

# the Torch Bearer

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## *Drumming to Worship*

In 17<sup>th</sup> century colonial America, Sunday morning began with a man beating on a drum. The village would then empty into the streets and follow him into the Meeting House. All adult males were also required to bring their muskets with them for protection. Women and girls entered first, men and boys, next, and the minister came last. Back then, males were seated on



one side and females on the other. In fact, they even entered the Meeting House through separate doors.

We are blessed to be a part of America's "Thanksgiving" faith tradition. Yes, the Pilgrims who spent sixty-six days on board the Mayflower and landed in the new world on November 9, 1620, were Congregationalists! As were many who soon followed, like Rev. Thomas Hooker who arrived in Plimoth Colony on September 3, 1633. He eventually founded the city of Hartford and the First Church of Christ. As we know, after his death, Rev. Hooker's followers left that church and founded the Second Church of Christ in 1670. That is us! Our legal name remains today, the Second Church of Christ, Hartford.

This should make Thanksgiving an especially meaningful holiday for Congregationalists. As such, we are planning to remember our tradition by holding a combined Thanksgiving service.

**On Sunday, November 19, 2017 we will hold one worship service "In the Manner of the Pilgrims" at 10:00 am.** We'll "begin" in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and end in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



Join us as we worship together as one in a combined service "*In the Manner of the Pilgrims.*"

### **Fun Puritan Facts**

- Sometimes they obtained pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man "could bring home the bacon." They then cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."
- Their floors were dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying "dirt poor."

## *Annual Church Meeting*

The Annual Church Meeting of the Second Church of Christ in Hartford (South Congregational) will be held at the church at 277 Main Street, Hartford, on **Sunday, November 19, 2017**. The purpose of the meeting shall be to review and vote on the annual budget, elect new members to the Church Council and the Board of Deacons and any other business to legally come before the congregation.

**The meeting will be held in our Meeting House at 11:30 am.**

## *Second Ecclesiastical Society*

The 348<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Second Ecclesiastical Society of the Second Church of Christ in Hartford (South Congregational) is called for **9:30 am on November 19, 2017 in the Bryant Room of South Church.**

All Society members are urged to attend.

*Leonard Diamond*  
Clerk of the Society

## Well Done Good and Faithful Servant

There are so many members of South Church who serve God here and do so without recognition. So, nominate someone deserving for a **Member Appreciation Award**.

**The George Grave Award** (Compassion & Caring)  
George Grave was the first Deacon of South Church (1670-1673). As Deacons are called in Acts 6 to a caring ministry within the body. This award is for someone who has gone above and beyond in caring for members of our church.

**The J. Hubbard Wells Award** (Sunday School)  
J. Hubbard Wells was the first Superintendent of Sunday School (1828-1829). This award is for someone who has done outstanding work in our Sunday School ministry.

**The Jonathan Bull Award** (Finance)  
Jonathan Bull was the first Treasurer of South Church (1775-1797). This award is for someone who has faithfully served in a financial ministry of our church.

**The John Church Award** (Male Youth)  
John Church was one of the children of the church who owned the covenant when we were formed in 1670. This award would be for a male youth whose faithful service should be recognized.

**The Sarah Richards Award** (Female Youth)  
Sarah Richards was one of the children of the church who owned the covenant when we were formed in 1670. This award would be for a female youth whose faithful service should be recognized.

**The John Whiting Award** (Male Adult)  
John Whiting was the first minister of South Church (1670). This award would be for a male adult whose faithful service should be recognized.

**The Susanna Whiting Award** (Female Adult)  
Susanna Whiting was the wife of our first minister the Reverend John Whiting. This award would be for a female adult whose faithful service should be recognized.

Help us say, "Well done, good and faithful servant," by nominating someone. Just write their name and which award you're nominating them for on a pew card and drop it in the offering plate, the wooden box in Robinson Lobby or email me: [pastoradam@southchurchhartford.org](mailto:pastoradam@southchurchhartford.org)

We will present the awards at our Annual Congregational Meeting on November 19.

*Pastor Adam*

## Children and Family Ministries: A Look Back



Kids Klub  
Afterschool studying  
cooperation!

Hi friends! We have had a great start to the school year in children and family ministries. **Rally Day** brought us all together to meet the teachers with a wonderful breakfast and our Sunday morning classes. We began this year studying *The God Who Creates*, and will move into *The God Who Provides*. We will complete this quarter with the Christmas Story—*The God Who Comes Near*.

**Kids Klub Afterschool** kicked off with an additional day in our schedule. Each Monday and Wednesday from 3:45-5:45 pm our elementary students do homework, learn life skills and have Bible teachings. We have been studying cooperation using Bible stories and activities to reinforce this important concept. Our Bible verse for this unit is "*How good and pleas-*



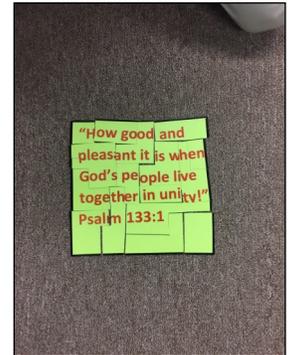
Brit Montijo at last year's  
Fall Celebration!

*ant it is when God's people live together in unity." Psalm 133:1.*

**Ladies 2:52** has begun on Mondays from 6:30-8:30 pm. We are currently studying 2 Timothy with Beth Moore in a study called *Entrusted*. We will take a break from November 20-January 1 for the holidays. A new study will commence on Monday, January 8.

Our **Fall Fun Family Festival** was held on October 28. It included fun costumes, games, candy, and an inspirational message for all ages.

We thank our middle/high school youth for planning and running this event! What an amazingly energetic and creative group they are!



Our Bible verse  
for Kids Klub  
Afterschool

## Children and Family Ministries: The Exciting Months Ahead!

During the first two weeks of November we will once again be preparing our annual **“Baskets of Blessings.”** These baskets will be filled with all of the fixings for a Thanksgiving dinner, and given to families and friends in need in our South Church community. A complete list of items we are collecting is available in Robinson Lobby. All non-perishables should be in by Tuesday, November 14, and all frozen turkeys (12-15 pounds), pies and rolls should be brought in the week of November 12-19. If you know of a family in need, please contact me at [vhuffman@scchartford.org](mailto:vhuffman@scchartford.org).

November also brings our annual **Family Advent Celebration.** On Saturday, November 25 from 1-5 pm we will have lunch, decorate the church, make crafts, and sing carols. We will end our holiday afternoon with a tree lighting on the front lawn! It is always a warm and productive day of unity with all ages coming together to welcome Advent. Don't miss it—mark your calendars now!

December brings the children's and youth Christmas Pageant—**A Night of Joy.** This heartwarming production will be held Sunday, December 10 at 6 pm. Young people from three years old through grade twelve can participate. They will act out the story of Christ's birth with costumes, lights, staging, beautiful music and a message from Pastor Adam. The re-

hearsal for ALL participants will be held on Saturday, December 9 from 10 am-12 noon. If you would like to help in any way—lights, makeup, costumes, setup or cleanup, please contact me. Something everyone can do is to invite friends or family to come and enjoy this beautiful evening with you. We will have light refreshments and fellowship following this hour long presentation! Mark this on your calendars as well!

As we move forward to the end of 2017, we are all feeling the effects of escalating violence and divisions all around us. My prayer is that 2018 will bring us the peace that only Jesus can bring; that as a church we would cling to Him and to each other as we serve, love, and equip this hurting world.

**“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.”**  
**John 14:27**

With joy in serving the Lord with you,  
*Vicki A. Huffman*

### Men At Work



There is a small group for men eighteen and up here at South Church. It's called **“Men At Work”** because we meet to work on our faith while having fun and fellowship. We held our first annual Sock Golf Tournament at the Colonial Club at 277 Main Street on

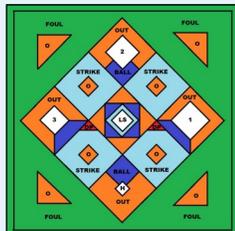
September 30 and **Ryan Dafgek** walked away with the coveted golden putter! On October 28 we held our first PFL (Paper Football League) tournament.

Our next event is **Saturday, November 18** at 5:00 pm. Come join us for Root Beer Pong!

On December 30 at 5:00 pm we will be playing Dart Ball. If you like darts and baseball, you'll love dart ball. Join us! Bring a brother!

If you are interested, some Men At Work men (formerly the Charles Spurgeon Society) still meet on the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 pm at the Tobacco Shop, 89 Pratt Street, Hartford, CT for faith, fellowship and cigars.

Be a man and join us for Men At Work!



### She Did It!



**Isabelle Devanna** defended her 2016 Cookie Crumble crown with her two-time winning snickerdoodle cookie. Congratulations Isabelle, our 2017 Cookie Crumble Winner!

## Christmas at South

In 1860, South Church called the **Reverend Edwin Pond Parker** to be its tenth Senior Minister. That same year, on Christmas Eve, a service of public worship was held in the sanctuary. So far as I know, this was the first celebration of Christmas in worship by any Congregational church in New England.

That may sound odd but Puritans systematically suppressed the celebration of Christmas during the colonial period. In fact, it was illegal to observe Christmas in Massachusetts Colony from 1659 to 1681. If you were caught the fine was five shillings (35¢). As early as 1621 (a year after the pilgrims arrived on the Mayflower), when Governor William Bradford came across some of Plymouth's new settlers attempting to take Christmas day off he ordered them straight back to work. Why all the opposition toward Christmas? There is actually a reasonable explanation. Congregationalists are historically a "Bible-believing" people. If it is in the Bible we follow it. If it is not, there is no obligation upon us. Unlike celebrations such as: Passover, the Feast of Firstfruits, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) and The Feast of Tabernacles, which are clearly spelled out in Scripture as required festivals, there is no biblical support for having any sort of celebration of Jesus' birthday. Truth be told, there is no biblical or historical evidence supporting the idea that the Christ child was born on December 25 to begin with. The decision to hold a Christmas celebration on that date was not officially decided by the church until the fourth century.

*"...it was illegal to observe Christmas in Massachusetts Colony..."*

The Puritans, however, had more reasons for censoring Christmas. In the seventeenth century the holiday was celebrated much differently than it is today. Just as there were in England, here in the colonies, there were rowdy public displays of excessive eating and drinking; a mockery of established authority, aggressive begging (including the threat of doing harm) and even the invasion of wealthy homes. It was much more reminiscent of Halloween's "trick or treat" than anything connected to our Savior's birth. Cotton Mather preached on December 25, 1712, "The Feast of Christ's Nativity is spent in reveling, dicing, carding, masking, and in all licentious liberty...by mad mirth, by long eating, by hard drinking, by lewd gaming, by rude reveling..."

Therefore, it was significant for South Church to hold the first celebration of Christmas in worship by any Congregational church in New England.

This year we are celebrating Christmas, first, with a combined **"Christmas Celebration Service"** on **December 24, at 10:00 am**. Our Chamber Choir and Praise Team are preparing a magnificent musical celebration. There will be songs both old and new.

Then, that same evening, the **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** returns to **11:00 pm**. Join us as we celebrate the coming of the Christ Child beginning with some food and fellowship, followed by worship in our Meeting House.

Bring someone to enjoy Christmas at South this year on Sunday, December 24, at 10:00 am and again at 11:00 pm.

*Pastor Adam*

## New Members Class



The next **New Members Class** will be held on **Saturday, November 4**, from **9:00 am until noon**. If you are interested in becoming a member of South Church or just curious about our church and its story, what we believe, or congregationalism in general, you are welcome to join us.

There is no obligation. Just because you attend the class does not mean you have to join the church. We simply want you to make a fully informed choice.

## Mr. & Mrs. Dafgek!

Congratulations! **Ryan Dafgek** and **Miss Ashley Burke** were joined forever on Saturday, October 14, 2017. They are now **Mr. and Mrs. Ryan and Ashley Dafgek!** Praise God!

Ryan is currently our Director of Worship Arts and a member of the Church Council. Ashley has been serving on the Worship Team. We are so blessed to have another church couple become husband and wife! Enjoy Aruba! We'll see you soon!



## The Last Lap of 2017

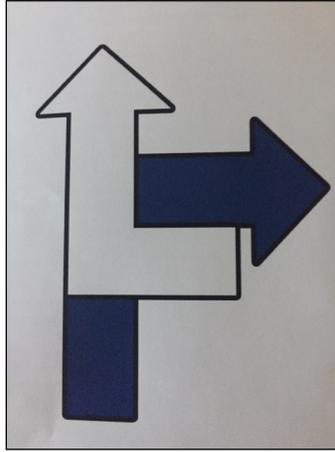
November and December are just around the corner. Lost & Found has been meeting on Saturday mornings at 10 am. We have been doing a small study, journal time, and then some type of craft, game or activity. First of all, I would like to thank all the South Church members and friends of South who donated craft supplies. Our hope continue creating special crafts, design sets for future plays at South, and allow our youths to use their imaginations. I ask you to help provide the supplies we need for our crafts and play sets.

Speaking of plays, our hope is to do our first play in Lost & Found in February, 2018. So far, the plan is to create a show based on social bullying in high school. Haley Serrano has gracefully accepted the role of Director and Coordinator for the play. Hopefully we will be able to perform the play as a way to gain donations for camp. We believe that performing plays could become a regular activity for Lost & Found.

We will continue meeting on Saturdays in November. My hope is to continue my series on Sin, while also working on

our play script, crafts, and personal growth.

On November 25 some of the youth will be joining the Advent Day festivities with decorating, food and fun. This will be a great time to have friends and family come together to enjoy the spirit of the season.



December turns into a time of celebration. We will have caroling with Ryan on Saturdays, the Christmas Pageant on December 17, and a combined Christmas service on December 24 at 11:00 pm. These are great times to get to know our church family in celebration.

Please continue to pray for our youth. They are battling so much from the culture. Reach out to them and let them know you care. Challenge yourself. They need to have a church mentor who loves and cares for them. They love being at South, but many have to go home to a place that doesn't fit truth. We are a safe haven for them to know Jesus and grow spiritually.

*Candido Montijo*

## Holidays at South

It's the most wonderful time of the year here at South Congregational Church. Please make note of the following events and invite friends to join you!

### **November 19 (Thanksgiving Service ~ 10 am)**

We will hold one combined worship service "*In the Manner of the Pilgrims*" at 10:00 am. We will "begin" in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and end in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Join us!

### **November 25 (Advent Celebration ~ 1 pm - 5 pm)**

Come enjoy lunch, crafts, caroling and decorating our beautiful building. We finish by lighting our Community Christmas tree out in the courtyard.



### **December 10 (Christmas Pageant ~ 6 pm)**

Invite family and friends to a presentation of the classic nativity story as interpreted by our South Church children. You do not want to miss these memories in the making!

### **December 16 (M<sup>25</sup> Christmas Tea)**

The Haiti mission team is hosting a Christmas tea party from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm in the Stanley Room. Enjoy a variety of teas, juices, sandwiches and desserts for only \$10.00 per person. Don't miss this!

### **December 17 (Ugly Christmas Sweater Sunday!)**

Come on now. Everyone has received a sweater they're not crazy about over the years. One that you said you could never wear in public. Well, wear it to church and let's all enjoy the joy of the season in our ugliest!

### **December 24 (Christmas Celebration Service ~ 10 am)**

We will gather for one combined service of celebration on December 24 at 10:00 am. It will be a musical extravaganza and a message.

### **December 24 (Christmas Eve Service ~ 11 pm)**

Come enjoy a candlelight Christmas Eve service on Sunday, December 24, at 11:00 pm. Invite family and friends to celebrate the birth of our Savior at South Church.

## M25 Haiti Mission Team

Get ready for a busy season with your Haiti Mission Team. It all starts on November 1 with the beginning of our **shoe drive**. We are collecting all types of shoes in any condition—boots, flip flops, high heels, sneakers, etc. Bring them to the church and we will do the rest! We need to collect 100 bags of 25 pairs of shoes to make \$3000 for our school and church in Haiti. Share this information with your friends and family to help us collect as many as we can. We will collect until January 1, 2018. If you have a lot of shoes, call me at 207-852-6545 and we can arrange to pick them up.

On November 11 at 5:00 pm in Gray Hall we are hosting a **FREE Night in Haiti dinner**. We will serve Haitian Squash Soup, bread, and Pikliz (spicy coleslaw), with Haitian Blondies

for dessert. We will share from our trip in June and talk about our next trip.

Join us on December 16 from 1-3 pm for a **Christmas Tea Party**. We'll serve a pot of tea, hot cocoa or lemonade, scones, tea sandwiches and mini desserts. The cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children.

Please share all of this information with your family and friends, and invite them to share in these fun events. Help us raise \$10,000 to rebuild after the hurricane! Check out the display case near the kitchen for more information about events and donating opportunities.

*Renée Söderberg*

## Cooking with Christ

Cooking with Christ is going strong. We are cooking either a meal or a dessert every week. We typically have 6-10 people cooking, but there is always room for one more! We start each week with a short devotional, then get right into cooking. Each

person or team will prepare our weekly recipe and then we get to eat! Join us on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:30 in the kitchen.

*Renée Söderberg*

## Super Girl is Here!

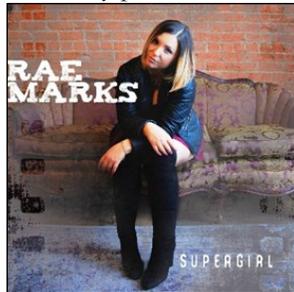
Ever since she began belting out show tunes into a vacuum cleaner hose, Rae has been passionate about music. She trained vocally under Broadway performer and Opera singer Gary William Harger, as well as Broadway performer and producer Kristin Huffman.

We knew her as **Rachel Greggis** when she was a member of South Church and used to sing with the Praise Team. She and her husband Ted moved to Texas in 2015.

After a successful Kickstarter campaign, Rae traveled to Nashville to record her first EP. A lot of blood, sweat, and tears went into her debut EP "Super Girl."

"The encouragement and kind messages I've received is overwhelming, but it's not a dream anymore. This is just the beginning of a reality that I have been working towards for a while now!"

If you love a little bit of country, rock, and blues, then you'll love this CD! Support Rae and her career by visiting [www.raemarksmusic.com](http://www.raemarksmusic.com) and purchasing your own copy of "Super Girl!"



Congratulations Rae! South Church is so proud of you! We always knew you were a super-girl!

## Happy Birthday!

### November

- 03 - **Karl Robertson**
- 07 - **Eulalia Garcia**
- 19 - **Vicki Huffman**
- 22 - **Tina Marzano**
- 26 - **David Casiano**
- 27 - **Jonathan Hodges**  
**Lynn Robertson**
- 29 - **Kevin Petruzielo**

### December

- 04 - **Eleanor Peterson**
- 12 - **Carol Bracken**  
**Margaret Young**
- 14 - **Bruce Wallace**
- 15 - **Raymond Clarke**
- 19 - **Ryan Dafgek**
- 30 - **Julio Birbrau**

## Happy Birthday Marie!

I was blessed to join Charlie and Pat Rossi, Dr. John Afman and his wife Susan for lunch as we celebrated our most senior church member **Marie LeVan's** 109<sup>th</sup> birthday! Marie was born September 03, 1908! William Howard Taft was president and Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid were killed in Bolivia.

God bless you Marie!

