

the Torch Bearer

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National Back to Church Sunday 2015

It's time to kick off the new church year! **National Back to Church Sunday** happens on September 20.

This year we are holding our 1st Annual **Ministry Fair!** You will be able to register your children for **Sunday School** and check out all of the small groups here at South Church. This is an opportunity to discover where you can participate in the life of our church. We have all kinds of groups for all kinds of people with all kinds of ways to fellowship, grow spiritually and serve our community and beyond.

We will also be holding our 3rd Annual **Cookie Crumble!** If you want to enter simply bring a dozen cookies to

the **Cookies & Christ** table. Our judges then have to determine a winner. I know. It's a tough job but someone has to do it.



South Church is registered again this year at www.backtochurch.com. Let's pray that everyone who is looking for a Hartford church to visit this September 20 will choose 277 Main Street and discover all the God is doing at South Congregational Church!

September 20 ~ Schedule

- 8:30 am: Register children for classes
- 9:30 am: Traditional Worship/Nursery Care/Sunday School Classes
- 10:00 am: **Ministry Fair**
- 11:00 am: Solid Ground/Nursery Care/The Third Day Children's Program

For teachers returning this fall, our training dates are: Tuesday, September 1, from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm **or** Saturday, September 19, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm. Speak to **Miss Vicki** for more details.

So, invite someone to **National Back to Church Sunday!** We'll see you there!

Kids Klub!

Kids Klub is our afterschool program that we moved from Wednesday evenings to Wednesday afternoons last January. We believe this format is a more fruitful approach to ministry in our community as we focus more on helping children succeed in their academics. In an effort to have a bigger impact,



beginning September 28 and 30 we will run **Kids Klub** on both Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm and volunteers are needed. Please pick EITHER Monday or Wednesday

from 3:15 pm to 5:30 pm to help. Your job will be to help one or two children (no more) with their homework for one hour, then guide kids through the rest of the program which includes: games, snacks, life skills, and Bible stories. Training for volunteers will be Monday, September 21, from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm for Monday volunteers; and Wednesday, September 23, for Wednesday volunteers.

I Am Who He Says I Am

"I Am Who He Says I Am" was the title of *Walk in the Light Ministries* 45th Awards Banquet held on July 10, 2015. Several people were honored at the event including: Chief Archbishop Emeritus **Louella H. Tate**, 2015 Hartford Mayoral Candidate and former Probate Judge **Bob Killian**, Congressman **John Larson (D)**, **Dr. Marcus M. McKinney** of St. Francis Hospital, as well as **Pastor Adam Söderberg** and Director of Children and Family Ministry **Vicki Huffman**.

It was a blessed celebration. Seven-year old **Deshawn Chapman** recited Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech from memory. **Pastor Lawrence Chester** formerly of Guyana, South America, delivered the keynote address and Pastor Adam was asked to speak as well.

Congratulations **Miss Vicki** and **Pastor Adam**. It is a blessing to see South Church being recognized as a vital and active participant in the city of Hartford.

An Incredible Story

As I continue working on my updated history of the Second Church of Christ in Hartford (otherwise known as South Congregational Church) I am constantly reminded of what an amazing God we serve and what an amazing church He founded here in 1670. One reason is our focus on missions and outreach - a hallmark of our ministry for years.

Under the Reverend Irving Berg's leadership, by 1916, more than 13% percent of all funds given to South Church was being used for foreign, home, and city missions; church planting, education, the YMCA, refugee relief, Tuskegee Institute, Piedmont College, campships and parish benevolences.

In 1948, we helped with the founding of Lady Doak College in South India and raised the needed funds to purchase additional property for the school and build a new clinic.

South Church also supported Dr. Mary Cushman (1870-1965) and her mission to establish a hospital in Chilesso, Angola, West Africa.

Dr. Henry David Gray focused a lot of energy on missions and outreach. "[We need] an adventure in service to the spiritual needs of the inner city." His ideas included, "sponsoring as a church or cooperatively with others: a day nursery, teenage center, or club for older people." He also suggested business-

men's luncheons or breakfasts in the Main Street church to serve those whose "daily battles of life" often seem "forgotten" by churches. South Church was also an enthusiastic supporter of the Waldensian Aid Society who today advocates and helps support the persecuted church.

During Dr. Gray's pastorate missions and outreach spending increased 90% going from over \$11,000 in 1955 to more than \$110,000 in the late 1960's. In fact, total South Church missions and outreach monies from 1956-1969 exceeded \$5,000,000.

In the 1970's, during Dr. Elmore's pastorate, South Church partnered with Pastor Philotheos Zikas and supported his church (our sister church) in Greece - the Evangelical Church of Alexandroupolis.

Today, whether it is reaching out to Hartford through Covenant to Care or the Sparrow Ministry or supporting our sister church and school in Camp Perrin, Haiti, it is such a blessing to continue serving others just as all our brothers and sisters who came before us did.

Pastor Adam

Experiencing God

Peter writes, "...if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it." (1 Peter 3:15)

That's what we'll be doing in the Parlor on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm beginning September 9 - getting ready. While this does involve studying the Bible, starting this fall it will also include other things such as: movies, art, book studies, and any other method that will help us better understand our faith so we will always be ready to explain our Christian hope.

Since this journey will encompass more than exclusively Bible Study we are changing the name to "**Experiencing God.**" Join us! No previous experience is necessary.

The Hartford Project (THP)

The Hartford Project called South Church home for three weeks this summer. We had 311 participants (including students and leaders) from 22 different churches who came to the capitol city to grow, learn, and serve. We also part-

nered with additional churches and organizations throughout Hartford. It was an amazing experience for all involved and we are blessed to both participate and host this incredible ministry.

South Church sent six youth to THP: **Erik Savery, Carlos Sanchez, David Casiano, Sarah Savery, Jess Isberg, and Jeremiah Sanchez.**

We are also blessed with strong leaders in: **Phil Shattuck, Jess Sasseville, Renée Söderberg, and Javon Delaine.**

The **Love Wins** block party took place on our property on July 28 as well. This is a great opportunity to interact with our community.

We are all looking forward to see what God has in plan for 2016!

Find Your Fit!

Save the date! Saturday, October 10, 2015, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm it's **FIND YOUR FIT!**

Have you wondered why some volunteer jobs are so rewarding and other times you say,



"I'll never do that again?" The answer has a lot to do with what motivates you. Come and discover how you were naturally designed by God and what jobs for your career and/or your volunteer service that will fulfill you and bear fruit for God's Kingdom. Please register by emailing **Miss Vicki:**

vhuffman@southchurchhartford.org or signing up on Sunday mornings.

Cookies & Christ

Baking cookies and learning about Jesus...does that sound like something you might be interested in? Then join us on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm for **Cookies & Christ!**

You can find out about what the Bible has in store for you and learn a new recipe (and of course, sample what you made) for delicious cookies.

We meet in the kitchen and start with our study and then begin baking at 7:00 pm. Just bring your Bible and your willingness to learn. No experience necessary!

Children & Family Ministry

Hi friends! The summer is rolling along. It's mid-August, and a very hot stretch of weather recently. We've definitely been cooking in Children's and Family Ministries. We have had coverage every Sunday for our **Nursery** and for **The Third Day** throughout the summer months and we are having a baby boom...yay God!

Earlier in the summer, 22 children went to Lakeside Christian Camp for a week of fun and spiritual growth. Many members and friends of Children's Ministries made it possible for



these kids to experience an amazing week in June by giving financial gifts and/or attending or helping with fundraisers. A big thank you to all who gave in so many ways!

Vacation Bible School

just ended. Eighty children and over 50 volunteers who helped before, during and after made this year's **"Thailand Trek"** a huge success! Our last night was a celebration of the week

ending with a group picture on the front steps with our two nine foot tall purple elephants! Many new children and families joined us this year.



made this week a huge success by cooking, shopping, driving, shepherding children, teaching, decorating and praying.

It's time for a deep breath and a big thank you to God for providing for ALL of our needs.

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." (Romans 8:28)

As always, it is a blessing for me to serve the Lord at this awesome place "for such a time as this."

Vicki Huffman

Worship Arts Ministry

The Fall is an exciting time for the Worship Arts Ministry at South Church! As always, the **Chamber Choir** is looking forward to making music together again after a summer off. In very exciting news, we are starting a **Children's Choir!** We will meet on Wednesdays at 5:00 pm and all children are welcome to join us!

We're also looking forward to our **2nd Annual Arts Night**, so please be thinking about what you will share! It will be in November, date TBD. All talents and treasures welcome! Be creative!

We have many volunteer opportunities in the Worship Arts Ministry as well. If you sing, play an instrument, dance, can help with audio/visual, computers, or feel called to join our Prayer Team contact our Director of Worship Arts **Sheila Hodges**. WE NEED YOU! Email Sheila at:

sheila.reeve.hodges@gmail.com

Sewing Smiles

Sewing Smiles in conjunction with **M²⁵ Haiti** are making feminine hygiene bags for the girls and ladies of our sister

church in Camp Perrin. Girls in Haiti miss an estimated two months of school each year due to the lack of feminine hygiene projects. Women are unable to attend church, village events, and shopping during this time of



the month as well. The reusable hygiene products we are making will enable these young women to go on with life as usual. If you would like more information on this project, check out www.daysforgirls.org

We still need a few supplies for this project such as: flannel fabric (old flannel sheets, shirts or new flannel fabric), light weight face cloths, small bars of soap (hotel samples are best), and gallon size non-slider Ziplock bags.

We also could use sewers to help assemble the kits. You can do so at Sewing Smiles or in the comfort of your own home.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at: m25haiti@gmail.com

We are always looking for more ladies or gents who like to sew or would like to learn to sew to join our group. We have many easy sewing projects in the works and many hands make light work.

Holy Scrap

Mark your calendars! September 26, from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm, join us for an all day crop event! If you are a scrapbooker, card maker, or other paper crafter, you won't want to miss this.

For a small fee of \$25, you will be given ample table space, breakfast and dinner, coffee, tea and water, use of rubber stamps, Cricket machine, Sizzix die cut machine, punches, etc. There will also be opportunities for raffles, make-and-take demonstrations, cash and carry craft supplies and fellowship with other crafters.

This will be held in Gray Hall. Proceeds will benefit our **M²⁵ Haiti** mission team. Call **Renée Söderberg** (207) 852-6545 or **Mary Moffat** (860) 550-5894 to reserve your space.

Holy Scrap meets most Tuesday afternoons from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm and on the second Saturday of the month from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm in the Elmore Room on the lower level of the church. All are welcome!

M²⁵ Haiti Mission

Monday September 7 from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm, join us at **Rita's Ice Custard** in Rocky Hill for a mission team fundraiser. We will receive 10% of the evening sales! We will also be collecting shoes at this event.

Speaking of shoes...if you bring your outgrown, worn out shoes to us you can help us raise money. If we collect 7500 pairs of shoes Funds2orgs will donate \$3000 to our mission. The only requirement is that they must be a pair. They can be boots, shoes, flip flops, sneakers, sandals, any type of shoe, in any condition. If they shoes are in really bad shape they will melt them down and make new shoes out of them. It's time to clean out your closets anyway, so, donate those used shoes. If you cannot get to the church to donate them, we will be happy to pick them up.

Please share this with your friends, family, and neighbors. We will be collecting shoes until the middle of October.

We are still accepting applications for anyone who wishes to join us on our 2016 mission trip to Haiti. If you would like more information contact **Renée Söderberg** at: m25haiti@gmail.com

Happy Birthday!

September

- 01 - Vincent Santangelo
- 03 - Gene Beaupre
Marie LeVan (107)
- 04 - Michele Birbrau
- 05 - Karl Hahn
- 14 - Peg Barles
Susan Elphick
- 15 - Alaura Howes
- 17 - Javon Delaine
- 19 - Deborah Deschenes
- 25 - Alana Ciarcia
- 28 - Pat Rossi

October

- 01 - Janet Wallace
- 02 - Pastor Adam Söderberg
- 06 - Jack O'Connell
- 13 - Jean Trzcinski
- 22 - Sheila Hodges
Jeffrey Savery
- 24 - Colleen Jenkins
- 30 - Jessica Sasseville

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