

THE PROSPECT TOWER

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

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Pastor's Page

One of the things that we often take for granted is Sunday school. Sunday school started for a reason you may not realize. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, universal education did not exist. Many children, especially from working class and poor members of the English society, could not read or write. This was a major problem and this was the "Genesis" of the Sunday school movement. It was started to help literacy.



Prior to this, religious education was viewed as the responsibility of the parents. The society expected parents to teach about the Gospels and the Ten Commandments. Children were then expected to sit with their families during the Sunday worship service, which in some cases could last for up to three hours. The theory of the religious education of children could best be described by the term "osmosis." They were immersed in a Christian culture that was a part of their everyday life.

But then, around 1800, Sunday schools started to form across the English countryside. Children learned to read by studying the Bible. And while the teachers taught the children to read, they shared with their students the major themes of the Christian faith. Sunday school became an important part of childhood.

Sunday school spread from England to the United States. All of the major denominations embraced the concept and shifted the emphasis from literacy to the spiritual formation of our children. Another subtle but important shift occurred in the twentieth century when adults discovered the importance



of Bible study and understanding their own faith. Sunday school is not just for children — it's for everyone who would like a deeper walk with their loving and forgiving God.

(Cont. to Page 2)

Prospect United Methodist Church

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For a Sunday school to be successful, it depends on the faithfulness of the entire church. It needs committed and caring teachers who volunteer their free time and energy to reach out to our children. It needs dedicated parents who see the importance of Christian education in a world which is filled with distractions. And, most important of all, it needs the prayers of our entire congregation.

Sunday school will be starting up in the fall, but we need to start planning for it right now. We welcome your input and suggestions. As a congregation, what can we do to improve our Sunday school? As parents and students, what should Christian education look like? What are the desired outcomes? The Chairperson of the Education team is Joyce Rioux (jrioux88@gmail.com) Please share your perspective via email, face to face, or phone contact so we can prayerfully contemplate next steps.

Grace and peace,
Bob Sorozan

Please Note:

Summer Schedule: During the months of July and August the 8:30 and 10 a.m. services will be merged together and held as one service at 9 a.m.

History Corner

PROSPECT IN EARLIER DAYS

Sunday School Picnic Photo Included In New Book

Area author Lynda Russell's newest book on Lake Compounce includes a photograph of a Sunday School outing from Prospect Methodist Episcopal Church taken c. 1910. The photograph was loaned by Vivian Brackett, who chairs our History Committee, from the Historic Gallery off of Sessions Hall. Reportedly, it's the oldest photograph Russell used in the book.

The caption in the book reads, in part:

"Through the generosity of William Sessions of Bristol, the children who attended Prospect Methodist Church Sunday school would occasionally get a special

treat. Sessions provided the transportation by trolley for all the children, and when they arrived at Lake Compounce, they were able to go on all the amusement rides ..." This photograph was taken during one of the Sunday School picnics. The woman standing in the second row in black was Deaconess Carrie Reynolds, who was widowed at a young age and wore "widow's black" thereafter.

Those picnics were fondly recalled by older members of the church who were children at the time. The Historic Gallery has an even older photograph of an outing of young people from the church at Lake Compounce, but the quality wasn't as good as the one depicted in the book.



*Prospect M. E. Church
Sunday School Picnic, Lake
Compounce, c. 1910*

Renaissance Dinners

Rousing Good Fun, Food, Games In Sessions Hall

~ Luisa & Gary Gladu, Renaissance Dinner Co-Chairs

On May 2nd and May 9th, Sessions Hall was transformed into the Great Hall at Edinburgh Castle as King James V and Queen Mary of Guise welcomed guests for a Spring Feast. A lavish feast was prepared for all and the royal court looked splendid in their finery. King James has decided to pawn off/marry off his daughter, Princess Mary of Scots, but to whom?



Two “suitable” albeit “questionable” suitors had been chosen: Prince Edward of England and Francois DeValois Duke of Alencon of France. But alas, there is always something amiss; it seems Prince Edward was a “no show” and in his place, Dave the Duke of Ellington came to win the hand of the Princess Mary.

The King was not happy, but since everyone was there and the feast was prepared, plus the Great Hall was already separated into two sides, The French and The English, he decided why not continue with his plan. He asked the Gaming Mistress Anita Mann to come up with three competitions for the Dukes. She being quite clever announced the following: Pass The Egg, The Feudal Family and Skittles, a.k.a. bowling. The Dukes both had magnificent cheers, the French with a hearty “Awe, Hawe, Awe” ... you have to say it in a French accent ... and the English, “Oye, Oye, Oye” ... you had to be there!

The Dukes with their teammates chosen from the guests did a wonderful job. The games were rousing, the food delicious, and there were songs and dances for all. Alas, the Dukes were not happy with the outcome of the games, both of them cheated and it was just a mess! They seemed to want more competition, and more it was: a sword fight, with real swords. Of course it was choreographed to the Mission Impossible theme with many fun gags thrown in and that didn't end well because they starting chasing each other in a circle.

Finally, King James declared a winner: The French Duke on the 2nd and the English Duke on the 9th, but it didn't matter because Princess Mary didn't want either of them. She chose from one of the guests but alas for naught as he was not interested in the Princess, let's just say we are a very open-minded realm. Although there was no marriage, the Princess did set her eyes on several possible suitors and the evening ended with a celebratory dance of "Dancing Queen," ... again, you had to be there.



On May 9th we must have had a "Pastor's Discount" as we had a total of four in attendance. Our Pastor Emeritus, Bill Barnes, had the following to say:

"Luisa and Gary, The Renaissance Dinner last evening was wonderful. The decorations and costumes were gorgeous. The food was tasty and beautifully presented, each and every removal. The entertainment was captivating, (dare I say) even lusty and truly exceptional. All the players, beginning with the two of you, as well as the King and Queen, were terrific. We haven't laughed so heartily for a whole evening in a very long time.

"Thanks so much, not only for last evening's joyous gathering, but for all that you do for Prospect.

"Blessings, Bill & Pat"

The Middle Ages Group, Cast, Servers and Crew entertained and fed a total of 174 guests this year. Guests came from surrounding communities, several traveling from Massachusetts and Rhode Island. We had many repeat guests who come every year to see what is new. As they know, a new script is written and a new show created every year to keep things fresh and to delight us all. If you have never attended, please consider doing so in the future. It's a wonderful evening and the funds raised go directly into the General Fund. Our next events are our Annual Christmas Victorian Tea, Saturday, December 5th, and the Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 19th. Next year's dinners will be on May 7th and May 14th, so save those dates.

Notes

■ Former Church Secretary Dies

Virginia (Smith) King, who served as church secretary at Prospect for approximately 15 years, passed away at age 91 on April 26. Her daughter, Valerie (King) Gienty, said the family moved to Bristol in 1966, and she went to work at the church shortly afterwards. She was church secretary during the pastorate of the late Rev. Kenneth Grady and associate pastor Rev. Earl Heck. A graveside service was held at Boughton Hill Cemetery, Victor, NY. Her husband Robert predeceased her. The Kings attended Prospect when they lived in Bristol and Valerie was married at the church. In addition to Valerie, who lives in Connecticut, she also leaves a son, Roger, of Maryland.

■ Singing Our Faith Sunday

The Education and Worship teams solicited input on favorite hymns of worshippers in preparation for Singing Our Faith Sunday which was held on May 24th. People were asked to respond to a brief survey sharing their favorite hymn, along with a description of their memory or connection to the hymn. For results of the hymn selections go to <http://anewprospect.org/news/>.

■ Save the Date

Sunday June 28th we are pleased to have Mollishmael Kwame Gabah visiting us! He is the Founder and Director of the Global Ghana Youth Network school in Ghana. The Volunteers in Mission Team including Jill Wilson, that went to Ghana in October, visited his school, and worked on building desks and benches for the students.

Be sure to come to the 10am worship service, to hear his spiritual journey, learn about the development of the school, and enjoy his incredible drumming talents!

You will be sure to leave energized and enthusiastic for the Lord!

Thanks

A very special thank you to all those individuals who helped make both evenings possible: The Middle Ages Group Members, our wonderful church volunteers, student volunteers from St. Paul Catholic H.S., family and friends, and Officer George Franek and the Bristol Police Explorers. You are all amazing and we could not do this without your help.

Youth

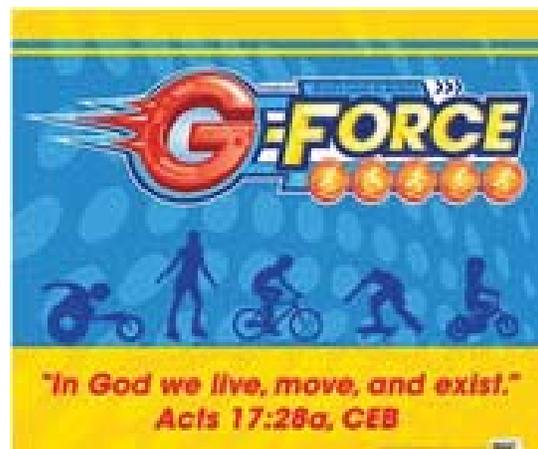
■ Summer School Teachers Needed

Director of Education Christa Valdivar is looking for volunteers to teach Summer Sunday School to Pre-K-5th grade during our 10 a.m. worship service. No experience is necessary, just a love of children and desire to share the love of God with them! All curriculum materials will be provided. Please consider signing up for one or more Sundays! We need two adults per Sunday throughout the summer. Please contact Christa Zaldivar at (860) 845-2016 or cjw02@hotmail.com to sign up or for more information.

■ Vacation Bible School

We invite all children to Prospect United Methodist Church's "G-Force" Vacation Bible School. The fun begins Monday, June 22nd, and ends Friday, June 26th, from 6 to 7:45 p.m. at Prospect United Methodist Church.

Kids will explore how to put their faith into action. In this mission-focused VBS, kids experience God's unstoppable love and discover how to fuel up and move in and through life with God. Watch our church come alive with movement and images of all sorts of kid-friendly transportation, such as skateboards, running shoes, roller blades, and more! T



The adventures include interactive Bible fun and great music, super science, cool crafts, games, and more for pre-k to grade 5. To be a part of all the (free) excitement at G-Force, visit the church's website at <http://2015.cokesburyvbs.com/prospect>.

**PROSPECT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
99 SUMMER STREET
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