

Return Service Requested

The CHALLENGE January 2017

South United Methodist Church
with Rev. John Marshall



"Where the joy of life in Christ overflows"

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship with Choir
Children's Story in the Sanctuary
Communion served monthly

10:45 a.m. Sunday School
For All Ages

11:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship with
Wildfire Worship Band in the Café
Communion served monthly

Contact Information:

Church office: (860) 647-9141
Office Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 9:00a-12:00p
Tues, Thurs 6:00p-9:00p
Email address: office@southumc.com
Web address: southumc.com

February Challenge Deadline:
Sunday, January 22, 2017



**SUNDAY
WORSHIP
SCHEDULE**

- 9:30a - Traditional
Worship with Choir
and Children's Story
- 9:45a - Sunday School
for Nursery-Grade 2
- 10:45a - Sunday School
for all Ages
- 11:45a - Contemporary
Worship with Wildfire
Worship Band

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THE CHALLENGE JANUARY 2017

**Report of the Pastor
State of the Church**

"I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers." (Ephesians 1:15-16)

Dear Friends,

This has once again been an extremely busy, active year for me as your pastor. South Church is a vibrant, active church; so there is never a lack in opportunities to serve for any of us. It has been my privilege to preach and teach the Holy Scriptures, lead you in worship, administer the sacraments and officiate at a wedding and several funerals throughout the year. I have attended numerous meetings many Tuesday nights in 2016 and led Staff meetings most Wednesday's at 11am. I have also visited many of our folks at home, in the hospital or in rehabilitation facilities in the past twelve months.

In this report rather than dwell on my activities, I would like to share you what I have learned about you, the people of South United Methodist Church in my over sixty-five months serving as your pastor. In the process, when I think about South Church it is no longer "your church" but rather "our church." At the outset, let me hasten to add, that I am interested in your thoughts on my learnings.

I. What's important: the priorities of South Church...

Following Jesus/ growing spiritually: In getting to know you, I have been struck by your interest in knowing and following Jesus. You strive to make Jesus real in your own lives, families, in our community and world. Many South Church people read their Bibles as well as devotionals like the Upper Room or Our Daily Bread and listen to Christian radio. In addition you strive to live out your faith in the neighborhood and work place. Adult Sunday School as well as various Bible studies are important to many of us who participate on a regular basis.

Discovering the power of prayer: A few years ago, a prayer chain was started (re-started?) at South Church. Many of you are on the chain and many of you share your requests and answers to prayer. In worship both in the Cafe as well as at 9:30am, a central part of our time together is the sharing of our celebrations and prayer requests. I believe we at South Church also understand our dependence upon the Lord's guidance and help for all that we do, or attempt to do.

Vibrant Worship: The people of South Church understand that worship is at the heart of who we are. We offer two distinctly different worship experiences each Sunday. In both the sanctuary and The Cafe, our music is well done and heart-felt. We deeply appreciate the musical leadership of our choirs and praise band.

Passing our faith on to Children, youth and young adults: South Church for years has demonstrated a commitment to children and youth through holding a VBS each summer. Nearly 100 children attend VBS, which is staffed by dozens of enthusiastic youth and adults. At Sunday School every week, the message of Jesus is presented in a fun way that makes children want to come back. Nearly every week our youth gather for fellowship, fun, worship and discussion. Young adults regularly participate in Bible Studies and special events. Each Sunday, we provide loving child care in our nursery allowing parents (and grandparents) to attend worship at either 9:30 or 11:45 as well as Sunday School. Taken together the above ministries reflect the high value South Church places on helping the young among us to experience and share the love of Jesus!

Caring for one another: You are a caring church. South Church has a strong commitment to look after each other in our time of need. This is demonstrated through the one-on-one caring provided by our trained Stephen Ministers. We continue to show concern for those who may not be able to currently attend worship through our congregational care ministry.

Doing Good: locally and globally: You don't have to attend South Church very long before observing how critical mission is around here. In and around Manchester, we actively support MACC (Manchester Area Conference of Churches) food pantry, kitchen, seasonal sharing during the holiday season and other need-meeting ministries throughout the year. Early in the year we donate money to purchase the ingredients to pack thousands of meals at our Stop Hunger Now event held in April. At the end of the April, through Rebuilding Together many of us work to improve the home of one of a neighbor in our community.



Each May, to honor and remember our mothers and other significant women in our lives, we donate funds for hundreds of blankets through Church World Service to help people in crisis nationally and around the world. In the fall, for the past two years, we have prepared Shoeboxes (163 in 2016!) filled with gifts to share the love of Jesus with children at Christmas. Working together, we the people of South Church do so much to make our world a better place in Jesus' name!

Growing spiritually, prayer, worship, passing on our faith, caring, doing good: these are the priorities of South Church. By God's grace, through the power of His Spirit and the hard work of his people every week, life-changing, need-meeting, ministry takes place. How does it happen? Why are we able to do so much? I have learned that it is due to the commitment we the people of South Church make to three strategies or approaches to ministry...

II. The South Church Approach to Ministry and Mission

We support, encourage and develop a high quality staff team: Ministry happens as a result of the leadership of people who are willing to take personal responsibility to insure this ministry takes place. South Church has a tradition of high quality leadership both paid and volunteer. Without the efforts of these people, we could not do what we do. The future of the ministry of South Church largely depends on our ability to continue to recruit, train, support and encourage gifted people.

We maintain attractive, comfortable, user-friendly facilities: Many of us were first drawn to South Church by the prominence and location of our building and it's obvious quality. We strive to balance a respect for our church's history and tradition with our need to continue to relate to the needs of people in our time. At South Church, we have a history of using our buildings for ministry to one another, to house our staff and to help us be in mission to our community.

Generous Giving: Simply put we the people of South Church are a generous group. We could not do what we do were it not for our common commitment to pray, attend, give, serve and witness to our faith. As a result of these commitments we grow spiritually, worship together, pass on our faith to the young, care for one another and do so much good. None of us should ever underestimate the critical role we have in making the ministry of South United Methodist Church happen.

Finally, these are my learnings concerning the overall values of South Church. These values, I believe, guide our interactions with each other and with those we seek to reach.

III. The Values of South Church

Excellence: We seek to do our best and bring our best to whatever we do at South Church. You can see this in our worship, our programming, our outreach and the way we maintain our facilities.

Innovation: We are a traditional church with over 225 years of ministry experience in the town of Manchester. Yet, we have a cafe service that is well attended, we have a highly creative, up-to-date VBS each summer, we even receive emails to hear where our shoeboxes will be delivered to. Over and over, we demonstrate a willingness to shift, change and adapt in order to further our common desire to carry on- and out, the work of Jesus.

Authenticity: We seek to be real in how we live out our faith in Christ. Our worship is genuine but not showy or pretentious. We strive to be real and genuine in how we treat one another and those we serve. We know that we are not all in the same place in our faith and we are more than okay with that.

Compassion: We are not perfect but we do seek to care for and love one another. South Church has real concern for those who seem to have been left out or forgotten in our world. We pray for one another and patiently listen to each other, like a family. We strive to remember and be in contact with those who for a variety of reasons are not active in our ministries.

This is some of what I have learned about South Church during our time together. These commitments, strategies and values are a significant part of what makes our work together so effective. By God's grace, I am hoping in the next year to continue to help South Church's ministry grow and expand by the grace of God, the power of the Holy Spirit and the support of all of you.

In Service to Christ,

John

South United Methodist Church Contact Information

Church office: (860) 647-9141

Office Hours: Mon Wed Fri 9:00a -12:00p
Tues, Thurs 6:00p-9:00p

Email address: office@southumc.com

Web address: southumc.com

Facebook: [facebook.com/southumc](https://www.facebook.com/southumc)

Prayer Chain: (860) 337-2793 or
prayer@southumc.com

South Church Staff

Pastor - Rev. John Marshall ext. 14

Director of Music - Earle Bidwell ext. 11

Organist - Christopher Walton

Director of Ministries - Terry Marshall ext. 15

Director Next Gen Ministries - J.T. Himmelstein ext. 13

Sexton - Ken Schaller ext. 20

Sexton - Don Wilby ext. 20

Office Managers - Colleen Olbert/Patti LaForest ext. 10
Rev. Richard Thompson (retired)

Guided New Testament Tour is under way...

Reading the Bible more consistently and faithfully is a common resolution at the beginning of a New Year. A great way to read the Bible more regularly is to use the New Testament readings provided below. So, it's never too late to join in reading the NT with other members and friends from South Church. We started in October and will finish in April. Right now the readings are found in the Gospel of Luke. But you will find a list of this month's readings below, in the bulletin and at southumc.com (click on the devos tab). On the first and third Thursdays of the month, from 6:30-7:30pm in the cafe, Pastor John will lead a session previewing the New Testament material to be read in the coming weeks. The next scheduled sessions will be held: January 5 and 19th. Reading the New Testament is a great way to start the New Year and a definite way to grow closer to our Lord!

Readings 52-55: Luke

52 1/2/17 Luke 20-21

53 1/3/17 Luke 22

54 1/4/17 Luke 23

55 1/5/17 Luke 25 6: Intro to Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians

Readings 56-64: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians

56 1/6/17 Galatians 1-2

57 1/9/17 Galatians 3-4

58 1/10/17 Galatians 5-6

59 1/11/17 Ephesians 1-2

60 1/12/17 Ephesians 3-4

61 1/13/17 Ephesians 5-6

62 1/16/17 Philippians 1-2

63 1/17/17 Philippians 3-4

64 1/18/17 Colossians 1-2

65 1/19/17 Colossians 3-4 Session 7: Introduction to 1,2 Peter, Jude

Readings 66-75: 1,2 Peter, Jude

66 1/20/17 1 Peter 1

67 1/23/17 1 Peter 2

68 1/24/17 1 Peter 3

69 1/25/17 1 Peter 4

70 1/26/17 1 Peter 5

71 1/27/17 2 Peter 1

72 1/30/17 2 Peter 2

73 1/31/17 2 Peter 3

74 2/1/17 Jude 1-16

75 2/2/17 Jude 17-25 Session 8: Introduction to Mark



Our church has been sponsoring Lovendy Delva, 11 year-old boy from Haiti for the past three and a half years. Updated photos, information about our sponsored child and information on how you can sponsor a child are available at the kiosk in Reception Hall.

Bill McGugan, 860-649-9072
runbillrun01@gmail.com.



Cup of Joy ~ Women
Join us any Sunday
10:45am ~ Cooper Hall

Cup of Joe ~ Men
Join us any Sunday
10:45am ~ 3rd floor classroom



Social Justice Class
Join us any Sunday
10:45am ~ 3rd floor classroom

Upcoming Youth Events

The Winter Retreat is right around the corner! Please be sure to send copies of health insurance cards and the second deposit (\$50) into JT or the office.

The Super Bowl is right around the corner, and Youth will be taking a "Souper Bowl" Sunday offering on February 5 that will help to support MACC! Please be sure to bring your donations that Sunday morning, and you can join us for the Youth-hosted Super Bowl party later that evening from 6 pm to half-time.

- 1/8 Youth Group 5pm at South
- 1/15 Youth Group 5pm at South
- 1/22 Youth Group 5pm at South
- 1/29 Youth Group 4pm at Laser Quest
- 2/5 Super Bowl Potluck at 6pm
- 2/10 Youth Retreat ~ return 2/12



Thanks you to all who supported our Sunday School children for the 2016 Christmas Pageant entitled, The Party. We especially want to thank Denise Roman, Pageant director and Jill Smith, Children's choir director for their extra time and effort to ensure the pageant would be such a success! Bravo Everyone!

Thank you

Thank you so much, for all your get well cards, calls, visits and prayers. I really appreciate all of your caring and thoughtfulness. I am feeling so much better, thanks to all of your prayers.

Jeanne Eagleson



The Youth and Recent Alumni/ Young Adult Christmas Party was a great success! Thank you to those who helped pull it off, and thank you for praying for it! Please continue to pray for our Young Adults, especially those traveling back to school for the spring semester.



Washington school needs sweat pants, sizes 5 and 6, hats and mittens.

Contact Bill McGugan for any questions
(860)649-9072 or
runbillrun01@gmail.com

South United Methodist Church Presents:

Harold Lloyd

In the romantic comedy

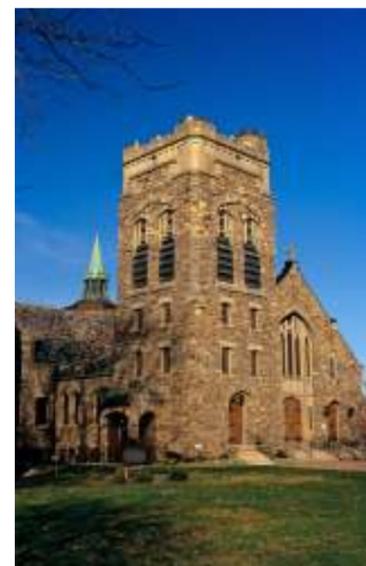
Girl Shy



Clark Wilson performs on the Austin Organ

Friday, February 24th 7:00 PM

1226 Main Street Manchester CT Adults \$10 Children \$5



Annual All Church Celebration

Sunday, January 29
at 10:00am
(One Combined Service)

in The Sanctuary
Light lunch to follow downstairs in Cooper Hall
(by donation)

Come and help us celebrate in the context of Worship all that God has done, and will do, in and through South Church for 2016/2017.

All members and friends of the church are invited and encouraged to attend.

January 2017 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00am One Combined Service 11:45am NO Contemporary in Café 5:00pm NO Youth Group	2 6:30pm NO Young Women or Men Bible Study	3 12pm Bulletin Deadline 6:30pm Lay Leadership 7:00pm NO Committee	4 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	5 6:30pm New Testament Class 7:30pm SM Supervision	6	7 7:30am Men's Fellowship 9:30am Knitting Group
8 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am K- 2nd Children's Church 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm Youth Group	9 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm Young Women's Studies	10 12pm Bulletin Deadline 7:00pm NO Committees & Commissions 7:30pm NO Ad Board	11 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	12	13	14
15 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am K- 2nd Children's Church 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm Youth Group	16 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm Young Women's Studies	17 12pm Bulletin Deadline 7pm Lydia Circle 7:30pm NO Staff Parish Mtg	18 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	19 6:30pm New Testament Class 7:30pm SM Supervision	20	21 9:30am Knitting Group
22 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am K- 2nd Children's Church 10:45am Social Justice presentation 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm Youth Group **Challenge deadline	23 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm Young Women's Studies	24 12pm Bulletin Deadline 7:30pm Finance Mtg	25 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	26	27	28
29 10:00am All Church mtg. followed By lunch 11:45am NO Contemporary in Café 4:00pm Youth Group/Laser Quest	30 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm Young Women's Studies	31 12pm Bulletin Deadline	1 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	2 6:30pm New Testament Class 7:30pm SM Supervision	3	4 7:30am Men's Fellowship 9:30am Knitting Group

More South News

DOING JUSTICE

The Social Justice Class that meets at 10:45 on Sunday mornings has been struggling with our own definition of what it means to “do justice” in the Biblical sense. We present now what we have so far. We would invite you to join us during January (except for the 22nd and 29th) or February and add your input (positive or negative).

For us, doing justice has two parts (maybe more). There is a personal part and a societal part.

A. For us, the personal part involves:

1. Treating all people (with an emphasis here on diversity) with respect, as exemplified in the life of Christ.
2. Using our time, energy, voice, and money to try to make the same opportunities available to all people.
3. Standing with the oppressed as they strive for justice (bringing the Gospel with us).
4. Praying fervently that God will be present in movements toward justice (and in us as we seek to confront our own biases).

B. For us, the societal part involves:

1. Seeking to do as a community what Jesus taught us to do as individuals: love God and love our neighbors (however far away they may be).
2. Praying consistently that God will help people see His hand at work in the world and repent of their less honorable ways of living.
3. Supporting those individuals and groups who have the capacity and the will to identify and stop oppression, and/or to work toward a fair distribution of opportunities and resources.

COME AND HEAR ABOUT “BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES”

The Social Justice Class (with the approval of the Ad Board) has invited Peter Tullson and his wife to come to the church on January 22 and share during the 10:45 am to 11:30 am period of time something of the story of a group active in Manchester called “Building Healthy Families”. We would encourage you to come and share in the excitement of what they are doing for our children.

A great deal of a child’s capacity to learn and enjoy success in school and later in life is formed during the first 1000 days of life. Therefore the group focuses on them and their parents. Using a program called BrightStart Parenting Workshop, they equip parents to provide a language rich, emotionally secure environment in which to grow physically and emotionally strong children. They have so far conducted about a dozen workshops and served over 100 families, and they are seeking to expand on that.

We aren’t sure where our church, or individuals within our congregation, might fit into the program, but it is an opportunity for us to be doing justice.

PREPARING TO STOP HUNGER

Each spring, approximately sixty members of our congregation gather together and pack bag after bag of lunches for school kids in an impoverished part of the world. We have a great time. All the teacher has to do is add a little water and cook the combination of rice and soy and flavoring and vitamins.

Before that, however, we need to collect at least \$2900 to pay for the ingredients and for shipping (that’s to make sure it’s worth the commitment of their truck and driver). If we get more than \$2900, we get to pack and send even more food.

We are setting aside three Sundays during January (the 8th, 15th, and 22nd) to collect your financial contributions and send them to Stop Hunger Now. Please help us to meet our goal.

Outreach News

South Church is Reaching out Through:

MITTEN TREE.

The annual mitten trees are up in Reception Hall and outside The Café. We are hoping people will pick up some inexpensive hats or mittens or sweat pants for sizes 6, 7, and 8 and put them on the tree. They will be given to the school nurse at Washington School to have on hand for emergencies or to use with children who don’t have adequate clothing for the winter.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD.

We have heard that the shoe boxes we filled were all shipped to Ukraine to present to the children there. All told, some 11 million boxes went out, all around the world.

SEASONAL SHARING.

Thanksgiving and Christmas have come and gone, and we want to thank all the people who donated food and money and gifts to make this a much happier season for folks who are struggling financially. We can only hope that recipients felt God’s love as well as ours.

HEARING ABOUT BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAM

Several weeks ago, the Social Justice Class invited Peter Tullson to talk with them about what his group is doing in Manchester. They were so excited they invited him to come back on Sunday, January 22 at 10:45 am to speak to anyone from the congregation who might like to better understand the program.

SUPPORTING STOP HUNGER NOW

There will be chances to offer your gifts during January. The packaging will take place later on, in April.

VOLUNTEERING INDIVIDUALLY

It’s hard to keep up with them all, but this month we’d like to call attention to Jane Zadnik who is working at MACC, both in the clothing store and in the preparation for the Seasonal Sharing families, and to Margaret Callaway and Deb Grehn who have taken up reading books with young children one-on-one at local schools. If either of those things sound good to you, see them.



I just wanted to give a quick update about the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes, and urge you to keep the program in your minds year round. I was notified from the area coordinator for OCC that the Central CT/Tolland County area collected 13,716 shoeboxes this year! She also asked me to pass on their appreciation for “your love of and dedication to the gospel message for hurting children around the world.” The shoeboxes are primarily distributed during Christmas time, but distribution does take place all over the world, year round. Remember to keep the program, and all of the volunteers around the world, in your prayers!

Just a personal anecdote we wanted to share with everyone: As we shopped for items to fill our shoeboxes last year, Zach really wanted to include winter hats. Even though we are never sure where the boxes will end up, we decided to go ahead and include them. We tracked our shoeboxes with labels printed from the OCC website and learned our boxes were headed to Ukraine, where those winter hats will be most useful. So, when you’re not sure about including certain “seasonal” items in your box, if you feel a pull to include something, go ahead and do it, and pray that your box (or boxes) will be blessed in a very special way and be directed to an area where it will be well used, or to a child who needs or wants that specific item in your box.

(I’m hearing overwhelmingly that many of our boxes went through the Baltimore processing center and were ultimately sent to Ukraine this year. So, even if you did not track your box, it’s quite possible your box ended up there as well.)

Finally, I want to remind you that you don’t have to wait until October or November to fill your shoeboxes! You can collect items all year long - every time you go shopping, think about items you’d like to include in your shoebox! It spreads the cost of filling your box over the course of several months, and allows you to take advantage of clearance or sale events. Maybe you can even pack 1 extra box this year with the money you save! (I picked up a few water bottles for \$2 each when I was clearance-shopping the week after Christmas. I’ll keep them in a bag in my office, and add more items to it as the year progresses.)

If you are on Facebook, send me a friend request. I often post updates from Samaritan’s Purse and Operation Christmas Child throughout the year, and also post lots of reminders in October and November when we are actively collecting shoeboxes at church. I’ll also include Challenge articles from time to time with packing reminders and tips.

