

Faith IN ACTION

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A LETTER FROM MYSTIC CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

FEBRUARY 21, 2007

#8/2007

MAEC CHOIR FESTIVAL

brings 11 area children's, youth and adult choirs together at St. Mary's Mother of the Redeemer Church (next to Fitch High School at the top of Fort Hill in Groton). Sunday, March 18, 4:00 p.m. Some members of our own church choirs will participate.

For over 30 years, many Mystic area churches have sponsored the choir festival. Each year the Mystic Area Ecumenical Council (MAEC) invites a nationally-known choral director to come and lead our choirs in a service of outstanding choral music. This year's festival will be directed by Tom Kendzia, composer/clinician/pianist, from Christ the King Church, Kingston, R.I., accompanied by organ, harp, strings, and brass. This is an event you don't want to miss!

The MAEC underwrites some of the expenses. However, the costs exceed the resources of the Council. If you would like to be a Festival sponsor, just make a check out to MAEC and mail to Pat Wilbur, 23 Sylvan Street, Noank, CT, 06340. Your donation is tax deductible.



Web Ways

Did you know that your free click on **The Hunger Site Donate Free Food** button found in our church website funds food for the hungry around the world?

Just go to

www.mysticcongregational.org

and click on the button:



The site which began on June 1, 1999 explains how it works.

Dear Friends,

Today the season of Lent begins with a worship service in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.. Ash Wednesday is so named because the 40th day before Easter always falls on a Wednesday and because ashes are a primary symbol used in many traditions.

Ashes are both a symbol of penance and as a reminder of our humanness. In Genesis, God reminds Adam and all humanity that we are dust and to dust we shall return. With the finite truth of our days in clear focus we are invited to explore our relationship with God through confession and repentance.

Let's face it: repentance and confession are not popular. They are, however, essential to the life of discipleship. The Church has often constructed elaborate and oppressive liturgies that call forth guilt and shame rather than authentic confession.

But as Daniel Clendenin notes, "Confession and repentance are privileges to enjoy, not penalties to fear. They signal good news about God's forgiveness, not bad news about our failures."

The focus is on God's goodness and grace and the deepest desires of our own hearts to walk (in the words of a popular hymn) in perfect harmony. Like any relationship, ours with God is strengthened by honest exploration and deep sharing ... intimacy with God is something that needs to be nurtured.

Confession and repentance are aspects of nurturing that we seldom embrace ... but the wisdom of our worship liturgies issues an invitation to rethink our natural tendencies.

I hope you will join us tonight for a simple time of worship and fellowship as we begin the Lenten Journey together.

Pastor Pat