



# FIRST WORD

April 2008

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*From the Pastor...*

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***“Look! Listen!”***

Lately, I’ve been working on being more mindful of what’s going on around me and within me. The concept of “mindfulness” comes from the practice of Buddhist meditation and focuses on an awareness of breathing.

However, I’m expanding the concept of mindfulness to include nearly everything I do. For, to be mindful is to pay attention to the spiritual dimension of what I’m doing.

Here’s an example. I love to hike. There are several ways you can look at hiking. You can view it as exercise, especially when you are hiking uphill. You can see it as a race to get from one place to another as quickly as possible. You can understand it as a competition and try to hike faster than everyone else.

You can also understand hiking as a spiritual experience. As you hike, you can look at the beauty of the trees, the rock formations, the streams and the wildlife. You can breathe in the smell of the woods. You can notice how the sunlight filters through the trees. You can

look up at the vast sky above. If you come to a vista, you can stop and look over the treetops for miles and have a sense of eternity.

While hiking, you can also notice what is going on within yourself. How hard are you breathing? How hard is your heart beating? Are you feeling tired? Are you carrying your anxieties, worries and concerns with you? Are you feeling a sense of freedom or joy?

To be mindful is to be deeply aware and it can make all the difference in how we experience an activity.

To be mindful is to be fully present and to live fully in the present. Mindfulness places you in the here and now. It takes you from doing to being. Mindfulness is a spiritual discipline.

Frederick Buechner writes, “If God speaks to us at all... I think that he speaks to us largely through what happens to us...if we keep our hearts and minds open as well as our ears, if we listen with patience and hope, then I think we come to recognize that he [God] is speaking to us...”

So then, let us look and listen carefully to what is happening to us. For being mindful is a way of connecting with the holiness and sacredness of life; it’s a way of connecting with God.

*Bob*

## **New Pastor Named!**

The Rev. R. Randy Day will be our new pastor as of July 1. Over a period of ten days in March the Pastor Parish Relations Committee met with Rev. Day twice and unanimously agreed to accept him as our new pastor. Randy, his wife Emily, and their four children are looking forward to living in the parsonage and being an active part of the First Church family.

Randy comes to First Church after having served as the Chief Mission Officer for the United Methodist Church worldwide for 4 years and previously as Senior Pastor of the Jesse Lee Memorial Church in Ridgefield, CT for 10 years.

We will have some opportunities to get to know Randy better before July 1. On Sunday, May 11 (Mother’s Day) Randy will preach and share in worship leadership with Bob Walker. Also, on Sundays June 22 and 29, Randy will preach and lead worship.

If you would like to learn more about Randy’s background, please contact a member of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee: Steve Pisarkiewicz (chair), Grace Abbott, John Irwin III, Chris Cole, Keith Roe, Margot Weinstein and Nils Nilsen.

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**New Youth Room  
Dedicated**

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On Sunday, March 30, we held our Coffee Hour in the newly refurbished Youth Room. This project was funded by the Trustees and involved new painting, carpeting, a kitchen area and comfortable furniture. In addition, the Youth Room has wi/fi and a big screen TV. The youth will be using this room on Sundays for church school and at other times during the month for fun and fellowship. A BIG thanks goes to CE Director Susanne Frank, who supervised the project.

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**Where Would You like to Serve?**

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Our Nominating Committee is beginning its work to recruit officers and leaders for First Church beginning June 1. The nomination slate will be voted on at our Annual Meeting in May. We will be electing new Trustees for the class

of 2011, committee chairs and members. The question to ask yourself is not, "Do I want to serve?" but, "Where would I like to serve?" You can let us know by speaking to a member of the Nominating Committee: Bob Walker (chair), Grace Abbott, Steve Pisarkiewicz and Chris Cole.

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**Dr. John Tamerin to  
Speak**

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On Sunday, April 20, we will have a special guest preacher. Greenwich psychiatrist Dr. John Tamerin will be preaching on "Passion and Purpose." Dr. Tamerin, who is a member of Temple Shalom, is a nationally recognized leader in alternative treatments for depression and bi-polar disorder. He leads a weekly support group for persons who are depressed or bi-polar and their family members. Don't miss this unique opportunity to hear him on the first day of Passover.

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**YOUTH GROUP IN APRIL**

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**April 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> – 30 Hour Famine at**

the Noroton Presbyterian Church in Darien.

**April 20<sup>th</sup>** - Rob Bell Series in Youth Room

**April 27<sup>th</sup>** – Youth Group Hangout, pizza and games in the Youth Room from 11 am to 2 pm.

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**Freezer Needed**

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A freezer for the parsonage basement is needed for the Day's arrival in June. If anyone has a gently used freezer in good condition they'd like to donate, please contact the church office, 629-3876.

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**Sympathies**

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Our deepest sympathies are with two families of First Church members who died this past month. On March 3, at First Church, we celebrated the life of *Fred Parmelee*, who died on March 1. On March 24, we celebrated the life of *Doris Greenbaum* who died on March 22. Please keep these families, and all everywhere who mourn, in your prayers.

**Bring A Friend to Church Sundays!**

**For the next three months, the first Sunday of each month will be "Bring A Friend to Church Sunday." Think of a person or family who you could invite to worship with the First Church family. Perhaps you could give them a ride to church or invite them to lunch afterward. This is a great opportunity to reach out and give someone a warm welcome. Mark your calendars: April 6, May 4, June 1.**

**FIRST CHURCH OF ROUND HILL**

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•FIRST CHURCH OF ROUND HILL STAFF•

Robert M. Walker, Pastor  
Avery C. Manchester, Pastor Emeritus  
Gwendolyn Hillman, Director of Music/Organist  
Susanne Frank, Director of Christian Education  
Daisy Melo, Youth Director  
Annie Callahan, Secretary  
Sandy Regan, Financial Secretary  
Ernesto Damm, Property Manager

First Church of Round Hill is a Christian community, rich in heritage, open and caring, bound together by our faith.