

First Congregational Church of Greene, New York
United Church of Christ - Founded 1811

The Congregation

The Congregation is published monthly, except July and August, which are combined.

Volume LIX

October 2009

Number 51

Spirituality: The center of our daily life is to continuously improve our relationship with Christ and all God's Creation.

Compassion: Actions that welcome and accept all people and help them experience the good feeling of God's unconditional love.



Integrity: With honesty and respect we support everyone's freedom to develop their Relationship with God.

Belonging: In sharing and celebrating life, we support our commitment to all others to nurture a family relationship of belonging.

Neighbors in Need Mission Offering, 10/4/09 during worship

Open Door Kitchen, Fri., 10/9/09 @ 5:30 p.m.

Confirmation Class, 10/20/09 & 10/27/09 @ 6:00 p.m.

Men's Fellowship, Tues., 10/27/09 @ 7:00 p.m.

November Newsletter Deadline, Mon., 10/19/09

Daylight Savings Ends November 1st - clocks back 1 hour

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OFFICE TELEPHONE: 607-656-4923 E-mail address: UCCGREENE@juno.com Pastor's Study: 607-656-7449

Website Address: <http://www.uccgreene.org>

Sunday School at 9:00 a.m. - **Worship Every Sunday at 9:55 a.m.**

Church Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
28 N. CHENANGO STREET
GREENE, NY 13778**

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PERMIT NO. 204
GREENE, NY 13778**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Pastor: Rev. Curtis Whitman
Moderator: Art DeJager
Board of Deacons: Mary Gell & Donna Possemato
Board of Property: George Marr
Board of Christian Ed.: Laurel Acunto
Secretary/ Newsletter Coordinator: Linda Teter
Organist/Choir Director Claudia Kachmarik
Custodian: Wayne Hartley
Newsletter Volunteer: Jean Compeau

October 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Care Team 9:00 a.m. Joyful Ringers 7:00 p.m.	2	3
4 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:55 a.m. World Communion Sunday Families in Need Collection Neighbors in Need Mission Offering	5 Cub Scouts 6:00 p.m.	6 Mission Committee 3:00 p.m. UCC Chimers 4:50 p.m. Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m.	7 WIC 8:30-4:30 Choir 7:00 p.m.	8 ABC Support Group 10:00 a.m. Grief and Loss Support Group 10:00 a.m. (library) Joyful Ringers 7:00 p.m.	9 Open Door Kitchen 5:30 p.m.	10
11 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:55 a.m.	12 Deacons Meeting 6:30 p.m. Columbus Day Observed	13 Property Board 7:00 p.m. UCC Chimers 4:50 p.m.	14 GCNS Board Meeting in Library 6:30 p.m. Choir 7:00 p.m.	15 Joyful Ringers 7:00 p.m.	16	17
18 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:55 a.m. Pastor Recognition Luncheon after Worship	19 NOVEMBER NEWS-LETTER DEADLINE Cub Scouts 6:00 p.m.	20 UCC Chimers 4:50 p.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m.	21 Choir 7:00 p.m.	22 Joyful Ringers 7:00 p.m.	23	24 Greater Greene Train Show 9:00-5:00 
25 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:55 a.m.— Healing Service Food Pantry Collection Blood Pressure Screening Women's Fellowship Bake Sale	26 Cub Scouts 6:00 p.m.	27 UCC Chimers 4:50 p.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m. Men's Fellowship 7:00 p.m.	28 Choir 7:00 p.m.	29 Joyful Ringers 7:00 p.m.	30 Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m. (downstairs) Amy Gregory - Bosnia presentation 7:00 p.m. (Social Hall)	31 Halloween  (Don't Forget to set your clocks back an hour on Nov. 1st!)

Minister's Musings

As we approach the Fall season and notice the changing colors of the leaves and feel the first blast of cold air I am reminded of the New York State Fair which was recently held in Syracuse. My family and I always loved going to the York Fair in Pennsylvania and now look forward to going to the New York State Fair. We love to pass by the many rides, or play a few games, eat some hot sausages, and maybe even watch a few pig races. But the attraction that used to catch our attention the most a few years ago was the huge crane which would lift a cage that people would jump out of with a bungee cord attached to their ankles. We would watch people jump at different times as we walked the fair grounds. As I watched these jumps I became aware of not only the height of the jump and the physical abuse of the body, but of the sense of loneliness of the jumper. There you are up 150 feet in the air, with only an elastic cord to save your life and you are virtually by yourself. What a lonely situation!

On Sunday, October 4, our congregation, along with many others around the world, will be celebrating World Communion Sunday. I can just see the communion table in our church, with the communion elements on it. The bread and the wine have been prepared. It is not just any Sunday; it is a Communion Sunday, wherein we share with one another the body and blood of our Lord.

As I look out into the congregation I see the faces of people I love and care about. People I have visited in hospitals and at home. People I married and confirmed. People whose children I have baptized and whose loved ones I have done funeral services for. These are people I have laughed with, cried with, prayed with and worked with.

During the service I hold up the bread and the wine and together we take them and we become one in the name of Christ. And afterwards I ask those gathered in worship to depart in peace, taking with them the peace of Christ.

It is quite a contrast to my view of bungee jumping. None of those partaking in the service is alone. Each is accompanied by mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, friends and neighbors. Each is blessed by the presence of Christ's living Spirit.

The service of Holy Communion is not easily forgotten, nor are the spirits of those gathered for worship quick to leave me. For on this holy day, the Lord's Day, Christ and those gathered, have been brought together again at the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup. They are not forgotten. They are not alone. They are renewed and their lives continue with the living Christ.

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Curtis



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Executive Council will meet on the following date: November 3rd at 7:00 p.m.

The Executive Council is seeking individuals to help plan our church's 200th anniversary. If you are interested, please let Art DeJager know at 656-7818.

**NOVEMBER
NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
Monday, October 19th.**

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Dave VanSlooten, Jr.
- 2 Marjorie Brainard
- 4 Meghan LeDuc
- 5 Charles Brown
- 8 Robert Root
- 17 Lanette Breck
- 18 Sara Swift
- 20 Loren Breck
- 21 Ruth Bennett
- 26 Cherie Bentley
- 27 Matthew Oderkirk
- 29 Sally Dailey

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Wayne & Paula Basa
- 7 Stephen & Cherie Bentley
- 9 Robert & Anne Irwin
- 11 Curtis & Pam Whitman
- 13 Colby & Loretta Meister
- 14 Russ & Nancy Haberl

(Please contact the Church Office at 656-4923 with any changes or additions.)



UPDATE YOUR DIRECTORY

Doug and Carol Ann Duntley
26936 N. 52nd Glen
Phoenix, AZ 85083



FOOD PANTRY

A collection is held the last Sunday of every month for the Food Pantry. Boxes are provided in the Narthex and the Social Hall. Please help support those less fortunate. Boxes are always available if you forget to bring in your items on the last Sunday.

CLOTHING BANK

If you have clothes you no longer need or no longer fit, there is a Clothing Bank in the village. It is located above the village office. Hours are 10:00 a.m. to Noon every Tuesday and Thursday and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every Saturday. Items are free and they will accept gently used clothing, shoes, boots, coats, etc.



COMMITTEES AND CHAIRS

Executive Council - Art DeJager, 656-7818
Board of Property - George Marr, 656-9452
Deacons - Mary Gell, Co chair, 656-5185
- Donna Possemato, Co chair, 656-7964
Board of Education - Laurel Acunto, 656-9094
Music Ministry - Amy Root, 656-8990
Mission Comm. - Carol DeJager, 656-7818
Women's Fellowship - Sharon Fowler, 656-9647
Head Usher - Russ Haberl, 656-9092
Altar Flowers - Margaret Bryant, 656-8201
Prayer Chain - Sharon Fowler, 656-9647
Care Team - Peg French, 204-0079
Parish Nurse - Sharon Fowler, 656-9647



Don't forget...Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, Nov. 1st. Set your clocks back an hour.

GREENE OPEN DOOR SOUP KITCHEN

The Greene Soup Kitchen will be serving dinner on Friday, October 9th at 5:30 pm.

Please spend the day volunteering to serve others! We are already making plans for our traditional Thanksgiving dinner on Friday, November 13th.

Remember to mark your calendars!

(As in the past, if Greene Schools are closed due to inclement weather, the soup kitchen will also be closed.)

Katha Root
#656-9654

FAMILIES IN NEED

On the first Sunday of every month the Mission Committee collects 5 items for families in need; Toothpaste 5 oz., Bath Soap 4.5 oz., Shampoo 15 oz., Dish Soap 12.6 oz., and individually wrapped bathroom tissue. Boxes are provided in the Social Hall and Narthex. Thanks for your help in supporting this project.

UCC of Greene	
Budget	
As of 9/30/09	
Income	\$94591.41
Expenses	<u>\$108462.07</u>
Net	(\$13870.66)

Please note that our Congregation is depleting investments in order to cash flow negative balances.

DEACON'S DOINGS

We would like to start an Adult Bible Study on a week night from 5:30 PM to 7 PM. You would bring a brown bag supper to be eaten at 5:30 to 6, then Bible Study at 6 PM to 7PM. You can just come to Bible Study from 6 to 7. Also, any interest in a Bible Study on Sunday Morning 9AM to 9:50 AM please contact a Deacon.

Sunday School Junior Class is praying and emailing for three chronically ill children. They are hoping to make new friends by giving cheer and blessing.

First Congregational Church is still working on the 200th Anniversary, so don't forget to take lots of pictures. If anyone wants to work on the committee just let a Deacon know.

Youth Group is starting to meet. If anyone wants to join just let Steve Bentley or a Deacon know.

A Bell Director is needed. If you know anyone interested tell a Deacon.

Thank you Kay Doak for supplying the tissues put in the pews.

THOUGH YOUTHS GROW WEARY AND TIRED,
AND VIGOROUS YOUNG MEN STUMBLE BADLY,
YET THOSE WHO WAIT FOR THE LORD WILL GAIN NEW STRENGTH:
THEY WILL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS LIKE EAGLES,
THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GET TIRED
THEY WILL WALK AND NOT BECOME WEARY.

ISAIAH 40:30-31

God Bless You All
Pat Ford, Deacon's Secretary



COFFEE HOUR

This is a schedule for the next two months. If you can't participate on a Sunday for which you are scheduled, please call a friend and ask them to switch with you.

If you're not on the list, and would like to help with coffee hour, please call Paula at 656-9258. Coffee hour is just a nice time to socialize with each other. If you have coffee and punch, that's good enough. Please don't feel the need to spend a lot of money or time baking for Sunday. If you want to bring a package of cookies from the dollar store or a bag of pretzels, that's fine. There are no rules and we need to make it cost effective for everyone. Just enjoy.

Oct. 4 Steve and Cherie Bentley/Dan and Laurel Acunto

Oct.11 Loren and Lanette Breck/Ron and Jean Compeau

Oct.18 Russ and Nancy Haberl/Faith Gimbal

Oct.25 Alta Martin/Dave and Marlene Sherwood

Nov.1 Bob and Nancy Root/Amy Root/Katha Root

Nov.8 Kent and Jessie Garringer/Kay Doak

Nov.15 George and Peg Marr/Chet and Adrienne Silvernail

Nov.22 Pumpkin Pie Sunday (Deacons)

Nov.29 John and Ellie Rugg/Jim and Cindy Gagnon

Thank you all very much for all you do.
Paula Basa



Grief and Loss Support Group to be offered in Greene

Brenda Birdsall, bereavement coordinator from Hospice of Chenango County will be facilitating a monthly support group to those in the community who are coping with the loss of a loved one. This group is open to all community individuals (no prior connection to Hospice is required.) This support group will be held the second Thursday morning of each month from 10-11:30 a.m.; it will meet in the First Congregational Church's library and the next meeting will be on October 8th. Please contact Brenda Birdsall at 334-3556 for any questions.

The Oct., Nov., and Dec. issue of THESE DAYS are available in the Narthex and Social Hall. Pick up your copy next time you are at church.

Dear Church Friends,

I would like to thank you very much for the money you gave to me as I started back to Oswego State for my junior year. I was happily surprised and very grateful for your thoughtfulness and will use the money to help pay for my college books.

Thank you.

*With much appreciation,
Corey Breck*

RELAY FOR LIFE UPDATE

The final team totals and the overall total for this year's Relay For Life have been distributed and you can be so proud of our church! The total raised by all teams was **\$146,174.24!!!!** That's \$6,174.24 above their goal. Isn't that wonderful? A-n-n-n-n-d, our team raised **\$2,065**, our second highest amount raised by our team. Thank you all for your support with time and donations for this wonderful event. This was our fifth year to participate in the Relay For Life and we have raised a total of \$9,380 for the American Cancer Society. Great job, everyone!! God bless each of you.

Titus to be inducted into Cazenovia College Hall of Fame

Valorie Titus, a native of Greene, will be inducted into the Cazenovia College Athletics Hall of Fame in an Oct. 3 ceremony.

A member of Cazenovia's Class of 2001, Titus, a graduate of Greene Central School, played on the softball team from 1997 to 2001. She holds school records with a .400 batting average, .754 slugging percentage, 99 runs scored, 140 hits, 27 doubles, 27 home runs, 93 RBI's and 264 total bases.

She also owns single-season records in several categories, including slugging percentages, runs scored, hits, home runs, RBI's and total bases. In 2001, Titus led the Wildcats to the program's first Eastern College Athletic Conference tournament appearance by posting 54 hits, 42 RBI's and 10 home runs with a .412 batting average. She was a two-time Cazenovia female Athlete of the Year and All-Conference selection in 2001.

She appeared on two academic All America teams in 2000 and was the beneficiary of multiple scholarships throughout her years at Cazenovia. A staple of the Dean's List for four years, she also received the Howe Math and Student Life Genung Memorial Awards in addition to serving as the Student Government Association president. She graduated summa cum laude with a 3.9 overall GPA.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

On Saturday Sept. 20th, fifteen ladies and our honorary member, Curtis Whitman, gathered for breakfast at The Spot Restaurant. As always the food and service were both great--and a good time was had by all.

We were glad to have a chance to "meet and greet" Bob and Ann Irwin and Larry and Cheryl Driscall and see that they are well--always nice to see them.

Please be aware of the following dates: Oct. 18th, Pastor Recognition Sunday--with a covered dish luncheon following morning worship. Oct. 25th --WF Bake Sale after worship--ladies "do your thing" and guys show us the money! Tuesday Nov. 10th at 10 am in the Chapel we will be having a book discussion. The book to read is "The Red Tent" and the local library will have several copies in advance so that all interested ladies can be prepared. Heather McCloud-Huff from the Moore Memorial Library will lead the discussion--so read the book and plan to attend.

Keep saving your pennies for the Pennies for People jar--remember they came back to Greene this year with a \$1,000 gift to the Open Door Kitchen--and wherever they go in Susquehanna Association it will be to improve the lives of women and children.

- Sharon Fowler



LIBRARY NEWS

The library received a lovely donation last month from Nancy and Russ Haberl, which may be found on the audio/video shelves in the library. This is a set of 16 audio cassettes featuring the voice of James Earl Jones reading the entire New Testament. Titled *James Earl Jones Reads the Bible*, it has a running time of more than 19 hours in its entirety. Each tape is labeled. Even if you want to listen to only one or two tapes (for example, the Book of Matthew is on tapes 1 and 2) please check out the entire collection to keep it together. I have taped a card pocket with card on the back of the cover.

The text from the back cover states as follows:

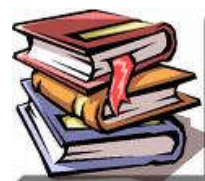
James Earl Jones possesses the most recognized and rich narrative voice of the modern era. His film credits include *The Lion King*, *Hunt for Red October*, *Star Wars*, *Field of Dreams*, and many others as well as being the “voice” of CNN. In this extraordinary box set, you have this huge talent reading the New Testament of the Bible in its entirety. You will be mesmerized by Mr. Jones’ style and pronunciation, and will listen to this beautiful recording over and over. Without doubt, the greatest spoken-word audio product ever produced on the Bible. Digitally remastered, and enhanced with a beautiful background music score, this will be a collection treasured for a lifetime.

The copyright date is 1999. You will need access to a cassette player to be able to enjoy this collection. Thanks, Nancy and Russ. This can be a wonderful resource for anyone recovering from an illness, or for those who have impaired vision.

I hope to be able to spend some time in the library soon weeding out older books that are not being used, as we need space on the shelves for newer donations. As always, the library is a work in progress.

Your church library continues to be a rich resource of reading, viewing, and listening material in all venues. Please visit often.

Peg Marr, Librarian



LABOR DAY 2009

Thank you to each and every one of you who helped in any way to make Labor Day 2009 a big success!

We had a very busy day at the chicken BBQ tent and we had great collaboration with the other churches! We were thrilled to have the new BBQ pit built for our use this year and the chickens cooked much quicker. Thanks to Joe & Donna for the fabulous chickens and yummy rolls! We received many compliments about both.

All proceeds will go toward community projects and scholarships in Greene through the Greene Area Churches. We are looking forward to 2010 when we should have many changes. We expect to have a permanent pavilion built on the ball flats next year and we are looking for a Boy Scout to complete an Eagle Scout Project and build us several safe and durable picnic tables.

We are proud to be carrying on the tradition of Labor Day into the 91st year! Another reason Greene is a great community!

Katha Root

FROM THE PARISH NURSE

ASPIRIN

If you take an aspirin or a baby aspirin once a day, **take it at night.**

The reason: aspirin has a 24-hour “half-life”. Most heart attacks happen in the early hours of the morning, the aspirin would be strongest in your system. Aspirin lasts a really long time in your medicine chest...years...and smells like vinegar when it’s old!

WHY ASPIRIN BY YOUR BED?

It is important to always have aspirin in the home, but why have aspirin by your bedside? Because in a cardiac emergency a simple aspirin can save your life!

ABOUT HEART ATTACKS:

There are other symptoms of a heart attack besides the pain on the left side and radiating down the left arm. One must also be aware of an intense pain on the chin, as well as nausea and lots of sweating. However these symptoms may also occur less frequently.

Note: there may be no pain in the chest during a heart attack.

The majority of people (about 60%) who had a heart attack during their sleep did not wake up. However, if it occurs, the chest pain may wake you up from your deep sleep. If that happens, whether alone or with someone,

IMMEDIATELY DISSOLVE TWO ASPIRINS IN YOUR MOUTH. Then call 911 and state “HEART ATTACK! And that you have taken two aspirins.” Then, if able, go to the front room of your residence, unlock the door, then sit down on the sofa or in a comfortable chair, and wait for help to arrive. DO NOT LIE DOWN!



JOYFUL RINGERS

The Joyful Ringers are grateful for the continued blessings we have received through the support of this congregation.

Thank You! to everyone who has supported the music program by attending concerts, train shows, buying baked goods, and making contributions to the music department over the past two years. As a result of your support, we were able to have the handbells cleaned, adjusted, worn parts replaced, and cases conditioned and repaired over this past summer. The bells look and sound beautiful and we are looking forward to sharing their beauty with you this fall.

We thank Adrienne Silvernail for her willingness to fill in as director this fall, and Ellie for her continued work with the chimers.

We are still hunting for a full time director of the handbell and hand chime program. If anyone has any suggestions of possible candidates, please contact Amy Root.

As always, if anyone is interested in learning to ring and / or joining the Joyful Ringers either full time or as a sub, we currently rehearse on Thursday evenings at 7 pm.



SERVICE OF HEALING

On Sunday, October 25th, we will be having a Service of healing during our worship time. This is a service that helps us all come in touch with parts of our lives that we need to lift up to God and have God’s healing love intervene for us. Some may come to be healed physically; some for emotional healing and some may come forward for spiritual healing in their lives. Whatever the reason may be it is a unique service in which we are invited to place our pains, hurts and helplessness before our Lord. Encourage your friends, neighbors and families who are concerned about spiritual wholeness to attend and be a part of this worship service.

PROPERTY BOARD

The months have gone by swiftly, with the front door almost finished and work progressing on the south side handicapped door. The front door project will be finished in about two weeks when new weather stripping is installed. Phil Gagnon has been working to complete this chore. The barn debris removal operation is still in scheduling, but with the cooler weather, it will not be as hot a job as in the summer. Art DeJager, Phil Gagnon, and Fred Kroncke are pursuing this project. An ongoing problem is the lift operation that is centered on the safety interlocks getting out of adjustment. Since service calls cost about \$300 for just a few minutes, we are pursuing the DIY approach. That is not an easy task because it is difficult to obtain the needed information.

Insurance we pay approximately \$13,500 per year, which is an amount close to our current budget shortfall. However, the insurance covers more than \$2 million in property damage, in addition to other coverage. We all know self-insurance is not an option, but neither is dropping the insurance as even the recent flood experience showed. How to cut the price while making sure that the coverage is complete and from a reputable firm is definitely an ongoing challenge.

Another...and continuing...door closure reminder: The kitchen door to the parking lot continues to be found left ajar, which means the church is open to anyone who chooses to walk in. PLEASE, make sure this door is securely closed and the lock in place when using this exit from the kitchen.

George Marr



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Welcome back to another great year of Sunday School. Our teachers this year are: Nancy Root, Art DeJager and Pat Ford. Mary Gell, Kris Sexton, and Mary Ludolph have volunteered to be subs or to help out in any way that they can. Thank you all for your support of our Children and our Sunday School. We could not do it without you!

Please put these dates on your calendar now. Our children's Christmas program will be Sunday, December 20th. We will have a rehearsal at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, December 18th with pizza. If each family could bring something to go along with the pizza that would be great: i.e. Drinks, chips, fruit, dessert, etc.

The Youth Group invites everyone to join them for Christmas Caroling on December 13th at 5:30 p.m. at the church.

The end of the school year Children's Day program will be held on Sunday, June 20th, 2010. Rehearsal for this program will be on Friday, June 18th at 5:30 p.m. with pizza.

The Board of Christian Education would also like to thank everyone for all of their donations of food, cash and craft items during Vacation Bible School. We had approximately 20-25 children and the VBS went very well. Older youth from our church: Elissa Case, Ana Acunto, Courtney Bentley and Marie DeJager were in charge of leading a group of children around to each station. The game and snack time was held jointly with all of the groups at the same time. Thank you also to Laurel Acunto, Cathy Goodstal, Pam Cemay, Erica and Cherie Bentley, Jody Hartley, Mary Ludolph – we could not have done Vacation Bible School without your help/teaching skills. Everyone had a blast at Crocodile Dock!! We hope to share a few of the songs we learned with you sometime in October. We plan on having vacation bible school the week after the 4th of July again next summer!



I Am With You Always

This summer in Vacation Bible School the catch phrase was “Fear Not”. One of the things we learned was that God kept his promises so, as His children, we should “Fear Not” because God would do what He said. In Matthew 28:20 Jesus tells us “and surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” FEAR NOT!

One of the wonderful things I love about Christian music is how so many different songs reinforce the basic elements of Jesus’ words. The hymn *God Will Take Care of You* was written right here in Johnson City at the old Baptist Bible Seminary. Mrs. Martin and her husband were staying in the area while Mr. Martin gave revival meetings in Albany. Mrs. Martin became very ill and could not travel with her husband which upset him greatly. It is told that Mrs. Martin insisted he go do the meetings because God would take care of her. She wrote the beautiful words to the song while he was at the meetings.

Hold To God’s Unchanging Hand comes from the Southern Gospel genre and *All My Hope* from the great jazz musician Dave Brubeck. Each of these songs, in their own unique way, reinforces that God is constant, He doesn’t leave us. He is my Rock, He is my Strength. FEAR NOT!

As a church family, we have experienced great illness, physical injury, and the loss of a job. Through this music we hear each week, it is my hope that the words and melodies uplift and encourage each and every one of us. Those hymns that run through our head during the week bring comfort and healing to the heart and soul. We are so blessed to have such wonderful music in this church. Come prepared each week to share in that blessing. And if you are so moved, join us in the choir; we would love to have you rejoice with us.

I must say a heartfelt thank you to all those who provided music during the summer months, especially Joan Smith and Ellie Rugg. It is a blessing to me to be able to have the summer off and still know that the music is wonderful.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Claudia

October 2009: Global Ministries Homeless and Directionless Find Support

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

St John's Center in Northern Sri Lanka, which is part of Global ministries' partner the Church of the American Ceylon Mission, is working with twelve refugee camps which have been home to thousands displaced from their homes due to civil war. St John's has nineteen volunteers, eleven pastors, one doctor and two nurses who are working tirelessly among the camps in a systematic and coordinated way offering subsistence food, child care centers, trauma counseling, medical assistance, clean water and sanitation.

Recently, about three months after the end of the civil war, the Sri Lankan government decided to send 5000 refugees from the outer camps back to their own villages. St John's received about 200 and gave them packages of food and basic clothes to start their new lives. Since their homes were destroyed they will go to live with relatives. The elderly were also released, many have no where to go. St John's is working to accommodate these elders on a temporary basis in elderly facilities.

Over 300,000 people are still in the camps. About 40% of the displaced are children - many of whom are unaccompanied by family members. Their care is the subject of conversations between the government, social agencies and faith groups like St. John's.

'Thank you very sincerely for your timely support and prayers in taking care of the refugees. Please uphold our ministry in your thoughts and prayers.'

Rev. Dr. S. Jeyanesan is Chair of CACM, and Project Director of St John's and wrote this letter to James Vijayakumar, Global Ministries Southern Asia Area Executive

For More Information

James Vijayakumar
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