



The Hancock Herald

May 2011

Inside this issue:

From the Sr. Minister	2
Sabbatical Time for Dana	3
Alice M. Kraley Memorial Youth Music Fund	4-5
Food Pantry	6
More on Honduras	7
O.W.L. Turns 5	8
Congregational Care: Message from Meg	9
Newcomers Dinner	10
The Notice Board	11

Steering Committee: Turning Dreams into Plans



Growing for Good

In March we began the “dream” phase of our Capital Campaign in earnest. Since then the Steering Committee has reached out in many ways to ask for your suggestions for how a Capital Campaign could improve Hancock’s ministries:

- We held two church-wide events to gather ideas: group brainstorming on March 6, and “speed-dating with the task forces” on March 27;
- Members of the Steering Committee have visited virtually every committee and program to gather ideas;
- Our ministers and Steering Committee members have visited three retirement communities where we have clusters of members, and volunteers have reached out to other elders who don’t get to church regularly to solicit their feedback; and
- We have maintained open channels of communication via e-mail and suggestion cards, with constant reminders in the bulletin, weekly e-mail and Herald.

And respond you did, with more than 700 ideas! They range from the practical and obvious (we need an elevator!) to pie-in-the-sky dreams. Collectively they paint a picture of a congregation with high hopes and high expectations for their church, and for ministries that serve with commitment, compassion, and excellence. We encourage you to have a look at what you told us; the list of ideas can be viewed via the link in the Hancock Blog, or on the campaign bulletin board at church.

(Continued page 5)

LexMedia Cable TV Schedule
Watch Hancock Services on RCN 3, Comcast 8 and Verizon 35 at Sunday 9:55 am (LIVE) and 7 pm.

Bedford Cable TV Schedule
Watch Hancock Services on Comcast 8 and Verizon 38 on Sunday at 7 pm. There is a one-week delay.

Reflection on Honduras from Amy Swanson

For two years whenever the question arose of whether I was going to sign up for the service trip to Honduras, I would politely dodge answering it. I got very good at deflecting the question of whether I was going. It’s not that I didn’t believe in the objectives of the trip or Sustainable Harvest International.

I was a big believer in SHI-- there was no doubt that SHI was having an impact on raising the standard of living of the participating families, as

well as helping curb the destruction of the tropical forest. The embarrassing truth was I had a lot of fears about the home stay part of the trip. It meant living in some pretty rustic conditions and that bothered me...a lot. I never considered myself a good candidate for this type of a trip and here’s why.

- I never camped growing up. When I finally did do some camping with friends after college, our version included bringing generators to power the blenders...not par-

ticularly good preparation for this kind of trip.

- I’m not good with dirt, bugs, rodents, and/or feral dogs and I knew for a fact that there was plenty of that after having talked with prior trippers.
- The families had no indoor plumbing or running water so that meant we would be using latrines and facing trips in the night and barking dogs.

(Continued on page 4)

From the Senior Minister



Dear Members and Friends,

Over the past four months, you have been invited to dream about the future of Hancock United Church of Christ. Not merely about the church building, but about more important matters as well: our mission, our purpose, our reason for being, today and tomorrow. And you have responded to the invitation. It's been a joy to watch and listen as you have shared your ideas and visions with the Steering Committee. Everyone has been invited, and all have been listened to, your ideas faithfully recorded.

So faithfully in fact that more than 700 of your ideas have been collected!

But now, as we shift into the Easter season, and as April passes into May, our conversation necessarily transitions from dreaming to planning, a very different sort of process. To create a meaningful plan requires that our 700 ideas be sifted, sorted, prioritized. Some will prove to be impossible to pursue and implement. Others do not require capital resources to implement, and so they'll be passed along to appropriate committees for action. But through your thoughtful, and prayerful consideration, some grand themes will begin to emerge, themes that will shape the direction in which we move.

This process will be undertaken in good faith, guided by thoughtful leaders, and rooted in our commitment to open, congregational discussion and decision-making. Each of us will need to engage in this process in the spirit of hope and trust. It is likely that each one of us will need at some point to let go of an idea that we think is wonderful, in order to facilitate the search for the common good. Guided by our desire to accomplish our core mission of transforming lives, we will trust that our open process and the guidance of the Holy Spirit will help to create a future for Hancock that will meet not only our needs, but those of generations yet to come.

In some ways, dreaming is easy. Your leaders had neither to push you nor to pry your ideas from you. But planning is more difficult, for now we begin to say "no" to some things and "yes" to others. Now we need to begin to say that this, while desirable, is not possible, and that this other idea, while not perfect, is what we must do. And above all, now is when we must keep our gaze into the future, which is often foggy, and not as clear as we might wish.

As we work together to turn our dreams into realistic plans, let the same spirit that has prevailed so far continue among us. Let us resolve to listen, to change our minds with grace, and to always seek the Holy Spirit together. For only then can our hopes be fulfilled, that Hancock Church will Grow in Faith, on the Green for Good.

AS DANA'S SABBATICAL LEAVE BEGINS

I am sure that we all join together in wishing Dana Allen Walsh every good thing as her sabbatical leave begins. She will be away from us from May 3-August 17, and while we will all miss her, we need to let her go. She has other tasks to engage now, in order to strengthen her for the work to come: deep rest, concentrated study, gaining perspective on the first five years of her ministry, and on the next five as well. She has earned this time of rest, and we wish her well.

Dana has done much to prepare for her absence. The programs that she gives herself to will continue: worship, the Hancock youth ministry, advocacy for outreach and Christian service. She'll be missed, and the work will not be as fun without her as with her, but we are confident that we can continue faithful service.

I know that many members look to her especially for wisdom and guidance. And I am also aware that my gifts for ministry are not the same as hers. But please remember that I am here, willing to do my absolute best while she is away.

The research is clear: ministers who are granted sabbatical leave tend to stay in their calling longer, and to serve with continuing creativity, energy and verve. Congregations who grant sabbaticals to their trusted leaders tend to be healthy, forward-looking and strong. We will miss her while she's gone, but are grateful to be sufficiently strong to let her go, and trust that the Spirit will guide her and us, so that in a few months, as summer melts away, she will return refreshed, and find us ready to renew the work that we have been called by God to do.

Go in peace, Dana, and don't forget to come home!

Grace and Peace, *Paul*

Hancock Travels

It's Sabbatical Time by the Rev. Dana Allen Walsh

On May 3rd, I will begin my sabbatical from Hancock. It strikes me as odd that it's already been 5 years. At moments, I wonder where the time has gone and then I look at all that Hancock has accomplished and I know exactly where the time has gone!

Sabbatical is a wonderful gift and I'm deeply grateful that you are giving me this opportunity to reflect on my ministry. While I've been doing a lot of thinking all along, sabbatical allows me the time to disengage from my busy life at Hancock and to remember what it's like to be a person of faith apart from my everyday work.

In the early years of ministry, it's typical for young ministers to ask themselves, "Can I do this?" That question felt like a common refrain during my first few years at Hancock. I wondered at each turn whether I had the skills and abilities to serve this community well. There were times of doubt and uncertainty, but on the overall, I have felt a greater confidence (or better yet, a greater trust in God) that I am called to ministry and that God will provide for me the gifts needed for the tasks I am called to do.

Hancock Church has been a gentle and patient place to do that kind of discerning and learning – so thank you. Now I'm asking less, "Can I do this?" but more "Where is God in this?" As I seek to understand God's presence, I'm going to be exploring the following questions over the next few months:

- What does my soul need? What are the deepest longings of my heart and how do I attend to those?
- How has God been moving in my life? What lessons have I learned? How have I grown? What challenges do I still face?
- How is God calling Hancock to be a presence in the United Church of Christ and in our local community? And what is my role in that vision?

I invite you to ponder and pray about these very same questions yourselves. When I return in August, I'd love to have coffee or take a walk and hear about your own reflections.

Over the next few months, I have some wonderful plans that will hopefully facilitate my thinking and reflection and I want to share some of those plans with you:

Spiritual Direction & Retreats: I will regularly be meeting with a spiritual director. This person will help me to answer and discern the questions I've stated above. He will help me to listen and to see where God is moving in my life. And he will also keep me accountable for how I'm using my time on sabbatical (there's only so much TV a person should watch!). I also plan to incorporate several retreats in my sabbatical time – a few will be local – the Cape and Maine, and one as far as an eco-lodge in Costa Rica!

Writing Program: I was accepted and received a fellowship for a writing program for pastors at the Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research in Minnesota. The program only has 12 participants and is led by Mary Nilsen, a writing professor at the University of Iowa. I'm looking forward to this intense learning experience and I see it as an opportunity to become more comfortable as a writer and to build on my sermon-writing skills.

Best Practices of Other Churches: In late May, I will be traveling between Boston and DC to visit a few healthy, vital churches and learn from their best practices. As Hancock enters a new phase of our future with the Capital Campaign, it will be helpful to see what has made other churches successful and led to their growth.

Rest and Relaxation: For the month of July, Sean and I will be living in Buenos Aires. We are looking forward to having time to really relax, to practice our Spanish, to do some writing, and to eat some delicious steak!

I will return to Hancock on August 17th, hopefully feeling refreshed and renewed and ready to go! I'm looking forward to sharing with you stories, experiences, and pictures from my travels. I'm imaging that you'll hear plenty about my sabbatical through sermons, slideshows, and casual conversations.

Thank you for the generous gift of space so that I can renew my relationship with God, with myself, and with my friends and family.

Worship @ the Well Schedule for May

May 8, May 15 and May 22. Join us in the Chapel at 6:15 pm for worship that's informal, candlelit dynamic and centering. Led by casually-dressed ministers and music from The River Rock Band.

Honduras Continued From Page 1

No running water meant 5 days with no showers—what about personal hygiene? ...and I spent way too much time wondering about the hows of brushing teeth without a bathroom!

With all these personal concerns, I told myself that I didn't want to be the weak link of the group, whining about the home stays, and souring the experience for others...better off that I not go. (What's a day without a rationalization? *)

Really what was going on was that I was a white middle-aged gal from the suburbs that lived in a little sanitized comfort zone. My fears of the unfamiliar, the uncomfortable, the different made me say "no" as a reflex action.

And I've gotten very good at saying "no". As I allowed more and more voice to those fears, the space left for me in my comfort zone got smaller and smaller. I was on automatic pilot turning down the opportunity to go to Honduras.

What got me to reconsider Honduras was the power of an anecdote shared by one of the people who went last year. I can't remember who recounted it, but the story pierced the resoluteness of my "no".

When the Hancock group got to Piedras Negras last year, they were warmly greeted by various families. One woman got very emotional, embraced Hancock members and in Spanish said "You did not forget us!" "You did not forget us!"

It was clear to me that the families knew that Hancock was responsible for funding the field extensionists and the training and tools, and that commitment was for the term of SHI's work in Piedras Negras.

But what was a new revelation was the depth of her appreciation for the personal connection. It mattered a lot to her that Hancock came to work with them and for them. I think she was telling us that by Hancock members caring enough to return, that meant she was important...this woman was no longer invisible. She mattered. And that was a powerful call to me.

In comparison, my personal objections were not so important and it was worth reconsidering why I was saying "no". In time, I signed up and now am so grateful for the richness of my experience.

With this kind of trip, there are many different experiences and conversations to reflect upon, but my thoughts keep returning to two ideas that coalesced in a powerful way.

First, if you really care about a cause, you need to be its advocate. For those of us who took this trip, there was no way that we couldn't become even more convinced of SHI's credibility.

About 3/4ths of rural households in Honduras live below the poverty line and SHI is moving families beyond that statistic.

SHI is giving families the means to achieve food and income stability, giv-

ing them hope for the future. If we shared our stories, we could be instrumental in bringing more awareness and financial resources to SHI, to ensure and expand their footprint in Central America. We can be their local advocates.

Second, the other big thing I learned from this trip is the power of facing up to fears. Now, I can laugh at all the stuff that made me say "no" for so long. In retrospect, they were so trivial!

Don't let your fears hold you back from experiences that you believe in and which have the opportunity to enrich your life and that of others. I knew that SHI was empowering the families with whom they work, but what was unexpected was how reciprocal that empowering proved to be. I ended that week on a high, feeling freer than I had for years!

I'll leave you with one last anecdote. When we touched down in Miami and could turn the cell phones back on, I texted my family that I was back safely and the trip was great.

But the text I had most satisfaction in sending was to my college-age son, Ben, who loves the outdoors and does a lot of backpacking and hiking trips.

I took great pleasure in texting him: *"Back home. Trip was awesome. Even know how to brush my teeth without a bathroom...also how to shower and wash hair in a waterfall."* I know he understood the significance of that message!

* *The Big Chill*

Adult Education: Going Together

Join us this Spring for fun, fellowship, volunteering and learning opportunities nearby. Want to go as a group? Dine together before or after? Need transportation?

If so, email the contact person below. Or, just look for your Hancock friends when you get there. For details and registration information, see the sponsor website.

April 30: Plenitude - The New Economics of True Wealth by Juliet Schor, Cary Lecture Series. Contact Sally Wyman, 781-861-1929. www.julietschor.org/the-book/

April 30 - May 2: Art in Bloom (teas, tours and family day) at the Museum of Fine Arts. Contact Barbara Shafer, 781-863-0862. www.mfa.org/programs/series/art-bloom

May 27: The Comedy of Errors by William Shakespeare at the Huntington Theatre. Contact Russ Schutt, 781-862-8109. www.huntingtontheatre.org

Look for other events on the Adult Education webpage of the Hancock Church website soon.

Steering Committee Continued From Page 1

Now comes the next challenge: sorting and filtering these ideas into themes and goals that our Planning Committee and our architectural consultant can begin to translate into concrete ideas.

We need your help here as well! On May 1 the congregation will be asked to vote their priorities for the campaign. The Steering Committee will take this guidance, combine it with everything else we've heard, and present a progress report at the spring congregational meeting on May 15.

Over the summer we will flesh out these ideas and come back to the congregation in the fall with more mature concepts for

your consideration. We will need your feedback at every stage.

Our goal is for all of us, working together, to assemble the best possible package of improvements in our building, programs and mission to build the church we want Hancock to be, in faithful service to our community and the world.

Questions? E-mail us at steering-hucc@googlegroups.com, or call any member of the Steering Committee:

With thanks to Chris Counihan for his terrific work designing our new campaign logo that appears on page 1.

Members:

Sam Altschuler
Carol Counihan
Robin DiGiammarino
Faith Fenske
John Foster
Sarah Kuli
Susan McClements
David Parker
Tom Ransohoff
Rosemarie Sauermann
Paul Shupe
Dana Allen Walsh
Jim Weston
Charlie Wyman

The Alice M. Kraley Memorial Youth Music Fund at Hancock

Most of us listen with great appreciation (and sheer awe!) when we are treated to the beautiful music during Hancock's services or special performances. The spiritual experience at Hancock enjoys a powerful partner in the musical energy – an art which brings alive a message, a reading, a liturgical season, or just plain old finger- or foot-tapping reactions.

Even the least gifted of musicians knows these "offerings" come through the hard work and generous sharing of talented people in our church and community. Those talents often are formed early in life, so "investing" in our youth bears wonderful fruit.

The "Herald" spoke with Mike Kraley recently. We learned that when Mike's mom passed away in 1995, she left a small estate. "Cheryl and I wanted to use some of that money as a memorial to her. Although my mother was not a formal member of Hancock Church, she was quite interested in many of its activities, especially when her grandchildren were involved."

The Kraleys discussed aspects of creating a memorial endowment with then-Sr. Minister Peter Meek. Mike went on to explain, "Although most donors like to specify some special purpose for the funds, being too specific can create problems as things evolve over the years. My mom really enjoyed music, and, in par-

ticular, when children were involved. So we decided to create the fund to benefit the musical programs aimed at children and youth. We knew that both music and children would always be an important part of Hancock, so we knew that this charter would never become irrelevant. But we left the specifics of how the money would actually be used up to the committees in charge at the time."

Now known formally as the "Alice M. Kraley Memorial Youth Music Fund," this endowment supports many music programs and instruction involving Hancock's younger members, for which all of us are most grateful.

As part of Hancock's "Permanent Endowment," the principal produces an investment income each year, calculated at a prudent rate to preserve the "purchasing power" for many years to come. (For more information about how Hancock's Endowment Income is calculated, please refer to the most recent Annual Report.)

In honoring Mike's mother, the Kraleys balanced two goals, directing this generous gift to a particular area of interest and vocation at the Church, but also allowing flexibility to leadership to deploy the income to the highest and best use at any given time.

No matter what our age, "Music and the Arts" will always be a core activity at Han-

cock, and thus, this gift offers immense support of the good work of our clergy and leadership, music professionals, performers and listeners. The Alice M. Kraley Memorial Youth Music Fund accomplishes wonderful things, and Hancock has been greatly strengthened by the foresight and generosity of the Kraley Family.

Like "Music and the Arts," there are several other primary areas of "need" at Hancock, which include "Christian Service and Outreach," "Professional Development and Spiritual Formation," "Building and Grounds," or "Youth and Christian Education" to name a few. "Unrestricted Endowment" is perhaps even better, because it allows leadership full flexibility to use the income for what Hancock needs most at the time. Best of all, an endowed fund also creates a legacy for those who desire to remember a loved one, or his/her own commitment to this special place.

More information about the endowment goals of the Church will be outlined in our new "Endowment Gifts" brochure and on our website. Anyone who would like to discuss this topic in more depth should contact Larry Link or any member of the Endowment Committee. As many know, however, specific financial, tax or estate planning advice always should be obtained from a qualified professional.

Hancock Contributions

4th Annual Go Green Dance Thanks You; \$1,400 Raised for SHI



The 4th Annual Go Green Dance was co-sponsored by Trial Run and Feeding 5000 for the benefit of Sustainable Harvest International.

Fun music by the band, Trial Run; good conversation; community at large welcomed; tasty food and clear weather.

What more could we ask for?

With your support, we raised \$1400 toward our goal of funding the work of SHI for another year in Piedras Negras, Honduras. Thank you for making it a success!

Good Samaritan Fund for Youth Projects

The Christian Service Committee is pleased to announce the creation of the Good Samaritan Fund (\$500 annually) to encourage and support Hancock's youth (up to age 30) in their service and outreach endeavors.

Activities eligible for the Good Samaritan Fund include walks, bike rides or other activities that benefit charitable organizations. Individual awards will be

up to \$100. Recipients will share with the church community how they used the fund to help them in their service work.

They can do this by blogging, writing an article for the *Herald*, making a presentation—how they share their story is their choice.

Good Samaritan Fund applications and more information can be found on

Hancock's web site under the Events section on the homepage. Please allow two weeks from submission date for review and approvals. For more information, please contact :

Connie Gregg, congregg@rcn.com

Beth Schutt, beth.schutt@gmail.com

Thank You from the Family of Connie Devereux

The family of Connie Devereux has made a donation to Hancock Church in sincere appreciation for all of the help and support that so many Hancock members gave during Connie's recent

move to Carleton-Willard. Thank you to the many sorters, packers, delivery people, hauler away-ers, and the subsequent unpackers. All of this done with such great warmth and encouraging spirit. You made

this transition not just easier, but so much better for her. Thank you to everyone who helped!

Lexington Food Pantry Focus Food for May is Cereal

If you donate food in May, please consider giving Cereal - no family size. Donation baskets are in the narthex, as well as outside the office and dining room.

Volunteers are needed for May 14 to help distribute the food at the Pantry.

The commitment is from 8:45 to about 11:30 am for this volunteer work and

the learning curve is short!

For more information, contact Caroline Nijenberg (carolinen@rcn.com or 781-862-4465).

Contact Us If You Have Medical Equipment To Donate

If you have medical equipment to give away or lend please let Marjorie Nickles know. (mjnickles@verizon.net, 781-862-7931, 13 Lois Lane, Lexington 02420). Please describe the item in detail and give your name and contact information. Marjorie will keep a spread sheet and can be consulted any time someone needs something such as a glucometer, a blood pressure cuff, a bath stool, a commode, a bed rail, a walker, a wheelchair, etc.

Message from Pam Cochrane: Director of Children's Ministries

Traveling to Honduras with Hancock an "Extraordinary Experience"

Making the trip to Piedras Negras, Honduras with SHI and fifteen other adults from Hancock Church was an extraordinary experience.

The journey has shown me the great gift of hospitality and love we all have to share in a world created by God. From the moment we arrived in the small rural village there was much to learn and absorb, and our host families were eager to care and support us even when language, fatigue and cultural differences appeared to hamper us.

With each new activity, task and meal, we were all learning and growing in our understanding of the common ground we share; that love, laughter, work and play can connect us in community.

When we visited the village school on Saturday morning, where more than seventy kids gathered for our visit, all the differences that so often separate people faded away and joy permeated the classrooms as we shared music, games and art. It is that joy that I bring back with me and look forward to shar-

ing with the Hancock community and the children of our church school. A joy that will ring for many weeks and months to come, resounding as loud as our Eastertide affirmation that Christ has risen, indeed, Alleluia!

With gratitude and appreciation,
Pam Cochrane,
Director of Children's Ministries



Improved Recycling at Hancock

You probably have noticed the improved recycling centers that have been added at various points in the Hancock education wing.

Along with a regular trash bin, there are blue recycling containers for paper and green containers for cans and bottles. Better marked and more conveniently placed for everyone using our building, these recycling centers are encouraging more recycling, and less garbage.

This winter HEAT also piloted a kitchen waste composting program in the kitchen and dining room and we are happy to report on its success. Now instead of all kitchen waste going into the garbage, we have bins to collect it for composting. What's compostable? Most food scraps as well as coffee grounds, teabags and even used paper towels and napkins! The big no-no's are

meats and lots of fats. There's a 2 gallon green plastic bin in the kitchen with a degradable liner to collect food scraps, etc.

And for events in the dining room, such as coffee hours, we have a more attractive white ceramic bin where members have been depositing their used tea bags and paper napkins.

The collected scraps, grounds, napkins, and more then get emptied outdoors in a black compost bin that is located at the back of the parking lot by the dumpster. Over time, these food scraps will decompose and make good organic material that can be harvested by Hancock's own landscaping committee to enrich the plantings.

Our good neighbors at the Nursery School have embraced the addition of

kitchen waste composting and have reported to us about "field trips" to the composter!

This is easy to do at your own home as well. You will create your own organic compost in the garden, but also remove a lot of unnecessary garbage from the waste stream. Once you start composting, you'll be surprised at the large reduction in household garbage. Your water bill may also go down.

It's pretty easy to get into the habit of dumping vegetable peelings, food scraps, used paper napkins, etc. into a container. You don't need to buy a special container. An old plastic food storage container with a lid works well. The Lexington DPW sells outside compost bins at a subsidized cost of \$30. These are sturdy and lock to keep animals out.

Ushers Needed

Hancock is in urgent need of additional ushers. This is a great opportunity for people to involve themselves in the worship activities at Hancock. The six usher teams are assigned to every sixth worship service. Ushers are responsible

for greeting people attending the worship service, passing out programs, collecting the offering, and being available to answer questions and provide assistance as needed. This ministry of welcome is an essential part of the Sunday

worship service and is an excellent chance for members, new and old, to become involved. If you're interested in serving as an usher, please call Tom Battin at 781-862-3338 or email him at tbattin@verizon.net.

O.W.L. (Our Whole Lives Program) Turns 5 at Hancock

Leaders Share Their Reflections

Sean Walsh - For the past four years, I have had the pleasure of working with several adults in leading and teaching the Our Whole Lives (O.W.L.) program to the eighth graders at Hancock.

During this time, over 40 students received a comprehensive, faith-based education regarding human sexuality, relationship building, and practices that are sure to lead them to make healthy, informed decisions about sex, relationships, and their own bodies.

There are many things great about this program, and the obvious one is the education the students receive. The class offers the opportunity for these adolescents to discuss often uncomfortable topics (who wants to discuss sex with their parents?!) with caring adults in a safe space. More importantly, it allows for the honesty of questions that this topic demands. But that's an obvious benefit.

There are three other reverberations that this program sets forth:

1) The reciprocity factor --- This program has inspired many, many conversations among adults in the church (teachers, parents, ministers, and lay leaders) about the important intersection of sexuality and faith, perhaps more than ever before.

As a teacher, I have had to rethink my judgments and have had my knowledge tested around certain topics and ideas. In many ways, the teachers and, I would venture to say, the parents have gained the most. We have learned that it is ok (and necessary) to discuss sexuality in the church and with our youth.

2) Inclusiveness – This program promotes inclusiveness and celebrates the diversity of human sexuality. Of all the programs at Hancock, it is perhaps most

telling that our eighth grade curriculum is our most visible sign of our Open and Affirming welcome. This shows us as a church valuing all people and wanting our youth to share in those values.

3) Community – We may never fully know the lives we touch outside of the Hancock walls, but I would say that young people in Lexington are safer because our youth have been taught a strong, vital value system in regards to sexuality and relationships.

In a world of Facebook, text-messaging, instant gratification, and increasing exploitation, the church has a role to play in providing the values to our youth and the space and means to discuss our ever-changing, ever-complicated world. I encourage all who are interested to get involved, to learn about the program, and to teach! To those parents with children who are nearing the age for Our Whole Lives, I would encourage them to reach out to others within the church and community to sign up, to join in, and keep this powerful ministry – vital and active.

Rhonda Black - I have just completed my second year teaching Our Whole Lives (O.W.L.) at Hancock and have been impressed with the students and the families who have enrolled and supported them through the program. As a parent, I wish this program was available when my girls were in JYO. One aspect of the program that I most value is the emphasis on positive self esteem throughout the lessons.

The slides not only advocate inclusiveness with regard to human sexuality but illustrate all the different shapes and sizes of body types. Adolescents are constantly bombarded by media images of the perfect bodies which are often sexualized images. One of our lessons deals

directly with this issue and it is often one of the more spirited discussions. I hope all the parents of eighth graders will take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

Bill McClements - This was my first year teaching OWL and it was a great experience. It was a great group of kids. I was struck by how insightful they could be.

The curriculum provides a lot of information in a context which reinforces self esteem, diversity and personal responsibility. I wish I had an opportunity like this when I was younger to talk about sexuality in a safe context and to get better information unbiased by media or the vagaries of knowledge among my peers.

Bill McClements, Rhonda Black, Linda Nason and Pam Cochrane will be returning to the classroom in the fall to welcome the next group of eighth graders to the program.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, would like to sign-up, become an O.W.L. leader or perhaps share a reflection from your own O.W.L. experience, please email Pam Cochrane, Director of Children's Ministries at the e-mail address below: pam.cochrane@hancockchurch.org.

Ministry/Program News: Congregational Care

Message from Meg — Spring Beckons

The sound of the peepers burst forth from the waters. Songbirds fill the air with their melodies, as they gather twigs, mud, straw, and create intricate nests. Preparing for their young who will soon be hatching from eggs of all different colors, shapes, and sizes, the proud parents sit and wait patiently!

The turtles crawl up from the mud, and sun themselves on logs, rocks, and branches along the water's edge. The majestic herons soar through the air and perch themselves, ever ready to capture the next fish in sight! The air has shifted as a gentle warm breeze emerges. The sun rises along the horizon. The shift is noticeable!

Even the humans appear different. Heavy boots and sweaters disappear. Arms and legs, sandals and shorts seem to appear from nowhere. Youth, along with persons of all ages, decorate Lexington Center. Students with books and beverages sit outside cramming for finals! Seniors anticipate graduation. Other students experience varied rites of passage!

All of us witness the joy of springtime and celebrate the joy and the hope that the season brings forth! At Hancock Church, you celebrated Holy Week, Easter, and now springtime, as Annual

Meeting comes and goes.

Along with the season come many new changes. Dana is on sabbatical. Seminary Joy and Eric prepare to say goodbye, as they continue their spiritual journey toward ordination. The dreaming stage of the Capital Campaign has been transformed into a priority wish list. You are on a new and exciting journey. Church programming and activities wind down to prepare for a more relaxed pace during the summer months.

The Congregational Care Team has been meeting monthly. Some members of the team have been doing regular visitation. Others have been writing cards, staffing the receptions after Memorial services, visiting nursing care facilities, and delivering flowers at Christmas and Easter, or making phone calls to those who are homebound or sick.

There are a variety of ways to continue to become involved in congregational care. I encourage you especially to watch out and care for each other during the summer months, when the Care Team does not meet formally.

The Prayer Shawl ministry as part of congregational care continues to go

well. Shawls are given to children at Baptism, and brought to the sick in the hospital or those in need. Please remember to take a pattern on the table across from Meg's office, for those wonderful summer nights before dark. While chatting, why not knit a shawl!

There is a group open to all each month that meets to hold in prayer, those who are on our prayer list. There was a gathering of folks who stopped by church to have muffins with Meg, Minister of Pastoral Care on a Tuesday morning last month. Great conversations were had by all!

The last Congregational Care Team meeting for the year will be held on Sunday, May 22nd at 11:15 in the Wilson room. Come join us! Have a wonderful, fun, and blessed summer!

Peace & blessings,

Meg Anzalone
Congregational Care Coordinator

New Paintings in "The Corridor"

The artist, Barbara Senna, never had any formal art training, but always enjoyed sketching.

When her four children were involved in projects at school, the making of posters, signs and paper mache figures always ended as "her part". After they became grownup, she had time to

indulge in her artistic side.

About 25 years ago she was encouraged to take an acrylic class at the Lexington Arts and Crafts Society and immediately became hooked on painting. She's been at it ever since.

For the past several years she has

attempted watercolors – a tricky change in medium.

Andrew Kusmin's teaching has enabled her to become more proficient. She now loves both mediums, and experiments in painting a subject first in watercolor and then in acrylic (or vice versa). The difference is amazing.

Hancock Happenings

Report from the Interfaith Garden — Sat, April 9th



Volunteers supplied by Hancock and Follen. Journal observations:

Looks like we are running about one week behind vs. last year...both in terms of what we are planting as

well as signs of growth on returning plants.

Soil tests on small garden came back... deficient in nitrogen, so Carla added urea and cow blood (?). Also planting peas which will add even more nitrogen back.

No signs of asparagus soldiers yet...still

hiding out under the composted manure.

First rhubarb knobs can be seen.

Garlic is looking good. Was visible 2 weeks ago when I last worked, and even more so today.

Amazingly, I miss the garden paths?! I was so used to them last year, keeping my big feet off the plants. With so little planted as of yet, they really haven't been necessary. Soon tho! (Memo to self: bring newspaper next time I work to add to Carla's supply for creating paths.)

Some of what we did: 1) Cleared straw off of strawberry beds. 2) Installed heavy metal stakes which will be the first step of a fence for the peas. 3) Removed stump from old boysenberry bush. 4)

Planted spinach and bok choy. 5) Brought out the rosemary plant that wintered in the basement of the barn. Harriet did an excellent job of pruning it back. 6) Planted peas in the small garden along its fence. As noted above, the peas will help the nitrogen problem.

Would you like to work at the Garden? How about your friends, neighbors or kids (community service hours available for LHS students)? No experience needed.

We welcome all to work in this special place, growing good food for good neighbors. For more information contact Amy Swanson (781-863-9443 or amy.swanson@rcn.com) Check out our website <http://interfaithgarden.org>

Newcomers Dinner and New Member Sunday

Newcomers Dinner

May 22nd 5:30pm to 7:30pm

On May 22nd, the Welcoming and Membership Committee will host a dinner for newcomers and visitors.

We invite all who are new to the church to come. You will learn more about Hancock UCC, and how to become more involved in this active faith community. You will discover the many opportunities for learning, growing, worshipping,

and serving through your faith journey here at Hancock.

Watch the Sunday bulletins and weekly emails for more information, or contact Julia Potter at juliapotter@verizon.net.

New Member Sunday June 5th

Hancock Church invites all who are considering membership in the church to affirm a commitment to continuing their faith journey at Hancock United Church of Christ.

New members will be welcomed in the worship service the morning of June 5th.

All who have already committed to Hancock but are not members yet are also encouraged to officially join the church on this Sunday. Contact Senior Minister Paul Shupe at the church office with any questions (781-862-4220).



Thanks for Supporting the Handbells!

The Handbell Program at Hancock Church presented its 8th Annual Patriot's Day Concert of American Music on April 18.

Over 200 people gathered in the Sanctuary to support the ringers and the Handbell Scholarship Fund that enables ringers to attend workshops to help develop their ringing skills and supports their community outreach concerts at nursing homes, senior centers, and schools.

Have you visited the Hancock Blog lately? We've posted entries on Hancock's history in Lexington, Capital Campaign Committee news, and Hancock's music. Catch up today at www.hancockblogspot.com.

The Notice Board



The next Hancock Herald will be published in June. The next deadline is May 15. Please e-mail submissions to sara.withee@hancockchurch.org.

**SAVE THE DATE & SIGN-UP for the
Hancock Heifer Field Trip to Overlook Farm, Rutland MA
June 12th 12pm-4:30pm**

On our tour, participants will be introduced to Heifer's mission of working with communities to end hunger and poverty while caring for the earth. We'll view a video that introduces Heifer's work around the world and enjoy a guided walking tour through Overlook Farm's gardens, barnyard and Global Village.

An experience for all ages

sponsored by the Children's Christian Education Committee
For more information contact Ann Boese, annboese@yahoo.com or
Pam Cochrane, Director of Children's Ministries, pam.cochrane@hancockchurch.org

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR THE
ANNUAL LEXINGTON PANTRY FOOD DRIVE.**

When? Sat. May 14, anytime 1- 6pm, especially after 3pm. Can work in 2 hour shifts.
Don't need to RSVP, just show up

Where? Church of Our Redeemer, 6 Meriam Street. Go in the last door down on the driveway side of church to the Parish Hall. This is Lexington Food Pantry's largest food drive. It brings in a supply to help the pantry get through the summer when donations drop off dramatically. Postal carriers pick up food at people's houses and drop it off at the pantry. They drive their trucks up to the Pantry with bags and cartons of food. There needs to be a crew to meet the trucks, unload and carry the food downstairs. Another crew to check expiration dates, sort and pack up boxes.



www.hancockchurch.org

Rev. Paul Shupe, Senior Minister
Rev. Dana Allen Walsh, Associate Minister

Phone: 781-862-4220
E-mail: office@hancockchurch.org

1912 Massachusetts Avenue
Lexington, MA 02421

Hancock United Church of Christ, Congregational

Non-profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Boston, Mass
Permit No. 52230

Hancock Calendar

The following is a list of May services. To see a full list of services and events at Hancock United Church of Christ, pick up a church bulletin or visit www.hancockchurch.org/events/event-calendar.

Sunday, May 1: 10 am Morning Worship. Holy Communion. The Rev. Dana Allen Walsh preaching.

Sunday, May 1: 6:15 pm Worship @ the Well in the Chapel.

Sunday, May 8: 10 am Morning Worship. Mother's Day. The Rev. Paul Shupe preaching.

Sunday, May 8: 6:15 pm Worship @ the Well in the Chapel.

Sunday, May 15: 10 am Morning Worship. Children's Baptism. Seminarian Recognition. Seminarian Eric Sherlock preaching.

Sunday, May 15: 6:15 pm Worship at the Well in the Chapel.

Sunday, May 22: 10 am Morning Worship. Confirmation Sunday. The Rev. Paul Shupe preaching.

Sunday, May 22: 6:15 pm Worship @ the Well in the Chapel.

Sunday, May 29: 10 am Morning Worship. The Rev. Paul Shupe preaching.