

# the Torch Bearer

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## *Congratulations to the Class of 2015*

It's hard to believe it's been five years but we continue to be so blessed that 277 Main Street, Hartford, CT, is also the address of Grace Academy.

On Wednesday, June 10, the graduation ceremony for the Marion Anderson Class of 2015 was held in our Meeting House. **Pastor Adam** was asked to do the invocation and offer some remarks.

*"Believe it or not, I know I don't look like it but when I was born John F. Kennedy was President of the United States. So much has changed since then. This year we have two women seeking the highest office in the land. A former U.S. Senator and Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton and a former CEO of Hewlett Packard, Carly Fiorina and I think that's awesome!"*

*Partially because of Grace Academy that's what I see before me today - future leaders, CEO's of Fortune 500 companies, Senators and maybe even a Madam President.*

*It is also my prayer that when that day comes you will remember how much Grace Academy and South Church loves you and supported your hopes, goals and dreams."*



Our heartfelt congratulations go out to: **Naomi Arroyo, Tailanae Brantley, Azoya Clarke, Angelica Cornejal De Los Santos, Biaga Jones, Thalia**

**Ortiz, Doh Paw, Kyoe Paw, Chit Poe, Kenyaira Redding, Genesis Rodriguez, Pawta Shu, Liddy Siggia, and Alanna Torres.**

Congratulations as well to: **Matt Fitzsimons** (Head of School), **Gina Bolduc** (Business Manager/Admissions), **Lindsey McPhee** (Academic Advisor), **Linda Noll** (Dean of School) and all the rest of the staff and teachers of GA. Well done good and faithful servants!

FYI - South Church girls such as: **Grace Valdez** and **Elaina Rodriguez** are currently attending Grace Academy and **Ainesey Jimenez** will begin in September.

## *Summer is Here Again!*

Pulse had a great year connecting and learning; several of our students have seen great growth this year, something we praise God for continually!

With summer here, we have started to meet every other Sunday night (check with **Abbi** or **Phil** for the schedule), and are getting ready for some special events. Guys have a couple of hiking trips planned and a camping trip is possibly in the works for August (contact **Phil** for details).

We are also hoping to put together a day trip or two for girls. If you have any ideas for what to do, talk to **Abbi** or **Phil!** And of course, **The Hartford Project** is coming up July 12-16! We are finalizing registrations now.

Looking forward, we can't wait for the Youth Explosion retreat in September and a return to our regular schedule. But until then, it's fun, sun, friendship, and of course **NO SCHOOL!**

## *M<sup>25</sup> Haiti*

Plans are underway for the next Haiti mission trip on April 9-16, 2016. If you are interested in joining us, please email me at [m25haiti@gmail.com](mailto:m25haiti@gmail.com).

We are already in the fundraising zone, selling bracelets made by Haitian parents trying to earn money to be able to keep their children, give them a roof over their heads and send them to school. Sadly, some parents end up giving their children up because they cannot afford to feed them and they end up as child slaves or working as prostitutes.

*The Apparent Project* ([www.apparentproject.org](http://www.apparentproject.org)) hires these Haitian parents to make these beautiful bracelets and they earn money to be able to keep their children. The bracelets sell for \$10 each, we keep half for our mission... (cont. on page 3)



## Where's Waldo?

Many young children growing up in the late 80's and early 90's loved the *Where's Waldo?* books created by English illustrator Martin Handford. The books consist of a series of detailed double-page spread illustrations depicting dozens or more people doing a variety of amusing things at a given location. Readers are challenged to find a character named Waldo hidden in the group. He was the one always wearing a distinctive red-and-white-striped shirt, bobble hat, and glasses.



In keeping with that theme, sometimes if you stop by the church office you may be wondering where's **Vicki, Sheila, or Pastor Adam?**

On any given day, **Miss Vicki** may be with Covenant to Care, The Hartford Project, Children's Ministry Network, FBI

(Faith Based Initiative), Hartford City Mission, Urban Alliance, Grace Academy or out visiting families. **Miss Sheila** might be with The Hartford Project, the Hartford Area Worship Leaders Network, United Night of Worship, Urban Alliance, or Grace Academy. **Pastor Adam** might at a John 17:23 meeting, FBI (Faith Based Initiative), WJM, The Hartford Project, WIHS, Urban Alliance, South Park Inn, Overseed, Hartford Churches Unity Collaborative, the Connecticut Bible Society, Hands On Hartford, Grace Academy, or out visiting.

We are blessed to have a **ServAnt Leader Team (SALT)** dedicated to serving not only South Church but the wider Hartford community as well.

## Giving Him to the Lord

Just as Hannah brought Samuel and Joseph and Mary brought Jesus, on May 31, **Jon** and **Sheila** brought their son **West Gordon Hodges** and dedicated Him to God.

As a church family we were asked an important question that day as well when **Pastor Adam** said, "Are you willing to love **West**; to pray for him; to help teach him the ways of the Lord so that he might one day trust Jesus as his Savior?" Yes! Absolutely! And we look forward to being a part of **West's** life (along with **Mabel** and **Ellie**) as they grow in the Lord here at South Church.



South Church has been blessed to be the host church for THP for several years now and we are excited for 2015.

THP will be here for three weeks this summer: June 28 - July 02; July 12-16 and July 26-30.

You will encounter lots of activity and new faces in the halls of our building so say, "Hi!" and welcome these amazing youth who desire to serve God and our great city.

## Generation Sunday

We had a great Generation Sunday on June 14. The Children's Ministry lead worship at 9:30 am and Pulse lead at Solid Ground. A job well done by all! It is so amazing to see the growth in our South Church kids!

## Puerto Rican Day Parade

What an awesome day we had on June 7 at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Puerto Rican Day Parade! Thank you to all who helped set up, break down and clean up.

A very special thanks goes out to: **Sonia Rodriguez, Vicky Padillo, Alexa Valdez, Pamela Mautino** and **Mickey Manrique** for making such delicious empanadas, pork pinchos and frozen limbers.

Not only did we celebrate alongside our community but we raised over \$500 to send kids to camp. Amen!

## Flag Day Observance

South Park Inn held a Flag Raising Ceremony and Recognition Luncheon in honor of the homeless veterans in our community at the South Green on Thursday, June 11.

Participating in ceremony were: the **Hispanic American Veterans of Connecticut Color Guard**, State Senator - **Mae Flexer**, Councilman and Hartford Mayoral Candidate - **Joel Cruz, Jr.**, President of the University of Hartford - **Walter Harrison**, and Deputy Chief of Police - **Joseph Buyak**. **Pastor Adam** was invited to offer some remarks and the invocation.

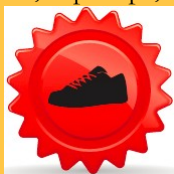
*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. This is how the great experiment called American was born. And this is what our flag represents - equality, unity, freedom. No one star is larger than any other. No color is more prominent than any other. Instead they gather together as our flag and although we have not always lived up to our ideal we continue to strive toward the stated goal our founding fathers proclaimed 239 years ago."*

South Park Inn is an emergency shelter and transitional living program which houses over 100 people every night. Located at 75 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut, the South Park Inn is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## M25 Haiti (cont.)

(cont. from page 1)... and the other half goes back to the Haitian artists. See any team member to purchase a bracelet.

We also have a big fundraiser going on until October. We are collecting shoes...all kinds of shoes.. boots, sandals, sneakers, flip-flops, dress shoes...you get the idea. Shoes can be in any condition, but there has to be two of them. Bring your worn, (or new) shoes to us for our *Funds2orgs* fundraiser. If we collect 7,500 pairs of shoes by the middle of October and *Funds2orgs* will give us \$3,000!



Talk to your coworkers, neighbors, relatives and friends. We will come and pick up the shoes anywhere in the greater Hartford area (we will go further if there are a lot of shoes too!). We have flyers that you can use to spread the word. So clean



out your closet and spread the word! We need your shoes!

We are also looking for flannel fabric, girl's new panties, lightweight facecloths, and freezer ziplok bags for a female hygiene project. This is an important project, visit [Daysforgirls.org](http://Daysforgirls.org) or see **Jessica Sasseville** or **Renée Söderberg** for more information.

If you are someone who knows you would never want or be able to go on a mission trip, we still can use you. There are many opportunities for people that want to remain stateside. Just see any team member and we will get you signed up.

Beni S'wa L'eternal,

## God Be Wi' You

In the mid to late 16<sup>th</sup> century the phrase "God be wi' you" got progressively shorter and eventually contracted into the word "goodbye."

Sadly, our Director of Youth Ministry **Abbi Menear** has given her notice and will be leaving her position here at South Church at the end of the summer. She will be working in the North End of the city at Hartford City Mission.

We will all miss her leadership, passion and spirit. Thank you Abbi for a job well done! Our loss is HCM's gain but it is a encouraging to know that our beloved city of Hartford will continue to be blessed by your ministry.

We are exceedingly blessed that **Phil Shattuck** and **Ryan Dafgek** have stepped up to lead Pulse while we search for a new Director of Youth Ministry. Thank you guys!

We also want to offer thanks and congratulations to our **Rachel Greggis**. Rachel is a producer at FOX CT and has accepted a position on the *EyeOpenerTV* morning show at KDAF in Dallas, Texas. She and her husband Ted will be relocating there in July.

Rachel has served on our Worship Team since we began Solid Ground. Her amazing voice and keyboard skills will be greatly missed!

**Ricky** and **Meredith Campbell** are

also relocating to Wisconsin. In the short time we had them the Campbells were faithful servants. They taught Sunday School and volunteered at Sparrow Ministry. Ricky served on the Prayer Team and even occasionally filled in on the bass and Meredith as a Computer Tech. We will miss them too but know God will continue to use them powerfully in Wisconsin.

So, it is with grateful hearts we say to **Abbi, Rachel, Ricky** and **Meredith**, "Goodbye."

## Vacation Bible School

VBS takes place August 10 to 14 from 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm this year.

**Parents...**Your children from 4 years old thru completed 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to experience the sights sounds smells and tastes of a unique culture at **Thailand Trek VBS**, where kids learn how much God loves the world.



**Church...**This is also another opportunity for our entire church body to get involved.

**Here are some ways you can help:**

- Help make props and decorations for the week. (dates TBA)
- Decorating the church ahead of time. (Sunday afternoon, August 9)

- Working during VBS at a certain station or being a guide of children from station to station.
- Providing snacks and food for dinners we will provide each day.
- Cooking and serving a meal one night.
- Invite children who are family, friends, or neighbors to join us!
- Transporting children to and from VBS if it's too far to walk.
- Lending or donating decorations Thailand style.

Call **Vicki Huffman** to join the team! 860-249-8627 ext. 15

## Prayer Breakfast

At the May 30<sup>th</sup> community-wide prayer breakfast we enjoyed an amazing menu including: egg dishes, fruit salad, fish, pastries, and much more.

We had clergy and new found friends from a variety of Hartford churches come and participate in prayer. Councilman **Joel Cruz, Jr.** was our keynote speaker and delivered a wonderful message of hope and we raised over \$500 for our Children's Ministry!

A special thank you to the **South Church Women, Delano & Jennifer Paul** and **family, Matt Siracusa** and everyone else who helped make it a success.

## Summer Schedule

Finally, summer is here! And that means we shift into our Sunday summer schedule.

There are sign up posters for volunteer leaders posted in Robinson Lobby. All regular teachers are encouraged to take the summer off from Sunday mornings, so you can come back refreshed and renewed for the Fall!

- **9:30 am & 11:00 am:** Nursery is open during both worship times for children up to 4 years old.
- **9:30 am:** Children attend church with their parents - Children's bulletin supplied to kids kindergarten and older.
- **11:00 am:** Children attend Solid Ground until after the Children's message then go to *The Third Day*.

Please sign up to volunteer so we can continue to sow seeds at South and give those who serve September thru June a much deserved break.



## Happy Birthday!

### July

03 - Carolyn Ford  
 05 - Betty-Ann Santangelo  
 06 - Charles Rossi  
 12 - Natalie Ciarcia  
 14 - Shirley Johnson  
 15 - Donna Peatfield  
 23 - Len Diamond  
 24 - Dwight Burgess  
 25 - Bob Jones  
 31 - Travis Hancock

### August

02 - Ashely Badillo  
 Suzanne Savery  
 Patrice Smith  
 06 - Linda Ciarcia  
 Rachel Greggis  
 Audrey Portonova  
 07 - June Hodges  
 08 - Joan Sala  
 11 - Darlene Ambrose  
 Nancy Springer  
 14 - Pertrena Davis  
 15 - Abigail Menear  
 16 - Nancy Wennberg  
 17 - Khareem Foster  
 Lisa Jones  
 19 - Cathy Reitmeyer  
 28 - Nicholas Mangan  
 30 - Donald Bradley