

The Shepherd's Good News

Good Shepherd United Methodist Church

Fall 2005

From the Editor

Sara Bruce

What a beautiful summer we had. Our picnic at Grandma's place was so much fun. If you didn't get a chance to go, I have posted some pictures on our web page. www.gbgm-umc.org/gsumc-me.

This is the first newsletter to be posted on the web page. If all goes well, you will find future newsletters there as well. Past newsletters will also be showing up in an archive section over the next few weeks.

There is a special letter to our Summer Pastoral Assistant on Page 4 which was written by a member of the congregation.

We also say goodbye to a beloved member of our congregation this week. I have asked Rev. Tom to write something special, and you will find it on page 5.

I welcome any comments, good or bad at sasalyn@maine.rr.com.

Charge Conference

Our Annual Charge Conference will be held on Sunday, October 30, right after morning worship. The new district superintendent will preside. There will be reports heard and plans made. The chairs of all committees and the financial officers are expected to prepare reports. From committee chairs we'd like to know what has happened since last we met as a charge conference, which was about a year ago. The financial secretary should prepare a summary report of how much money we took in to date and what the donors indicated it should be used for. The treasure should prepare a budget report to date showing how our money was spent and that shows how much money we still owe and for what.

Rev. Tom's Corner

I confess that I have mixed feelings about summer coming rapidly to an end. I thrive on the long hours of daylight and warmth. As most of you know, Beverly and I spent the summer at our camp on a small pond. The fishing was good - I caught all the fish I wanted to clean and eat. We swam nearly every day. As good as those things were the best part of summer was having lots of friends around, watching them and their children enjoy the pond and the boat and sometimes the fish too. Some of you accepted our invitations and we are glad. Much of our family was around some. A group of retired colleagues came for a day. I didn't keep count, but I think there were about 75 different people who spent some time with us this summer. Just plain wonderful!

As much as I will miss the pond and the boat and the fish, I do look ahead to a new time in the congregation. How can we take advantage of all that re-creation of summer and create something new and wonderful for us all and those who may come seeking a relationship with the God who gives us all that we need and more? Shall we work on that together? I hope so.

TRM

**BRING A FRIEND
TO SUNDAY SCHOOL!**



Finance Report

Rick Smart, Chair

Once again, the good people of Good Shepherd have come through. The operating budget we passed for 2005 was one of the most aggressive in our history as we had projected a large operating deficit for the year. Thus far in 2005, the generous contributions of our congregation have been very strong. Although it has been a challenge to pay all the bills sometimes, the large operating deficit we were projecting has not fully materialized. Many thanks to those who have given.

Through September 4, we have received more than \$37,000 in operating donations – this is already way ahead of the pledged total for the entire year (\$29,840). In addition, we have received some large donations specified toward big ticket budget items like the projection system and the new sound system. Together, these have allowed us to keep the bills paid and to continue the mission of our church.

The budget for our building is in good shape. Through September 4, we have received \$11,655 in building fund donations. This puts us right on track for the \$17,000 we had budgeted for the year. At this pace, we will be able to pay our monthly mortgage payments and reduce the principal of our loans by about \$11,000 this year.

If you have any questions about our progress in 2005 or any other part of our church's financial picture, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the Finance committee.

Rick Smart, Chair of Finance Committee

Phone: 829-4207

bethanyandrick@msn.com

Finance Team: Natalie Blake, Sara Bruce, Linda Cox, Michele DeRoche – Treasurer, Dan Frost – Recording Secretary, Tom Merrill

An Invitation to Be Counted

Why are churches, particularly the United Methodist Church, so interested in statistics? Why join the church? Doesn't God already know my heart and soul? All good question and I have been asked them all and others like them many times. Even so, please consider this an invitation to be counted, if you are not already listed as a full member of Good Shepherd UMC.

The result of the count that is knowing exactly just how many people have responded to the invitation, is in fact not particularly important; it is just a number after all is said and done. However the witness that happens when we stand up and be counted in a public, visible way says a lot to those watching, particularly young people, children and anyone else who might be considering a commitment to helping spreading the good news that God is still alive and well.

Anyone reading this who would like more information is invited to speak with the pastor.

Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPPRC)

Sara Bruce, chair

We had a very nice summer with our Pastoral Assistant, Natalie Blake. We will be meeting with Natalie in the next couple of weeks, and although this is a closed meeting to members of the committee only, we welcome any comments from the congregation. You may email me directly at sasalyn@maine.rr.com, or speak with any one of the members on the committee in the next week. Members are: Tom Merrill, Pastor; Judi Shoberg; Michele DeRoche; Brad Van Damm; Maggie Topel; Ginny Cleaves.

Pastor evaluations are coming right up. They will be made available by October 1. I strongly urge all members of the congregation to take one and fill it out.

Greater Portland UMC Cluster News

Natalie Blake, Lay Leader

The Cluster that Good Shepherd is a part of is a grouping of 10 churches that gather together to offer programs and training that are not able to be offered by the individual church. We meet once a month, usually the third Saturday at 10 P.M. at Clark Memorial Church in Portland and, even though we have a designated representative, anyone from the church is welcome at the meetings. Some of you have been to the Lenten series offered in the Spring, to training workshops for program and administrative committees, the Celebration of Methodism held last year, Lay Speaking classes and the choir festivals in the Fall. We are having the Choir Festival again this year and will be joined by some participants from our sister Cluster - Casco Bay. The Festival will take place on October 16 at Tuttle Road Church at 3:00 P.M. Your choir will be participating and we hope to see some familiar faces in the audience. One of our pianists will be the pianist for the mass choir and the choir director is Sandi Simpson from Clark Memorial. There is a reception following the concert which gives everyone a chance for fellowship. Look forward to seeing you there!

Morning Bible Study

by Sara Bruce

We will be starting a new study in the next couple of weeks. We are almost through our book "Life Together, The Classic Exploration of Faith in Community" which we studied over the summer months. This has been a very enlightening book. Thank you Tom for helping us pick it out. A new study will be announced shortly, so keep your ears open.

Because of some scheduling conflicts, we are now meeting on Tuesday mornings instead of Wednesday. We would love to have you join us. You may talk with anyone from the group if you have any questions.

Outreach

Bethany Smart, Chair

Recently we have touched the lives of many through our outreach programs. August 13 found many of us at the church running our quarterly clothing swap which this time served 24 families! Ways you can help with the clothing ministry are to "advertise" it through our community. Let people know it is available anytime. If someone calls the church office (657-2009), we will set up a time to help them get needed children's clothing. If there is anyone in the congregation willing to do minor sewing (i.e., buttons, sew a seam, etc.) let me know, as sometimes there are nice clothes we could use but just needing a little TLC – as it is now, we would not keep them, as our policy is no rips, no stains, etc.

The next day in church, August 14, the Sunday of Brady's baptism, we blessed the stuffed animals which everyone generously donated, and they will soon be on their way to children who will love them through Feed the Children, International. Thanks for helping with this way to brighten a child's life.

Currently, Sara is heading our Hurricane Katrina relief effort to collect money, health kits and flood buckets for UMCOR. I am proud to be a United Methodist, a church with a dynamic, responsive relief organization. Thank you Sara for organizing our UMCOR donations.

Coming up in the fall/winter, we hope to have a special speaker from the Maine Council of Churches regarding Restorative Justice. No date as of yet, but hopefully soon! For more info if you are curious:

<http://www.maineCouncilofchurches.org/restorativejusticecenterofmaine.htm>

Thanks to everyone who has participated in our Outreach programs this summer. If you have an idea for fall/winter, please let us know!

Women's Group

Julie Frost, Chair

Everyone has had a busy summer and with fall approaching, it is now time to start up the Women's Group again. The mission of our group is to help the women of our church to get to know each other better - making us a tighter knit church family.

On the third Wednesday of October - the 19 - we will be meeting at The Landing restaurant in Windham at 6:30 P.M.. This is a time for all women to come out and have an evening of great food and nice conversation. If you know of a friend that could use a night out.... bring them along.

The meeting for November will be at the church on the third Wednesday of the month - the 16 - at 7:00 P.M.. We will be working on crafts for the Christmas Fair.

Come out and join us for dinner on October 19 to kick off this year's women's Group! Bring your thoughts of what you would like the group to do over the next year. We are up for any ideas that help us get to know our sisters-in-Christ.

Southern Maine United Methodist Men Celebrate 50 Years

Cape Elizabeth UMC will host the Southern Maine United Methodist Men, Wednesday, 6:30 P.M. on October 5, 2005. Not known by the same name over the course of these many years, Southern Maine United Methodist Men is one of the oldest sustaining Methodist Men organizations in the country.

Visit us on the web.

<http://www.sodistumm.com>

Music Team

Calling all 'wanna' be singers. The choir has openings! The only requirement is to enjoy yourself. Come test us out on Thursday evenings at 7 P.M. at the church; ages Junior High and up! Watch out though Jody is determined to make us behave and stay on task this year. The 2005-2006 choir season will run September 11, 2005 thru June 4, 2006. We sent Bethany shopping this summer and have new music plus some of our old favorites. We started our year with "You Raise Me Up" and will perform a blend of contemporary and traditional music throughout the year. Tim Warrow will join us at least once a month with praise music on his guitar. Music enthusiasts should mark your calendar for Saturday, February 26, 2006 for a night of music which we will provide more information at a later time as we formulate our program. Listen in Faith-Dawn, Bethany, Jody, & Tim.

Dear Natalie,

A big thank you from the whole congregation for your wonderful "substitution" as our leader during the summer and while Tom was on vacation. He left us in very capable hands. In addition to the administrative duties and your keeping us all abreast with your Friday e-mails and your excellent weekly news columns, we know you have been kept mighty busy.

As an added note, please know that your news column is by far the friendliest and most inviting of all the church columns. It is definitely indicative of you, and speaks well of our congregation and our church.

A big Thank You for the fine job!

P.S. That doesn't mean that we are letting you off the hook now though!

P.P.S.: Welcome back Tom and Beverly!

When health and weather permitted Ray and Phyllis Segars were in their chairs on Sunday mornings at Good Shepherd Church. Even after health issues made it difficult for Ray to get around he came as often as he could. On Communion Sundays he came forward to receive the elements. I would have gladly served him in his chair, but he wanted to be a regular part of the congregation. His was a powerful witness to faith and devotion.



Not long after we occupied our church home I discovered that Ray worked with wood to build good and useful things. You've probably seen his whimsical lawn ornaments and novelties. I soon saw his clock and furniture, so I asked him to build a pair of stands to be used in our worship center. We use them in various ways, one of which is to hold the bowl when babies and others are brought or come to receive the water of Holy Baptism. One of the stands usually holds the plumb bob, which has special meaning for the congregation.

Late last Sunday, September 11, 2005, God released his soul from a tired and worn body to life eternal. We prayed faithfully for his soul and body while life lasted, now we commend his immortal soul to his God for whom we give thanks for sharing Ray with in this community of faith. In loving memory of C. Raymond Segars. TRM 9/15/05

UMCOR Emergency Kits

I want to thank everyone who donated toward the UMCOR emergency kits. We raised \$500!!! To date we have made 16 health kits, 4 flood buckets, and 10 school kits. We still have a little money left over because of a last minute donation, so we will be making a few more health kits which are currently an urgent need right now. Again thank you for your generosity!

-Sara

Important Upcoming Dates

Sept 18 - Sunday school begins at 8:45.

Sept 30 - Tres Dias Secuela 7 P.M. at Good Shepherd.

Oct 5 - Southern Maine Methodist Men celebrate 50 years meet at Cape Elizabeth UMC at 6:30 P.M..

Oct 23, 30 & Nov 14 - Advanced Lay Speaking course at School Street UMC in Gorham.

November 12 - Clothing Swap 8am to noon.

ON GOING

Bible Study Tuesday's at 9am. Contact Sara Bruce.

Women's Group Every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7 P.M. (6:30 P.M. when eating out). Contact Julie Frost.

Choir Rehearsal Thursday at 7 P.M. and Sunday at 9:30am. Contact Dawn Sample.

Sunday School Sunday at 8:45am Preschool through Adult. Contact Cally Bartholomae.

Youth Group every other Sunday evening. Contact Libby Topel.

Administrative Council 3rd Sunday of the month following service. Contact Vinal Doody.

Please call the church office at 657-2007 for more information.

Laity - Are You on Fire for God?

Don't know how to use that Fire of God you are feeling or just want to take another step in Faith but not sure what to do? Have you considered Lay Speaking? The Tri State District encourages you to consider exploring this ministry as part of your call from God. Anyone can be a Lay Speaker and preaching is only one part of the program. There are classes to prepare you for: leading Bible Study, be a more effective prayer leader, about Servant Leadership, Small group leadership, Story Telling, etc. Lay Speaking gives you a chance to obtain more in depth knowledge of the Bible, of our church and yourself. Anyone can take any of the classes and not do more with them although we hope that people will feel called to become certified.

For people who have already taken a Basic Course, there is an Advanced Lay Speaking class coming up October 23, 30 and Nov. 14th at the School Street UMC in Gorham beginning at 2:00 P.M.. Preregistration is necessary.

Registration Form:

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Church Affiliation: _____

Church Address: _____

Pastor signature: _____

Recertification (please circle one): Yes No

Cost: \$35.00

Cut Off date for registration is October 6.

Make checks payable to **New England Conference**, and note Tri-State Lay Speaking on the memo line. Please send registration and check to:

Natalie Blake, Registrar
127 Shaker Rd. #50
Gray, ME 04039