

FIRST CHURCH NOTES

October 2017

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 155
Gray, ME 04039

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Church office: 657-4279
Church/Supper room: 657-3279
Email: grayfirst@securespeed.us
Website: www.grayfirst.org

Videos of Sunday Services on GCTV Cable Channel 2

Sunday: 10:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m.
Monday-Friday: 2:30 p.m.
Saturday: 9:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m.

Office Hours:

Tuesday & Friday 9:00 – 3:00
*Office hours subject to change.
Please call ahead.*

Summer into Fall; What We're Doing; 500 Years of Reformation; Enjoying Life.

My sermons this summer have focused on the Acts of the Apostles, the travels of Saint Paul and the Old Testament background of Paul's preaching. Sermons are posted, both print and video, on the church Facebook page on Monday or Tuesday. I also post sermons in print on my personal Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn pages.

We will begin an educational series on October 15 at 6 o'clock at Sally Johnston's house, beginning with several episodes of Bill Moyers interviewing Joseph Campbell in the series called "The Power of Myth."

Since 5:30 Friday afternoon is not a good time for everyone, I am thinking of offering Bend, Stretch and Breathe, a movement practice rather like yoga, at an additional time during the week, perhaps Thursday at 2. Please let me know if you would be interested in joining me for this joyful movement practice.

October 31 will mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther posting his ninety-five theses for debate on the door of the church in Wittenberg. We will do something special on the last Sunday of October, the traditional Reformation Sunday. The sermon that Sunday and for a few Sundays before and after will therefore consider Luther's Reformation in relation to the initial wave of reformation set off by Jesus and the early church of Paul. We will also consider where we stand within the waves of reformation today.

We will celebrate All Saints' Day the following Sunday, November 5.

Shortly after I arrived in Gray, I found this document and posted it on the shelves in front of my desk in order to remind me:
2016 Goals for Congregation and Minister:

1. To foster an environment where parishioners feel safe, respected and comfortable expressing their thoughts and feelings.
2. To rebuild a sense of community/family with other local churches.
3. To learn how to manage conflict in healthy ways.

Pastor Richard's Column is continued on page 3

Missions Report

ALL SAINTS' DAY

All Saints' Day will be observed during worship service on Sunday, November 5th. This is the day when we remember those who have died during the past year. If a family member or friend has died since last All Saints' Day (November 6, 2016) he/she will be honored in this service.

The congregation is asked to please submit names **ahead of time** by contacting Sue Pollard (657-4500) no later than Wednesday, November 1st.

Lectionary Readings for

October 1, 2017

- Exodus 17:1-7
- Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
- Philippians 2:1-13
- Matthew 21:23-32

October 8, 2017

- Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
- Psalm 19
- Philippians 3:4b-14
- Matthew 21:33-46

October 15, 2017

- Exodus 32:1-14
- Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
- Philippians 4:1-9
- Matthew 22:1-14

October 22, 2017

- Exodus 33:12-23
- Psalm 99
- Thessalonians 1:1-10
- Matthew 22:15-22

October 29, 2017

- Dueteronomy 34:1-12
- Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17
- Thessalonians 2:1-8
- Matthew 22:34-46

Expenses for the month of August totaled \$7,737.85. To meet the budget for 2017, Our monthly income should be \$9,609.92.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Hutchings

Through the free will offering, we were able to send \$341 to the Hurricane Harvey Recovery through the UCC. Thanks to one and all.

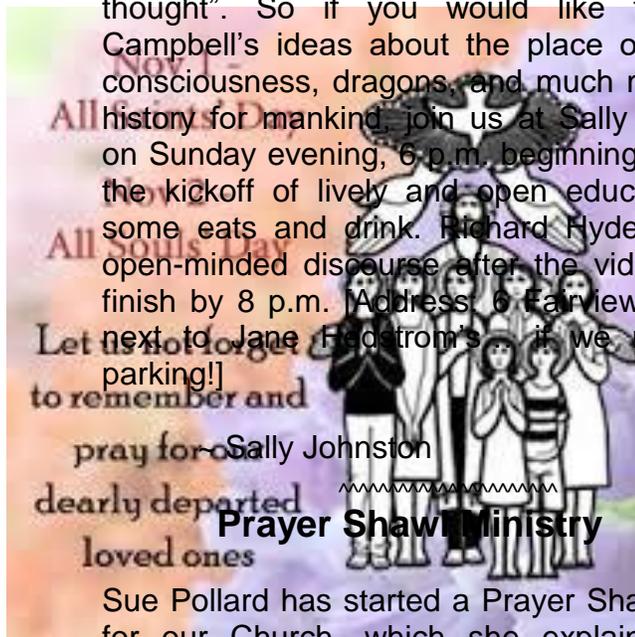
Joan Preston will speak on Neighbors in Need in October, with an option for Hurricane Irma Recovery.

The Emergency Fund is in good shape, Michael Mills reports.

~ Sally Q. Johnston, Treas

Fall Evening Education Series

Joseph Campbell talks of myths, metaphors, and mysteries. As he says, "God transcends all thought". So if you would like to discuss Campbell's ideas about the place of paradise, consciousness, dragons, and much more in the history for mankind, join us at Sally Johnston's on Sunday evening, 6 p.m. beginning Oct 15 for the kickoff of lively and open education, after some eats and drink. Richard Hyde leads the open-minded discourse after the video and we finish by 8 p.m. Address: 6 Fairview Ave, right next to Jane Hadstrom's - if we need extra parking!]



Sally Johnston
Prayer Shawl Ministry
Sue Pollard has started a Prayer Shawl Ministry for our Church, which she explained to the congregation on September 10th. Many churches around the country have such a Ministry, where members create, either through knitting or crocheting, prayer shawls. The shawls are garments that surround the wearer both physically and spiritually in prayer and celebration, in joy and sorrow.

Churches have also started including in this Ministry what they call Pocket Prayer Squares – small squares (4") of fabric sewn together with a cross inside. The square can be carried in a purse, backpack, put on a bedside table, taken to the hospital, held while praying or taken when

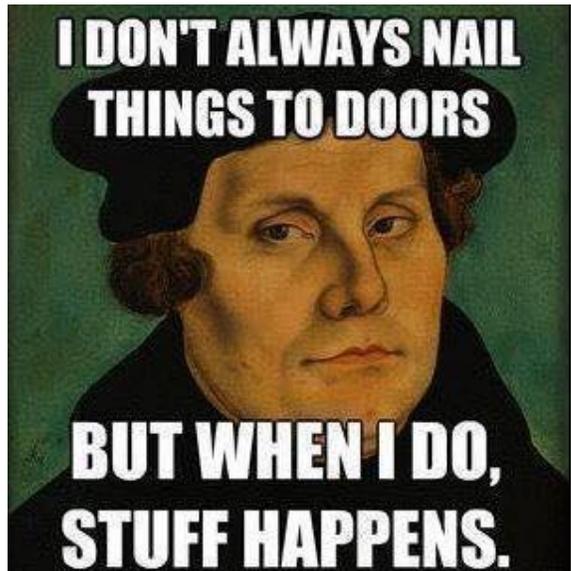
traveling. They are small and light enough to send through the mail.

Paula McDonald has knitted and given us 3 prayer shawls to get us started. Sue has created a number of squares. These shawls and squares were blessed by the congregation on the 10th. If you would like to contribute to this ministry, please see Sue. If you know of someone who might need or like a shawl or square, or if you yourself would like one, please feel to take one – they are located on a table near the ramp door.

26th Annual Chicken BBQ

Thank you to everyone who worked on or donated food, money, etc for the 26th Annual Chicken BBQ. Very little was left over this year - a few ears of corn and some potatoes and a few biscuits. The grand profit was \$991.00. We appreciate all the willing workers helping with set up, cooking, serving and clean up!

~ Kathy Skilling and Fran Hutchings



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I have combined all these goals into one:

To help the members of this congregation to enjoy Sunday morning worship and to enjoy each other's company.

One of my mentors emphasized that accomplishing anything in life, first of all, requires enjoying life. Means and ends are closely related. If you enjoy the means, you have a good chance of enjoying the ends. I hope you have enjoyed this first year of my ministry in Gray as much as I have.

~ *Pastor Richard*

Presentation Announcement

Pastor Richard will be giving an illustrated lecture at Saint Joseph's College on Wednesday, October 4th, at 3 pm entitled "We Will Remember Them: Public Memorials & National Character".

He will also deliver the same lecture at our own First Congregational Church sometime later in October or November. Details will follow.

