



The Signpost

June 2021
Volume 48, Issue 6

The vision of the Bolton Congregational Church UCC is to be true to the model and example set by the early Church of the Apostles, in our own time.

The Bolton Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
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860-649-7077 ~ www.boltonucc.org

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION:

A Special Meeting of the Bolton Congregational Church UCC has been called by the Church Council to be held Sunday, June 13, 2021 immediately following worship service.

The purpose of the meeting will be the following:

1. To discuss and vote on a Motion from Church Council recommending the sale of the recently inherited property from Pamela Connelly located at 57 Vernon Road, Bolton, CT; and
2. To solicit input regarding the most appropriate use of the sales proceeds that best align with the intentions of Pamela Connelly in making her generous gift to the Church.

Calendar of Events

Worship: Sundays at 9:30 am in the Sanctuary

Mondays, 7pm—Planning Committee—Z

Tuesdays, 10:30am-1:30pm—Crafters in Chandler Hall

Fridays, 7:30pm—Al-anon in Chandler Hall

Tues., June 1, 6:15 pm	Missions Committee Meeting—Z
Tues., June 1, 7:15 pm	Stewardship Committee Meeting—Z
Wed., June 2, 6 pm	Deacons Meeting—Z
Thurs., June 3, 7pm	Discernment Meeting—Z
Sun., June 6, 10:15	Discernment Meeting—Chandler Hall
Tues., June 8, 6:30 pm	Finance Committee Meeting—Z
Wed., June 9, 6:30 pm	Church Council Meeting—Z
Thurs., June 10, 7 pm	Discernment Meeting—Z
Sun., June 13	Special Congregational Meeting—immediately following worship
Mon., June 14, 5:30 pm	Bolton Land Trust Meeting—Chandler Hall
Wed., June 16, 6 pm	Deacons Meeting—Z

Z—indicates meeting is taking place remotely via Zoom

Reflections from the Interim Minister for the Moment

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.”

When I have to write something and I don't exactly know what to write, this verse (Matthew 6:28-29 - “The Sermon on the Mount”) comes to mind more often than not. I don't exactly know why, except that it serves as a reminder: perspective matters.

We tend to look for signs of success measured in numbers, in wealth, status, and acquisitions. Yet Jesus said that Solomon, a rich, successful, even faithful (to God) king, despite the splendor, couldn't compare to even the fleeting beauty of flowers.

This is flower season. I have geraniums ready to plant in the cemetery - simple, beautiful and loved by my mother and grandmother whose graves they will adorn.

Perspective matters.

Given all BCC has been through, I hear (in our discernment sessions) people who express concern for low numbers of people in worship, and a lack of the activity they remember from the past. People worry about the future. Will BCC survive?

I don't know the answer to that. However, as one who talks with people every week who are working and planning and doing things, here is what I see:

- in March, a corned beef dinner, and a pancake breakfast offered under the constraints of pandemic restrictions.
- Deacons deciding (I had nothing to do with it) to meet twice a month because they had too much work to do in figuring out how to be Church in this strange time.
- Transition Team - they came together last fall - on their own, volunteering to meet every week to figure out (with me) how to help the church make sense of the past and present, and what God calls the church to do in the future. All of the members of this Team serve on other Boards in the church.
- At times they disagree - sometimes vehemently - AND they love one another, care about one another. They work it out, coming to consensus about how to proceed.

I also see about 60 people who have participated in sharing their thoughts and feelings through the Discernment process. They have shared joys they have about being part of BCC, and the times they have suffered, at times felt deeply hurt by events or words at church. We have laughed and even cried and held one another in prayer in those times.

I have seen people who have said they have learned things about friends at church through these sessions, and even gained new insight, understanding, and even changed opinions, due to hearing what others think or feel.

I see people taking initiative and trying new approaches. I hear a desire for learning how to pray and making prayer an explicit part of the discernment process. You have no idea how gratifying that is for me. That desire has been more rare than common in the 17 churches I have served in the last 40 years.

You may not see these things happening yet, especially if you are not one of those involved in these activities. You may think BCC is on the ropes or on life support.

The life that is thriving here right now is largely unseen by those who have not been called yet to serve in the groups and ways I've mentioned. But just because you do not see it, does not mean it's not happening. The young organist in one church I served posted pictures of his wife 7 months ago announcing they were expecting a child.

Continued on next page

Reflections from the Interim Minister for the Moment (continued)

It took a few more months before she began to appear pregnant in the pictures they posted. The last few months - there was NO question. This morning, they posted pictures of their 2 week old baby girl. Even when we couldn't see that Taide was pregnant - great things were happening within her.

Perspective matters.

Peace to you, and grace,
Pastor Bruce

Church School News

It's June!! Can you believe it? The Romeo Family celebrated the college graduation of our daughter and we now await the High School graduation of our son. It is crazy how fast time goes by. One minute you kiddos are running around playing with their friends and the next they are all grown up and looking for a job and an apartment. Yikes!

We are also finally coming back to in person Sunday School. Because we have been away so long, we are going to do things a bit differently. We are going to have summer Sunday School. We will have class 2 Sundays per month (outside preferably) at the same time as our church services. We will do this through September. We will revisit things later in the summer to determine when or if we will go back to weekly "normal" Sunday School. All children 3 and 4 years old through 8th grade are welcomed. I am allowing the older children to decide if they would like to be helpers or students either way is fine. We will meet at 9:25am in Chandler Hall and if weather permits we will move outside. Please reach out to me at jessica.romeo.bcc@gmail.com and let me know if your child/children will be attending, their ages and if they have any food allergies. Also, reach out if you have any questions or concerns. I am fully vaccinated, but I know that the young children aren't eligible yet, therefore masks will be worn. Class will only be as long as the church service and parents are asked to pick children up as soon as church ends.

The schedule for the summer is as follows:

June 13th and June 27th

July 11th and July 25th

August 8th and August 22nd

September 12th and September 26th

This schedule is subject to change, but I will send out an email with a few weeks notice if it does change.

I look forward to seeing you all very soon.

~Jessica Romeo

From the Missions Committee

"That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house, but could not shake it, because it had been well built." Luke 6:48, NRSV

As Father's Day approaches, our Mission's Board focus is on the Church World Service Tools of Hope and Blankets of Love Program. Your generosity means that Church World Service can respond quickly with joy and compassion when disaster strikes. They supply building tools and materials, blankets, hygiene kits, emergency clean-up buckets after floods, gardening tools and materials, construction training for volunteers and small business loans, to assist others in re-building their destroyed homes and wells. In 2020, despite the pandemic, thousands of items were distributed around the world to neighbors who are trying to rebuild their lives. May our gifts offer Tools of Hope, Blankets of Love, as well as compassion, shelter, comfort and support, wherever God's people need care.

Church members can choose to donate a Tool of Hope or a Blanket of Love, to Honor, or in Memory of a father/mother or male/female caretaker. Donations are \$10. each, and may be mailed in or placed in the collection plate in the church narthex, (look for marked envelopes in pew racks). Please make donation checks payable to "Bolton Congregational Church". When a donation is made, please indicate your chosen gift on the check. Please add a separate note, with the names, donation and your relationship to the named individual, and a list will be printed in the Summer Signpost. Thank you for the many blessings you share which brings joy and comfort to those who are struggling in God's world!

Crafters' Corner & Church Store

Continued from last month...

So, as you can see, the Crafters and Store Volunteers have been around for a long time (30 years) and have contributed to and run a popular fundraiser for the church with all income going to our church missions. We have tried to use our talents to get BCC out into the community in a variety of venues. We have displayed our vintage and handcrafted items in several shops in other towns over the years as well as have our online store. We have hosted luncheons with another church on several occasions so that their "crafty ladies" could come for conversation and shopping at the store. We have shared fabrics and other items with other non-profit groups and continue to support the From the Heart programs and contribute items and open the Store during other church programs such as the dinners and Festival of Trees (and for special programs we donate all of our sales to that program). We donate \$3.00 gift certificates to the Store to all children attending our church school 2 -3 times each year and thoroughly enjoy watching them spend their own money.

COVID-19 had forced us to close down for several months, but in late summer we decided to start meeting again on an abbreviated schedule just to get out of the house and see each other again. We are all getting older now (most of us over 75), but are still crafting and enjoying each other's company each week. We are setting up our sewing machines for the summer and plan to make new items for the Store as well as doing some quilting and finishing up several projects that were started. We are, also, hoping to have our online store again in the future.

We can't wait to be able to hang out our "OPEN" sign again and invite the public in. Even without our sign when they see our cars and some "life" at the church they come to see if they can shop. It will be nice to invite them for coffee/tea/conversation again.

We feel that the Store is still a viable fundraiser and hope that when time permits, you will try to shop there often (especially for your greeting cards with prices from .25 cents to \$2.00). Going back in our records from 1997 - 2020 we have raised over \$70,000.00.

Please feel free to stop in on any Tuesday. **HAPPY FATHER'S DAY** ~Lynn Ralston, Crafters and Store Volunteers

From the Heart

“The Significance of Oneself cannot be measured by the fame and glory of this world or the material things we have, but by the love and compassion you have shown to others every day of your life without fame or glory or thanks...just in the name of love. And maybe all of the little things we do for one another is the most significant thing you and I might do in our lifetime”

MiSun

Hope this update finds you healthy, both physically and emotionally! I am excited to share with you that the feedback from our new Gift Bag program continues to be extremely positive. Our contacts are so grateful for the variety of uplifting items you are donating and share how much the seniors look forward to receiving the donations each month.

The donations from BCC are included with other donations from “From the Heart” making it possible for 125 spring arrangements and snack cups to be donated to the seniors at Evergreen; Woodlake; Manchester Manor and Brookdale.

The spring arrangements were donated in late April/early May just in time for Mother’s Day and included beautiful silk flowered pots, decorations with butterflies, word find books, playing cards, tissues and many other personal items.

“From the Heart” has been given the green light to donate certain snacks, so we assembled decorative snack cups with snacks, tissues and even a tiny stuffed animal and they went over very well!

The creativity within this program just continues to expand and the seniors are loving it! Thank you!!

How can you help with our Gift Bag Program? Monetary donations definitely help us purchase in bulk allowing us to save money and create similar donations.

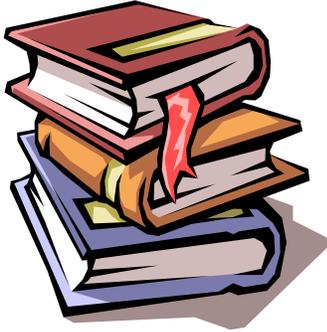
We are always in need of:

- Hand Lotion
- Shower gel
- Chap-stick
- Tissues
- Pump hand soap
- Small unbreakable knick-knacks
- Silk or dried flower arrangements
- Brand new small stuffed animals
- Pringles chips
- Individual bags of Crackers and cookies (just nothing with nuts or berries)

Thank you for all of your support!

Laura Ann / From the Heart
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Chandler Book Nook



"A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies. A man who never reads lives only one." ~George R.R. Martin~

We have a mix of fiction and nonfiction, newly acquired books, just waiting to find their way to your summer reading list.

Recent Acquisitions

My Own Words by Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Maybe You Should Talk To Someone; A Therapist, HER Therapist, and our Lives Revealed by Lori Gottlieb

When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi

All the Light You Cannot See by Anthony Doerr

Born A Crime; Stories From a South African Childhood

by Trevor Noah ***reviewed below by Lori Vadnais**

6.Deacon King Kong by James McBride

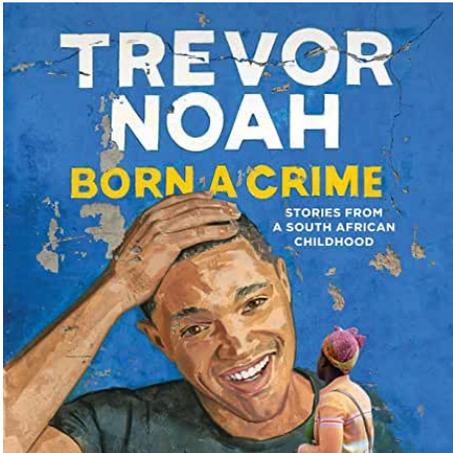
A *****HUGE GOLD STAR***** going out to Lori Vadnais for answering our call to review a book which she highly recommended we purchase.

With much gratitude...Lori Vadnais' review of:

Born A Crime; Stories From a South African Childhood

I always loved watching 'The Daily Show' with Jon Stewart, 'The Colbert Report' with Steven Colbert, and 'Late Night' with David Letterman for late night TV. After working full time as a radiation therapist at the cancer center for a lot of years, comedy and laughter were what helped to keep me relaxed and sane and to wind down before sleep.

One of the things that I liked about them was that all three of the above were equal opportunity comedians....didn't matter if you were an elephant or a donkey, male or female, adult or child, straight or LGBTQIA, black or white, tall or short....whatever. You were fair game for their monologues.



When Trevor Noah took over for Jon Stewart, I was familiar with him because he had guest starred many times on comedy shows. He was a natural. So I really looked forward to reading about his South African childhood when his book came out.

I was totally unprepared for the gritty survivalist story of his childhood that he told so graphically and with so much humor considering what he went through, he and his amazing mother!!! And the stories he tells of his church going adventures, how his ability as a multilingualist got him out of terrifying situations, his assortment of zany relatives....one especially of his aunt and uncle had me laughing until I was crying....at 1:00 in the morning....I slept great that night I was so exhausted from

the belly laughs. I couldn't put it down.

After reading this book, I could only marvel at his resilient nature and the fact that the Good Lord saw him through it....and am so grateful that I got to hear about a life I could never have imagined, having never walked in those amazing shoes.

It's a really good read!

Continued on next page

Chandler Book Nook (continued)

About the Author and Performer

Trevor Noah found fame as a comedian and TV personality in his native South Africa before becoming a household name in America as the host of *The Daily Show*. But before he found his gift for satire, he came of age as a storyteller during the waning days of apartheid and the tumultuous freedom that followed. In writing and performing *Born a Crime* — his first book — Trevor Noah can add “best-selling memoirist” and “audiobook narrator” to his list of hilarious-yet-heartfelt triumphs.

Critic Reviews: “Comedian Trevor Noah's stories of growing up in South Africa are vivid, sometimes harrowing, and often laugh-out-loud funny. The bonus of audio is that listeners get to HEAR Noah tell these stories in his South African-accented English, as well as hear him speak snippets of various other South African languages. Noah (who succeeded Jon Stewart as the host of 'The Daily Show') is a natural storyteller - skilled, engaging, and relatable.... Noah's narration offers insights and intimacy.” (*AudioFile*)

“The author's gift for vocal impersonation elevates the audio version into something even more splendid than an already terrific memoir.” (*The Washington Post*)

Our new books are on display and ready to circulate. Please remember to use the card in the back book pocket and leave it in the basket on the CBN table.

The Library Ladies ~Linda Brown and Denise McLennon

Finance Committee Update

May Financial Snapshot - Celebrating June

Lots to celebrate in June with graduations, the promise of summer fun when school lets out, kids being out and about, pools open, early vacation trips, maybe a wedding or two and of course Fathers' Day. I know that not everyone will be able to celebrate all of these things, but whatever you do celebrate this June, along with family and friends, please remember your church family and God in your celebration.

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31 ESV

Now, for an update on the May financial numbers to-date:

- May's monthly contributions are over the projected budget to date at \$53,722;
- Thank you all for keeping up with your intentional giving throughout the year as we head into the Summer months, during which, contributions traditionally lag;
- Total Income through May is \$86,772, approximately \$1,500 above the budgeted projection;
- With quarterly payments for Insurance and Social Security Liability coming due in June, we are currently in a good position with expenses for the year-to-date at \$68,065 which is less than our year-to-date projection;
- To-date, \$285 have been contributed for support of hawkwing and there is still time to make your donation for this worthy project;
- Further analysis is wrapping up on the tabled motion to sell or keep Pam Connelly's lakeside property and will be communicated for a final vote in June, more info to follow.

And... Happy Fathers' Day to all who are Dads, or who are bonus Dads, or who filled in as a Dad, or to those who miss their Dads or need a Dad. Please know we are loved by the greatest Dad of all, God the Father.

P.S. The phrase “God the Father” is used here for illustrative purposes, and I hope She doesn't mind.

Jim Bahre



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



THE SIGNPOST ~ JUNE 2021

The Signpost is a publication of the Bolton Congregational Church UCC, Bolton, CT.

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