The Spire

From Your Pastor

May 2007

Keep on keeping on

Ask, and it will be given you;
search, and you will find;
knock, and the door will be opened for you.
(Matthew 7:7)

I could imagine a reader coming upon this verse and wondering, with a twinge of frustration: *"I asked. Why didn't I get what I asked for? I searched, and nothing seemed to happen. Is it because God isn't listening? Is it because my faith is too weak? Did I not use the correct words?"*

The verbs *"ask... seek... knock"* are imperatives calling upon the reader to do something. In Greek, there are two kinds of imperatives.

1. There is the **aorist imperative**, which issues a definite command: *"Shut the car door"* is an aorist imperative. Do it now. If the aorist imperative says, *"Stand up,"* it means stand up right now. It does not mean stand up five minutes from now. This imperative means: do it once, do it now.

2. The **present imperative** issues a command that a person should always be doing something... continue doing what is asked. *"Always shut doors behind you"* is a present imperative. Or, *"Wear seat belts"* means to always wear seat belts. Do it now and keep on doing it.

In Matthew 7:7, Jesus used the **present imperative** verb. What that means is not so much ASK, SEEK, and KNOCK, but to

.. **keep on asking**. Don't ask once and then stop.
.. **keep on seeking**. Don't seek once and then give up.
.. **keep on knocking** and knocking and knocking.

Such is the character of our faith. It is an exercise in keeping on: continuing to seek God's presence, continuing to knock on God's door, continuing to ask in prayer for that which we desire, continuing to walk humbly with our God as we try our best to be God's faithful children.

In other words, keep on keeping on.

– John Zehring

Welcome *to new visitors and to old friends.* ***Welcome*** *to grandparents, to mothers, fathers, single people and children.* ***Welcome*** *to people of all colors, cultures, abilities, and sexual orientation, to young and old, to believers and questioners, and welcome to questioning believers.* ***Welcome*** *to all who have no church home, need strength, want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe. We joyfully and unconditionally welcome you. We hope you find peace and inspiration in our service.* ***YOU are welcome here!***

(Voted on and approved by the congregation January 28, 2007)

Sundays in May

May 6	Communion. Message: *Lower Your Bucket*. Time with the Children will be led by Judy Scott. Following worship, meeting of 5th and 6th grade parents with the Pastor and CE Board representatives.
May 13	MOTHER'S DAY. Message: *When to Compromise*. Mother's Day prayer by Krista Reid.
May 20	Kevin Munroe preaching. Following worship, meeting of the Investment Advisory Committee.
May 27	PENTECOST. Everyone wear red! No announcements. Message: *Seek First to Understand*. Processional with choir and all children (all children come directly to Fellowship Hall before worship). Lively music, including a band.

May's Deacon of the Month is Tom Brillat.

In Sympathy

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to Bill Bartels and his family on the death of his mother.

Adult Ed: Parenting Series: Sunday Evenings 5:30 - 7:00

Come connect with other parents and children over pizza and salad, then learn about and discuss current issues affecting our children.

May 6: For parents of children in Elementary School. Learn about a program that will help your children navigate their way through an increasingly violent world. Christi Saurette will present a program being used in many schools (including South Kingstown elementary schools) that focuses on violence prevention, social skills, empathy, assertiveness, and problem solving. Child Care will be provided.

May 13: For parents of Teens. Susan Baran, Media Literacy professor at Bryant University, will discuss American obsession with materialism and the problems this has caused for today's children. The discussion will include topics such as media technology, advertising in schools and developing self –image.

May 20: For parents of Adult children. A discussion of issues of how to set appropriate, loving boundaries with our adult children.

So that we know how much food to prepare, please RSVP by the Friday before each session either to the Church Office or to Joanne Gyorgy at 294-7437 or jogyorgy@cox.net.

Official Call

To Authorized Ministers, Delegates, and Conference Board of Directors and Invitation to Visitors and Conference Members

It is time to gather for the

201st Annual Meeting

of the Rhode Island Conference, United Church of Christ
Saturday, May 5, 2007

Pawtucket Congregational UCC
40 Walcott Street
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Speakers:
The Rev. Da Vita D. McCallister
UCC Minister for Youth, Young Adults and the Outdoors
Mr. Kenneth Brown
Justice Witness Ministries: Associate for Youth/Young Adult Empowerment

NOTE: We at the Kingston Congregational Church will host the NEXT big meeting of the RI UCC, the Autumnal Meeting on October 27.

Dance Lessons at KCC

DANCING WITH THE STARS?? We're all potential stars at KCC!
Latin/Ballroom dance classes are here at KCC to help raise some money for our church. Please come for the fun, recreation, exercise, and have a few laughs. Sue Davis is our instructor. She has been taking ballroom/Latin/swing/tango lessons for years, but has been doing some form of dance since the first grade!

Dates: Sundays, April 15, 22, 29, May 6, 13, 20 – Come to any or all sessions.
Time: 4:00-5:30 (for all dates except May 6th which will be announced) will include warm up and practice time
Fee: $30 per person for the 6 week series- NO PARTNER NECESSARY
Place: Fellowship Hall, KCC
NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY
Classes will focus on Latin favorites – merengue, rumba, salsa, cha-cha (other requests will be given serious consideration!)

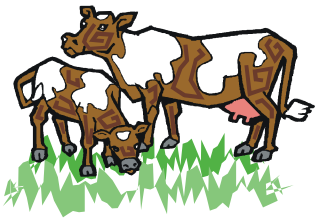
Questions to Sue Davis, 789-5295. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall.
See you on the dance floor!

Women's Fellowship and Church World Service

Thank you to everyone who contributed to Church World Service. We met our goals and completed **12 Kid's Kits, 25 Baby Kits, 200 Health Kits and 226 School Kits!!** The recent campaign raised $650 as well as donated items for the Kid's Kits, ziplocs, onesies, and washcloths. Bev O'Neil's Memorial Fund spent $466 for the baby kits and Women's Fellowship spent $570 last fall and will contribute $900 to the shipping for a **grand total of $2,586**. (For a complete accounting of what was spent where, see Helen or the bulletin board on the stairs.)

Thank you to Pat Weeden, Jane Skogley, and Carolyn Barwise for knitting baby sweaters! Thank you to those who sewed school bags: Susan Perkins-Brillat, Beth Asher, Lea Embree, Doris Findley, Judy Scott, Beth Curtis, Helen Rowe-Drake and Nancy Barth who cut the pieces out and sewed 80 bags!! Thank you, Nancy, for your commitment of time and energy! Thank you to those who helped set up: Delight, Dottie, Loretta, Elizabeth, Martha, Helen and Carolyn Barwise. Thank you to the Men's Breakfast for a delicious meal and to Ann Ross for being Hostess and providing the fruit. Thank you to the assembly crew: Ann, Helen, Elizabeth, Martha, Loretta, Kennie, Canna, Kileen, Nancy Ross, Connie Fitzelle, Carolyn Barwise, Pat Cox, and to Joe Geary, Frank Osterman, and our youngest helper Nolan Urian! Thank you to our treasurer, Ruth Fiddes (& George) who did her job despite her broken leg. Last but not least thank you to shopper, coordinator and organizer Helen Rowe-Drake. We do it for those in need… Hearts to God and Hands to work…great job everyone!!

HEIFER PROJECT



A HUGE THANK YOU

To the children and youth of our church and to everyone who helped our church school children raise $900.00 for the Heifer Project!! The Church School children voted to purchase a HEIFER, a GOAT, a LLAMA, and CHICKENS.

Junior High Fellowship

There will be an informational meeting on Sunday, May 6th for parents of children currently in the 5th and 6th grade to discuss Junior High Fellowship. Please grab a cup of coffee and meet the Rev. Zehring and members of the Christian Education Board in the Fireplace Room immediately following the service.

From the April/May 2007 United Church News:

Sudan crisis: Churches 'compelled' to act more boldly

The following is an excerpt from an urgent pastoral letter from national leaders of the UCC on March 7 regarding the ongoing crisis in Darfur/Sudan. The full text includes specific ways that congregations can get involved and can be found at ***<globalministries.org>****.*

As leaders of the UCC . . . we join together to express our concern for the people of Sudan. As Christians, we realize that we must share in the responsibility to protect human life.

Since 2003, over 450,000 people have died and we mourn the unnecessary loss of so many lives. We despair for the lives of over 2.5 million displaced Darfuris who are currently surviving in refugee camps.

The current actions of the Sudanese government have created the abhorrent conditions under which the displaced must live because access to humanitarian aid has been severely hampered. We find unconscionable the raiding, pillaging and burning of villages and the rape, torture and other violent actions committed by the militia group, the Janjaweed.

This oppression and violence has moved the UN to call the situation in Darfur 'the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today.'

We urge members of our churches and all those who are compelled to stand in solidarity with the people of the Sudan/Darfur to continue to pray, study and discern. We encourage action in all forms.

We firmly believe that 1 John 3:18 is calling us to love not only in word or speech, but in truth and action and that God's spirit is calling for peace and justice on behalf of the people of Sudan/Darfur.

Your ***Missions Board at KCC*** *finds it significant that a recent storm nearly destroyed our Darfur Banner! Thanks to Elizabeth McNab, it has been rescued and will appear again shortly before the "Floating Disaster Offering" for Darfur on June 10.*

Names and Addresses

- Please look at your address label on the front of this *Spire*. Check your name and address. If you don't like what it says or the spelling is wrong, please call or e-mail the KCC office at 783-5330 or kcc@highstream.net.
- If you would like to receive the *Spire* by e-mail, please contact the office.
- If you would like your name removed from the mailing list, please contact the office.
- If you know someone who isn't receiving the *Spire*, but would appreciate it, please let the office know.

Please note that printing of the *Spire* will be suspended for July and August. Therefore, summer notices must be publicized in the June issue. The deadline for the June *Spire* is May 15th. The *Spire* will resume printing for the September issue. The deadline for the September *Spire* is August 15th.

SILENT AUCTION 2007

We are planning a silent auction on Sunday, November 4, 2007 following worship service. The auction will last one and a half hours and all proceeds will benefit Kingston Congregational Church.

We are looking for items and services to be donated to the auction that would be attractive to bidders. These are just some suggestions for your consideration and any other ideas would be greatly appreciated!

- Vacation properties
- Professional Services
- Artwork
- Jewelry
- Free Labor (i.e. leaf raking)
- Concert tickets
- Hand Crafted items
- Gift Baskets

Please embrace this fundraising event for it will create opportunities for individuals to enjoy some wonderful services and goods, while at the same time benefiting Kingston Congregational Church.

Contact Information:
Mark, Nancy & Molly Tortolani
539-7417
mark.tortolani@beelinegroup.com