

THE TIE that binds

February 2019



Jesus Is The Greatest Valentine

Jesus is the greatest Valentine;
His love will never cease to be.
His love is bigger than the world;
I'm so glad that Jesus loves me.

Jesus is the greatest Valentine;
His heart is bigger than the sea.
And He always fills my heart with joy;
I'm so glad that Jesus loves me.

Yes He is the greatest valentine;
I will rejoice eternally.
I will lift my voice with all my heart;
I'm so glad that Jesus loves me.

Susan Y Nikitenko
February 3rd, 2012



Pastor's Page



Receiving New Members

As part of our business agenda at this year's Annual Meeting we had the joy of voting to receive new members.

We prepare to joyfully welcome...

***Bob and Jane Startz
Drew and Londa Wesche***

They are all joining by transfer of letter.

On Sunday, March 3rd during the morning worship service we will extend the Right Hand of Fellowship and celebrate their presence among us as we receive them into our family of faith.

There will be a special reception held in their honor.

SUNL Annual Meeting

We have received an invitation to the Annual Meeting of the SUNL (Stonington Union New London) Association of American Baptist Churches.

The meeting will take place on Sunday, February 24 at 2:00pm at the Flanders and Community Baptist Church,
162 Boston Post Road, East Lyme, CT.

We will worship together and learn of the ministries of our 22 American Baptist churches in southeastern CT. We will affirm and recognize some of the new pastors/interims who have joined our association in recent years, receive the 2018 financial report and vote on a budget for 2019. Refreshments will be served.

The pastor and two representatives from each church serve as official delegates, but everyone is invited to attend.

Please let me know if you'd like to join us!

Books We Have Recently Shared

*"This is the Dream" in honor of the Civil Rights Movement
Written by Diane Z. Shore and Jessica Alexander*



FEBRUARY MINISTERS

Communion: Prepare: Belle Jordan
Richard Tourjee

Serve: Belle Jordan
Richard Tourjee
Cathy Greenfield
Richard Tourjee

Assist Pastor: Catherine Hiller

Lay Leader

03– Marilyn Rodearmel
10 - Dennis Piscitello
17 - Richard Tourjee
24 - Mei Ling Liu

MARCH MINISTERS

Communion: Prepare: Dave and Carol Rowley

Serve: : Dave & Carol Rowley
Candy Zeppieri
Barbara Brant

Assist Pastor: Rick Tourjee

Lay Leader:

03 – Patti Tootell
10– Catherine Hiller
17– Marilyn Rodearmel
24 - Holly Boyle
31 - Pete Wong





FEBRUARY

01 – Gary Benson
14- Yvette Ackley
14 -Sandy Vocolina
18 - Celia Lew
20 – Ronald Tourjee
20 – Donna McLaughlin
27 – Richard Bassett

MARCH

02 – Burt Crooks
07 – Josh Chomicz
10 - Mela Magno
11 – Claudine Crooks
13 – Jennifer Kent
13 – Carla Berry
15 – Daniel Morton
15 – Peg Ackley
15 – Meghan Berry
15 – Gianni Pezzolesi
18 – Matthew Johnson
18 – Cassie Johnson
18 – Robert Johnson
21 – Cheryl Piscitello
25 – Heidi Butler
26 – Janice Watrous
29 – Portia Freeman
29 – Carol Case
31 – Aida Amuan



162nd Annual Meeting of Poquonnock Bridge Baptist Church
February 3rd, 2019

Members of the congregation convened for the annual meeting following the morning worship and communion service, beginning the meeting time with a wonderful pot-luck luncheon where food and fellowship were shared by all.

Moderator Catherine Hiller called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Pastor Claudine led us in a devotions.

The minutes of the 161st annual meeting held of February 4th, 2018, were read by Barbara Brant. There were no corrections or omissions, therefore the minutes were accepted and filed as read.

REPORTS:

Because the Annual Reports were passed out a week ago, people had an opportunity to peruse them at their leisure. Catherine led us through the booklet, allowing people to skim through the reports and bring up any questions. She also allowed for any additions to the written reports, which are as follows.

Pastor's Report:

- Each year Claudine tries to find a creative way of capturing the year in ministry in a way that is interesting and different. She reviewed the model of her report for this year, beginning with the "Day by Day" elements of our ministry and then going on to some "Highlights" of the year.
- Claudine reminded everyone that if anyone has questions about her report or any of her ministry throughout the year, they can feel free to reach out to her.
- She ended by saying that it is a joy for her to continue to serve, and a particular joy for her to have broken the pastor record for longest time served.

For the remainder of her time, Pastor Claudine asked Courtney Assad to come up and speak about Youth Ministry. We at PBBC are grateful for the gracious support of the other churches in the Youth Fusion in this time where we have few youth. Despite our lack of youth at the moment, we have still worked regularly with the planning team, to (to use a football phrase on this Super Bowl Sunday) "keep skin in the game." The pastors meet regularly, and Holly Boyle and Jonathan Liu often help out. Courtney's home church is Union Baptist, and while she is not often able to make it to worship here at PBBC, we are always happy to welcome her when we can.

- Courtney began by saying that it is always good to be a part of the congregation. She has provided a written report, but went over the highlights. There is not a huge contingency of youth from PBBC at this time, but Courtney said it is great to have the ones we do have: Hailey Basset, Alli and Ava Teti have all attended at times, and Wynonna Tuang is now old enough to begin attending as well. She looks forward to continuing to have more youth in the program, and she said that if anyone knows anyone who might be a good fit with the youth group, they can feel free to put them in touch with her for more information.
- The ministry of the Youth group is broken down into three pillars of work: a regular monthly meeting that rotates between the three churches, including PBBC; fun special events; and volunteering and community service activities. If you ever want to hear more about any of the activities of the Youth Group, you can let Claudine know and she will put you in touch with Courtney!

Church council:

A number of corrections in council committee reports were brought to the attention of the moderator:

- Hospitality – Marilyn Benson requested that we add a note that a memorial reception was held for Kristin Greene.
- Mission and Outreach – Carol Gatlin mentioned that a name needed correcting – page 11 should say that Jennifer Kent brings the Second Sunday food collection items to the Groton Food Bank.

With no other questions, comments, or corrections, we moved on to the review of the financial reports. Again, Catherine allowed the congregation time to flip through the reports and raise any questions. The following were raised:

- Rick Tourjee had a comment about page 19, noting that the Mystic Area Shelter and Hospitality is now called Always Home. He also had a question about how Care and Share is financially supported. Claudine said that it used to be that multiple places had financial amounts for funding Care and Share, both to support in general and to use benevolent money as above and beyond if needed. Now Groton Social Services and Ministry Pawcatuck partner with us, and we streamline requests more and get people help so funding has not run out as quickly and we have only had to support it through the Missions budget.
- Thomas Fund is still there, but doesn't need to be discussed
- Belle Jordan wanted to clarify that the line item in the Treasurer's Report listed as "Square Deposit" is part of the Christmas Bazaar income, and wants people to know that with this amount included, the total Bazaar income was closer to \$11,000 rather than in the range of \$5,000. This deposit is the income we receive from credit and debit cards at church sales, accomplished through scanning of cards with a phone/tablet attachment called a Square. It was noted that in the future it might be helpful to label in the report what the Square Deposit designation represents. Mei Ling also noted that the money from this goes directly into our account so it is reported separately.
- Barbara Brant had a question about the Amazon Smile income on page 24 appearing to be only \$0.54, but it's actually \$54; Mei Ling simply left off cent amounts.
- Sue Shontell raised a question about the line item designated "Weekly Deposit," as it is a rather high amount to be only a week's income. It was clarified that the amount listed was the total for the year, but it was designated as weekly because it comes in weekly. It was acknowledged that a change of wording there might be helpful.

With all questions being answered, Catherine stated that the reports would be filed as viewed.

The Auditors report was then reviewed, attached as a loose sheet in the Annual Report booklet.

- Rick Tourjee noted that the report reads that there was missing documentation from the Memorial Fund, but that has been resolved.
- It was also noted that the Memorial Fund does not have a checkbook.
- Barbara Brant moved that we approve the auditor's report. Marilyn Benson seconded. Discussion was allowed. Richard Tourjee asked if the recommendations in the report should be discussed; Catherine stated that the recommendations would be sent to the council pending passing of the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Catherine shifted the order of the agenda, and began with the presentation of new member candidates from the Worship and Membership committee.

- On behalf of the Pastor and the Deacons of Worship and Membership, Barbara Brant and the Worship and Membership Committee recommended the following people for membership at Poquonnock Bridge Baptist Church:
 - ◇ Bob Startz, by letter of transfer
 - ◇ Jane Startz, by letter of transfer
 - ◇ Drew Wesche, by letter of transfer
 - ◇ Londa Wesche, by letter of transfer
- The Worship and Membership Committee plans to extend the Right Hand of Fellowship to new members during worship on March 3rd.
- The membership voted and the motion to accept these new members was carried.

We then moved on to discussing the Proposed General Fund Budget for 2019.

- It had previously been moved and seconded by the finance committee that this budget be adopted. Dave Rowley, Finance Committee Chair, really wanted to be here to discuss the proposed budget, but due to injury was not able to be. Richard Tourjee presented the budget in his absence.
- Richard began by saying that he is sure that everyone has gone over the budget with a fine-toothed comb, and he is here to explain any confusing parts and answer any questions.
- The biggest increase written into the budget is in the area of the pastor's financial income and perks. Richard is very proud to be a part of the financial committee to make the recommendation of that raise to the council and congregation. He said that Claudine is an outstanding pastor and our recent pastoral evaluations certainly showed that an increase in this area is well-deserved.
- The topic of the budget was then opened to any questions.
- ◇ Betty Land raised a concern that the choir music budget should have been raised to \$200, particularly if we are in search of a new organist/choir director, because it will allow for more music purchasing and will be more attractive to a potential candidate.
- ◇ Pete Wong asked about item 3.07, which included a substantial increase for the historian's budget. Catherine explained that in the upcoming year we will be finding a new way to display the portraits of our PBBC pastors (after having to remove some to make room for the stained glass window) and this will likely involve some expense in terms of photo reducing/printing and framing. There are also a few identifying plaques that need to be created for some pictures displayed on the walls.
- ◇ Claudine wanted to offer a thank you for the hard work on the budget and in particular for the raise requested by the Finance Committee and the Pastoral Relations Committee. Claudine wanted to explain how her salary budgeting usually happens and how these decisions are made. It is typical for us to receive from MMBB a recommendation for a cost of living increase for pastors. They recommended a 2% increase. Claudine prepared information about this 2% increase and brought it as a request to the PRC. The PRC then decided that this was not an acceptable raise considering her excellent performance this year, and decided to add a 3% merit raise. Claudine emphasized that it is rare for a group to advocate so passionately and faithfully for something that wasn't even requested by the pastor, and she wanted to express her deep gratitude for the immense blessing of the committee members who were willing to go above and beyond what the denomination recommended.

- ◇ Pete Wong raised another question, asking about item 4.01 – the sexton’s compensation – noting that it was the only staff position without a raise. Belle Jordan confirmed that this was not an oversight, and the Finance Committee complied with her request to forgo a raise.
- ◇ Rick Tourjee asked about item 4.05, wondering if the large amount spent on roof maintenance was offset by insurance money. The answer was yes, insurance and the memorial fund together paid for these repairs.
- ◇ Richard Tourjee wanted to note that in the Auditor’s report, there was a difference between the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019. Mei Ling explained that this was because the final bank statement was December 10th but the year we closed ended on December 31st, so the amounts reflected in Mei Ling’s statement versus the Auditor’s report do not match.
- With no further questions or discussion, the congregation turned to Betty’s request to increase the music fund. Burt Crooks moved to amend the original motion presented by the Council and Finance Committee, that we accept the budget as written, adding an amendment to include an additional \$100 in music supplies. Rick Tourjee seconded the amendment. The Finance Committee and Mei Ling agreed to the amendment. The motion was then to accept the proposed General Fund Budget for 2019 and increase the music line item by \$100. A vote was held and the motion passed.

Next, we turned to the Proposed Mission Budget

- The Mission Committee has recommended the budget as seen on page 31 of the Annual Report booklet.
 - Claudine wanted to add another word of thanks to the congregation, explaining that this year there was an increase in both people pledging and the amounts pledged so there was more missions money to work with. This allowed for increases in mission giving.
 - She also noted that there was a change in terminology: Noank Group Homes is now called Noank Community Support Services. These and other community support groups are doing their best to adapt so that they can continue to respond to the needs of the modern world, and it is exciting to have more money to pledge to groups like these.
- The motion passed.

Finally, a report was presented on behalf of the Nomination Committee, as seen on page 32.

- Catherine wanted to begin by thanking those who are going off the council at this time on behalf of the congregation. She made particular note of the long history of contributions to our church’s financial operations made by Ron and Bob Land, switching on and off for 20 or so years to keep the church running smoothly.
- Pat needed to make a few small changes to the report:
- ◇ Sandy Vocolina has asked to move off because personal issues preclude her from continuing her council position. Cathy Greenfield has agreed to take over for Sandy on the Hospitality Committee.
- ◇ Marilyn Benson has also requested to be taken off the council. Sarah Adams has agreed to take over for Marilyn, also in Hospitality.
- Catherine read the names of those coming on the council or changing positions:
 - ◇ Dave Rowley, assuming role of Vice Moderator
 - ◇ Pete Wong, coming on as Financial Secretary
 - ◇ Portia Freeman, coming on for Worship and Membership

Minutes cont.

Belle Jordan announced that she is looking for a few strong congregation members to volunteer to put out the tall garbage cans every Sunday for collection early on Tuesday. Jonathan Liu and Drew Wesche volunteered to take this on, and they were asked to see Belle to figure out logistics.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:22p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Heidi Butler, Church Clerk

A lovely Thank You from Carolyn and Bob and

Claudine & our Church family.

Z.

*And grateful
are the receivers.*

*Thank you all
so much.*

*There are no words to
express the gratitude Bob
and I have for you all.
Everything was beautiful.
Connie would have been
glad to see how many
people cared about her.*

*Love and blessings,
Carolyn & Bob*

Youth News

Youth Meetings

This year our regular youth group meeting will take place the third Sunday of every month from 4-6pm. We will rotate churches each month. Here is our rotation schedule:

February 17th - Poquonnock Bridge Baptist Church

March 17th - Union Baptist Church

April 21st - Noank Baptist Church

May 19th - Poquonnock Bridge Baptist Church

Go to Courtney's email to respond to these invitations: youthcoopdirector@gmail.com

RESCHEDULED: Bowling at High Rollers Luxury Lanes

Saturday, February 10th 3-5 pm
(Meet at 2:30 if you need a ride at UBC)

Volunteering: Cabin Fever for Always Home

Saturday, February 23rd 12-4 pm

Always Home is again looking for volunteers at the annual Cabin Fever Festival at the Olde Mystick Village. Last year we had fun helping out and it supports a mission close to all of our churches



Camp Wightman Spring Work Weekend

Saturday & Sunday,

April 26-27, 2019
Fun, Work, Food,
and Fellowship

We will take on some necessary projects and light
the first campfire of the 2019 camping season.
Arrive Saturday morning by 9am--finish up Sunday
by 3pm

Call or email your interest.

860-376-2179

campwightman@abcconn.org



[illegible]



Come, let us worship and bow down.

Psalm 95:6-7

195TH ABCCONN ANNUAL GATHERING

SATURDAY, MAY 4TH, 2019

8:30AM – 2:30PM

Theme: Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down

The event is designed as an experience of worship -- we will worship and bow down before the God who calls us to gather, to work, to minister, but above all, to worship

The location is yet to be announced -- watch the ABCCONN website and the weekly eNews for more details about the event

Registration and more information will be in the next ABCCONN mailing

Save the date!!!

Grace Spaces – A Production of the American Baptist Churches of Connecticut

The ABCCONN Staff is thrilled to announce the launch of our new podcast, Grace Spaces. Join us on the second Monday of each month (starting March 11, 2019) for a powerful 30-minute conversation with a fellow sojourner as we discuss themes like cross-cultural church development, being Missionally-minded, spiritual health, leaving a legacy, and more!

You can find Grace Spaces on Apple Podcasts, SoundCloud, or abcconn.org. Look for the link in your weekly e-news

MYSTIC AREA ECUMENICAL COUNCIL
Invites you to attend

**Caring About Environmental
Racial Justice**

Executive Director and Founder
Interreligious Eco-Justice Network

*IREJN Mission: To inspire and empower religious communities
in Connecticut to be faithful stewards of Earth.*

Expert commentary presented by
TERRI EICKEL

**Sunday, February 24th
3-4:30 pm**

Mystic Congregational Church
UCC - Parish Hall

*43 East Main Street, Mystic CT 06355
Light refreshments served—all are welcome!*

Poquonnock Bridge Baptist Church
1241 Poquonnock Road
Groton, CT 06340