“Lessons from Life”

On Tuesday, September 14, the comedian Norman Macdonald, died. He was best known for his stint as the “Weekend Update” anchor on “Saturday Night Live” from 1994 to 1998. During one of his guest appearances on the Conan O’Brien late night show, he was asked by Conan where he got his material, and Macdonald proceeded to explain that he got it from life, from the things he saw and heard. He then went on to tell one of his typical long “shaggy dog” pieces, the “Moth,” which he said came from his limo driver.

I’d heard it before, but it was still funny, and I was reminded of something I had long believed, namely that the best lessons of faith, the ones that stick with us, come from the day-to-day life we live and encounter.

And, for me, that was a helpful reminder that scripture in all its forms was born out of human experience, the experience of the encounter with God, in all God’s forms and voices.

As if I needed to be reminded, earlier in the week, I was given one of those life lessons, when my youngest daughter called, and I could tell she was excited. After a moment or two, she said, “I joined the Berlin Congregational Church! I went to the other one you told me about, but they weren’t very friendly, so I tried the Berlin church. They were friendly and made me feel at home. I knew two of them because they come to the Stop ‘n Shop, and they recognized me, too. And, one of them told me she went to high school with me, but I didn’t remember her.
And, I volunteered to work at the Berlin church fair booth! And they told me they would give me a ride to church!” I asked her who the minister was, and she said, “I can’t remember his name.”

Some life-lessons to be learned. First, she encountered some of the forms and voices of God, and that is how it works, always, that God appears to us in this life in the lives and faith of other human beings. Second, she remembered the lessons she had learned when she was young. “Daddy, they sing the same songs we sang at Stanley Memorial!” Third, she was touched and moved by human contact, by the smiles and greetings of people whom she did not know, but who will now be her new friends.

What lesson can we learn from this? At its simplest, if we want there to be growth and vitality in a congregation, there must be human interaction, real human heartfelt connection. The best preaching and music will be the sermon and hymn offered in human love. Amen.

Ken Frazier

Art, Book & Rare Jewelry Sale
On Sunday, October 17, from 2-5pm we will have an Art, Book and Rare jewelry show! Hoping to insert a poster in this newsletter but there will be more information to come. Save the date!!
OCTOBER WISHES

Happy Birthday to the following Church Members!

- Steven Sugrue 10/1
- Edna Kearney 10/5
- Franca Grzybowski 10/7
- Melissa Saliva 10/6
- Robin Griskus 10/10
- Juan Ortiz 10/10
- Karen Cotner 10/11
- Joanne Mason 10/11
- Sarah Cooley 10/11
- Ashleigh Fegley 10/11
- Karen Elwell 10/14
- Kimberly Walters 10/14
- Joanna Rocco 10/17
- Krista Walters 10/16
- Catherine Crouse 10/20
- Matthew Reed 10/22
- Daria Deaquiar 10/21
- George Walters, Jr. 10/23
- Marilyn St. George 10/29
- Linda Lindsay 10/30
- Matthew Elwell 10/30
- Richard Casey, Jr. 10/31

GWIM FOOD BANK DONATIONS

Peanut Butter & Jelly, Canned Meats, Cold Cereal, Mac & Cheese, Pasta & Pasta Sauce, Juice, tuna, canned soups-stews-chili, canned fruits, canned vegetables, beans (canned or dried), rice pouches, etc. Other donations will be welcomed, but these will be the main focus. The food basket will be available each week in the Narthex.
WISH LIST FOR SAFE HAVEN SHELTER

- Liquid Laundry detergent
- Canned Juice
- Dish Detergent
- Paper Towels
- Jars of Baby Food
- Toilet Paper
- Women’s socks (new)
- Videos
- Nintendo Games
- Women’s Underwear (new)
- Wash Cloths
- Gift Certificates
- Pillow Cases - Pillows
- Hair Brushes
- Diapers (large & ex-large)
- Cleaning Supplies
- Baby Cereal
- Napkins
- School Supplies
- Children’s Socks (new)
- Large Bath towels
- Fitted twin sheets
- Children’s Underwear (new)

Safe Haven currently provides the following bilingual (English/Spanish) services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault: up to 60 days of shelter for women and their children; individual and peer group counseling; 24 hour crisis hotlines for domestic violence and sexual assault; legal advocacy information and referral; community education for adults and children; and court based family violence victim advocacy.

Please bring all your donations for Safe Haven on the third Sunday.

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September was an extremely busy month at First Church. Waterbury Baptist Ministries along with First Church held two Terrific Tuesday concerts. Typically these are held in a 4 week series but due to COVID and other scheduling two week programs were held.

City Youth Theater held their first two night event at First Church with close to 200 people in attendance over the two day period. We are blessed to have so many talented youth here in Waterbury and we at First Church owe it to them to provide every performance opportunity we can.

Now upcoming: We will hold our annual haunted house Halloween party on October 29th & 30th, we will need donations of candy and of course any time you can spare during the week for setup and cleanup once the event is over. This year it will require advance reservations as we will more than likely reduce the numbers of those attending, at least for this year. In October 2020 we would have celebrated 20 years, we will celebrate that this year as this is part of our outreach to the community.

On Sunday, October 17, from 2-5pm we will have an Art, Book and Rare jewelry show at 5:00 pm we will have a piano recital by two of Liliya Bikbova’s to talented piano students followed by a small reception.
Finally, a reminder, choir rehearsals are on Thursday nights from 7:15 pm until roughly 8:30 pm all are welcome to join us. Please check our Facebook and website for updates.

Stewart Crouse
Director of Music & Youth

Dear members, we need your help!
October 29th and 30th will be our annual Haunted House/Halloween Party and once again I am calling upon the generosity of the congregation to donate candy and decorations for the cause. We will begin collecting donations on October 14th and right up until the 23rd. Furthermore, if you are interested in volunteering for setup, operation, or take down, please contact me (Stewart Crouse at 706-9824). There is a little something for everyone to do.

Youth
As a reminder, we will need donations and help for the event, set-up, operation tear down. If you have any questions, please see me.
Haunted House
Halloween Party

Friday, October 29th & Saturday, October 30th
At First Congregational Church
222 West Main Street Waterbury!
games – crafts – trick or treating - snacks
Come and enjoy! Wear your costumes!

Time of event: 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Reservations a must! This year it will require advance reservations as we will more than likely reduce the numbers of those attending, at least for this year.
MASKS TO BE WORN BY ALL!

Call 203-757-0331 by the 20th
Cost: $2.00 Adults - $1.00 per Child

TIME CHANGE
Daylight Savings time ends Sunday, November 7, 2021. at 2:00 a.m. Please set your clocks back one hour before going to sleep on Saturday evening, November 6th.