



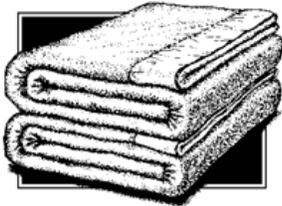
# The NBC Anchor

Newsletter of the Noank Baptist Church, Noank CT

860.536.7129 [www.noankbaptistchurch.org](http://www.noankbaptistchurch.org)



## MAY 2015



### Church World Service BLANKET SUNDAYS MAY 3 & MAY 10

Celebrate Mother's Day by buying a blanket for your mother, sister, aunt or friend. There are two kinds of blankets that are sent; a wool one for colder climates and light-weight ones for warmer climates. Both will be on display in the Narthex. Please remember your loved ones by buying a Mother's Day Card (and a blanket). Cards will be available on May 3 and May 10 before and after worship service. Please feel free to purchase more than one.

Imaging the possibilities: \$250 can provide warm blankets for five families left homeless by a tornado; \$450 can provide refugees resettling far from their homelands the gardening tools and materials to build six small raised beds for vegetables; \$750 can provide sewing machines and training for three women, empowering them to earn an income and feed their families; \$1,100 can provide 10 displaced families with emergency food packages that will feed a family of five for one month; \$2,500 can provide 250 blankets to an agency serving homeless individuals and families in the U.S.; \$6,250 can provide a sand dam that gives an entire community a source of lean water year round. In the past years our church has received sufficient donations to purchase over 100 blankets.

For over 60 years, Church World Service (CWS) has worked in partnership with local communities to identify their needs and access the resources they need to build the foundation for a more viable future, including emergency supplies in the wake of a disaster.



### Welcoming Erin and Rick Wyman Our New Musical Directors

It goes without saying how delighted the congregation is with the selection of Erin and Rick Wyman to be our permanent Directors of Music. They were very familiar to us when they agreed to serve during the interim through which they have transformed the music of worship and



our choirs! Though accomplished musicians and conductor in their own right, both Rick and Erin see this as a wonderful opportunity for each of them to grow in their professional skills and experience. Rick continues to serve as the Assistant Conductor for the US Coast Guard Band and will enhance his choral conducting under the tutelage of Jaime Spillane at UCONN. Erin has taught and performed piano professionally, but now has the opportunity to study organ under Simon Holt. Together they have already enhanced our Senior Choir and the worship experience and we look forward to their leadership in the coming years. Joining them on their ride from Old Lyme are their boys—Conner, Avery, and Oliver—who enjoy returning to Noank Baptist. The Wymans will formally take over their positions in September. In the meantime, welcome them back!



In my recent travels to the southland of our country, I heard a complaint commonly made here in churches of the Northeast, i.e., there are fewer people in the pews and It's hard to get them to commit to church activities and weekly participation. Honestly, I thought the generational fragmenting and downsizing of churches was a discouraging word limited to the congregations north of the Mason-Dixon line, east of the Mid lands of America, and somewhat left of the Evangelical world. Apparently not.

The downsizing of American churches has been ongoing for nearly thirty years—roughly through my entire professional life. As a rule, this is due to changes in society more than ineffective ministry by churches. Over the years, I have attended numerous seminars and read plenty of books and articles addressing the phenomenon and offering advice, if not formulas, for reversing the trend. Unfortunately, not a single panacea has been found. A forecast of the future paints a bleak picture for most, if not all, denominations and local congregations as the numbers continue to dwindle down, presumably, to eventual extinction. For many, the future is already present with attrition in staffing and revenue gaps in church budgets making the local church seem more vulnerable to closure than ever before.



As disturbing as this downward trend appears, some things are inevitable. Historically speaking, we are moving out of the Constantinian era (now post-Christian) where, for 1500 years, Christendom dominated entire continents and church institutions shaped societies. Evangelization usually meant hegemony and dominance over others to ensure conversion and compliance. To maintain power, Christ was portrayed as the scornful judge of humanity—as quick to condemn as to redeem. Hence, the one who preached the Sermon on the Mount evolved into being the patron god of bloody conquest. Although this would hardly be the Christianity we'd embrace today, its institutional shadows still loom over us in how reluctant we are to let go of being the dominant religion and moral voice in society.

Our collective despondency is an honest reaction to the current trends. Most of us have been shaped by the post-war Baby Boom expansion of congregations and buildings in the 1950s and 60s (after a similar period of institutional growth in urban areas a half century earlier). This institutional growth in property and prestige became the gold standard for generations (G.I., Silent, Boomers, and Generations X & Y—all born between 1901 and 1981). With entrepreneurial vision, churches grew because of what they offered the wider community in terms of a social and cultural center, which included arts and entertainment, athletics, personal development, social services and outreach, and a host of other ministries that, for the most part, were tangential to religious piety, but central to an urban (and increasingly suburban) quality of life. Churches became all-purpose support systems to families and entire communities, helping to define the "American way of life" with Sunday School, youth groups, Scout troops, sports teams and choirs providing safe and supervised settings to help young citizens grow up well.

With such institutional growth evident throughout the country, few saw any contradiction between the faith of their tradition and the entrepreneurial spirit of American culture. Infused with a mythology that invented the piety of our Founders, the United States was uncritically viewed as a Christian nation, with Jesus, effect, serving as our mascot. He became the tribal god to pray to at football games and on fields of battle, the god of ambition who inspired hard work and achievement, the god of family values who helped keep households and marriages strong, the god of noble sacrifice who inspired us to heroism and service, and the god of second chances who forgave all of our missteps and mistakes, so we could pick ourselves up from the dust of the road in order to begin again. All of these images are inherent to our cultural ideals and sense of collective purpose. Jesus was portrayed to embody American culture as the all-purpose god who made us free, prosperous, charitable, and loving as Americans. As I reacquainted myself with Southern culture, I recognized how much of it reflected the "once upon



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a time” of my childhood in Maine, when virtually everything I did was in some way related to my church and religion.

Those days are long past in New England, with few exceptions. A chronic loss of institutional prestige and cultural prominence has already demoralized many of our once proud congregations. The Southern landscape and the Heartland will eventually suffer such decline as well, though it may be a few decades away. They are just now beginning to experience the reality that Christian churches no longer are the hub of society, dictating Sunday morning schedules or midweek activities or serving as the principal moral voice for people’s lives. They are now where we were thirty years ago.

I don’t forecast this change with any sense of gloom. What needs to be grasped is that this institutional decline may be the best thing to happen to Christianity in America since the days of the Pilgrims. The teachings and vision of Jesus never translate well into institutional aims, needs, and objectives. In fact, the radical edge dictates the values and interests that demnation of the leaders of the Jews were unusually perverse or hypocritical control of and funding a cherished prestige in Judean society. What came crashing down within a century came crashing down within a century the Gospels imply, it wasn’t the Romans was the institution itself that, over time that once justified its existence.



by the dominance of this institution, their traditions and faith, along with that of nascent Christianity, were then free to develop through smaller congregations which cultivated the faithful piety that brought such good to the world.

The Constantinian compromise ended that for Christians in the Roman world by the fourth century; it has taken constant reformation and institutional decline and renewal to alter its effects. The losses we currently experience may, in fact, be the divine hand that delivers the present Church from its endless institutional problems, serving as the seed of our phoenix-like renewal for coming generations invested in a faith built solely on the teachings of Jesus and not on the cultural dominance and prestige of a state religion.

I admit, it’s hard to imagine spiritual renewal in the present downward turn in most congregations. Voluntary contributions can’t adequately support large buildings or staffs. But smaller will prove to be better in the long run as many renewed congregations are discovering, freed from the maintenance of large facilities and reenergized for purposeful ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It’s trusting in God for redemption, not restoration.

Death and rebirth may not seem much like a sign of success in America, but it’s closer to heaven’s hope than even the faithful first believed.

## *Graduates for 2015*

High school and college graduations are almost here again. If you know of any graduates, please contact Gloria in the church office at 860-536-7129 or by e-mail: [admin@noankbanptistchurch.org](mailto:admin@noankbanptistchurch.org). Please indicate which high school, college or other educational program, as well as information pertaining to the degrees earned and employment.



**Congratulations, Graduates!**



Our Church Family

## *News from around the Church Family*

Our prayers and thoughts are with those who have had recent surgery, been in the hospital, received treatment, in rehabilitative care, or are recuperating at home: **Peter Littlefield, Joan Laursen, Joanne Hart, Kate Chanin, Nancy Treadway, Ginny Colbeth, Ken Knobloch, Mimi Avery, Errol Crossman, Frank Murdock, Gloria Marshall, Posy Webber, Steve Kanyock, Ruth Hodgson, Anita Anderson, Amelia Anderson, Cecil Miller, Robert Reas, Linda Santoro, Cynthia Borden, Maureen Block, Tom Lewis, and Roger Floyd.**

Please remember our homebound and those in rehab/nursing care: **Ruth Hodgson** (Pendleton), **Betty Guhl** (Fairview), **Millie Jensen** (Fairview), and **Cindy Booth** (Sunny Lodge, New London).



## **CROHN'S & COLITIS FOUNDATION OF AMERICA**

Susan Jennerwein, a member of Noank Baptist Church, will be walking with the CT Team Challenge as part of the Shipyard Old Port Half Marathon in Portland, Maine on July 11, 2015. This will be Susan's second half marathon. This marathon is run to raise awareness and funds for research leading to improving treatment options and cures for Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

Susan has promised to raise \$3,200 for the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA), but needs your help to honor her commitment. Please support Susan by donating directly to Susan at 2 Main Street, Noank, CT 06340. Your check should be made payable to CCFA with Susan Jennerwein on the memo line.

A minimum of 82 cents per dollar raised by CCFA goes directly to research and patient support. No gift is too small (or large) and your contribution is 100% tax deductible.



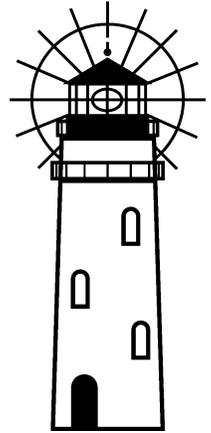
## *Sunday Flowers*

Remember to honor a loved one by purchasing flowers for the chancel on Sunday. There is a sign-up sheet in the outer office on the wall. Please indicate if it is in memory of/honor of/celebration of a person or persons and who the donor is. The cost of the flowers is \$25. When making out your check, please indicate "Sunday Flowers" on the memo line.

## Children and Family Ministries



### BEACH DAY Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> *sand – sun – water – bare feet – toys – games - friends*



All Sunday School children will meet in the Vestry (downstairs) at 10:00 am. Please wear play clothes, a hat, sunscreen, and bring beach toys. (We will not be going in the water!) Parents can meet us in the Vestry at 11:00 am or are welcome to walk to the beach with the children.

### Summer Friendship Gathering

It's no secret that NBC summer attendance is a little on the low side. However! We have great energy and momentum in our Sunday school program and would like to continue offering fun and creative ways for our young friends to grow in faith.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! We need one adult or youth each Sunday to offer a short story, craft, art or game for our Summer Friendship Gathering, children K - 4<sup>th</sup> grade. If you can help, please see Sue



Nursery care will be held in a separate space.

#### Overheard in Lighthouse Cove

We were playing a game in Lighthouse Cove to learn the names of Jesus' disciples. As we went around the circle, a curious young lady asked "Why are there only BOY disciples and not any girl ones?"

#### Overheard in Sunday School Class (short version)

While discussing the fact that in Jesus' day women didn't work outside the home, one Sunday School teacher explained that she didn't work outside the home when her children were young. Someone asked, "Did you live in Jesus time?"

#### Overheard in the Nursery

"We have so many in here that we need people to hold babies." (If you would like to be a *Baby Holder*, talk to Sue)

## THANK YOU!

We would like to thank Shannon Weigle for putting together a database of contacts collected over the past 4 years. We have discovered that during the last 4 years, Children & Family Ministries of Noank Baptist Church has served over 130 children from approximately 80 families! This was, and still is, only possible with the many volunteers who share their time, talents and energy. Thank you, thank you, thank you, to each and every one!



### *Easter Sunday Worship Service*

The congregation not only enjoyed music from the adult choirs and instrumentals, but also enjoyed the youth choir and singing by the children of Lighthouse Cove.



### *Easter Craft Night*

A wonderful time of making Easter crafts was enjoyed by about 30+ children. It is amazing what they can create with just a few odds and ends.



### *Easter Party and Egg Hunt in the Memorial Garden*



### **Vacation Bible School August 3—7, 2015**

Kids explore how to put their faith into action. In this mission-focused VBS, kids experience God's unstoppable love and discover how to fuel up and move in and through life with God. Watch kids at your church come alive with movement and images of all sorts of kid-friendly transportation, such as skateboards, running shoes, roller blades, and more! Watch the G-Force meter climb, illustrating how God is at work around the world and how God's people are on the move.



Craft Night was a buzz with boy-zzzz!

# Tell Me What's A Happenin'!

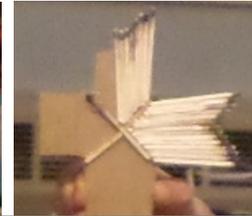
Community Easter Craft Night @ NBC

Catherine B organized the coolest crafts -

The boys were all a-buzz! 1. Rough square



(hi) Proud of his nail cross & matches cross in progress! (lo) practice Co-Op



nail bound together into a cross with shiny brass wire! 2. Spent wooden matches laid on a cross pattern! Soooo Cool! Thank you Catherine!



## Music to Welcome Spring

CONCERT! Amelia A sang several selections with the Fitch HS



Women's Choir. Gina M was stringing us along (haha) on her violin with the FHS String Orchestra! BRAVO! BRAVO!!

## Pretzels & Easter Cards for Last Bread & Broth

Don't think Hallmark has anything over cards like these! Heartfelt, joyful & full of the promise of Easter & Spring! Pretzels



(up) Some of our cards! (L) Noelle & Liz made pretzels, (R) &



were in "hot" demand & the first to go at supper!!!

School Spring Break We began practicing our mono & dialogues for Co-Op Youth Sunday!

## What's the buzz all about?

Sun April 26 Co-Op Youth Services @ both PBBC & NBC FUN prose & slideshows - that's what Co-Op

Youth Sunday's all about! Let's gather @ PBBC @ 9am.

Sat. May 2 8:30-1:30 Camp Wightman Spring Workday. Let's travel Sat morning to enjoy a nibble, spruce up the camp & then nibble some more! Kristen will pick up from NBC at 8:15am & PBBC at 8:30pm.

Wed May 6 or 13 @ 3-5pm Bringing in the Spirit of S-Ping! to the Mystic River Cottages Together we will gather in WARMTH to bring in MAY FLOWERS of JOY!

May Fri 15th - Sat 16th Nightwatch Crossroads Grades 9-12 we head to St John the Divine in NYC to overnight in the largest Gothic Cathedral in the world! We'll sightsee NYC on subway & foot! All will begin 3:30 Fri & end approx. Sat 5pm. Complete a registration form attached & give to Kristen!



(hi) Amelia (top left) & (lo) Gina 2nd chair, first row violins!



Dear Friends,

Erin and I are honored and thrilled with the opportunity to serve long-term with you all in the church's musical life. We, and our boys, feel like we've returned "home"—you have been so welcoming and kind—thank you!



Over the past few months, we've so immensely enjoyed working with the wonderful people of the Noank Baptist Church Choir - you should know (if not already), how proud we are of them. Each member of the choir has made a special commitment to the church - to learn, rehearse, and sing meaningful music each week. They, as you know, play a very special role in every service, the life of our church, and (ultimately), our community. Perhaps you heard this evidenced by their beautiful singing on the very challenging and powerful music for the Good Friday Service, or the joy they brought to Easter Sunday (accompanied by saxophone quartet - an "Easter Surprise," of sorts!).

Upcoming (as we write this) is a special performance on May 3 (at 3:00 pm) at a "choral celebration" at Central Baptist Church in Norwich (celebrating its 175th anniversary). Throughout this month, as you hear the choir sing its final services before the summer hiatus, we invite you to consider whether you might join us as a choir member. Rehearsals are Thursday evenings (7:15-8:30) and Sunday morning (9:30-9:45). If you'd like to know more, and/or can join us, please speak with me, Erin, or any choir member!

In the meantime, whether or not you sing in the choir, we look forward to making music with you all!

Best wishes,

*Rick (and Erin, Conner, Avery, and Oliver) Wyman*



April was not a very active month. However, the church did host a Girl Scout troop from New Hampshire in the Vestry over the April 17 weekend.

We recently had our first-of-the-year termite inspection.

A task force has been formed to survey the parking lot which has taken a toll on the paving due to the severe, cold winter months. We are currently looking at widening the parking lot and reclaiming the exit from Cathedral Heights. Hopefully we can report more at our April Business Meeting on April 22 and in our next newsletter.

Lastly, to ensure that we are up the State of CT health requirements for the Day Nursery School, we will be replacing the faucet in the center island sink.

Respectfully Submitted

*Carl Brustolon & Brian Straub*

Property Managers



The children and teachers are enjoying outdoor activities despite the cooler than normal spring temperatures. Love that fresh air after a long, long winter!

**NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS** The children have planted two types of flower seeds, bachelor buttons and cosmos. We will observe how different each looks as they sprout. Once they have begun to grow, everyone will be able to plant them in their own garden.

We will be exploring sea life/the ocean during our final month of classes for this school year. The wonderful collection of shells and fossils donated by Rosalie Rathbun will be useful in the hands-on exploration of ocean critters. We have some fun projects planned for this unit of study.

Pastor Paul has enriched our classroom with music and his wonderful sense of humor. We all love those special Friday morning sing-a-longs.

We will walk to the town dock on Wednesday, May 20 (weather permitting) to have a snack and enjoy the view.

Our annual trip to Carson's Store for ice cream will be on Friday, May 22, after which we will go to the park to play. Should it rain on that day, we plan to do this on Wednesday, May 27. We will be having our picture taken as we enjoy our ice cream by Karen Steever, a long-time resident and Miss Vera's good friend. There will be a copy of this photo to be distributed at the end of school picnic.

**FYI**—there will be no school on Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.

Our last classroom day will be on Wednesday, May 27. The end of the year School Family Picnic will be held at 10:00 am on Friday, May 29 at Sutton Park in Groton. The picnic will be held rain or shine under the large pavilion. Children will not come to the school that day. We will all meet at Sutton Park at 10:00 am for the festivities.

The school staff is appreciative of the support that the Church continues to provide to our program. Everyone's generosity and caring is very encouraging to the efforts of the teachers. This insures that our program remains a positive and thorough learning experience for the three and four year old students who attend.

Miss Vera and Miss Tina would like to wish our "graduates" a safe and healthy summer as they prepare to enter kindergarten in the fall. We will miss you! We also wish our returning students a safe, happy summer and we look forward to seeing you in September.

Thank you for sharing your children with us! May God continue to bless our families.

Respectfully Submitted  
*Miss Vera and Miss Tina*



## *Pasta Supper FUN-drainer*

Friday, May 1, 2015

Two seatings 5-5:45 pm & 5:45-6:30 pm  
Noank Baptist Church Vestry

Come join us on Friday, May 1 for a pasta supper that includes four pasta sauces (red sauce with meat, red sauce without meat, pesto sauce and white sauce), bread, a spectacular salad bar and homemade desserts.

Items available for purchase: raffle baskets, Sculler's sauce dressing, Noank Scullers note cards and double scull poster.

Donations at the door: \$8 adults; \$5 kids 12 years and under; free 3 years and under.

## *Spring Work Day at Camp Wightman*

Saturday, May 2, 2015  
9:00 am to 3:00 pm



Please mark you calendar and spread the word. Join others who love Camp by helping to get the property ready for the summer season. Please bring a rake, paintbrush, chainsaw, hammers and nails and prepare to rake, paint, repair, build and clean.

Call the camp office at 860-376-2179 x 10 to reserve a spot for yourself, your family, your work group or your church. We will have a great lunch prepared and offer the opportunity to fellowship with others who love Camp Wightman like you.



## *Camp Wightman Summer Camp Hiring*

Camp Wightman is in the midst of completing **summer staff hiring** and would like to ask for your help. They need young adults, ages 18 years and older, who have completed at least one year of college, who desire to serve God by sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with children and youth, and who want to grow in their own faith. These young adults will live with, lead, and love campers, plus ideally be able to share a specialty skill like music, lifeguarding, athletics, art, etc. Any college students at NBC who are looking for something more than just a summer job? Please contact Camp Wightman at 860-376-2179 so we can talk about their plans for Summer 2015. Oh, and they don't have to have been to camp before to qualify for a staff position!

## THINKING AHEAD!! 7 MONTHS AND COUNTING



Now is the time (soon I hope) to plant vegetables and herbs for the Holiday Bazaar herb table! Don't forget to scour yard sales for "cheap" jelly and pint canning jars, and if you have some jars that you purchased at the Bazaar last year, please return them to the church office. All jar and produce donations help defray the cost of jellies and pickles.



Almost any fruit can be made into jelly—pick some extra for the church bazaar when you pick for yourself. Let Jane Templeton know if you have rhubarb or other produce from your garden to share. You can contact Jane at 860-961-2004. Thanks in advance

**We are looking for volunteers who would consider chairing this annual Holiday Bazaar event. Please contact Betsey Goetsch @ 860-739-5150 if you can help.**



Paul Coutu & Bill Turner cordially invite you to:

### *"A Gardener's Delight"*

**Saturday, May 16, 2015 (rain or shine)  
Kentford Farm Perennial Gardens & Floral  
297 New London Turnpike (Route 184)  
Stonington  
Gates Open at 9:00 am**

Plants "Home Grown" by Master Gardeners:  
Corinne Clevenger, Paul Coutu & Diane Hitchcock



#### **The Event Includes**

Plant Sale, Guided Perennial Garden Tours  
(10 am to Noon)

#### **Tickets**

Tour, \$20 at the Gate

#### **Proceeds Benefit**

Alliance for Living, Inc.

#### **For More Information**

Call Alliance for Living, Inc.  
860-447-1239 ext. 233

*Alliance for Living, Inc. is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people affected by HIV and AIDS in New London County by providing comprehensive non-medical services, including medical case management, food pantry and meals, housing, medication adherence and nutrition programs. [www.allianceforliving.org](http://www.allianceforliving.org)*

**TEDDY ROOSEVELT IS COMING TO NOANK!!**  
**ONE MAN, ONE HOUR, ONE UNFORGETTABLE SHOW**



Ted Zalewski

actor/author

performs as Teddy Roosevelt

**NOANK BAPTIST CHURCH, MAIN STREET, NOANK VILLAGE**

**THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2015– 1:30 PM**

Performance only: \$15  
Performance & Tea with Teddy: \$20 (limited number of tickets)

In Teddy Roosevelt’s Mind, Body, Spirit, actor/author Ted Zalewski brings one of America’s greatest presidents to life. Cowboy, soldier, naturalist, historian, father, statesman and winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace, Theodore Roosevelt lived a life that inspires us still.

**Proceeds will benefit Our Shoreline Community Association (OSCA)**  
**To reserve tickets, please call 860-271-1681 or [OSCAforseniors@gmail.com](mailto:OSCAforseniors@gmail.com)**



***April Council News***  
***Bonnie Banks, Clerk***

The Council held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 1, 2015 with 13 members present. The minutes from the March 4, 2015 meeting were approved as corrected.

**Council Members**

Moderator: *Chris Butta*  
 Clerk: *Bonnie Banks*  
 Treasurer: *Jane Templeton*  
 Asst Treas: *Debbie Bates*  
 Finance: *Nancy Gilmore*  
           *Carol Spunar*  
 Property: *Carl Brustolon*  
           *Brian Straub*  
 Spiritual Life: *Marti Bradshaw*  
                   *Mary Harris*  
 Comm Life: *Betsey Goetsch*  
               *Steve Gordon*  
 Staff Relations: *Open*  
 At Large: *Cyp Cyr*  
           *Sherrie Neilson*  
           *Jennifer O'Donnell*

Pastor Hayes shared a thank you note from Mary Brodhead for Trux's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party.

Youth Sunday will be celebrated on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

The Center for Hospice Care will present a pilot program on end of life issues following church and a light lunch on April 26. The program will be open to the public with sign-up required.

The Parking Lot Task force will begin meeting on Thursday, April 9. Currently there are 7 members on the task force.

Finance reports that although investments are doing well, there is concern about the amount of money they are having to withdraw from the Merrill-Lynch account to cover expenses. The especially large snow plowing bill contributed to the deficit.

There have been two very qualified candidates interviewed for the Music Director position with one more candidate to be interviewed this week. The task force is confident that a great replacement will be identified soon.

In addition to researching solutions to the parking lot issues, the property managers reported that they have done a walk-through with Frank Lewis to identify any outstanding issues. A relief valve on the boiler was replaced. Discussions are ongoing regarding arrangements for lawn mowing services for the season as well as considerations for snow plowing for next year.

Betsey Goetsch is looking for people to help Cal Robertson provide a meal a week for St Francis House where he lives. Volunteers to provide a meal, or part of a meal, for eight individuals should contact Betsey.

The Staff Relations Coordinator position remains vacant. Anyone who might be interested in filling this position should contact Pastor Hayes or a member of the council.

The revised lease for Main Street House was reviewed. The council voted to accept the revisions.

Pastor Hayes is leading a Bible study of the final days of Jesus life on Tuesday evenings at 7 pm in the chapel.

The quarterly business meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> beginning with a potluck supper at 6 pm followed by a hymn sing with the meeting starting at 7 pm.

The next Council meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 6 2015 at 7 pm**. All are welcome to attend. Full council meeting minutes are available upon request.

Respectfully Submitted  
*Bonnie Banks*



Dear Friends,

March 28, 2015

This week we are taking a few days to celebrate a college graduation. Matias Perez graduated from the School of Psychology at the University of Michoacán last Saturday evening. His mother Pascuala and other family members arrived in Puebla on Thursday morning after an all-night bus trip from Chiapas, their home. After a rest in our home, we packed up the van and headed for Morelia, a five hour drive. By Friday we were rested and the celebration began with visits to the tourist sites of this beautiful colonial city.

What a story! Pascuala is a single mom who was determined to help her son get his education. She left their village in the mountains of Chiapas when Matias was five and found a job as a housekeeper in the larger town of Yajalon where she knew the schools would be better. She worked seven long days a week at a wage of fifty dollars a month until Matias finished primary school...her only goal was that he would have the chance for a better life. Looking for a better middle school she moved again for Matias' 7<sup>th</sup> grade year. In Ocosingo she supported herself and son cleaning homes, taking in laundry, anything she could do. Matias was bright, enthusiastic, and appreciative and usually near the top of his class.



**Matias and Pascuala**

Following high school he applied to the University of Michoacán where a special scholarship program was available for indigenous students. Passing his entrance exams and receiving the scholarship, he made the twenty hour bus trip to a strange new world. His scholarship provided room and board in a small house shared by 80 other students. The bunk beds were three high with less the 24 inches between them. Rules were tough for maintaining the scholarship, but Matias persevered and by the end of the first semester there were less than 60 students and a little more room. He quickly joined the Baptist Church and became active in the youth program.



**Matias receiving his diploma**

I admit we groaned when Matias shared his decision to major in Psychology. Over these four plus years, through many talks and watching him work with the church, we are becoming a believer...that God is calling him to a ministry of counseling and working with young people. He has the gift, the character, the confidence and the love. Ramona and I are excited about Matias' future and feel privileged to invest in this special young man. Pray for him as he finishes his thesis and looks for a job and then for a graduate school. Thank you for supporting our work in Mexico. This story is partly yours so relish it!

For those of you who support us financially occasionally, or have not given, there is a window of opportunity to have your gift doubled. It must be received by International Ministries before the end of May or until matching funds are exhausted. Thanks for considering this and thank you so much for caring about Mexico and about us and for your prayers. God bless you and have a wonderful celebration of our Lord's Passion and Victory. HE HAS RISEN!

We love you and are so grateful for your amazing generosity and your powerful prayers. *—Ramona and Carlos*

International Ministries PO Box 851 Valley Forge PA 19482-0851

(Gifts for Matching Campaign please indicate non regular support for Shawver Mexico)