!

Do you ever feel like your life is just constant running around, waiting on other people? Do you hardly feel like you have time to breathe? The Camp Berea Women's Retreat is being held on September 17-19 and 24-26 and Judy and Jodi will be attending again this year and would love to bring a bunch of people with them. We have not committed to a weekend yet, but would like to hear from anyone interested in attending as to which weekend works best. This is not a “we are women, hear us roar!” kind of weekend. It is a quiet, peaceful weekend with no one asking for a ride to or from practice or a friend's house, no one asking what's for dinner or have you washed their favorite shirt yet. It is a time to relax, breathe and connect with God in an absolutely beautiful place, and we would love to have you join us. Please see Judy Pearson (210-1687) if you are interested in attending so we can determine which weekend works best for people.

Ushers for June ...

6 Don and Laurie Hill, Luke and Cindy Bonenfant
13 Tom and Allison Hardy, Helen Chapman, Marc Herring

20 Judi Pearson, Jodi Ehler, Nancy Bibbins, Dot Smith

27 Peter, Eric and Sharon Chase, Dean Hopps

If you are unable to usher on your given day, please contact Dean Hopps at 485-5509.

ALL CHURCH YARD SALE ...

Hold the date: June 19, 2010! The ALL CHURCH YARD SALE needs



your support! Check those closets, attics and basements for items to donate to this great cause. We hope to sell out of your great treasures and not have to make many runs to the dump after the sale! So please remember that if you would be embarrassed to give it to your friend it is not acceptable for the yard sale. **No clothing** (please), it is best to donate that to CAP or Goodwill or other such organizations, as they do not sell well at the yard sale. Also, **we cannot accept computers and big electronic items** because if they don't sell we will have to pay the dump to take them. Furniture, toys, household items, garden and houseplants in good health, also books, CDs, games etc. in good to very good condition are all welcome. We are also adding a bake sale this year, be thinking what tasty treat you can whip up to bring for the event. The more we have the better the profit margin will be. Part of the proceeds will be going to the summer work camp, which is going to be in Maine, July 2010. **Many hands make light work!** Sorting and set up will be on Friday night, June 18, and the sale will be from 8 am – 1 pm June 19, see you there! Posters are around the church and around town.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMM. ...

We rejoice in the work of the Holy Spirit this year in Sunday School! God has truly been working in

the lives of our kids and their families, and in the lives of our teachers. Thank you to all who participated this year.

Don't miss **Children's Sunday on June 13th**! The entire congregation will have the chance to participate in the service led by the kids of the church. If you want to experience what Sunday School has been all about this year, be there! 10:00, as always.

The **summer program** for the Sunday School will begin on **June 20th**. We'll meet every Sunday except July 4th and September 5th (Labor Day weekend). Please join us for fun and purposeful Sunday mornings. Think service. Think mission. Think water balloons!



CHURCH PICNIC ...

Come one, come all to the annual church picnic to be held **following church** on June 27 at Bear Brook State Park. **Be sure to wear your "picnic" clothes to church!** The Diaconate is providing hamburgers and hot dogs, lemonade, chips, plates and cups. Please bring either a salad or dessert to share (and your favorite games, lawn chairs, sun block and bug spray) so that we can have a great day of fellowship, food and fun! *FYI: Bear Brook has a small fee to enter, so be sure to bring enough cash to cover that fee.* **In case of rain, the picnic will still go on, but will be at the church.**



JUST FOR LAUGHS ...

"Paycheck News"

I was told by payroll that they're going to start garnishing my paycheck. It seems pretty silly, but I guess if they want to start tossing some parsley and currants into the envelope every week, it's okay with me.