

The Meeting House Times

The Congregational Church of Salisbury, United Church of Christ

May 2010



30 Main Street, P.O. Box 392, Salisbury, Connecticut 06068 ~ 860.435.2442 ~ www.salisburycongregational.org

Pamela Wyeth, Editor

A Glimpse into Who We Are

Albert C. Sly



On Saturday evening, May 15th, and Sunday morning, May 16th, we will celebrate Al Sly and his forty years of service to our congregation. Al needs no introduction, but

maybe you don't know parts of his story.

Youth: Soon after starting grade school in Flushing, Long Island, at the end of the roaring '20s, Al took his first piano lesson, age six. Clearly he was good. When it came time for high school, Al auditioned for the newly founded High School of Music & Art in Manhattan, won admission, and there, starting in 1938, continued his piano studies, sang in the chorus, learned to play the cello, and first sat down at an organ. Playing that instrument he "just picked up on his own."

Military service: All the young men who entered Yale College with Al in the fall of 1942 surely felt a sense of foreboding. At the end of his first semester, just two months after Pearl Harbor, the US Army summoned Private Sly to basic training in Macon, Georgia.

Assigned to the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), Al was ordered to "become an engineer"—musicians are mathematicians — and completed eight months of engineering courses at the University of Connecticut at Storrs before the Army abandoned the ASTP.

Next stop for Al was assignment to the 42nd Infantry Division training camp in Oklahoma. It was there that Al spoke to the Division

chaplain who just happened to be in need of an assistant. A musician who could drive a jeep would be useful.

Al served with Episcopal and Catholic chaplains, but longest and most closely with a Methodist-trained minister "who liked to smoke and drink and so became a Congregationalist." Chaplain's Assistant Sly, the Congregationalist Chaplain, and the 42nd Infantry arrived by ship at Marseilles, France, in late December 1944, sweeping in behind Allied forces pushing back the Bulge. There, in Aix-en-Provence, at midnight on Christmas Eve, Al and his little chorus of GIs and nurses who had rehearsed on ship-board, sang a carol new to Al, "Welcome Yule." Then the 42nd Infantry dispersed. Al drove a jeep carrying the chaplain and a portable organ, conducting services for the troops as they progressed from Provence to Alsace, then east to Munich and Salzburg.

Headquartered in Salzburg, Austria, as the war in Europe came to an end, Al served as secretary to the chaplain, typing 700 letters of condolence. He played two organs — one at the movies in Festival Hall where GIs sang to "follow the bouncing ball" lyrics. And, more sublime, for Sunday Protestant services on the grand organ of the Mozarteum.

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Both photos by Tom Zetterstrom

Al in his element





A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY AND A LIVING PROCESS

Often, the concept of “Church” is referred to as a living organism. This idea is further purported when “it” is referred to instead by the pronoun “She.” Most of us would agree that such an appellation is appropriate. The

Church is nothing if “She” is not actually alive – and being alive insinuates much more than simply being made up of living parts. She is living – and this truth implies movement, growth, and, yes, change. And with change, new experiences of excitement, anticipation, and challenge inevitably arrive – as do new encounters of pain, loss, and grieving. It is because of the sheer nature of this life, this existence as a corporate living entity – with all of its inherent and potential positives and negatives – that the Church must also take up the charge to approach her adventures as a “living process,” a journey of the Spirit, so to speak. Such journeys are also living and moving, and can sometimes even be temperamental.

This is why being faithful to that perspective requires a diligence to one particular spiritual exercise, perhaps over all others... *tenacious prayer.*

With all the pragmatic and technical aspects of the transition work we have tended to over the last year, God has not relinquished His call for us to undergird this process in prayer – and in expectation, hope, and enthusiasm. Our need to continually hear the Holy Spirit's voice as we plot forward is paramount, and nothing is more important than staying “plugged in” while we are doing this work... God's work.

I found it encouraging that, as our Lenten study on *Christianity for the Rest of Us* progressed, many in the congregation have been asking for more teaching on an ongoing basis – one of the desired topics being the practice of prayer in the deeper life of the Christian. There are few things that warm a pastor's heart more than hearing that. And we will visit different options in that regard as we press on through the summer and into the fall. Our goal, however, is not merely to have good intentions, or simply to plunge ourselves into more academic exercise, but to learn to secure and discover the mind and will and heart of God, and to discover how to more fully enjoy and learn of Him, *from Him.*

And of course I would be remiss in these thoughts if I did not include that, if nothing else motivates us to pray,

perhaps this one fact can: *God is intent on visiting us* – and, in fact, waits to meet with us.

Beyond this, however, is a point more foundational to the power and effectiveness of a Church's prayer life. It, too, must be viewed as *alive*... as a practice worth keeping alive, and one which only the commitment to its very discipline will accomplish.

In II Chronicles 7:11-16, God gives us some insight into how to approach major times of transition. In this story, Solomon had just finished having the permanent Temple built for the Lord, and Israel was in the process of a major change. It was shifting from worshiping God in temporary tabernacles to worshiping in one place perpetually. This was not only a major task for Solomon, but a milestone for the worship and religious life of the nation. And it required significant change.

After dedicating the Temple to God, the Lord came to Solomon and prophesied Israel's rebellion against this shift. Paraphrasing the text somewhat, God simply says, *“It is inevitable that My people will have a rough time at some point in the near future. When that happens, be sure to admonish them and tell them that if they humble themselves and pray, and are diligent to seek Me and turn from their ways and return to Me, I will bear them – and I will forgive them – and I will heal them.”* He closes His thoughts by pointing out to Solomon that the very purpose of His charging him with the task of building the Temple was to *hear the prayers of His people*, and to *be present* in that place, and to *meet with them* when they came to Him.

Having a God who does not change in character or promise, we have this assurance, as well: God will most definitely meet with us when we are intentional about meeting with Him. Indeed, God *waits* for such moments.

I am praying and hoping that more and more, prayer will be undergirding, upholding, and strengthening our efforts as a transitioning body of Christians. God's admonishment in II Chronicles is that transition is most effective if experienced – if entered – through the portal of humble and diligent prayer. Seeking God's face is not a practice merely for the “ultra-spiritual,” it is *our charge – your charge.* It is up to you and me. And as the Lord told Solomon... *He will be waiting for us.*

Pastor Steve

Email: rev.steve@salisburycongregational.org
Blog: <http://salisburycongregational.wordpress.com>

Search Committee Announcement

The Search Committee is grateful to everyone who recently returned their questionnaires. It's clear that each of them was thoughtfully prepared.

The tabulated results will appear in the Local Church Profile (our "resume") and will be posted on the UCC web site for prospective candidates to review.

These results will be displayed as a bar graph and the profile will also include representative quotes from the written part of the questionnaire. There were also several letter-length responses and a few people took the time to call us and have a conversation.

Once the church profile has been completed, which we anticipate will be in about a month, a copy will be available in the church office.

The Committee is very appreciative to all of those who have provided their thoughts and opinions to us to help us in our search to find our settled pastor.

Sarah Zarbock for the Search Committee



Deadline for the Summer Newsletter Thursday, May 20th

A Fresh Look at Pentecost



Fifty days after Jesus' resurrection, on a day called Pentecost, the Christian church was born. Because Pentecost was a holiday celebrating the harvest (a bit like our Thanksgiving), the apostles and a large crowd had gathered to celebrate in Jerusalem.

Many people had assembled near Peter and the other followers of Christ when "[F]rom heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind ..." (Acts 2:2 ff, NRSV). Then tongues of fire descended on everyone in the crowd.

After the wind and fire descended, all sorts of languages, known and unknown, came out of the crowd. Each person spoke "about God's deeds of power" (verse 11). No wonder Luke wrote, "All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?'" (verse 12).

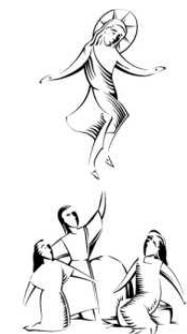
The whole affair was mind-boggling and life-changing. The Holy Spirit had come upon many people; they knew God was powerfully at work in their midst.

On Pentecost many years ago, some 3,000 people came to believe in Christ. That's why today Christians remember this powerful event as the birthday of the church. Pentecost occurs on May 23rd this year.

The Feast of Ascension

Many Christian denominations celebrate the Feast of the Ascension, which refers to a post-resurrection event that took place 40 days after Easter. This year it occurs on May 13th.

According to Luke, Jesus led his friends to a Jerusalem suburb called Bethany. While on a small mountain, he blessed his friends and then rose into heaven while they watched.



The ascension was such a momentous occasion that after Jesus disappeared, his followers had a worship service at the spot. Then they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24:52, NRSV).

Because Christ had promised to be with his followers always (Matthew 28:20), from then on they knew he would be with them as Spirit. Jesus' body was up and away, but spiritually he was still and always would be their companion.

To home, education, and career.

And then, in early 1946, discharged and home, and back to Yale where Al earned his Bachelors and Masters degrees and discovered the Northwest Corner during two summers at the Yale music program in Norfolk. Later he studied musicology at NYU. Just after college, he returned to Europe to study for a summer with the great organist Marcel Dupré.

Educator: In the fall of 1950, The Hotchkiss School recruited Al for what he thought was a one-year substitute position. For the next twenty years, he taught music history and theory, directed both choir and glee club, and played the organ at seven chapel services a week – required for all students every day except Tuesday and twice on Sundays. Hotchkiss alumni still trade fond stories of Mr. Sly. In off-duty moments, Al also played occasionally at a piano bar, “The Surrey,” in Lime Rock.

Hotchkiss also brought Liz into his life. Al went to direct the Choate glee club for a weekend, while equestrienne Elizabeth Taber had come home to Wallingford, and they were invited to a dinner party. And so began a wonderful partnership and life on the Ark with Great Danes, Collies, Springer Spaniels, and occasional sheep in the basement.

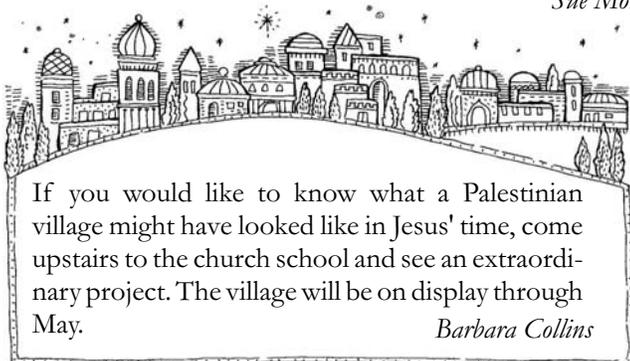
Congregational Church of Salisbury: In the summer of 1970, Salisbury Congregational Church organist Ellwood “Bunker” Hill retired, and Al moved over from Hotchkiss to begin a new phase in his career as Minister of Music. Choir members welcoming him included Jack Rogers and Nancy Sills, Rowena Peters, Harold Erickson, Polly and Isabelle Miner, Jim Palmer and half a dozen others. Lee and Barbara Collins joined them a year or two later.

Over forty years, Al has served as organist and secretary for three settled pastors, Charles Ranson, John Hay and Dick Taber, and three interim ministers. More than 100 singers have been members of Al’s choir. He has played at countless weddings and memorial services and mentored many young vocalists and organists.

Al’s own compositions, including the responses “Love Came Down” and “The Whole Bright World,” have a permanent place in our worship memory. His idea for an annual “musical sermon” led to years of Christmas concerts – all the community invited. Al recalls with pride performances of Fauré’s Requiem and Handel’s Messiah. In 2002, church friends established the Al Sly Fund to support the church’s music program bringing in guest soloists for Sunday worship and a concert series often featuring young artists.

On May 15th and 16th, we will celebrate Al Sly and the gift he has been to our congregation for forty years. Please join us.

Sue Morrill



Please join us for a
**Celebration of
 Al Sly**
 and his **Forty Years** of Service to the
 Congregational Church of Salisbury
An evening of reminiscences, merriment, and music.

Saturday evening, May 15th
 7:00 p.m. Dessert will be served.
 Place: the church's Parish Hall

And the celebration continues
Sunday morning worship service
May 16th, 10:00 a.m.
*A service of music
 Selected, performed, and some of it written by Al
 With church choir and bells*



Church Women United, May Friendship Day
" Living the Vision"

Friday, May 7th, at 1:00 p.m.

Service and Luncheon, St.Mary Parish Hall,
Wells Hill Road, Lakeville

If you would like more information,
please call Heather Schaufele or Ruth Tyrol.

Poster is on the Church Bulletin Board.

Save the Date!
For All You Golfers

4th Annual Silver Lake Golf Tournament
 To Benefit Silver Lake Conference Center
Tuesday, June 8th

9:00 a.m. Shotgun Start - Scramble Format
 \$150.00 per player
 Lyman Orchards Golf Club
 Routes 147 & 157
 Middlefield, CT

For an official entry form, visit their website:
<http://silverlake.ctucc.org/events.php?event=2221>

Confirmation 2010



RETREAT!

Retreat

The seven members of our Confirmation class, Pastor Steve, and I will be on retreat May 7-9 at Camp Jewell in Colebrook, CT. On Saturday morning we will attend the Shabbat service at Hevreh synagogue in Great Barrington.

Our retreat will focus on prayer and worship. Jennifer Mazur (remember Joan of Arc from our All Saints' Day service in October?) will be with us for part of the weekend and will lead us through a series of activities based on the Lord's Prayer. Jennifer is presently a seminary student and has lots of Christian Education experience. I know the confirmands

will enjoy learning from her. There will also be time for fun, plenty of food, little sleep, and marshmallows. Don't you wish you were young again?!

Dinner for Confirmands

The Deacons will provide a special dinner for our Confirmands, their parents, and their sponsors on Saturday, May 22nd. This evening is a very special one, where we not only enjoy a delicious meal together but adults and youth alike are invited to reflect on their personal faith journeys and to share their ideas, hopes, and prayers with each other.

Confirmation

Sunday, May 23rd, the Confirmands will help lead the worship service, and will personally confirm the promises that were made on their behalf at the time of baptism. This is an occasion for the entire church to celebrate as we formally welcome these fine young people into our midst. I know everyone will be there to support them.

Barbara Collins, Coordinator of Christian Education

Confirmation Class



Save the Date!



FIRST FRIDAY SUPPERS

We are starting something new: FREE community dinners for everyone in town.

First Friday SUPPERS

Our first dinner will take place on: **Friday, June 11th AT 6:00** in the Parish Hall. (Al-

though this date is, in fact, *not* a first Friday, there is a conflict for the space, so our first First Friday will in fact be a second Friday. Get it?)

This is an exciting experiment. We invite you all to come, bring your neighbors and friends, and enjoy a delicious dinner!

*Jane Elwood
Peg Heck
Carol Magowan
Sara Wardell*



Music in May

The **Bell Choir** will be very active this month! On Thursday, May 6th, there will be concerts at Noble Horizons at 4:00 in the Community Room, and Geer Village at 7:00 in the Hollenbeck Room. They also will play the prelude at 9:45 for our worship service on Mothers Day, Sunday, May 9th.

The **Senior Choir** will sing for worship services in May, except May 9th. They will give a concert at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, May 21st. The major work for the concert will be *Five Mystical Songs* by Ralph Vaughan Williams on poems by George Herbert, set for baritone and choir. Our guest soloist will be Jack Brown.



Choir Concert

Please plan to attend and bring your friends!

Al Sly, Minister of Music



Mother's Day



Memorial Day



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:00 - Worship & Communion and Church School 11:15 - Board of Trustees	3	4	5 5:15 - Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 - Choir Rehearsal	6 <i>Nat'l Day of Prayer</i>	7 ← Confirmation Church Women United Friendship Day (see page 4)	8 retreat May 7-9 Confirmand Dinner (see page 5)
9 10:00 - Worship & Church School (Bell Choir prelude at 9:45) 11:15 - Board of Christian Action <i>Mother's Day</i>	10	11	12 10:00 - Prayer Group 6:30 - Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 - Choir Rehearsal	13 <i>Ascension Day</i>	14	15 7:00 - Celebration of AI Sly <i>Armed Forces Day</i>
16 10:00 - Service of Music celebrating AI Sly & Church School 11:15 - Church Council	17	18	19 7:30 - Choir Rehearsal	20	21 7:30 - Choir Concert	22
23 10:00 - Worship & Confirmation 11:15 - Board of Deacons <i>Pentecost</i>	24	25	26 10:00 - Prayer Group 7:30 - Choir Rehearsal	27	28	29
30 10:00 - Worship	31 <i>Memorial Day</i>		7:30 - Choir Rehearsal			



- | | | | |
|------|---------------------|------|------------------|
| 1st | Susan Bohlmann | 12th | Myles Crain |
| 3rd | Tanya Tedder | 13th | Scott Bok |
| 5th | Fischer Rydingsword | 13th | Kyle Good |
| 7th | Steve Ohlinger | 18th | Roxanne Bok |
| 7th | Robert Storm | 19th | Nancy Bridge |
| 7th | Landon Good | 19th | Jane Capecalatro |
| 9th | Ella Rydingsword | 22nd | Angus Palmer |
| 10th | Mary S. Robertson | 24th | Mickee Ongley |
| | | 25th | Georgia Blades |
| | | 25th | Wesley Filkins |
| | | 28th | Barbara Lankler |
| | | 29th | Alden Tyrol |
| | | 31st | Lillian Curry |

An Afternoon Reception ~ Salisbury Scenes Saturday, May 15th ~ 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Terre Lefferts, a long time resident of Salisbury and member of the SCC, has been drawing and painting professionally for over 25 years, often rendering pen & ink house portraits, painting animal portraits and still life paintings in oil.



"Sunlit" by Terre Lefferts

In this show, working in oils and pastels, she has depicted the natural pastoral beauty of this area with its hills, views and farms.

Please join us for an afternoon reception on **Saturday, May 15th from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.** The "Salisbury Scenes" show gives a sense of our local community and Terre will be donating a percentage of her sales to the Salisbury Volunteer Ambulance Services, a very important town resource.

Location: John Harney Associates
7 Academy St., Salisbury, CT
RSVP: By telephone at 860.435.4600 or
E-Mail: choben@harneyassoc.com

Remember OWL's Kitchen

Please remember those in our communities in need of the basics. Non-perishable food is always welcome, and can be left in the baskets in the narthex and the parish hall corridor.



GOOD NEWS T-SHIRT

Jesus told his disciples — and us — to go into all the world and preach the good news. Wherever you go, this cool T-shirt will help spark conversations about your faith.

What you need:

- Newspaper
- Cardboard
- Plain white, cotton T-shirt
- Permanent markers
- Goggles (optional)
- Eye dropper
- Rubbing alcohol
- Clothes hanger

What you do:

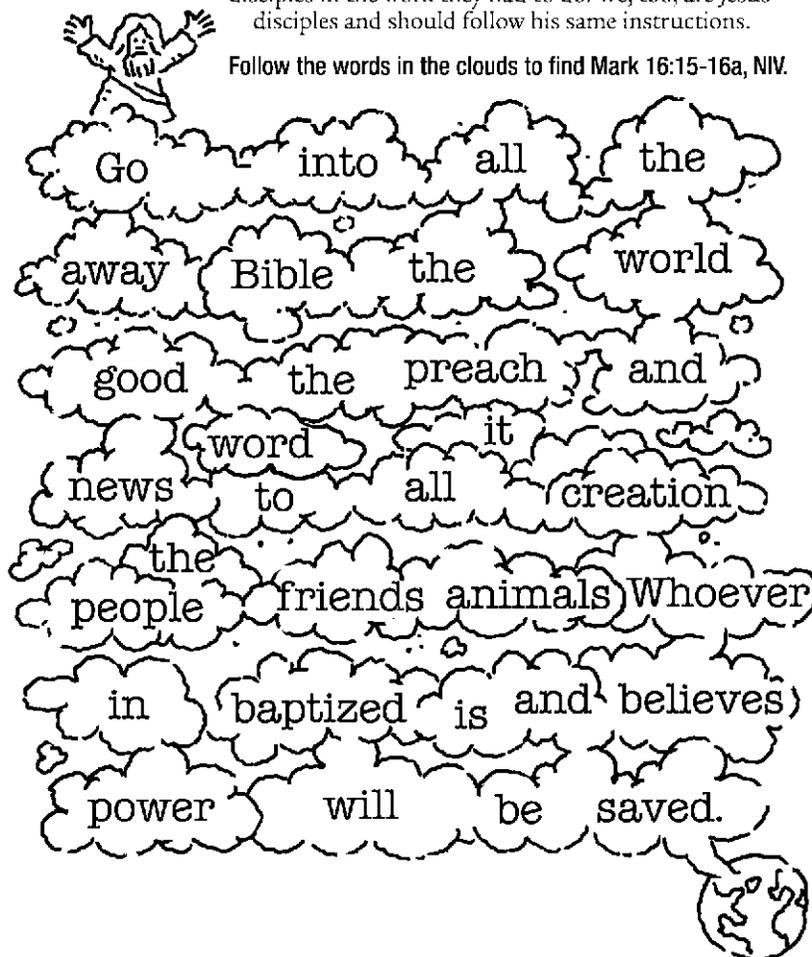
1. Cover a table with newspaper. (Work outside or in a well-ventilated area.)
2. Place a piece of cardboard inside your T-shirt. (This keeps pen marks from going through to the other side.)
3. With permanent markers, draw a design of large circles, spirals, hearts, etc.
4. Wear goggles while dropping rubbing alcohol onto your designs with an eye dropper. As the alcohol permeates the permanent marker, the color will break up and spread in interesting ways.
5. Hang the shirt to dry.
6. When the shirt is dry, place cardboard inside it again. On the front, write "I have some good news to share with you." You can also write a Bible verse.



"I am with you always."

Before Jesus ascended into heaven, he encouraged his disciples in the work they had to do. We, too, are Jesus' disciples and should follow his same instructions.

Follow the words in the clouds to find Mark 16:15-16a, NIV.



Answer: "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved." (Mark 16:15-16a, NIV)

Shhhhhh....

Six year old Angie, and her four-year old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not suppose to talk out loud in church."

"Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

