



# First Churches Northampton

God is still speaking,  
**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



September 2014

Pastor's Page

## Important Dates

- 9/4 Common Ground
- 9/5 Choir Begins
- 9/7 Gathering Sunday
- 9/18 Common Ground
- 9/21 Annual Meeting

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Regular Messenger readers know I often compare church life to gardening, so here is my end of summer update on both fronts. Last year I was a Community Garden rookie, and it showed. After a burst of energy, my weeding and watering faded, I had planted things too close together, and by the end of summer it was a sad little weed patch with a few tomatoes. But we still had one nice crop of peas, some radishes and tomatoes, so I approached year two older and wiser. I planted things further apart, improved the layout so I could move around and weed, and timed my planting better. As summer ends, I have loads of tomatoes coming, and a late crop of peas and beans. Apparently I am very good at growing Jalapeno's, and I had enough tomatillos to make salsa. The beets were too close together and needed to be thinned, the sweet peppers seemed to be on strike and produced nothing, and I need to learn more about pruning tomatoes because they were too bushy. But hey, it was a real garden and I learned more to work on next year.

This summer at church was also about better organization and placement, weeding and watering. We had a full staff this summer so we could focus on projects for the Fall. Vanessa revamped the church website and wedding promotion materials, Ernie kept the landscaping and building in great shape, and Dana reorganized the music library and developed ideas for a concert series. I reorganized my office, improved my computer design skills, and worked with Just Communities on the Trust Act. (see Sue Norton's article p. 4 ) We all helped with the weeding, getting rid of a large dumpster of stuff from the church basement. I also took a real vacation this summer and saw Iceland and the Northern Virginia coast.



The biggest change (and most exciting) is bringing Rev. Sarah Buteux into our work. She is preparing for an exciting year of Children's Ministry, and extending our garden with Common Ground, worshipping every first and third Thursday. Sarah fits in very well with our positive and hard-working team. (Continued...)

Thanks to everyone else who has worked with us this summer. As the Fall begins, we move into the time of harvest, and we are calling everyone to join us in getting the fruit of all our labors from vine to table. I am eagerly anticipating Gathering Sunday, September 7. It feels like it will be a market day where the community comes together. Come and see and bring a friend!  
Pastor Todd

## **Greetings First Churches Members, Worshippers & Friends!**

I hope you all had a wonderful summer, filled with free time, family & good friends. I also hope you are looking forward to Gathering Sunday, September 7th, as much as I am! It will be wonderful to see old friends and new faces this coming weekend, & I look forward to beginning a new program year in our beloved building, "the meetinghouse of Northampton".

I'd first like to extend a very warm First Churches welcome to the Reverend Sarah Buteux! Pastor Sarah has begun work as our Associate Pastor of Christian Education and Outreach. Her responsibilities include the children's Christian Education program - the Rainbow Room, Sunday School and Youth Group, as well as an alternative evening worship service called Common Ground. I would urge you attend a Common Ground service if possible. I found it a warm and welcoming evening of meeting worshiping with new people. Sarah will also assist Todd with pastoral care, and occasionally lead worship on Sunday mornings. We feel blessed to have Pastor Sarah here, and look forward to walking together with her and Pastor Todd, on the road to becoming the church God is calling us to be. I also wanted to share important information & dates regarding upcoming meetings:

**1. Our first Council meeting is Wednesday September 17th, 7pm in the Parlor.** These monthly meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday, and are open to all. We encourage members & worshippers alike to attend! Learn more about church initiatives and plans, and share your voice.

**2. Our Annual meeting is Sunday September 21st, immediately following services.** We will gather in Lyman Hall. We will ratify the agreement to call Sarah, distribute and discuss the annual reports, provide status of on-going project teams, and other business. Please plan to join us!

As we start this program year together, please know that I am always available for questions, comments, or concerns. My goals are openness, transparency and responsiveness... please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of any assistance.

Blessings,  
Donna O'Meally  
First Churches Moderator  
[donnaomeally@gmail.com](mailto:donnaomeally@gmail.com)  
(413) 584-9392

## **From your Associate Pastor**

Hello All,

The Christian Education Board and I have been busy getting ready for Sunday School and I think you'll all be delighted by the results.

- The children's wing has a fresh coat of paint thanks to Judy, Manny, George, Lisa, and their team.
- Angie has overseen the painting and refurbishing of our chairs that are now a cheerful bright blue.
- Vanessa has been working with me to get our web site up to date.
- I've created a special e-newsletter for our families to get everyone excited about what's in store for Fall. (If you'd like to receive it but haven't yet, please let us know and we'll get you on the list!)
- We've got a fantastic new curriculum called [Whirl](#) that I know our kids will love. (If you click on the link you'll see why).
- And most amazing of all, as I've been combing through the rolls and reaching out to families, **I've amassed a roster of over 50 students!**

Last year there were an average of 8 children involved in Sunday School each week. This year those numbers have the potential to be a great deal higher, as long as we can pull together enough volunteers to safely and effectively staff our program. And so I am casting my net far and wide and appealing to you all.

Even if teaching is not something you feel up to, we can still use you as an assistant because we will need at least two adults in each classroom to stay in line with our safe church policy. The Fall term will last for 11 weeks, but if that commitment feels like too much, I'd be happy to work with whatever time you are willing to give.

[The Whirl](#) curriculum (there's that link again) is not only a delight for children to use, it is also a lot of fun for adults. I truly believe that if you find it in your heart to volunteer, you will be as blessed by the experience as the children you serve.

I promise to do my part to make it as easy, enriching, and fun for you as I possibly can.

Please contact Pastor Sarah at [pastorsarah@firstchurches.org](mailto:pastorsarah@firstchurches.org) if you feel called to serve your church and our children in this way.

On September 7th we will celebrate Gathering Sunday. The Christian Education Board will be hosting coffee hour in the children's wing that morning so the whole church can come "taste and see" just how exciting this new year promises to be.

It's a new day! Please help if you can.

Pastor Sarah



## **Mayor Narkewicz says, “¡Si!”**

Suppose you missed your bus to work and feared you'd lose your job, even though it was only minimum wage. (You were working 60 hours a week, supporting a family of 3 young children.) So you borrowed a friend's car, only to be stopped by the police for a burned-out license-plate light. They asked to see your license, but you did not have one, since federal law forbids undocumented immigrants from getting drivers' licenses. Your parents had brought you here as a child, but there was no way for you to become a legal citizen in this "land of the free and home of the brave". Suppose the local police complied with the federal "Secure Communities" law, and turned you over to US Immigration and Customs police, who locked you up in prison indefinitely, then deported you, leaving you standing on the border with no money and no contacts.

This is the kind of story told by several members of Iglesia Quechua Bautista, the Hispanic church that meets every week in the chapel of First Churches. They said that knowing this might happen, fills them and their children with constant anxiety. So they have been working with Bliss Requa-Tratz who heads Just Communities, a local group that helps immigrants organize, Pastor Todd Weir in connection with First Churches Peace & Justice Committee, and the Mayor's office. They decided to hold a community meeting August 21. Inviting Mayor David



*Reprinted from Daily Hampshire Gazette  
Children from the Quechu Bautista Church  
singing to the crowd*

Narkewicz, Northampton Police Chief Russell Sienkiewicz, and members of the City Council to attend.

Chief Sienkiewicz said that since the last deportation incident in 2011, the Northampton police have not complied with the federal law. He was eloquent in his statement that Northampton should be a safe place for

everyone. He worried that undocumented people are likely to become victims of serious crime because they're afraid to report it to the police. Thus he introduced to the audience Jessie Aquino, a bilingual advocate who works for Northampton, Amherst, and UMass, counseling victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Mayor Narkewicz said, “¡Si!” He promised to make Northampton's immigrant--rights position more official within the week by signing an executive order, prohibiting the local police from turning over undocumented immigrants to US Immigration & Customs for non-criminal incidents. Also the mayor will work with the City Council to pass such a resolution, "codifying" the present non-deportation practice.

The audience clapped. The Iglesia women, dressed in embroidered white blouses, long black skirts, and sparkling jewelry, danced to Ecuador panpipe music. Their children sang an enthusiastic Sunday--school song. A lavish supper was served.



*Reprinted from Daily Hampshire Gazette*

## **People's Climate March; Sunday, September 21<sup>st</sup> in NYC**

World leaders are coming together for the UN climate summit. Environmental, religious and political organizations are urging us to come to NYC to be part of what is expected to be the biggest climate event in history to show the world and all our leaders that action on environmental protection must be a priority.

We have been asked to join with the Haydenville Congregational Church to fill a bus to go to NYC on the 21<sup>st</sup> and to return that same day. The cost is \$25 per seat and \$15 for low income.

Please contact the church office, 413-584-9392 ASAP to reserve your seats.

The next meeting of Peace and Justice is Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm in the parlor. All meetings are open and anyone who attends is considered an equal participant in any decisions made. Please come to help decide what the main priorities should be for the new church year and how we should act on these priorities.

### **Haiti Consultation**

I attended a Haiti Consultation in Port-au-Prince on 6/9 and 6/10 with people from several churches in the U.S., including First Church of Longmeadow, who have worked with the National Spiritual Council of Churches of Haiti (CONASPEH); with representatives from the national offices of such organizations as Global Ministries and One Great Hour of Sharing; and with bishops from CONASEPH. We gathered together to talk about strengthening our partnership. It is a relationship that should not be paternalistic but one of mutual respect. Below are statements from various Haitian participants:

- A coat of paint might look good, but it is not meaningful; the situation of the poor remains the same.
- People with the best intentions may be part of the problem for Haiti, rather than the solution.
- When doctors or others come from abroad and give services free of charge, it can cause long-term problems because it does not develop the Haitian economy. People may come from the outside and build a school, but when they leave, the school is unable to sustain itself. Any approach to helping Haiti has to be a development approach, not welfare.
- Haiti needs friends who ask what we need, instead of staying in their offices and deciding for themselves. The people of Haiti have to set their own goals.
- The greatest desire of anyone in Haiti who has an education is to leave – this hurts Haiti.
- Right after the earthquake, all the Haitian people worked as one to help re-build. Then all the NGOs came, and Haiti lost an opportunity to become independent. The NGOs controlled all the money and spent most of it on their experts. When Haitians see a white person, they think here comes money.
- The role of CONASPEH is to represent the poor Protestant churches in front of government and society. Social projects are one of its branches and help make CONASPEH stronger. It does not have enough resources to do everything it wants to do, but it will remain whether or not a particular program exists.

Being a partner with CONASPEH is challenging but extremely satisfying work, and I hope First Churches continues to develop and expand its work with CONASPEH. – Pauline Bassett

## THE FAIR...

On Sunday June 15, approximately 15 church members gathered for a general discussion regarding the annual church fair. This meeting was the onset of preparation for this year's fair, to be held on Bag Day, November 22, 2014.

The purpose of this initial meeting was to gather thoughts and suggestions about how to organize and present this year's fair. Last year a few new strategies were tried...new places for some tables...different "prep" for some tables...expanded presentations... elimination of some of the tables and the steering committee wanted to get input on the effectiveness of these changes.



### Some of the comments included:

- Good to begin the raffle prep in August
- Important to remind members early to help prep for/think about contributions to the fair
- Music (children's chorus) out front was a good addition
- Move bake table back in to Lyman Hall
- Keep crafts table in Lyman Hall...wreaths did not sell in front of the church
- Heifer Project was really enhanced with the live animals both in Lyman Hall and out in front of the church
- If there is a Christmas Table move into the parlor
- Try to offer Christmas crafts (home-made ornaments)
- Include some Spanish Christmas music

### This is what is known for sure:

- Peg Whitham, Barbara Parsons, Celeste Ortega, and Ginny Wahl are willing to be on the Steering Committee for the fair for one more year.
- Gregg Wilson will volunteer to chair the Attic Treasures
- Laura Judd will volunteer to chair the Bake Table
- Margie Riddle will volunteer to chair the Luncheon
- Celeste Ortega will volunteer to chair the Raffle Table
- Doryne Pederzani-Dinneen will volunteer to chair the Apple Pies
- Priscilla Pike will work on the Jewelry Table

### This is what is not known for sure:

- Will there be outdoor sales of raffle tickets on the weekends prior to the fair?
- Sanctuary tours and who would serve as greeters?

Next meeting for interested church goers is scheduled for **Sunday September 28** after the service at 11:30 (it was agreed by all that another meeting should be called for in September).

This is the time to begin thinking about what we all can do to work together to make this fair as good as or better than last year's.

Peg, Barbara, Celeste, Ginny;

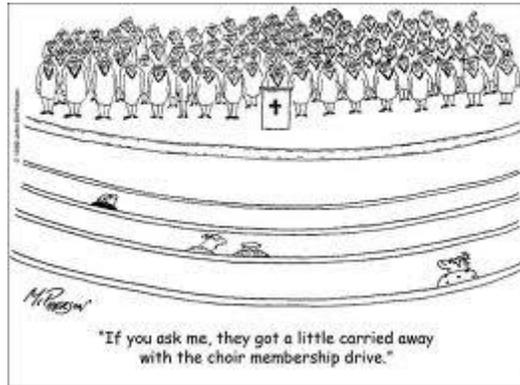
Church Fair Steering Committee

## FROM THE CHOIR LOFT

Choir rehearsals will soon be underway, and we are looking forward to welcoming back all of the faithful and talented members of our choir! We would also like to extend an invitation to anyone who loves to sing (newcomers as well as those who have been with us in the pews for a while) to join us! We meet on Friday evenings from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. and on Sunday mornings before the worship service begins.

There are no auditions for choir membership. We welcome all ages—from upper elementary school children and teen-agers through the elders in our congregation—and everyone in between! We sing a wide variety of music—classical, gospel, and

contemporary songs. Singing is a fun and healthy activity! Our choir members are good friends too—supportive and encouraging of one another.



Our first rehearsal will be on Friday, September 5<sup>th</sup>. We will gather at 6:00 p.m. for a light supper—you don't have to bring anything—before we begin to sing.

If you'd like to join us, please contact Dana at the church office (584-9392) so I can have music ready for you.

Also—please feel free to contact me if you have questions, comments or suggestions regarding the music program. I am always happy to hear from you!

## Cathedral in the Night

On **Sunday, SEPTEMBER 21<sup>st</sup>** we prepare and serve dinner for Cathedral in the Night for the last time this year. The number of community members we cook for continues to go up and we now plan for *80 – 100 people* – which means a lot of cooks and servers!

*Desserts are ALL SET*, but **we need:**

- green salads and/or vegetables
- 8 – 10(+) people to cook a main dish
- 8 dozen sandwiches (they need to be non-perishable: bologna, ham, smoked turkey, cheese, and peanut butter and jelly
- 6 dozen hard boiled eggs
- 13 people to serve and clean up
- 1 or 2 food couriers to pick up food at cooks' homes and deliver to church before 4:30 pm

Financial reimbursement is available for your expenses, thanks to support from the Board of Missions.

If interested, please contact:

The Church Office @ 413-584-9392





## Grocery Cards

**Do you shop at Stop & Shop, Big Y or River Valley Market?**

Please consider buying gift cards at church and support this fundraiser, at no extra cost to you. **Together, we raise about \$2500 per year for our church.** Look for us in Lyman Hall at every Coffee Hour!

*Kim Gerould, Martha Jamieson and Carol Judd*

## Sunday Morning Bible Study

8:45 AM in the Parlor off Lyman Hall – Every Sunday starting September 14

We will have monthly themes as we gather for this participatory discussion time of exploring scriptures with Pastor Todd facilitating.



## Second Hour

- September 7- Gathering Sunday. Christian Education will host Coffee Hour. Everyone is invited to the classrooms to see the renovations done by all our wonderful Volunteers and the new curriculum the children will be working with.
- September 14- Introduction to our new website. Come learn how to maximize the Member's Only section
- September 21- The Annual Meeting- See Moderator's article on pg 2 for more information.
- September 28- Church Fair Meeting. Come see how you can assist in the Church's biggest fundraiser of the year.



## **SUPER SATURDAY, FALL 2014**

**October 25<sup>th</sup> 8am- 3:45pm, Keefe Regional Technical High School**



Featuring The Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo, Executive Director of the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries; Rev. Jaramillo is responsible for the church's work on human rights and social, racial and economic justice. She is a former president and vice-president of the Council for Hispanic Ministries and former co-convenor of the Council of Racial and Ethnic Ministries. She will give the message during morning worship and also offer a lunchtime forum. Choose from 48 different workshops. Click [here](#) to register or more information, or contact Vanessa at the Church office for more information.

### **INGREDIENTS (SERVES 6-8)**

- 1 green cabbage, cored and shredded
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 2 tbsp. peanut oil
- 2 tsp. black mustard seeds
- 2 tsp. asafetida (substitute onion or garlic powder)
- 2 tsp. cumin seeds
- 10 fresh curry leaves
- 2 tsp. ground turmeric
- 3 plum tomatoes, chopped
- 3 Italian frying peppers, seeded and thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 serrano chile, thinly sliced
- 5 tbsp. roughly chopped cilantro
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 2 tbsp. sugar

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Toss cabbage and salt in a bowl. Let wilt for 1 hour. Squeeze excess liquid from cabbage; set aside.
2. Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add mustard seeds, asafetida, cumin, and curry leaves; cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add reserved cabbage, turmeric, tomatoes, peppers, and serrano; cook, stirring, until cabbage is crisp-tender, 6–7 minutes. Stir in cilantro, lime juice, and sugar. Season with salt; cook until flavors meld, 3–5 minutes.



MANJA! Let me know how you like it, or your variations.

# SEPTEMBER 2014

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat
	1. Labor Day Office Closed	2.	3. 7:00 Deacons Office Closed	4. 5:00 Common Ground  † Noah Martin	5. 7:00 Choir Practice	6.
7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
10:00 Worship & Sunday School <b>CE to host 2<sup>nd</sup> Hour</b> 5:00 Cathedral in the Night	7:00 Peace & Justice	12:00 Peace Vigil  † Carol Murphy	12:00 Finance 7:00 Trustees 7:00 Missions		7:00 Choir Practice <b>Arts Night Out</b> 7:30 Karuna Yoga Krishna Das Concert	
14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.
8:45 Bible Study 10:00 Worship & Sunday School <b>11:30 Intro to the website</b> 11:40 CE Meeting 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil  † Heather Williams	7:00 Council	5:00 Common Ground	7:00 Choir Practice	
21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.
8:45 Bible Study 10:00 Worship & Sunday School <b>11:30 Annual Meeting</b> 5:00 Cathedral in the Night - FC Meal <b>Climate Change March NYC!</b>	<b>October Messenger Items Due</b>	12:00 Peace Vigil			7:00 Choir Practice	
28.	29.	30.				
8:45 Bible Study 10:00 Worship & Sunday School <b>11:30 Church Fair Meeting</b> 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil  † Gabe Kushin				