



THE PROSPECT TOWER

Prospect United Methodist Church
A Growing Christian Community of Faith in Action

April 2014

Vol. 75, No. 4

Pastor's Page



Why We Need Missions

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Churches need missions. We need to be out in the world. We need to share a message of hope and love with the people around us, in our community and in the larger world. It is who we are as Christ's followers. When we forget about missions and turn into ourselves, when we focus solely on our own problems and our own needs, we are in danger of losing sight of the great commission that Jesus gave to his followers.

I say all this out of a sense of love. I have known congregations which have lost sight of this very important commission. And although I have loved the members of those congregations, I have a deep sense of sadness for missed opportunities. A church is not a social club or an ethical society. We are disciples and as disciples we need to continue Christ's work, wherever and whenever we can. That means sharing the message of the Gospel with our words and with our deeds. That means reaching out to our neighbors around the block and around the world. That means bringing our faith alive by embodying God's love.



Why do we need missions? I would like to share a little story from the history of Prospect United Methodist Church. In the days before World War Two, Prospect Methodist Church had a supportive relationship with missionaries in China. That relationship helped to make the congregation and the entire Bristol community aware of the plight of the Chinese people under an oppressive foreign army. We were able to play an important role in the national

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conversation leading up to the war because we were active in supporting missionaries and sharing their stories.

Much more recently, we have supported mission journeys by members of our own congregation. We have sent mission teams to Haiti, the Catskill Mountains, Long Island, and to that strange and exotic land of Brooklyn, New York. Every time people have gone on those trips, they came back changed. They have been touched by the people they met — they have seen Christ in the lives they encountered.

I love to preach and lead worship. I love to do Bible studies. But we must never forget that one of the most powerful ways we encounter Christ is to be involved in the lives of people. By being involved in Mission Journeys and supporting Missionaries, we bring our faith alive. And, by listening to the people we encounter, we will know that Christ is truly alive in our world.

Grace and Peace,
Bob Sorozan

The word "mission" often implies traveling to another country to teach and work. The work done in foreign missions is important, of course, but we can't all make the trip. What we can do, however, is be faithful servants where we live. Mission is about putting the face and name of Jesus in front of those who don't know him. We can do that in many ways — any place and any day.

Easter

A Friday transformed

The cross was not a senseless tragedy but the most important redemptive act in human history. For all who down through the ages have put their trust in Jesus, the cross is their highest blessing as it turns Black Friday into Good Friday. ~R.C. Sproul, When Worlds Collide: Where Is God?

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

Holy Week and Easter will soon be upon us. There will be many opportunities to remember the love of Christ and to renew our relationship with him.

- **Palm Sunday** will feature a special presentation from our Choir at the 10 a.m. service. You will not want to miss this very special remembrance of Holy Week. And, of course, the children of the church will be distributing Palms at the end of the service.
- **Maundy Thursday** will be observed on Thursday, April 17th, at 7 p.m. Our service will recall the Supper of our Lord with his disciples and we will share communion.
- **Good Friday** will be observed on April 18th, with a simple service in our chapel at Noon.
- **Easter Sunday** will be celebrated on April 20th. We will lift up our voices in praise and celebration at an Easter Dawn service at the Federal Hill Green around 6:30 a.m. — please watch our weekly bulletin for the exact time. We will also celebrate the resurrection during our Sunday morning worship service at 10 a.m. The Brass ensemble that played for us last year will be back this year.
- **There will be no early service on April 20th.** Easter is a time when we lift up our voices in the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord. Come and experience the joy of the good news with your sisters and brothers in the faith.

■ A Walk Through Holy Week

Prospect's choirs, musicians and actors will take worshippers on a multi-media musical presentation entitled "A Walk Through Holy Week" at the 10 a.m. service on Palm Sunday, this Sunday. A video also will be shown in an effort to take people through the events that occurred during Holy Week. According to Heidi Flower, director of music, the program will include "the Senior Choir, handbells, Sunday School children, soloists and a cast in the 20's!"

Stewardship Corner



■ A Note About Our Finances

Do you remember the winter? It was cold and snowy and a real pain in the ... well, it was a pain! Do you remember shoveling snow and filling up your oil tank? Now, just imagine that your driveway takes up an acre of land and your oil tank holds 3,000 gallons of oil. And that is the reality we had to face this past winter and which still hangs over our heads this spring.

With this in mind, I am not asking for you to buy a tank full of oil for the church — although if anybody would like to do that, I'm not going to argue with you about that. What I would like to do, and this reveals my small church background, is to ask all of our active members to consider contributing the equivalent of a five-gallon can of fuel oil to our church. That is the equivalent of a couple going out to see a movie without popcorn and soda!

If all of our members could contribute the five gallons of fuel oil, we would be able to pay our fuel oil bill, our treasurer would be able to sleep at night, and we could move on to the really important things like teaching our children about Jesus.

Prayerfully consider making a special gift to our church. If you would like to make out a check, please make it out to Prospect United Methodist Church and write on the memo line: Fuel Oil. Let's not have this harsh winter hanging over our heads all through the summer.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our church and its ministry.
Pastor Bob

■ WHAT IS ELECTRONIC GIVING?

The term Electronic Giving encompasses a wide range of secure, automatic payment methods that can be used to make regular church offerings and other contributions without the need to write checks, carry cash or prepare envelopes.

Electronic Giving works the same as the automatic payment methods used by most families to make mortgage or utility payments — and to receive payroll earnings or social security income.

History Corner

PROSPECT IN EARLIER DAYS

More News From April 1954 - Kathy Dube

The previous two Towers noted how Prospect church members prepared for the Easter season of 1954. The 10:45 a.m. service on Easter Sunday was said to have attracted approximately 1,500 people, necessitating the opening of doors to Sessions Hall to hold the overflow crowd. Other news from the April Tower show how busy church life was in those days.

In an article entitled “Prospect Church Officers And Committees Announced For Coming Year,” there was a notation that William Barnes — Prospect’s current Pastor Emeritus — submitted an application for a Local Preacher’s license as noted at the Annual Meeting held on April 12th:

“One of the highlights of the evening was the application of William Barnes, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clarkson Barnes, for a Local Preacher’s license. This is the first step in the Methodist Church when a young man begins preparation for the Christian ministry.” The license application was approved at the Quarterly Conference. He was to appear before the District Board on April 24th. The application, obviously, was favorably approved. A senior, Pastor Bill graduated from Bristol High School that June and entered Wesleyan University in the fall.

In other news: The Welker Club, named for Edith Welker, a former Deaconess, hosted a speaker from China. The speaker, Dr. Douglas Rugh, born in Shanghai, showed a film about the Communist leaders of China. Later in the month, Bishop J. Waskem Pickett, head of Methodist churches in the Greater Bombay area of India, preached at the church to discuss the problems occurring in Southeast Asia that were greatly worrying the country and world.

Music Corner

■ BARNSTORMERS ARE RETURNING

The Barnstormers, a four-part male choral group that has been entertaining audiences and spreading the joy of music for 65 years, will return to Prospect at 7 p.m. on April 26th. The group gets together three times a year to perform free concerts throughout New England, PA and NY. The music is a mixture of spiritual, gospel and patriotic music. There is no admission charge for the concert, but a free-will offering will be taken to support the Barnstormers.

Notes of Interest

■ **Bridal Gowns Of Decades Past**

On June 21st, Prospect Church celebrates the brides of the past in a bridal fashion show featuring wedding dresses worn by members and friends. Watch for information on tickets in the May Tower. The event is co-sponsored by the History Committee of PUMC and The Middle Ages Group. We invite you to share your wedding dress with us along with anecdotes that make it special.

Contact Melissa Brown by email with subject line "Brides": mbrownct@sbcglobal.net or leave a message at (860) 583-4159 with your phone number, or see Melissa before or after services on Sundays.

■ **Renaissance Dinner Dates Set**

Tickets are now on sale for Prospect United Methodist Church's Annual Renaissance Dinners. This year theme is a "Scottish Fling" and we hope you will be able to join us for an evening of good food, fellowship, fun and men in kilts!

- Dates are Saturday, May 3rd and May 10th.
- Tickets ~ Adults \$25 - Children 10 and under \$15.
- This is a reserved ticket event, and no tickets will be sold at the door.
- Festivities will start @ 6 p.m. both nights.



For tickets call Luisa Gladu, co-chair of the Renaissance Dinners, @ (860) 582-8383.

■ **Storm Sandy Recovery Continues and YOU Can Help!**

A mission team is forming to go to New York October 9th-13th. Join the mission experience with a team from our church, and assist in the ongoing recovery and rebuilding efforts. We will leave Thursday evening October 9th, work three days and return on Monday, October 13th. Exact location and work assignment depends on the skill set of our team. If you have ANY interest, and have questions, please talk to Jill Wilson, (860) 690-1853 or email her at jillmwilson@comcast.net.

Youth Corner

■ How To Explain Easter To Children And Grandchildren

The following passage is from a book by Carolyn C. Brown, a certified Christian educator and children's ministry consultant. Education Chair Christa Zaldivar is using this book in her weekly Lenten classes for children and in planning the Palm Sunday re-enactment. Carolyn Brown, the author of numerous books on including children in worship, believes children belong in the sanctuary as participants and leaders.

From "Sharing the Easter Faith with Children" by Carolyn C. Brown

A good starting point is to realize that Easter is bigger than any of us ever fully understand so we do not have to know all the answers. No one ever does. Easter is new life, an empty tomb, forgiveness, resurrection, and more. That is not something to understand. It is a reality we have to grow into. The truth is that we understand different aspects better at different times of our lives.

Adults respond enthusiastically to the Easter claim and promise of victory over death because adults understand the finality of death and fear death. Children, however, have a hard time grasping the reality, especially the finality, of death. Many books and people try to get around this by focusing on new life, paying attention to eggs, bulbs, and butterflies as new life symbols. While children are vaguely interested in these symbols, "new life" strikes few of them as particularly significant.

Instead, for children, the empty tomb is the ultimate victory of the good guys over the bad guys. On Good Friday, the bad guys thought they had won. They killed Jesus and sealed his body into a guarded tomb. On Easter morning Jesus blasted right out of that tomb and proved once and for all that God is more powerful than even the worst evil the worst bad guys can inflict. The natural response to such victory is to yell "Hooray for God and Jesus!" and to celebrate belonging to God who is the most powerful power there is in the universe! We probably do the most harm when we fail to talk with our children about our Easter faith out of fear that we will not get it right.



This Easter season our congregation especially invites children and their families to the Passion Sunday Service on April 13th at 10 a.m., Maundy Thursday Service on April 17th at 7pm, Good Friday Service on April 18th at Noon, and Easter service on April 20th at 10 a.m.!!!

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