

# the Torch Bearer

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## 'Tis The Season

We know that the Pilgrims who landed on Plymouth Rock were the first Congregationalist's to set foot in New England. As such, Thanksgiving has always had a special place in the hearts of all Congregationalist's including those of us here at South Church.

Again this year we will be celebrating Thanksgiving **Sunday** (November 22) with a *Service After the Manner of the Pilgrims*. Prepare to time travel to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and worship the way our congregational ancestors did.

Our **Thanksgiving Baskets Ministry** is also underway. If you can help or



know of a family in need contact **Vicki Huffman**. Feel free to start bringing in any food donations, however, please wait until the week of November 15-22 to bring in frozen turkeys as we have limited freezer space.

On the Saturday following Thanksgiving, November 28, from 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm we are holding our **Advent Celebration!** This year we are beginning together in Gray Hall with a simple lunch of hot soup and bread. After that we'll set out to decorate our beautiful church for the Christmas season. We'll gather again after that for some crafts, snacks, and a carol sing, than we'll head outside to our courtyard and we light the South Church Community Christ-

mas tree. This is fun event designed for the whole family! Childcare will be available during the decorating time.

Then on Sunday, December 13 in between services the Cookies & Christ ministry is holding our **Cookie Walk**. Come and get some great homemade treats as presents or just to enjoy yourself.

On December 20, at 6:00 pm is our Christmas Service - **A Night of Joy!** This year we are combining our Christmas Pageant and Candlelight Service together. (See page 3 for more details.)

So, don't miss all of the opportunities at 277 Main Street in Hartford. 'Tis the season to be at South Church to celebrate and serve!

## God Loves A Cheerful Giver

There are so many ways to show our Christian love at this time of year.

- **Christmas Poinsettia's:** Remember a loved one who has passed or honor someone special with a donation to decorate our Meeting House with a poinsettia. (see insert.)
- **Gifts of Warmth:** Bring in hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, etc. and we will share them with the MANNA Program of Hands On Hartford. (There is a basket in Robinson Lobby.)
- **Gifts of Grace:** Purchase a special gift for one of the special young ladies of Grace Academy. (See **Debbie Robertson** in Robinson Lobby on Sunday morning's.)

We are so blessed to be able to be a blessing to others.

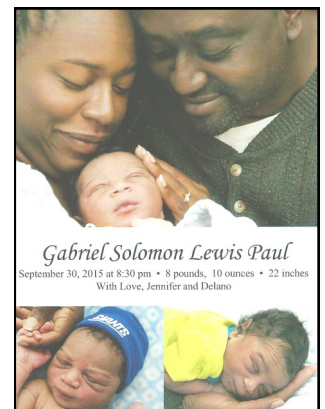
## God Is My Strength

The name Gabriel means "God is my Strength." In the Bible, Gabriel is an archangel who was God's messenger.

At South Congregational Church, however, Gabriel now refers to **Gabriel Solomon Lewis Paul!** Born September 30, he is 8 pounds 10 ounces and 22 inches of adorable cuteness! (Even if he is a NY Giants fan.)

**Delano** is a member of the Church Council and **Jen** sings in our Worship Team.

Congratulations to **Delano, Jennifer**; big sisters **Veronica** and **Jannah** and let's not forget grandma **Rose Hubbard!**



## He Makes Beautiful Things

Fall is my favorite time of the year and there is no better place than New England to enjoy it. I love looking out of my office window and seeing all of the multi-colored leaves. It is beautiful. It is also not lost on me that this is Hartford.

You see, over the past nine years I have come to fall in love with this city. Yes, even with all of the news that we hear on radio, see on televisions or read in the newspaper. I know. A lot of folks want nothing to do with Hartford; wouldn't set foot inside it if they had a choice. And many who have grown up here can't wait to escape.

I understand that. Hartford, like all cities, has its share of "city" problems but when fall arrives it still makes me think of its potential.

If you were to think of Hartford as a person what image would come to mind? Be honest. A beggar? An addict? A criminal? A prostitute? Probably. Then again, isn't that who Jesus spent most of His time with? As, Jesus said, "*Healthy people don't need a doctor - sick people do.*" We certainly have our share of "unhealthy" people in this city but that's another reason why I've come to love it. There are few things more inspiring or amazing than seeing someone transition from unhealthy to healthy, from lost to saved. It's beautiful.

So, when I see what appear to be ordinary green leaves suddenly turn into the incredible array of reds, yellows and oranges it reminds me that inside each one of us has the same potential. We can change. No matter who we were, with God we can be beautiful. As Mark Gungor's song says, "You make beautiful things; You make beautiful things out of us..."

God knew Hartford before He formed Hartford and He knew 345 years ago when He put South Congregational Church on the corner of Main and Sheldon streets what Hartford would be like in 2015. It's still has the potential to be beautiful. Sure, it might be deep down sometimes covered with a lot of hurt and pain but it's there and if we continue to share Christ with this city then Matthew 15:30-31 can be a reality here as well. "*A vast crowd brought to him people who were lame, blind, crippled, those who couldn't speak, and many others. They laid them before Jesus, and he healed them all. The crowd was amazed! Those who hadn't been able to speak were talking, the crippled were made well, the lame were walking, and the blind could see again! And they praised the God of Israel.*"

Yes Lord, "You make beautiful things; You make beautiful things out of us..."

*Pastor Adam*

## Pulse Youth Group

The new church year is now well underway here at Pulse! On Sunday mornings, our group has been engaging in volunteer opportunities during the services. We've spent a couple of weeks getting to know each other a little better and have begun to explore the Gospel of John in our Sunday night program. We are still seeking female volunteers for our night program. Please see **Phil Shattuck** or **Ryan Dafgek** if you can help.

It is crazy to think we're already talking about Christmas and the middle of the "church year," but here we go! In November, we have a Youth Explosion service on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> (dun-dun-dun) at 7:00 pm. This is a great opportunity for us to join with our teens in the city to worship God. We are also in the process of planning a mission trip to New York City in early December – as soon as we have details we'll let you know! Around that time, information will also start coming out for our 2016 Winter Retreat. Some other smaller

events may pop up from time to time, and will be announced on Sunday nights.

As we continue to pray for each other, we ask that you would remember our youth in your prayers. There's a lot going on at school for a lot of students and many have been struggling to find a balance between stresses, obligations and desires – and these are tough things for teenagers! God is also doing amazing things with our kids, and it is exciting to see the ways that God is moving here!

## To Love and To Cherish

*It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.*" (Gen. 2:18) Six verses later, God fashions Eve out of Adam's rib and she is just right for him. At this moment God creates the institution of marriage saying, "*This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.*" (Gen. 2:24)

We are celebrating with five couples

who have entered into the covenant of marriage this fall.

**Pastor Adam** performed the wedding ceremonies of: **Jeffrey Dow** and **Sulvā Bray** (September 5); **Gerald McElwee** and **Melissa Marzano** (September 25); **Thomas Ferrer** and **Suhadey Negron** (September 26); **Matthew Siracusa** and **Megan Sousa** (October 23); and **Nicholas Symkowicz** and **Stephanie Pellegrino** (November 6).

Congratulations to all! It is such a blessing to find the one God made who was just right for you!

## New Member's Class

The next **New Member's Class** is scheduled for Saturday, December 5, from 9:00 am to noon. If you are interested in joining us here at South Church call the church office or email:

[info@southchurchhartford.org](mailto:info@southchurchhartford.org) and let us know. We look forward to seeing you!

## Children & Family Ministry

### What's Happening Now!

Our **Kids Klub** afterschool program has started on Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm. Our desire is to add Mondays to our program as soon as possible. So, if you



are a high school, college student or retiree who has 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm available either Monday or Wednesday and would enjoy helping elementary age kids with their homework, learning life skills and more, we need six more volunteers in order

to add Mondays to our program. You will not be required to do any Bible teaching, just a desire to see kids succeed. We want to see our kids grow as Jesus did; in mind, body, spirit and social/emotional. *"Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all people."* (Luke 2:52)

**Sunday school** classes are off to great start each Sunday at 9:30 am, with many awesome volunteers serving in our Crib Room, Nursery, and elementary age classes. Substitutes are always needed on occasion so consider helping us and see what joy you receive from serving.

**Lisa Jones** is our newly appointed Sunday school superintendent, with **Linda Porter** serving as the Crib/Nursery Coordinator. Sunday morning breakfasts have begun as well on Sunday morning from 10:30 am - 11:00 am under the leadership of **Kelly Travers** and **Javon Delaine**. If you can shop, cook, serve or cleanup on occasion for Sunday AM breakfasts or for our First



Wednesday dinner for families please contact me by phone or email. (See below)

**The Third Day** program at 11:00 am is in desperate need of caring adults to serve this diverse group of children. Children begin their hour in Solid Ground; then move to the Bryant Room to do age appropriate activities while their parents are worshipping! Our children are in need of your love and care. Can you help once or twice a month from 11:30 am to 12:45 pm alongside **Vicki** and other junior leaders? The program is well planned out making it easy to serve and be blessed by our kids.

### What's Coming Up!

The **EMPOWERment** Children's Ministry conference happens on Saturday, November 7, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. All those who are currently serving in any area of children's ministry are invited to attend. Lunch will be served, door prizes, and lots of great information and inspiration. Come and connect with God's Power and each other.

**A Night of Joy** - Our children will participate in telling the Christmas story again this year! Put the date on your calendar, Sunday, December 20, at 6:00 pm. Keep a look out for more information soon.

If you have any questions or want to help contact: **Vicki Huffman** at: [vhuffman@southchurchhartford.org](mailto:vhuffman@southchurchhartford.org) or call at 860-249-8627 ext. 15.

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

### South Church Arts Night

We are looking forward to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual South Church Arts Night on November 14 at 5:00 pm. This event is not to be missed! We will gather together to enjoy art exhibits and performances by members of our own congregation; and to have a wonderful, catered meal together. It will be an evening of fun and fellowship, and perhaps we'll learn some new things about one another!

Tickets are \$5 each or \$20 for families. If you would like to share some of your talents with the congregation on this fun evening, please see **Sheila Hodges** as soon as possible.

### A Night of Joy

Our annual Christmas celebration, **A Night of Joy**, takes place on December 20 at 6:00 pm. Come celebrate with us as the Chamber Choir, Worship Team, Children's Choir and Grace Academy Choir share music; and enjoy the pageant put on by the children of South Church!



### Sewing Smiles

We are in need of some helpers for our sewing ministry. Sewers (basic knowledge), ironers, cutters, etc. There

are tasks available for all skill levels! Everyone is welcome.

We are also still in need of flannel material. If you have old flannel shirts, sheets, or new flannel fabric, we would love to take it off your hands. Donations may be placed in the Haiti blue barrel by the Bryant Room.

There are items we need for our **Days for Girls** program as well. If you are interested in what we are collecting, email me: [renee.soderberg@gmail.com](mailto:renee.soderberg@gmail.com)

I will be happy to provide you with the information or check the bulletin board at South Church.





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

The M<sup>25</sup> Haiti mission team would like to thank all those who donated shoes and other items to our Funds2orgs and Savers fundraisers. While we weren't able to meet our goal of 7500 pairs of shoes, we did, however, collect over 3000 pairs! When you think about it, that is 6000 shoes! We are not sure yet how much money that will yield but any amount is helpful.

We are continuing to collect clothing, shoes, etc. as well as household goods like dishes, pots and pans, decorative items and books. Every two months we will be making a trip to Savers and they pay 20 cents a pound for soft goods (even sheets and blankets and curtains) and 5 cents a pound for hard goods. Donations can be put in the Haiti blue barrel outside the Bryant Room.

Also, if you are interested in being part of the traveling team for our April 16-23, 2016 trip, there are actually still some spots open for team members. The cost is \$1600. If you have any questions feel free to contact me: **Renée Söderberg** at: [m25haiti@gmail.com](mailto:m25haiti@gmail.com)

## Happy Birthday!

### November

03 - Karl Robertson  
 07 - Eulalia Garcia  
 08 - Virginia Burnap  
 19 - Vicki Huffman  
 20 - Keon Brown  
 22 - Tina Marzano  
 25 - Jessica Battistini  
 26 - David Casiano  
 27 - Jonathan Hodges  
 Lynn Robertson

### December

02 - Marsha Earnest  
 04 - Eleanor Peterson  
 12 - Margaret Young  
 14 - Bruce Wallace  
 19 - Ryan Dafgek  
 24 - Lil Patrick Tate  
 30 - Julio Birbrau

## No checks? No cash? No problem!

Coming in January 2016 we will be able to financially support our church electronically. We have partnered with a company called **Pushpay** so if you don't have any checks or cash on you it won't be a problem. You will be able to give online at our website [www.southchurchhartford.org](http://www.southchurchhartford.org) or from your smartphone or tablet in ten seconds flat or less.

