



AUGUST NEWSLETTER

THE CORNERSTONE

Ridgebury Congregational Church
605 Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Ave, Ridgeburians!

This month, how about a book review?

I want you all too immediately run out (well, finish reading *The Cornerstone* and then rush out,) and by yourself a copy of *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing, and Why*, by Phyllis Tickle (Baker/emersion: 2010). Tickle's idea is that because the society in which it operates is always changing, about every 500 years, Christianity goes through a wrenching period of restructuring, when new forms of Christianity develop and existing forms either change or wither away. The result is an emergence of a new kind of Christianity. According to Tickle, the first of these periods took place in the 500s, with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire and the rise of monasticism. The second was the 1000s, which featured the final split between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism and the rise of the medieval church. The third took place in the 1500s with the Reformation and the birth of Protestantism--which means, if the pattern holds, that the 2000s is the next of these periods of development, change, and emergence. Tickle suggests that this is precisely the case. In her brief (only 166 pages) but outstanding book, she lays out the history of the previous three great upheavals and uncovers the roots of the present one. She considers the effect on Christianity of great nineteenth- and twentieth-century cultural and social changes including those wrought by Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Faraday's field theory which has become the foundation of the technology we all take for granted today and the theories of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Albert Einstein, and Joseph Campbell. She explores the impact that the rise of the automobile has on Christian worship and church service while also making brief forays into the origins of Pentecostalism, the influence of Karl Marx, Buddhism, Alcoholics Anonymous, recreational drug use, and the changing roles of women and, hence, the notion of the traditional family, in society since World War II. Finally Tickle takes a look at how these changes are giving rise to new ideas about how to do church in existing Christian communities as well brand new emerging ways of doing Christianity in 21st century America, specifically the Vineyard churches and the Calvary Chapels.

I think Tickle is on to something here. I would include a couple of additional things in her discussion of ways dramatic changes in contemporary society are pushing dramatic changes in ways of doing Christianity, particularly the ongoing revolution in our understanding of cognition and how the human mind works, but that is more a quibble than a serious complaint. Overall, though, I think Tickle is right: we are in the midst of enormous changes both in society and in how Christianity is going to operate in the future, which is significant because, to the extent that they think about the future at all, most Christians--and most folks in general--tend to think that the past provides a reliable guide to the future. Most of the time this is probably true, but not always, and, I think, certainly not now. If most of the times Christians tend to think "the future will look a lot like the past." A better slogan for our times might be the "past performance does not guarantee future results." And this important for us here in Ridgebury as we begin to think about the future of our Congregation. A bit later on in the Fall you'll be hearing from the Pastoral Relations Committee about opportunities for public meetings where we will discuss our Congregation's future, and if you come to one of those meetings, you might want to give Tickle's book a quick read first, because if she's right, then the one thing we might be able to predict about our Church's future is that in some significant ways it will not look like our past!

Cheers
John



Summer is in full swing – BBQs, vacations, trips to the beach, and fun in the sun! It's been a busy few months at Ridgebury as well.

The 'new' Board of Deacons met in early June. The board consists of seven familiar faces – Marsha Albats, Kathy Barry, Tod Dickson, Jessica Juska, Barbara Ollinger, Matt Orr, and Sally Yarrish all return for another year of service as deacons. I have enjoyed working with all of them this past year and look forward to an exciting upcoming year - thank you all for your hard work and dedication! The returning members all welcome Randy Raymond, who joins as our newest deacon. Welcome aboard, Randy!

Leaving the Board of Deacons is Carole Bishop, our outgoing chairman. We thank her for all of her hard work and especially for her leadership during her time as chairman. She has kept Deacons running smoothly and efficiently in the past year, and I hope I can keep things running as well. Thanks Carole!

Also at our June meeting, Sally Yarrish was elected for another term as our secretary. Jessica Juska will serve as the Deacons' representative on the Pastoral Relations Committee. Additionally, I will serve as a liaison between Deacons and the Christian Education Committee.

As a closing note, I thought I would share with you the Seven Point Creed of legendary UCLA men's basketball coach John Wooden. Wooden passed in June at the age of 99. His famous Seven Point Creed, given to him as a child by his father, summarized his philosophy about coaching, and more importantly his philosophy about life.

Be true to yourself.
Make each day your masterpiece.
Help others.
Drink deeply from good books, especially the Bible.
Make friendship a fine art.
Build a shelter against a rainy day.
Pray for guidance and give thanks for your blessings each day.

In Christ,
Tod Dickson
Chairman of Deacons



SAVE THE DATE

The date for the Ladies' Christmas Dinner has been set. We will meet at "Chuck's Steak House" on Wednesday December 1st. Details will follow in the coming months.

As the temperature and humidity soar, think of a cold night in December. Now, didn't that help to cool you off?



In June, following their election by you at RCC's Annual Meeting on May 10th, the incoming officers and board and committee members for the 2010-2011 church year met with their outgoing counterparts in transition meetings. Although none of the boards and committees met in July, all are scheduled to meet in August, to begin in earnest the work that is necessary to keep RCC running smoothly and moving forward.

I and the other officers and board and committee members are grateful to you for the opportunity to serve. Please pray for us, asking God to guide us in our discussions, decision making, and actions. Please also talk to us, sharing your thoughts as to what we should be doing to make RCC a better place to worship and share our lives in Christian fellowship.

If you are interested, feel free to come to any or all of the board and committee meetings. Meeting dates and times are announced in the weekly Bulletin and in the monthly calendar in the back of *The Cornerstone*. Although you will not be able to vote on matters decided at the meetings, you are welcome to propose your ideas and participate in discussions.

God bless,
Marty Ollinger



Just a reminder, there is a sign-up sheet for Altar flowers. The sign-up sheet is located on the wall in Shields Hall.

If you would like to dedicate flowers, please send your dedication to Bulletin@RidgeburyChurch.org.

JULY Birthdays									
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Ridgebury Congregational Church

250th Anniversary

605 Ridgebury Road, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877
www.ridgeburychurch.org

As part of our ongoing 250th Anniversary celebration, the 250th Committee is putting together a special commemorative booklet jam-packed with our congregation's history, information about our anniversary, special remembrances and greetings, historic photographs, and much more, which will be available at our luncheon on October 17th. There's even a section planned for members and friends of our congregation who want to add their own personal congratulations or greetings by becoming a Patron of our celebration! Just make a contribution to the 250th Committee and you will be able to add your own sentiments to our commemorative booklet, and be assured that future generations of Ridgeburians will be able to read what you had to say. The contributions will go to defray the cost of printing the booklet because while it is going to be lovely, printing it is fairly costly. If you would like to become a Patron of our celebration and have your thoughts included in our commemorative booklet, you need to either get your contribution to Betty Miller at 57 Langstroth Drive, Ridgefield, CT 06877, or include a check (with the word "patron" on the memo line) for your donation in the offering basket on Sunday morning. But however you do it, you absolutely need to do it by August 30th, so don't delay!

August 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Family Sunday	2 7p Deacons Meet	3	4	5 7:15p AA Meets	6	7
10a Communion						
8 11:30a Missions Meeting	9 7p Trustees	10	11	12 7:15p AA Meets	13	14
15 Assumption (Christian)	16 7p Council Meeting	17	18	19 7:15p AA Meets	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 7:15p AA Meets	27	28
29	30	31	1	2 7:15p AA Meets	3	4