



**A Just Peace, Open and Affirming,  
Multiracial and Multicultural Congregation  
Intentionally Inclusive... Expect the Unexpected**

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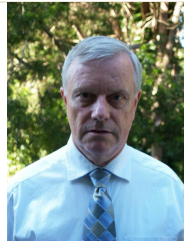
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*From the Interim  
Pastor*

Intrigued by the request of the worship commission to bring a memento or two home from vacation, I picked up stones that caught my eye as I walked the ocean beaches in Wellfleet on Cape Cod and shells I found along the bay beaches. I like to pick up flat stones and skim them into the surf

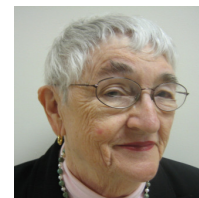


and see how many times I can get a stone to skip between the waves (usually five or six). Some flat stones are keepers, not skippers. Other stones of various kinds are also keepers. I have yet to find a beach stone that looks as good sitting in my hand as it does peeking out of the sand.

As you can see from this photo, the Atlantic Ocean washes up quite a variety of stones onto the Cape Cod National Seashore beaches. I'm not a geologist, so I can't identify the

stones by name, only by my attraction to them. They've all been worried over and worked on by the forces of nature: wind and sea and sand and other stones. If I hadn't caught sight of them and collected them last week, they might well have been swept back into the ocean by now. My stones and shells are gifts from earth and sea, received on the boundary between land and ocean, a kind of "thin place."

*Doug Clark*



**News from  
Around the Parish**

*by Peg Lorenz*

On July 5 we received the wonderful news that the Pastoral Search Committee has presented to Council the name of the person recommended to be our new permanent pastor. It was a time of rejoicing for all of us around the communion table. The letter sent, or given, to all the church gives more information about Rev. Peter Dennebaum and the schedule of events the weekend of July 24-26 when Peter will be in town. The church expresses its gratitude and appreciation for the devotion, time and energy the search committee devoted to this important task.

We were happy to have Ron Hopson leading worship and Harry Knox as our guest preacher and leader at Nurture on July 5.

The Site Development Strategy Group has been hard at work with the PEP (Potential Equity Partner) these past two weeks and will bring their report to a hearing called for July 12. We also will meet the principals from the PEP who will make a few remarks. The Group strongly urges that everyone who can possibly do so come to the hearing. Important decisions must be made quickly and the Strategy Group wants all of us to be involved and informed.

**Nan** and **Nick McConnell** are “ecstatically proud” to announce the arrival of **Haven Nicholas Lane** born to Abby and Anthony Lane on June 22 in Colorado Springs. After their visit to meet their grandson, they confirm that he is “a blue-eyed, brown hair, gorgeous bundle of joy.” What more can we say? Congratulations to all the family.

**Keisa Bennett** has finished her fellowship at Georgetown and will soon be leaving for the University of KY Department of Family Medicine where she will be teaching, seeing patients and doing research. She will be sorely missed at First Church. She wants to keep in touch and visit when she can and host anyone who would like to visit Lexington, KY. She says “Thanks to every one at church for supporting me and trusting me to become so integrated in church activities this year.” Keisa received a special laying on of hands blessing at our worship service on June 28<sup>th</sup> Godspeed, Keisa!

Travelers’ news:

First Church was well represented at General Synod in Grand Rapids, MI. **Byron Adams** went out early for meetings relating to GLBT issues. **BBZ** taught a class. Also attending: **Sandy Sorensen, Mari Castellanos, Karen Byrne** and **Phyllis Gillie**. We know **Doug Clark** and his family were enjoying their holiday in New England. **Tom Lopp** will spend the summer on the west coast visiting his family and making his annual pilgrimage to Alaska. **The whole Marsh family** will gather in Vermont in August to celebrate **Jo and Dwight’s 50<sup>th</sup>** wedding anniversary. Meanwhile, the **John Marsh family** and **Nora Marsh** went to Milwaukee to visit Charlie Marsh over the Fourth. **Jamey Moore** is vacationing in Providence, RI June 27-July 12. **Jeanne** and **Randy Herrick-Stare** are celebrating their son’s 30<sup>th</sup> birthday in New Hampshire over the Fourth. **Phyllis Gillie** has just returned from her travels that included attending the Central Atlantic Conference meeting and driving to St. Paul, MN for a Christian in the Visual Arts conference. **Faith Brightbill** leaves on July 9<sup>th</sup> for her cabin in Maine. Switzerland is the destination for **Karen Pence** and **Brian Bucks**; part holiday and part work related. **Meg Maguire** recently enjoyed a family reunion. A big trip is coming up for the **Byrne family**. Peter writes, “Karen and I, along with our children, Chris and Abby, are going to Senegal at the end of July to visit our other daughter, Maggie, who is serving in the Peace Corps there. This will be our first time in Africa.” **Anne** and **Richard Griffis** have returned from their trip which included a

visit in the Grand Tetons National Park. Anne spoke in church of the magnificence of the park and how privileged we are to have places of such great natural beauty preserved for all to enjoy. We should have some interesting “treasures” to share at our homecoming in September. **Barbara Hayes** had a family reunion on June 27-28 at the home of her nephew and his wife and family in PA. A highlight was a concert on Saturday night: Barbara’s great-nephew, 13, played two Chopin waltzes, Barbara’s niece, a concert pianist, played a movement of a Grieg concerto she had just played in a concert in LaCrosse, WI, and great-niece Maureen played some pieces on her new cello. They had a wonderful weekend visiting and, of course, eating.

In our prayers: **Joan King** was involved in a five-car accident on the Bay Bridge. Her car had to be towed away and she suffered multiple bruises and a broken leg. She is recovering at home and appreciates cards and visits and it wouldn’t hurt to take some food over. Her son and his family are here the week of July 5<sup>th</sup> so she will be well cared at the moment; but she will have many weeks of recovery. **Ron Hopson** asks for prayers for his family. His brother is holding on but slowly fading and another family member is seriously ill.

#### From Pastoral Search Committee

Dear First Church Community,

We have news of great joy! After many, many hundreds of person hours reading profiles and related materials, listening to sermon tapes,

interviewing candidates, witnessing them preach in their home church and neutral pulpits and discussion about where God is leading us, the Called Pastor Search Committee has joyfully reached consensus about recommending a candidate to you for our Pastor.

In our discussions last year around the writing of our Local Church Profile you specified twelve leadership expectations for our settled Pastor. And while it was clear that all twelve are important, four were held out to be of utmost importance:

- **We are a church that demands a strong pulpit.**
- **We are a church that needs leadership with a love for youth ministry.**
- **We are a church in transition and in need of pastoral care.**
- **We are a church that strives to be intentionally inclusive.**

We are excited that we have found a candidate who not only has gifts or experience in each of the twelve leadership expectations but one who is particularly strong in these four key areas. We recommend to you – enthusiastically and unanimously – the Reverend Peter Dennebaum.

- Peter is an exceptional preacher with a gift for blending his deep spirituality, intellectual curiosity, cultural knowledge, and sense of humor into meaningful messages for life today.
- Peter currently serves as the full-time Associate Pastor of Christian Education and Member Outreach at First Congregational Church in Chappaqua, New York. A number of his written references commented on the success he has

had there in turning the CE program around, starting a youth group, teaching the largest confirmation class in years and developing personal relationships with the children and youth.

- Peter's ability to connect with all people is amazing. He has a pastor's heart, strength and insight for developing lay leadership. He is well loved by both his congregants and colleagues. Here is what a few of them shared with us:

*"People, adults and children alike, are drawn to Peter. They immediately sense his authenticity and genuineness."*

*"His deep faith and integrity, his determination to bring justice and peace, coupled with his humor, ever smiling face and uplifting spirit brings everyone together no matter what the circumstances are."*

*"Quite clearly people realize that Peter sees them all ~ regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation — as his neighbors to love. That is a true foundation for a successful life in ministry."*

- Peter is a 41 year old gay man. He was raised in a devout Roman Catholic family and converted to Protestantism at the age of twenty. He is a native of Germany with a multicultural outlook. He is fluent in German and English, has basic knowledge of French, Spanish and Arabic, and has passed proficiency exams in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. He has three brothers; two are doctors and one is a Roman Catholic priest.

Before entering parish ministry, Peter spent several years working in human resources management for German financial institutions.

In the German system, candidates for ministry study theology for

approximately eight years and are required to pass two examinations roughly equivalent to a bachelor's and a master's degree in the U.S. Peter's study of Protestant theology took place at Eberhard-Karls-Universität in Tübingen (where Dietrich Bonhoeffer also studied), Universität Hamburg, and Humboldt-Universität in Berlin. His primary emphases were interreligious dialogue between Christianity, Judaism and Islam, and economic ethics. He wrote his thesis on "Justice and Peace for all: The Gaza-Jericho-Agreement and the Importance for the Current Middle East Peace Process" in 1997. He passed his first theological examination in 1997 and his second in 2006.

Peter's ministry is full of creativity and energy. During our conversations with him it was impossible to keep track of his ideas for Christian Education, member recruitment, worship, social outreach, music, etc.

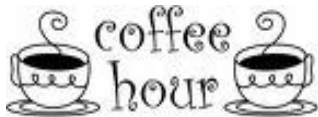
We have faith that once you get acquainted with Peter as we have, you will agree that Peter possesses the personality and ministerial gifts and experience that our church needs at this unique time in our journey. Your thoughtful input last fall as we developed our Local Church Profile together served as the foundation for our discernment process as we read Ministerial Profiles. It was frequently stated at that time that we would not be able to find a candidate who had experience or gifts in all twelve of the leadership expectations that we selected. In Peter, we have found someone that we can confidently say has experience or recognizable gifts in each of those twelve expectations.

We look forward to talking with you about our joyful interactions with Peter. We hope you will make every effort to attend the introductory events we have planned for the candidating weekend, and we will be reaching out to all First Church commissions and members to answer any questions you may have before then.

We believe God has led us to this exciting moment in our ministry, and so does Peter. We are looking forward to growing together as a faith community, serving others and proclaiming the good news of God's love. Thank you for the privilege of representing you in this process.

Sincerely,

The First Church Called Pastor  
Search Committee



Hosts for July

**12** Laura Mecagni, Peter Tracey,  
Sandy Sorensen

**19** Diana Gomez de Molina, Mari  
Castellanos, Randy Herrick-Stare,  
Michael Brooks

**26** Dwight Marsh, Nora Marsh,  
Karen & Peter Byrne

## July Birthdays

Susanna Brylawski, Tadashi  
Andrew Dodge, Kim Darling, Sid  
Fowler, Ellen Bushmiller,  
Katharine Ross, Fletcher Lutz, Paul  
Smolinsky, Julia Smeltzer,  
Katharine Williams, Sally Olson,  
Gwen Heard, Eric Steiner, Jamey  
Moore, Cynthia Hobbs, Beth  
Minear

## Calendar for July

### Sunday, July 12

11:00 Worship Commission,  
Building Museum Café  
11:30 New member orientation,  
Building Museum Café  
12:00 Bible Workbench  
1:00 Sunday Worship  
Preaching: Rev. Ron Hopson  
Second Sunday Offering: Shaw  
Community Ministry  
2:00 Fellowship Hour  
2:30 Congregational Hearing on  
Site Development

### Monday, July 13

6:30 Finance Commission, Nora  
Marsh's office

### Sunday, July 19

12:00 Bible Workbench  
1:00 Sunday Worship  
Preaching: Rev. Doug Clark  
2:00 Fellowship Hour

### Tuesday, July 21

6:30 Council

## Sunday, July 26:

### Candidating Sunday

12:00 Bible Workbench  
12:15 Choir Rehearsal  
1:00 Sunday Worship  
Preaching: The Rev. Peter  
Dennebaum, candidate for pastor  
2:00 Congregational Meeting, to  
discuss and vote on the  
recommendation of the Pastoral  
Search Committee to call the Rev.  
Peter Dennebaum as Pastor of First  
Congregational UCC, effective  
November 1, 2009.  
2:30 Reception in Fellowship  
Hall, hosted by the Pastoral Search  
Committee

### Meet Peter Dennebaum Candidating Weekend Events

#### Friday, July 24th

7:00 Potluck dinner at the home  
of Byron Adams.

R.s.v.p.

[byronadams@verizon.net](mailto:byronadams@verizon.net).

#### Saturday, July 25th

11-1 Potluck brunch at the  
home of John and Carolyn  
Marsh.

R.s.v.p.

[john\\_marshall@datatel.com](mailto:john_marshall@datatel.com).

5-8 Potluck for families with  
children or youth at the  
home of Susan and Doug  
Anderson.

R.s.v.p.

[sdgrmt@verizon.net](mailto:sdgrmt@verizon.net).

#### Sunday, July 26th

12:30 Children's Worship  
1:00 Worship  
2:00 Coffee Hour  
2:30 Congregational Meeting