



FIRST WORD

June 2009

From the Pastor...

As we enter the glorious month of June, we are celebrating the unique Confirmation Class here at First Church. All seven members successfully completed the course with me and became full members of our church on Sunday, May 31st.

In fact, they were the heart of the service along with our four baptisms. Our confirmands not only led the worship service, but each of them shared a statement of faith with the congregation. All of us were moved by their openness, honesty, vision, and gratitude for a church which has and will continue to nourish them. Hats off to the parents who supported us through the months of classes.

Our “magnificent seven” confirmands were also together on Saturday, May 30th for a field trip to Yale University. It was an opportunity to make numerous campus stops on beautiful, sunny day.

The sun poured through the translucent marble “windows” of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the largest building in the world reserved exclusively for the preservation of rare books. The class gathered

around the large glass case displaying one of the few, original remaining Gutenberg Bibles in the world – a “complete, perfect, paper” copy.

We learned that Johannes Gutenberg printed the Bible in 1455 in Mainz, Germany, ushering in the “Age of the Printed Book.” The Bible is a printed version of the Latin Vulgate translation and was produced on a printing press with movable type.

On the “old campus” of Yale University in front of historic Connecticut Hall, the class stopped for photo-ops with the famous statue of Nathan Hale. He was sent to Yale at the age of 13, in 1773. He became a teacher, married and had three children. He signed up with the Connecticut militia when the Revolutionary War began. On September 8th, 1776, Hale volunteered to go behind enemy lines and report on British troop movements during the Battle of Long Island. He was captured and hanged by the British in Manhattan (at 66th Street and Third Avenue).

The British were redeemed (somewhat) as the confirmands toured the Yale Center for British Art which houses the most comprehensive collection of British

art outside the United Kingdom. It is both a public art museum and a world-renowned research institute.

The class also visited the Yale University Art Gallery, Sterling Memorial Library, and ice cream hang-out, and had lunch on the outside terrace of an Italian restaurant.

Faith intersecting culture and life was the topic of the day.

Adults. I can easily be persuaded to arrange a similar event sometime this summer if there is interest. Let me know!

R. Randy Day

Chris Cole Update

Below is an update to the article Chris wrote for our newsletter last month:

Jamaica'n Me Crazy

Eight dollars and an hour does not sound like much, but it was great news for our “adopted” fifth child. And great news for the rest of us as well. Pottery Barn in the Stamford Mall hired our Jesse and today marked his first day, afternoon to night actually, on the job. The news

highlighted a weekend in which Jesse wore a tuxedo for the first time, and basically enjoyed what most high schooler's take for granted, the high school prom. The smile on his face the next afternoon, not morning, told the whole story; Jesse was fitting in and loving it. Of course, progress is often offset with hardship – or reality for that matter; the football coach kicked him off of the team for next year because his job will interfere with pre-football season practices and likely practices during the season. When you have no money, and frankly do not like pain much, exchanging a football role for a good job is a trade worth taking.

Interestingly, Jesse's "good fortune" in finding our family through the First Church of Round Hill, has not been appreciated by his extended family. While his mother in Jamaica appreciates our support, the father and aunts on both sides have been down right obnoxious. Jesse's father has slandered him and removed his healthcare benefits. The aunts have accused him of not striving to be independent. None offer financial help, but all are upset that he would take support from non Jamaicans. Having never been a minority in this country, I cannot comprehend the logic. I am sure, however, that there is logic there

somewhere. All I know is that it is very difficult for a young man to gain employment without considerable parental guidance, significant effort, and a strong dose of good fortune.

Jesse has moved up the list for Stamford's SRO, single room only, subsidized housing program. We would love to see him find a place soon since our home is filling up with our returning college students and his work/school in Stamford makes the Greenwich commute challenging. The SRO process has been long and complicated so I have no real idea when/whether Jesse's hopes will materialize on this score.

My family and I have learned plenty of Jamaican and been tested in ways only parents of teenagers can fully appreciate. He is a good sole and we are happy that he has landed in our little world. And as with our own college age children, we will be happy to watch them fly away, finding their own niche, their own happiness.

Chris

Baptisms

Congratulations to all who were baptized on Sunday, May 31st.

Daisy Eloise Eileen Mayer, Lawson William Mayer, Lily Camellia Bermuda Mayer, and Kelly Elisabeth Spector.

Father's Day Clothing Drive

As a way to honor all fathers on Father's Day, the Outreach Committee would like to help the homeless men at Pacific House.

They have a very great need for the following items: Men's undershirts and underwear sizes L - XXL and men's socks. Members of our congregation will be serving a meal to the men on Father's Day. They will take all the collected items up to the shelter at that time. If you would like to prepare food and/or serve on Father's Day, please sign up in the parlor.

New Members and Confirmands

Emily Abbott, JJ Andrews, Josie Day, Nicholas Debany, Forest Crossman, Christian Morales, and J Whelan were confirmed on May 31st. Emily Day and Meyong Sook Lee also joined First Church that Sunday. Congratulations to all!

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Sandy Regan, Financial Secretary
Ernesto Damm, Property Manager

ommunity, rich in heritage, open and caring,