

The First Baptist Church of Hanover in Etna^[SEP]
The First Congregational Church of Hanover in Hanover Center

Rev. Dr. Michael Hall, Pastor

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Pastor's Paragraph

What Shall We Call It?

The date is set (July 17-21, Monday to Friday). The time is also set (9:00AM – 11:00AM) There is a schedule for each day which includes singing, puppets, a lesson from scripture, recreation, a snack, a “clues” walk, crafts, prayer, and a mini-play practice. Sounds fun, doesn't it? Every morning for five days kids from grades K-6 will gather right here in our own Trumbull Hall. Weather permitting, there will be fun on the soccer field and a picnic type outing one morning at Hanover Center. The Christian Education Committee is in agreement and the Interchurch Council has given a resounding head-nod and blessing. Several kids and adults have already made a commitment to it by way of a survey.

What is it? Before I answer that by name, I must explain the perhaps over burdensome thought process that accompanies these deliberations. When I was just a lad, every church in town had one of these. Between the first full week that school was in summer recess and the week before teachers started back for their in-service meetings, somewhere along the way kids would assemble at a church for “Vacation Bible School.” That's what it was called; and nearly everyone called it that. All the kids knew what it was about. It featured some of the activities of the above paragraph, with minor modifications from church to church. Sometimes teachers wore costumes or used elaborate teaching aids. Some churches went with just the red Kool-Aid, while others gave kids a choice between lime green, red or purple with the concomitant teeth and tongue stained smiles.

Vacation Bible School has been around for a while. It started in 1873, near Lake Chautauqua, New York when summer Sunday School institutes were offered to the general public. The Methodist Episcopal Church led the way with educational and cultural programming geared to all ages. The idea caught on and soon other churches and para-church groups were offering summer retreats, some specifically for children.

Twenty years later a program in the East Side of New York City was hosted by a Baptist Church with an eye toward outreach to immigrant children of the slums. A mission minded lady of the church rented a saloon and held a six-week Bible School program. Her groundbreaking concept was expanded by the Baptist Mission Society and the movement grew within ten years to Philadelphia, Chicago and other cities. By 1911 the Daily Vacation Bible School Association had reached national status and 1923 saw the founding of the World Association of VBS.

Back to the question at hand...what shall we call our one-week summer ministry for children? Is Vacation Bible School too “old school” to be used? Here's my short list (off the top of my head, mind you).

Trumbull Kids, Trumbull Summer Fun, Terrific Time, Today's Special, Ready/Set/Go or the variant Ready/Set/Grow, Kingdom Kids, God's Kids (I could go on) and finally, Vacation Bible School.

I'm open to suggestions and ready for volunteers. Recruitment begins in May. Whatever we call it, let's do this!

In faith and hope,
Pastor Mike Hall

Adult Bible Study: Held on **Tuesdays from 7-8 PM** in **Trumbull Hall**, led by Pastor Mike.

The Etna Ladies Aid: The Etna Ladies Aid will hold its **Spring Rummage sale on Friday, April 28th (noon to 5:00) and Sat. April 29th (9:00 to noon.)** If you are cleaning out your basement, garage or attic, then please consider donating your gently used and working items to this great organization. **ALL** proceeds go to help those in need in our local Etna/Hanover area, and in surrounding communities as well.

The Hanover Center Church's Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 7th and will take place after the worship service in the church sanctuary.

Hanover Center Fair - Come one, come all!

Preparations for this year's Hanover Center Fair are in full swing, and all are invited to join in the fun. The next Fair meetings are May 15th, and June 12th at 6 pm. Please feel free to attend and offer your input.

There are many opportunities to be part of this fun (and fund-raising) annual event. Since it's annual budget season for both churches, we all know the importance of the fund-raising aspect of the Fair as well for the financial health of the church!

The book sale, White Elephant sale, auction, crafters, food sales, children's games and activities, ox and pony pull, parade... so many avenues are available for participation. A number of these activities require labor hours in advance of the Fair itself, so it's never too early to offer help. Please contact Christine Hoskin (643-1617 or christine@schoolhousefarm.net) if you have questions or to volunteer.

A more detailed list of opportunities for participation may be found on the church website, the Fair website (<http://hcoldtimefair.wix.com/hanovercenterfair>), or the Fair Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/HanoverCenterOldTimersFair/>).

Welcome to the fun... come join us!

A letter to our yoked congregation from the First Baptist Church Treasurer, Steve Schuchman on the quarterly financial report was sent via email and post, April 2017