



*Round Hill
Community Church*

The News Letter

September 2007

Catching the Spirit of Round Hill



Pastor Bob Culp

Following a worship service a few months ago, I was approached by a man who had been in attendance. He told me he had arrived quite early from out of town, and, having spent an hour or so before the service reading through a recent copy

of our church newsletter and our Annual Report in its entirety, he wanted very much to speak to me about the uniqueness of our church.

In our time together, he chronicled his disappointments with his own church experience in his home state of Ohio – dwindling attendance in church school and worship, the dry predictability of the services, a narrowly defined theology that seemed exclusive and lifeless. He said that it seemed to him that his church was doing nothing more than rearranging chairs on the deck of the *Titanic*, struggling not to sink and seeking only to survive.

But here at Round Hill Community Church, he said, he sensed something very different, something much alive, something unique and engaging and attractive. He wanted to know the secret of our life together. I spoke with him about our church's history and its struggle for independence; about our commitment to being a community church in which our unity is celebrated within the context of our rich diversity; about our church family that is small enough so that everyone is known by name and yet large enough to have had a beneficial impact upon the world's wounds and hungers and hurts; about our support for strong worship, music, and educational experiences; and about our fellowship's desire to focus upon those

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Rally Day – September 9 Bring Your Friends!

Please join us on the front lawn after the worship service to get a preview of the plans for this year's Church School with parents, students, and our new Director of Children's Ministries, Tom Mahoney.

Rally Day is also a time to reconnect with old friends, meet new ones, and catch up on summer adventures. It is a time to look forward to the many opportunities at Round Hill Community Church for education through the Center for Faith Development, fellowship activities organized by Church Activities, and Benevolence and Outreach projects that benefit people both locally and internationally.

Our faithful crew from the Men's Group will grill burgers and hot dogs, and friends and members are asked to bring salads (no mayo). Children and teens can participate in activities and crafts and are encouraged to bring friends.





New Director of Children’s Ministries Thomas Mahoney



We are pleased to announce that Thomas Mahoney will be joining us as the new Director of Children’s Ministries beginning in September, 2007. Tom will be working approximately 20 hours a week as he leads the church’s program in Christian education for children from nursery age through middle school.

In addition to leading and teaching in the Sunday morning “Rotation Model” for church school children, Tom will coordinate the children’s monthly outreach and mission endeavors, recruit childcare for church programs, and provide leadership for special events throughout the year, including Rally Day activities, Advent Workshop and Yule Log Service, Christmas on Round Hill, the annual Christmas Pageant, Easter Day activities, and the annual church picnic in June.

Tom is currently the Director of the Office of Special Clinical Services in the Greenwich Department of Health, where he has served since 1989, and where he will continue to work in addition to his new church responsibilities. A 1981 graduate of Fordham University’s Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education, Tom directed the religious education programs for three churches, two of which are here in Greenwich, after which he became more focused in the realm of human services. He has remained involved in local church programs, affirming and embracing the role and value of the spiritual life.

He says, “Whatever career I have chosen, teaching has been a fundamental responsibility, serving as a high school English and Religion teacher, a director

of several religious education programs, a trainer of volunteers in several non-profit organizations, and a trainer for professional emergency responders. I am passionate that religious education builds community, fosters spiritual development, and provides values that will be used in everyday life.”

At Round Hill, Tom looks forward to building “a community where children know, value, and live a Christian life – that they care for one another, are concerned about justice, that they help those who are less fortunate; that they know that God is alive and present to them in the good days and bad . . . that the older children and youth will mentor/nurture the younger ones.”

He also has indicated that he looks forward to serving the church in this new, expanded position in Christian education. He affirms how the church members and staff have welcomed him to the church, calling them “hospitable, engaging, and, most of all, sincere.”

Round Hill Community Church and its leaders eagerly anticipate Tom’s leadership beginning in September, and celebrate his willingness to embrace such an important and exciting calling.

Rotation Stories

The Church School will continue to utilize the Rotation Workshop Model as the structure for its curriculum. Rotation workshop means that children work on the same theme/story for a month using different learning approaches each Sunday. The workshops may include art, storytelling, drama, music, cooking, and/or Bible literacy.

This Year’s Themes/Stories

September	Our Special Church
October	Adam and Eve
November	Joseph
December	Christmas Prophecies
January	David
February	Prayer
March	Road to Emmaus
April	Jesus and the Lepers
May	Greatest Commandment
June	Church Picnic/Year-End Wrap-Up



CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

Teaching Teams

Volunteer teachers are needed to assist with the Rotation Workshop classes. The beauty of this model is that it allows people with different gifts and abilities to make a commitment for one month – the duration of the theme/story. Are you gifted in cooking, art, music, drama, film, storytelling? Whatever your talent may be, the children in our program need you. Recruit a friend and team teach. On Rally Day, see Tom Mahoney and Eileen Brehm at the Church School table. Lesson plans, materials, and teaching tips will be provided.



September Mission Outreach – Waterside School

Waterside School in Stamford is a co-educational kindergarten to fifth grade independent school whose mission is to provide children who are too often underserved, access to opportunities for personal and educational excellence and to prepare them, in time, for positions of leadership and responsibility.

The Waterside School opened with twenty-seven students, a handful of teachers, and a bold and timely ambition. Now spanning six grades, with one hundred students and a teaching faculty of twenty-three, the school has grown larger, stronger, and better.

Members of Waterside's Class of 2006 earned admission and scholarships to the area's finest independent schools – Brunswick School, Convent of the Sacred Heart, Greenwich Academy, Stanwich School, and others.

During September we will collect school supplies for Waterside. Bring your donations to church and deposit them in the school bus. At the end of the month we will give them to RHCC member Jody Visage, who is Head of Waterside School.



Change for Children – Children for Change

Our ongoing mission initiative will involve collecting change for a children's organization. Instead of passing around the offering basket at the start of class, children will drop their coins in an old-fashioned milk can every Sunday. We ask that children collect change during the week, bring it to church on Sunday, and drop it in the milk can. When we have filled the milk can, our children will vote to donate the funds to an organization that benefits children. We hope that they learn that the change they give will change another child's life.

Blessing of the Animals

The second annual Blessing of the Animals will be Sunday, September 30, in the Community House. It is a time for us to celebrate the joy and love pets bring to our lives. Tell your friends about this special Sunday and invite them to join us. They, too, can bring a pet.





THE CENTER FOR FAITH DEVELOPMENT AT RHCC

*The Center nurtures an inward journey of prayer and study along with an outward journey of worship and engagement to deepen our understanding of God's purpose in our lives.
We seek to follow Jesus Christ together and individually through a variety of activities.*



Shannon White
Assistant Minister

Welcome back to the Center. The 2007-2008 program year is full of lots of exciting opportunities for faith development and enrichment at Round Hill Community Church. This year, we are planning an in-depth Bible study taking a look at the Gospels of Mark and Luke and some of the Hebrew prophets. We also will be offering exciting forums that are designed to touch on a variety of interests and stimulate conversation. Additionally, we plan to continue to offer opportunities for people of all ages to put their faith into action through regular service projects.

September Events

Sunday, Sept. 9 Rally Day



**Sunday, Sept. 16 Bible Study, 11:15 to noon
Gospel of Mark**

The first of our three studies will provide an overview of this earliest Gospel writing and focus on the first section of the book. Rev. Susan DeGeorge will be leading the study of Mark on September 16, October 14, and November 18.

The Rev. Susan DeGeorge is Associate Pastor at South Presbyterian Church in Dobbs Ferry and teaches religion and philosophy at Mercy College there. She is also a lawyer and has a M.A. in comparative religion from Columbia University, and an M.Phil. in biblical studies from Union Theological Seminary in New York. She is currently a D.Min. candidate at Drew Theological Seminary. Rev. DeGeorge enjoys playing guitar and flute, gardening, traveling, reading, hiking, and having interesting conversations with folks who really want to change the world.

Thursday, Sept. 20 International Day of Peace



We will gather at 7:30 p.m. for a candlelight prayer service before we walk the Labyrinth on the eve of the world-wide commemoration of Peace Day. All ages are welcome.



CENTER FOR FAITH DEVELOPMENT AT RHCC

Sunday, Sept. 23 **Worship: Report on Nicaragua Trip**

On August 11, sixteen adults and youth from RHCC traveled to Guanacastillo, Nicaragua, to participate in a work camp through Bridges to Community, an international development non-governmental organization based in Ossining, New York. Bridges to Community organizes and facilitates international cross-cultural service trips for volunteers to live and work in materially poor communities, most of which occur in Nicaragua, the second poorest country in the Western hemisphere. This year, they expect to take nearly 1,000 volunteers on almost 50 trips to participate with local communities on their development projects.



An experience with Bridges allows participants to catch an authentic glimpse of how a vast majority of the world's population lives. They encourage volunteers to think critically and carefully about our global interdependence, foreign policies, economic impact, and stereotypes. While Bridges trips are typically thought of as service trips, they encourage volunteers to think of service as an experience of "what we can do

together" rather than "what we can do for them." And together, in a week, we built two cinder block houses that will now be home for two families of four.

Bridges philosophy says, "Our sincere hope is that by living and working alongside one another we can build friendships and understanding that are life changing for volunteers on both sides of the 'bridge.'" This indeed was the experience of the 16 RHCC members and friends who traveled to Nicaragua in August.



High School Discussion Group

Twice a month high school youth meet during the worship service in the upstairs room of the Community House to discuss issues that affect their lives and their faith. Several of our youth made the trip to Nicaragua this summer and found it to be a particularly rewarding experience. The group will plan and participate in other service projects that benefit both our local and the wider national and international communities.

Parents and church leaders will alternate guiding the group with the aid of our church school curriculum for older youth. Dates will be announced in the Bulletin and by email.





THE CENTER FOR FAITH DEVELOPMENT AT RHCC

Sunday, Sept. 23 Forum, 11:15 to 12 noon

“Theology and Literature: Looking at the Works of Emily Dickinson – Wrestling with the Face of Consciousness,” Dr. Lee Schlesinger



Inheritors of a radical-Protestant tradition, many of the great American writers struggle with its language and concerns and both evade it and reinvent it. No writer does this more dramatically and powerfully than the great poet Emily Dickinson. We will read several of her poems that develop her complicated relation to her Christian tradition and that indicate the extent of her spiritual and intellectual daring.

After receiving his B.A. from Brandeis University (1969) and his Ph.D. from Yale University (1973), where he taught for two years, Lee Schlesinger came to SUNY Purchase in 1975, and has been teaching there since then. His primary interest is American Literature, specifically 20th-century American poetry, and much of his teaching is of 19th-century writers Emerson, Whitman, Dickinson, and Melville. His signature course, however, is “The Bible” – a literary and historical survey of that vast and troubling text. He also teaches and lectures in high schools, libraries, churches, and synagogues. Beyond the classroom he is an avid and experienced birder, and a wide-eyed, appreciative traveler.

**Sunday, Sept. 30 Blessing of the Animals
Service 10:00 a.m.,
Community House**



All creatures great and small are welcome along with their human companions to come for our second annual service of blessing. Like last year, we will hold this service in the Community House so that our animal friends feel as comfortable as possible!



One of our members remarked that “to see how universal a love of animals is, unifying young and old, rich and not so, outgoing and introverted was so moving. We take these creatures into our lives and imperceptibly they creep deeply into our hearts. How close they are to the essence of God in the unconditional love they give to us at the same time that they have their own distinct personalities and characters.”



THE CENTER FOR FAITH DEVELOPMENT AT RHCC

Memoir Writing for Seniors with Jessica Bram



What better reason is there to write one's memoirs than to pass down a wealth of material and wisdom to the next generations? Geared to seniors, this is a friendly, supportive workshop in which to write your memoirs, share your memoirs with others, and learn good

writing techniques to make your work interesting and enjoyable. This workshop is ideal for beginners who wish to get started writing their memoirs for the first time. It is also geared to those who have already done some memoir writing and are ready to share and further shape their work.

This workshop is based upon a highly popular Memoir Writing workshop that Jessica Bram taught for several years at the Lifetime Learners' Institute in Norwalk.

Memoir Writing for Seniors Meeting Room, Thursdays, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

September 20, 27 October 11, 18, 25
November 1

\$375 for six-week session

To register, mail a check to:
Jessica Bram, 32 Webb Road, Westport, CT 06880

For more information, please contact Jessica
at (203) 227-3250 or
jessica@westportwritersworkshop.com

Jessica Bram Communications was founded in 2000 by Jessica Bram, a professional business writer, journalist, and editor with 25 years experience in banking, government, and real estate development. Jessica is an essayist and writer whose articles and essays have been published and syndicated in national and regional newspapers and magazines. Her commentaries are regularly heard on the NPR station WSHU (91.1) during "All Things Considered" and "Morning Edition." Jessica Bram is currently on the adjunct faculty of Norwalk Community College, where she teaches literature and writing.

Intercepted Correspondence – Bringing about Change in the World

Bob Culp found this piece to be particularly relevant at this time, especially after hearing from some of the participants of the mission trip to Nicaragua.

From an address given by the Rev. Jim Wallis, Founder of Sojourners, to students at Georgetown University in May 2007.

"There are always great inhumanities that we inflict upon one another in this world, great injustices that cry out to God for redress, and great gaps in our moral recognition of them. When the really big offenses are finally corrected, finally changed, it is always and only because something has happened to change our perception of the moral issues at stake. Something gets our attention, something goes deeper than it has before and hooks us in places we call the heart, the soul, the spirit.

In many places of the world, what we see now offends us, offends our understanding of the sanctity and dignity of life, offends our basic notions of fairness and justice, offends our most basic values. It violates our idea of the common good, and starts to tug at our deepest places. We cross the line of unacceptability. We become impatient and intolerant in the face of injustices.

Ask where your gifts intersect with the groaning needs of the world – there is your vocation. The antidote to cynicism is not optimism, but action. And action is finally born out of hope. Out in the world, you will live your way into a new way of thinking and being. The key is to believe that the world can be changed, because it is only that belief that ever changes the world. And if not us, who will believe? And if not you, who?"



BENEVOLENCE AND OUTREACH

Beach Day 2007

As you may have seen on the front page of the August 25 issue of the *Greenwich Time*, this year's Beach Day was another great success for all who attended. Regina Repenning did an outstanding job organizing this wonderful event, which was held on the rain date. The beach was quite empty because of the iffy weather, which was great for the families who traveled to Greenwich from Harlem. The 90 adults and children were enormously enthusiastic about the sand, surf, and picnic lunch. All ten adults and seven young people from our church enjoyed sharing such a meaningful experience.

– Helen O'Malley





LES BEAUX ARTS GALLERY



Les Beaux Arts gallery is opening its new season with a wonderful exhibition featuring the work Hazel Jarvis, a well-known artist from Greenwich who specializes in botanical illustrations, abstract landscapes, and mixed media collages. The show opens September 9, and will run through October 10. There will be an opening reception on Sunday, September 9, at the Gallery from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. All are welcome.

Ms. Jarvis received her B.A. in History and Theory of Art from Sussex University in England. Upon moving to the United States, she studied botanical illustration with Carol Bolt in New York, and during a five-year residency in Tokyo in the 1990s, studied traditional Japanese painting with Shoko Ohta, a well-known fourth generation artist. She has incorporated the highly decorative Japanese approach to nature into her own work.

Ms. Jarvis's paintings have been featured in exhibitions organized by the American Society of Botanical Artists, including shows at Longwood Gardens and the New York Horticultural Society. Her work is held in the permanent collection of the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation at Carnegie Mellon University and was included in its tenth International Exhibition in 2001. Her work was most recently shown at a three-person exhibition, "In and Out of the Garden," at the Flinn Gallery in Greenwich, in the fall of 2006. Hazel Jarvis lives and teaches in Greenwich.

– Mirella Hajjar, Gallery Curator

MUSIC AT ROUND HILL



Renowned trumpeter Dominic Derasse will join our choir on September 9, Rally Day. For the Prelude, he will perform Albinoni's Concerto in B flat major and for the Postlude, Martini's *Toccata*.

Born in Paris and growing up in Nice, France, Dominic Derasse studied trumpet with Gaston Cagnon, and solfège and theory at the Nice Conservatory of Music. He graduated from the Paris Conservatory with First Prize in 1979. Mr. Derasse was the 1982 laureate of the French National Teaching Diploma in trumpet and began to teach at the Vernon (Eure) and Vaulx le Penil (Ile de France) music conservatories.

In August 1985, Dominic won the position of principal trumpet with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in South Carolina. He moved to New York in 1987, and has fast become one of the most sought after trumpet players and educators in the area. He has appeared with the Eos Orchestra, New York Grand Opera, New York Philharmonic, American Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke's, and Concordia, and has played in a variety of Broadway shows.

**Check the calendar on our website
roundhillcommunitychurch.org
for the most current information
on events at RHCC.
Click on *Calendar* under "Topics."
Then click on individual events
for times and details.**

PASTORAL MESSAGE

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things we have in common that bring us together, rather than those things that could serve to divide us.

In response, he observed that there is a special “spirit” here at Round Hill, and he mused as he made his way to his car that he wished every church and every church member could “catch the spirit of Round Hill.”

I quite agree! There is a unique “spirit” here within our shared ministries and mission as a church. Expressed within our church’s creed and prayer, experienced within our life as a non-denominational and independent church, this “spirit” is known in the expansive and life-giving graciousness of those members and friends who are drawn together regularly in our church’s worship and fellowship, our educational and mission endeavors, and our inclusive, warm invitation that we extend to others to join with us as we experience together the wondrous challenges and joyous fulfillment of Christian discipleship.

At Round Hill Community Church, we have been called to live together as God’s children, to grow and thrive in discovering God’s goodness and purposes for our lives, to celebrate joyfully our call to serve the needs of others, and to share generously what we have received as God’s faithful stewards.

Throughout this coming year, we will be highlighting various dimensions of this “spirit” in exciting ways, including selected sermons, as well as articles that will be appearing in our monthly newsletter written by different members and leaders in our midst. We hope that you will not only “catch the spirit of Round Hill,” but also “share this spirit” with your friends and colleagues as we seek to grow in the Spirit of our Lord.

– Bob Culp

*The News Letter is edited by Nancy Mazzoli,
Claire McKean, Lawrence Sterne, and Lynda Kinney*

SEPTEMBER SERVICES

- 9 *Catching the Spirit of Round Hill*, Bob Culp
- 16 *God’s Calculus for the Lost*, Bob Culp
- 23 Our Mission to Nicaragua – Reports from Shannon White and our Mission Workers
- 30 The Blessing of the Animals
Service in the Community House,
Shannon White and Bob Culp

WOMEN’S GATHERING

We are looking forward to another enjoyable season of Women’s Gatherings where we can catch up with old friends and make new ones. Our first gathering will be on Friday evening, September 28, and the evening will feature “A Conversation with Bunny Prokop.” Save the date and invite your friends, neighbors, and new church members to join us. Look for a flyer in the mail in September with details.

Dates for future meetings – mark your calendars:

Friday, September 28	Dinner
Sunday, October 21	Brunch
Friday, January 11	Dinner, Church Parlor
Sunday, April 13	Brunch
Friday, May 16	Dinner

We hope to see you there and welcome any ideas.

– Marilyn Hammond and Rhona Johnson

VALENTINE DINNER DANCE

Please reserve Friday evening, February 8, 2008, for the annual Valentine Dinner Dance. As we approach the 25th anniversary of our present church building, the Men’s Group would like to provide something extra special.

Ron Wilson, Men’s Group

CHRISTMAS ON ROUND HILL



The time has come once again to call forth the creativity and energy of our members and friends to orchestrate the magical weekend we know as Christmas on Round Hill. As most of you know, it was a cast of dozens who contributed their ideas, talents, resources, and enthusiasm to make last year's party and fair such a success.

Whether our gatherings involved baking, decorating, painting, packaging, or glueing, there was an air of excited anticipation and a sense of teamwork to create the best Christmas fair ever! Many of us made new friends and got to know others we already considered friends in new ways.

It is clear to us that Christmas on Round Hill is not merely a two-day event but an ongoing fellowship out of which funds happen to come that contribute to the good that our church does for people in and beyond our community.

Workshops will begin in September and run through November. We will post them via email, in the News Letter, in the weekly Bulletin, and on flyers. If you have any questions, please contact Lynda in the Church Office.

This year's projects include:

Fabulous Food – baked goods, Christmas puddings, canned goods, dog treats, baskets

Living Greens – Potted plants, wreath decorating packs, topiaries

Something Special – Faux finished wood pieces, snow globes, daily quips note pads, painted wooden crèches, painted dollhouses, fabric stockings and tree skirts, origami ornaments, gift baskets

We also need help with setting up and running the Round Hill Café, decorations, invitations, packaging, and more. Please visit our table during Rally Day to let us know how you would like to get involved.

– Nancy Mazzoli

FLOWERS



The Flower Committee is looking for arrangers to take up the baton for the winter, spring, and possibly summer season. Debbie Lipner has graciously offered to be the fall flower co-chair for September through November. We need flower co-chairs for December through March and April through June. The position responsibilities are really streamlined and very user-friendly! There are no thank you notes, and Colony Florist can always step in when there is a dedication and no arranger. I will help in any way I can, but want to move on to other activities after seven years!

– Heather Sandifer, Flower Chair

PLEASE FEEL WELCOME

The Church Sanctuary is open for prayer, meditation, and reading the Bible every weekday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We encourage those who wish to use the Sanctuary for this purpose to do so, and to be encouraged in the disciplines of prayer, meditation, and scriptural reflection.

The News Letter

Round Hill Community Church
395 Round Hill Road
Greenwich, CT 06831

Visit our website, roundhillcommunitychurch.org to view more pictures, read past sermons, learn about the activities and history of RHCC, and check the monthly calendar.

SEPTEMBER 2007 AT ROUND HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Trustees' Meeting 8:00 p.m.	Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m.			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
RALLY DAY 11:00 a.m., Picnic and Activities on the Front Lawn	Building Committee 5:30 p.m.	Benevolence and Outreach Meeting 8:00 p.m.		Choir Rehearsal 8:00 p.m.		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
BIBLE STUDY 11:15 a.m. Worship Committee Meeting, 11:15 a.m.	Cooking for St. Luke's			Memoir Writing 2:00 p.m. Peace Day Service 7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 8:00 p.m.		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
REPORT ON NICARAGUA TRIP 10:00 a.m. Worship Forum: THEOLOGY AND LITERATURE 11:15 a.m.	Newsletter Deadline			Memoir Writing 2:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 8:00 p.m.	Women's Gathering Dinner 6:30 p.m.	Setup for Blessing of the Animals, 1:00 p.m., Community House
30	WORSHIP AND CHURCH SCHOOL – SUNDAYS AT 10:00 A.M. CHILDCARE AVAILABLE HAZEL JARVIS: BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATIONS AND ABSTRACT LANDSCAPES AT LES BEAUX ARTS GALLERY					
BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS 10:00 a.m. Community House						