



Historian's Notebook

by George Blanchard

China has been in the headlines for quite a long time; contaminated toys, the Olympic Games and the concerns of pollution and air quality for the athletes. There were earthquakes in the Southwestern part of the country; 70,000 people killed and 1.2 million left homeless. Communist China was our 'enemy' for many years but relations have improved.

Back in the 1920's, 1926 to be exact, Central Church first became connected to China. How? We sponsored a missionary couple, Arthur and Gertrude Rinden.

I am certainly not a student of Chinese history but in reading letters from the Rindens and newspaper articles, it appears that, and I quote, "China has been in a state of revolt since 1911 and will continue for 20 more years. The youth of China are endeavoring to make radical changes in the economic, literary, social, political and religious phases of their civilization. They are trying to do in 20 years what other countries have taken 300 years to do. They are making mistakes but we have faith in them . . . China has attempted to found a republic where there are no Republicans and a democracy where there are no Democrats, with the result that she is the prey of chiefs of the many contending factions."

This then is the situation that the Rindens and 225 other missionaries found upon their arrival. They were assigned to the mission in Foochow. Within months the area became a war zone with 30,000 Southern troops occupying the city. Orphanages were looted as were schools and homes with many senseless killings. Many of the

missionaries escaped to Hong Kong, the Rindens to Formosa.

When they were finally able to return to Foochow, Dr. Rinden wrote, "I am very glad to be in China, and we consider it a great opportunity to be able to do a little bit towards putting the ideals of Jesus into practice in China. China needs Christianity more than all other things combined. I am impatient to speak the language, so that I can begin on the great work. We appreciate the interest and prayers of Central Church, and we know that results will follow."

Later when Japan began bombing China. Mrs. Rinden and their three children returned to her parent's home in New Hampshire. In 1937, Dr. Rinden narrowly escaped when a bomb hit his home. He tells of walking through the mountains for 40 miles before he was able to reach Shanghai and passage back to the States.

After World War II they returned to China where one of his duties was to establish an audio-visual aids department for the National Christian Council of China. They also spent one year in Japan before returning home in 1952 to preach and write.

Throughout the years Central Church was very mission minded, also sponsoring the Rev. Dr. & Mrs. Robert A. Hume to India in 1874 and the Rev. & Mrs. John T. Parsons to Africa in 1954. It is also interesting to note that John Parson's parents were missionaries to China, where he spent the first six years of his life.



THE SECOND WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP



The Second Wednesday Book Group will try again to meet and discuss "Atonement" by Ian McEwan. It will be

October 8, 7:30 p.m. at Ginny Woodbury's, 508-798-2496, email vwoodbury@verizon.net. Please let her know if you'd like to attend.

If you are not a regular attendee, please consider it. This book is a beautifully written story, enthralling and thought-provoking.

THANK YOU, I.H.N. VOLUNTEERS!

United Congregational Church recently completed another successful hosting of homeless families for the Interfaith Hospitality Network. As always, this hosting would not have been possible without the many friends and members of United who cooked, served as hosts, bought supplies or assisted with the moving of our guests' beds and belongings.

Because of the help provided by you, the volunteers, the Worcester I.H.N. has been able to provide assistance to literally hundreds of families since its inception in 1997. Your dedication and concern has also been an inspiration to us, and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve with you in this ministry to those in need. May God bless you!

Tim Camp & Mary Flynn,
Hosting Co-Coordinators

FIRST NIGHT PLANNING MEETING SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 9:00 a.m.



United Congregational Church will once again participate in Worcester's First Night festivities. Entertainers will be performing in various church rooms the afternoon and evening of Wednesday, December 31st, and United will also operate a food and beverage concession.

First Night has always been an opportunity for our congregation to support a family friendly event, and to show our church to the larger community. Volunteers will be needed for food preparation and serving, greeting visitors, and a host of other tasks.

There will be an initial planning meeting for United's First Night events, scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 28th, in the Robinson Room. Anyone interested in helping at these fun filled events, or having ideas on how First Night can be carried out in more meaningful and efficient ways, is encouraged to attend. Those interested can also call United's First Night Coordinator Tim Camp at 508-798-6997.

THE FOOD CUPBOARD

- NEEDS:
- PEANUT BUTTER
- MAC & CHEESE
- CEREAL
- PASTA & SAUCE • SOUPS
- CANNED FRUITS & VEGGIES
- POWDERED MILK



Food Cupboard News



The Partner Agencies of the Worcester County Food Bank have worked hard over the past few years towards the goal to "Ensure Services For All" and with a full year of participation in the new

data collection system, we have made great strides. Using zip codes as a means to define service areas for each agency, information collected includes new and total numbers of people served each month, client age breakdown, principal household income source, and federal program participation. Clients residing outside of a program's service area are helped once and referred to a program in their neighborhood. Clients are receptive to referrals when the reason for the referral is explained as a way to ensure equal distribution of food resources to all those in need throughout Worcester County.

Thanks to the data collection system, current accurate information is now available to Partner Agencies through the web site of the Worcester County Food Bank. This information is being used at county, city, town and program levels in communication and advocacy efforts with the media, donors, and elected officials.

In addition, Partner Agencies have agreed to provide information and referrals to clients to assist them in accessing all the resources available to become self-sufficient. Because Partner Agencies vary widely in available resources and staff, the Worcester County Food Bank has provided MA Food and Nutrition Programs brochures to be distributed to all new clients.

Looking specifically at the data for United's Food Cupboard, there has been a 17% increase in the number of people served in August 2008 as compared with August 2007. Client age breakdown, however, remains essentially the same: 37% are children (0-17 years) and 10% are 65 and older. Also, there has been little variation in Principal Household Income data: 12- 14% of our clients are employed, 6-13% receive unemployment, 60-64% receive Social Security, 5% receive TANF/ADFC, 2-10% have no income, and 5% have other sources of income. New clients are given the MA Food and Nutritional Programs brochures in an effort to increase participation. Currently 46 – 52% of our clients receive Food Stamps and 13 – 15% participate in the School Breakfast and Lunch programs.

Special thanks go to the food cupboard volunteers at United who have worked so diligently to implement these changes in data collection and also for the professional and caring manner they treat our clients.

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS



Our coffee hour hosts provide us with goodies, coffee, and juice to enjoy while we talk with old friends and make new ones after worship.

We are looking for volunteer teams to host coffee hour. A schedule is prepared for a few months at a time. Call the church office if you are interested in signing up or for more information.

The GREEN ROOSTER CoffeeHouse



Doors open 7:30
All shows 8:00 p.m.

Oct 4	Cormac McCarthy
Oct 25	Aztec Two-Step
	<i>Thanks for dropping in! We always need volunteers</i>

FALL CLEAN-UP DAY SATURDAY, OCT. 18

ALL CHURCH WORK DAY

Join fellow members and friends for a few minutes or a few hours as we clean out all the nooks and crannies, with emphasis on the basement!!



Dear Friends,

My heartfelt thanks for the "get well" card that I received from the church with the many greetings and best wishes for my recovery as a result of my recent heart attack. I was deeply moved by the response considering some of the names of the church family that I am not familiar with.

It is for this reason that I choose to maintain my church membership with UCC in Worcester rather than join a local church in this area. This type of warmth, concern, and friendship makes me want to remain a part of the UCC family.

Bless you all and keep the faith,
Wendell Wright

A NOTE OF



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Elizabeth Brown	2
Geraldine Hansen	6
Barry Jones	7
Tim Wood	8
Richard Sisson	
Ingrid Ward	9
Audrey White	13
Patricia Gibb	
Marc Owanisian	16
Dot Mason	18
Tristan O'Donnell	
Ruth Evans	19
Audrey Simes	
Ed Fenner, Jr.	21
Kevin Ebers	23
Wallace Stuart	24
Kara Maki	26
Jolie Demers	27
Everett Wilcox Jr.	
Shirley Anderson	31

FRIDAYS 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study

Small Parlor



Stewardship Helpers Needed

We need your help!!

Work from home

One-time commitment

No committee meetings

Our Fall Stewardship Campaign needs some coordination! One person or team of two to prepare and mail stewardship letters and pledge cards

Materials provided

Follow up with phone calls

Send thank-you notes

Work with pastor on including stewardship messages in worship

Popcorn provided

It will be fun!!

Please call the church office to volunteer (508.752.3785).

Hear the church bells ring when you do!!!

CONCERT – OCTOBER 19 POMMERN VILLAGE CHOIR

4:30 p.m. Reception

Watch a DVD describing a water project to provide safe drinking water for the village of Pommern in Tanzania, and visit with members of the choir!



Large Parlor

5:30 p.m. Concert

A free will offering will be received for the water project.

Sanctuary

Goodies are needed for the Reception. Call the church office (508-752-3785) if you would like to bring something to share.

SECOND SUNDAY HEALING SERVICE

In accord with one of our most ancient of Christian traditions, the Diaconate would like to offer Healing Services on a regular basis. Immediately following worship on the second Sunday of the month, the pastor and a Deacon will be available to anoint and offer a brief prayer for those of you who would like to receive this healing blessing. It is our desire as pastor and as Deacons to provide for your spiritual needs.



2008 HARVEST FESTIVAL HEIFER INTERNATIONAL Overlook Farm

216 Wachusett St., Rutland, MA

Sat, October 4 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sun, October 5 12 p.m.-4 p.m.

Enjoy a hayride to the pumpkin patch to pick your own pumpkins. Great foods including harvest corn chowder, harvest stew, and pesto pizza. Activities for children include face painting, hay maze, and crafts. Visit our gift shop featuring fair-trade crafts from around the world.

\$5.00 parking fee per vehicle

No admission fee

www.heifer.org/overlook