

---

---

# THE NEWSLETTER

---

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ON THE GREEN IN NORWALK CONNECTICUT

Park & Lewis Streets, Norwalk, CT 06851

Reverend Frank Newsome, Senior Pastor

---

---

Church Office (203) 847-9551

[www.fccnorwalkonthegreen.com](http://www.fccnorwalkonthegreen.com)

e-mail: [fcthegreen@snet.net](mailto:fcthegreen@snet.net)

Fax: (203) 849-0221

---

---

JUNE 2017



As we are transitioning from one season to another I thought about the song **In the Bulb There is a Flower** that is on page 433 of our New Century Hymnal. This song reminds me there is more than meets the eye to almost everything. The guy that wrote this article C. Michael Hawn was one of Jill's professor's when she was in seminary. Enjoy and remember this article when we sing this song sometime soon. Frank

## History of Hymns: "In the Bulb There Is a Flower"

by C. Michael Hawn

"In the Bulb there is a Flower"

Natalie Sleeth

*The United Methodist Hymnal*, No. 707

*In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.\**

From time to time, a choral anthem inspires a hymn. "Hymn of Promise" was first conceived as an anthem in 1985, performed at the Pasadena Community Church, St. Petersburg, Florida, during a festival concert on Natalie Sleeth's music. Long known as a composer of anthems, especially for children, Natalie Sleeth (1930-1992) contributed one of the favorite new hymns to *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Sleeth was a native of Evanston, Illinois. She began piano study at the age of four and gained much of her musical experience by singing in choral ensembles during her earlier years. Studying music theory, piano, and organ at Wellesley College in Massachusetts, she received her B.A. in 1952.

Married to Ronald E. Sleeth, a United Methodist clergyman and professor of homiletics at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, she served as music secretary at Highland Park United Methodist Church from 1969-1976. During this time, she studied music theory with Jane Marshall and audited a course in choral arranging taught by Lloyd Pfautsch at SMU. Choristers Guild published her first anthem, "[Canon of Praise](#)," in 1969, the highest selling anthem in the history of this publisher. Her choral works for all ages number more than 200.

Sleeth received honorary doctorates from West Virginia Wesleyan College (1989), and Nebraska Wesleyan College (1990). Some of her compositions are described in her devotional book, [Adventures for the Soul](#) (1987).

Sleeth had the ability to compose both texts and music. Though "Hymn of Promise" has become a favorite hymn for funerals, it was written at a time when the author states that she was "pondering the ideas of life, death, spring and winter, Good Friday and Easter, and the whole reawakening of the world that happens every spring." Inspired by a T.S. Eliot line, the germ of the hymn grew from the idea "in our end is our beginning," the phrase that begins the third stanza of the hymn.

# The Newsletter

While it carries the promise of spring and the hope of Easter in its beautiful metaphors, it is a very appropriate hymn for funeral and memorial services. Shortly after its composition, the composer's husband was diagnosed with what turned out to be a terminal malignancy. Ronald Sleeth requested that "Hymn of Promise" be sung at his funeral service.

A wonderful child-like simplicity permeates "Hymn of Promise." Natalie Sleeth had a gift for composing texts on complex theological ideas that were still accessible to children. Her melodies seemed totally natural and therefore effortless for people to learn. "Hymn of Promise" is one of the most memorable hymns written by an American United Methodist in the last part of the twentieth century, and it promises to be sung for many years to come.

Composer R. G. Huff, who attended her funeral in Denver, Colorado, describes her impact on him in *Worship Matrix*, an online hymnal companion for the hymnal [Celebrating Grace](#) (2010): "In March 1992, I attended the memorial service of Natalie Sleeth at Wellshire Presbyterian Church in Denver, across the street from the church I served there. I had been a pen-pal of sorts with her for several years and wanted to be there for the celebration of her contribution to church music, especially the music of children.

"For a full hour before the funeral, the church's choir, soloists and organist performed her songs, hymns and anthems. It was a great tribute to her writing legacy. Of course, this was one of the songs we heard that day . . .

"Like the theologian she was, Natalie Sleeth moved on to worship: songs rising from silence, words seeking melodies, darkness becoming light, hope becoming evident in future days.

"Finally – and this relates to the afternoon in March 1992 – she expressed how life moves into death, death gives way to eternity, and ultimate victory comes for those whose doubt has evolved into belief."

\* © 1986 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Dr. Hawn is distinguished professor of church music at Perkins School of Theology. He is also director of the seminary's sacred music program.



## JUNE SCRIPTURES

- 1 Acts 2: 1-21
- 2 Numbers 11: 24-30
- 3 Psalm 104: 24-34, 35b
- 4 **PENTECOST SUNDAY (WEAR RED)**
- 5 1 Corinthians 12: 3b-13
- 6 Acts: 2: 1-21
- 7 John 20: 19-23
- 8 John 7: 37-39
- 9 Genesis 1: 1-2:4a
- 10 Psalm 8
- 11 **TRINITY SUNDAY (This is Good)**
- 12 2 Corinthians 13: 11-13
- 13 Matthew 28: 16-20

- 14 Genesis 18: 1-15,(21:1-7)
- 15 Psalm 116: 1-2, 12-19
- 16 Exodus 19: 2-8a
- 17 Psalm 100
- 18 **Second Sunday after Pentecost (Father's Day)**
- 19 Romans 5: 1-8
- 20 Matthew 9: 35-10:8
- 21 Matthew 10: 9-23
- 22 Genesis 21: 8-21
- 23 Psalm 86: 1-10
- 24 Psalm 86: 16-17
- 25 **Third Sunday after Pentecost (Daring Discipleship)**
- 26 Jeremiah 20: 7-13
- 27 Psalm 69: 7-10
- 28 Psalm 69: 11-15, 16-18
- 29 Romans 6: 1b-11
- 30 Mark 10: 24-39



**Pentecost SUNDAY IS JUNE 4th! WEAR RED!**

MUSIC MINISTRY

Worship



Notes from Jill....

May proved to be quite a musical month at FCC on the Green! Just one more word of thanks to all the participants of Diversity Sunday, both singers and dancers, those who shared at the luncheon, cooked dishes, dressed in costume, decorated the Parish Hall, and for all of you who supported the concert that evening! It was truly a celebration at the corner of Park and Lewis streets! Let me close with the words of our final hymn this past Sunday, penned by Marty Haugen, 1986

We are a blessed and a pilgrim people: bound for the reign of God!
Love our journey and love our homeland: love is the City of God!
Bring forth the reign of mercy, bring forth the reign of peace,
Bring forth the reign of justice, bring forth the City of God!

\*\*\*\*\*

- June 4 - Pentecost Sunday - Chancel Choir
June 11 - Men's Choir
June 18 - Chancel Choir- women's Ensemble
June 25 - Gospel Choir

\*\*\*\*\*

Our Farmer's Market seasonal opening is right around the corner. Start saving those Children's Books so that we can give them away each Saturday at the market!
~thanks



NOTES FROM THE GOSPEL

Men's choir will sing, second Sunday, June 11th and will rehearse that morning at 8am.
Gospel choir will sing fourth Sunday, June 25th, and will rehearse June 13th and 20th. Please note, we will not rehearse Tuesday, June 6th.



Say 'Amen' somebody...

Most people don't realize that a great musical performance involves not only the performer but also the audience. An audience can sometimes get lost spectating, thinking, ruminating and forget to give audible feedback to complete the interaction. If you have ever had a conversation with someone who doesn't give feedback, it can be very disconcerting because as a talker, we rely on the other person responding in voice or body language to know that we are being heard. If an audience is 'dead,' they don't respond to much. A dead audience might just be in their heads, thinking and totally enjoying the performance but for whatever reason, they are not showing it by visibly or audibly responding.

In Gospel music there is another element to the equation. In the African tradition of art and life being an inter-related conversation, there is a blurred line between performer and audience. Take for instance, the idea of the work song. So when you are working in the fields, you sing a song that may involve religious, social art and dance and evoke a playful back and forth between different groups that involve creativity as each groups

# The Newsletter

enacts a part. In other words it is not set rigidly. It is communal in orientation. It has multiple purposes usually. The singing may be about one topic but it is used to make the work go faster and tends to unify the group work. This tradition carried through to the new world when slavery brought Africans to America. The 'work song' and the field holler and chants were part of the breeding ground for the spiritual and the gospel tradition. This tradition brought with it the idea of integrating performer and audience as one unit. In the European concept of performance, an audience is supposed to receive politely and applaud after the performance is over. They are generally not invited to sing along or to participate audibly. The European model usually takes place inside a formal theatre with a stage and seating that separates stage from house, performer from audience. This sense of decorum from the European, formal model often hurts a gospel performance though. The gospel model, coming from the communal, African tradition relies on feedback both verbally and through hand clapping as well as joining in as co-performers. (There is a formal tradition where the spirituals were performed in the European style and were often 'set' as classical anthems, but this tradition is not what I'm talking about now, and comes from the time honored tradition of blending folk music into classical forms, think Dvorak and Copeland.) My point, is this, as an audience member, if you are listening to various forms of music you have to respond differently to be true to the various music you are receiving. One should adopt a flexibility to social conventions that seeks to honor each tradition in the way it is hoping to be received. So I encourage you all as receivers of gospel music to be enjoy yourselves in an active way. This will encourage your performers to feel confident and then they will sing all the better! So, yes, say 'amen,' clap your hands, sing along!

Chris, Gospel Choir Director



As time has passed, and the number of children attending Sunday School has declined due to vacations, warmer weather, and sports, we have decided to end Sunday School and the Nursery as we have in the past, on June 4th. We are however encouraging children to

attend to become involved in the service and church activities. A volunteer sign up sheet is posted in the parish hall for the KIDS KORNER at the farmers market.



Blessings,  
Amanda  
[amandaotero7@gmail.com](mailto:amandaotero7@gmail.com)  
(203) 810 – 9898



**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL GRADUATES!!**

**HIGH SCHOOL**

**Zoe Merriman, daughter of Lisa and Keith Merriman graduated from Laurelton Hall and will be attending PENN STATE University.**

Is someone in your family graduating from high school or college? Send us their names and their plans for after graduation, if you have them. We will publish them in the July/August newsletter. Please also send us any change of address – we want to keep in touch!



Silver Lake 2017 Summer Camp schedule and registration  
Forms are available in the church office.

## George Marsh Fund Scholarship

### General Information

George E. Marsh was a member of the First Congregational Church of Norwalk who served as the President and CEO of the Norwalk branch of the YMCA from 1969 – 1978. He later served as the director of the Philadelphia Naval YMCA until his retirement in 1992. Upon his death in 1994, he left a bequest to the First Congregational Church to be used to provide scholarships to young people who are members of the church family.

Each year the accumulated interest, (starting in June of prior year through May), from the George Marsh Scholarship Fund is used to provide young people with scholarships for one of three purposes:

1. participating in youth programs associated with our church or denomination, (confirmation class retreat)
2. attending summer camp at Silver Lake
3. Or assisting with the expenses associated with attending an accredited college or university.

### Application Requirements

In order to apply for the George Marsh Scholarship, young people must submit an application to the scholarship committee, requesting consideration and explaining how they would like to use the funds. All applicants must be either church members or, if not yet confirmed, must be active participants in the church's Christian Education program. Applicants may request funds for multiple purposes.

**Separate applications are available for Silver Lake and for College. Note, for the summer camp, you will need to fill out a separate application from Silver Lake.**

**NOTE: All applications must be received by the George Marsh Scholarship Committee no later than MONDAY, July 17, 2017. There are NO exceptions.**

**Application Forms are on the Table in the Parish Hall or call Phyllis, Church Clerk, 203-847-9551.**

## Annual Meeting

The 150th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ is being held as part an historic joint Annual Meeting with the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Conferences. It will be June 16 - 17 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.



The bulk of the meeting, including the Authorized Ministers' Luncheon, will be held jointly, and the **full schedule, lodging information and registration can be found at: [ctucc.org/TriConAm](http://ctucc.org/TriConAm).**

This page contains information specific to the Connecticut Conference portion of the meeting only. The three Conferences will break into separate plenary sessions on the afternoon of Saturday, June 17. as part an historic joint Annual Meeting with the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Conferences. It will be June 16 - 17 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.



### **CHRISTIAN COUNSELING CENTER**

In 1976, these lyrics filled the air, "cause it's summer, summer time is here, yes it's summer, my time of year". Summer just screams fun and adventure! We may vacation and socialize during other seasons, but there's nothing quite like the warm temperatures to invigorate and inspire, bringing us outside and relational for hours at a time.

We can tend to become hermits when it's cool, holing up with the TV or a good book. Some people suffer from SAD, seasonal affective disorder, being extremely sensitive to the lack of sunlight. So, as soon as the days start getting longer, we fire up the grill for a picnic, venture outside for a walk, head for the shore, or soil-filled hands plant flowers, herbs, and vegetables. We tend not to hear/say, "I'm bored" since we become more active, reconnecting with nature and people, out from our hibernation period.

# The Newsletter



Person-to-Person

Coming off our big food drive, we could use:

## JUNE WISH LIST

Individual snacks (granola bars, breakfast bars, etc.)  
Small bags of white rice (1 or 2 lbs)  
Dried Fruit/Raisins  
Peanut Butter and Jelly (especially strawberry, apricot, and raspberry)  
Grocery bags (paper or plastic) always needed too!

Food Pantry Volunteers needed:

Person-to-Person's Norwalk Food Pantry provides local families with groceries. We help over 700 families a month; 30-50 families per day. Volunteers stock and organize the shelves, sort donations, and help clients shop and make selections. We could also use volunteers in reception and for data entry. We are open Mon – Fri from 9:00am-4:00pm and could use volunteers on all shifts, especially in the afternoon. If you'd like to learn more about how you can help, please contact Susan Zelman at [susanzelmanp2phelps.org](mailto:susanzelmanp2phelps.org) or 203-621-0703.

Thank you so much!!!

Susan Zelman

Site Manager Norwalk

Person-to-Person

76 S. Main Street | Norwalk, CT 06854

203 621-0703 | [SusanZelman@p2pHelps.org](mailto:SusanZelman@p2pHelps.org) |

[p2pHelps.org](http://p2pHelps.org)



CHECK OUT OUR NEW

WEBSITE.....[fccnorwalkonthegreen.com](http://fccnorwalkonthegreen.com)

and share it with others. Not only does it give lots of information about our church, but shows us how we can get involved, has online giving, a blog of thoughts and musings, and numerous pictures of our community of faith.

YOU CAN SEND YOUR PLEDGE BY MAIL OR YOU CAN PAY ONLINE THROUGH OUR WEB-SITE AND YOU CAN PAY BY CREDIT CARD.



## Do I have your e-mail address?

Thanks for the people who have given their e-mails! Hope many received their newsletter this month in a e-mail or snail mail.

Still need more peoples e-mails !!!!

Please e-mail me at [fcthegreen@snet.net](mailto:fcthegreen@snet.net), which is the church's e-mail address.

Thank you, Blessings, Phyllis, Church Clerk

There are many proverbs and verses on lethargy, and while experiencing boredom is not a sin, the attitudes and choices that arise may be harmful to our faith, and produce a spirit of apathy. If you're in a slump, it's your time to connect with one of our counselors who will help you navigate your path towards vitality. Just give the Christian Counseling Center a call at 203-846-4626 to make an appointment, so you may enjoy the months ahead, sharing your joy with others. 1 Timothy 6:6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain."

**Christian Counseling Center**

**3 Lewis St. Norwalk, CT 06851 203-846-4626**

[www.christiancounselingcenter.us/](http://www.christiancounselingcenter.us/)



**BETA CIRCLE**

**NEXT MEETING is JUNE 20<sup>th</sup>**

**12:30**

At the last meeting we celebrated our 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with good spirits and an anniversary chocolate cake! Allia Zobel Nolan graced us and became a Beta member. We also booked this famous author for a program at our meeting on Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>.

We were glad we cancelled the Tag Sale on Mother's Day Weekend. Rain (lots of it) was the reason. So, now it is scheduled for June 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>...Father's Day Weekend! Save some money and enjoy! We plan on using the front of the Church and the Narthex so the community and drive by folk see the Tag Sale.

We need the help of several able men to bring up the boxes that were carried down to the basement because of the Diversity Luncheon, Gospel Concert and reception afterwards.

Decisions about future dates were made:

-----Dispersion of the Tag Sale funds made will be at a Business-

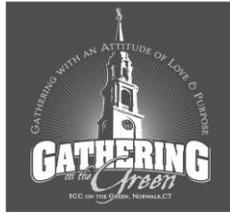
Luncheon meeting on June 20th

-----The Christmas Boutique will be December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_The dispersion of the funds earned will be at a BETA meeting (12/12)

**Make sure you remember the Sale on Father's Day weekend!**

Reverend Frank Newsome  
Church Office 203 847-9551  
Fax 203 849-0221  
e-mail: [fcthegreen@snet.net](mailto:fcthegreen@snet.net)  
[www.fccnorwalkonthegreen.com](http://www.fccnorwalkonthegreen.com)



**THE NEWSLETTER**

First Congregational Church of Norwalk  
Park and Lewis Streets  
Norwalk, CT 06851

**\*ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**FCC FARMER'S MARKET STARTS SATURDAY, JULY 1<sup>ST</sup> FROM 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M. AND EVERY SATURDAY UNTIL OCTOBER 28<sup>TH</sup> !**

