

# NEW ENGLAND CHAPEL: RESTORATION

SHOWING COMPASSION, MENDING INJUSTICE

May 2014

## What do you mean by the term "social justice"?

By Jodi Koeman

The tag line for Restoration is "Showing compassion, Mending injustice". The church seems to understand and practice the showing compassion part pretty easily. It's the "mending injustice" that sometimes gets confusing. I have often been asked, "What do you mean by 'social justice'?" Social justice is something that God calls his followers to engage in. We need to act compassionately, but do it to bring justice to the people we walk alongside. Acting with justice is doing our best to "put things right" as God desires. I found this very helpful explanation from the Office of Social Justice of the Christian Reformed Church:

*The term "social justice" emerges out of Scripture, and was actually originally coined by the church: a Jesuit monk based the phrase on the teachings of Thomas Aquinas. Contrary to some misconceptions, "social justice" is a concept deeply rooted in the historic, Biblically orthodox traditions of the Christian faith.*

*When we talk about "social justice" in a Reformed context, we are referring to*

*God's original intention for human society: a world where basic needs are provided for in love, where people flourish, and where shalom reigns in the Kingdom of God. This vision of shalom is a vision of "the way things ought to be," or the way God created the world to be before sin. As Cornelius Plantinga writes, "In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight... the webbing-together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight."*

Social justice refers to the pursuit of shalom in human, social relationships. There are many types of justice (retributive, restorative, etc.). The significance of social justice is that it references the pursuit of shalom — righteousness, harmony, and "the way things ought to be" — specifically in our human interactions and societal structures.

Pursuing and acting with justice is not easy, but God wants all people to enjoy whole and full relationships with him, each other and with creation. NEC Restoration is constantly asking how we do that as we serve people in our church, community and the world.

*"Equipping the people of NEC to show compassion, mend injustice and deepen partnerships as God guides our part in restoring his world." - Restoration Mission*



Mend, Repair, Restore

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# Restoration: @NEC & Local



## Financial Peace Class Encourages Teamwork & Transformation!

By Amy Cornwell

Financial Peace University, a Biblically based financial management course began the first Sunday in March at NEC. NEC members Carl Rubin and Nick Carlson have been teaching these evening sessions and will be wrapping up the nine week course later this month.

Adrienne Petit, an accountant who has been attending the classes with her husband, had this to say: I was interested in the class because I wanted my husband and I to share responsibility when it came to our finances. Since I am an accountant by profession, I have always managed our finances with minimal input from him. I don't think my husband was looking forward to the class when I first approached him about it, but after attending our first class he was excited to get involved in developing our budget and financial goals. After just a few short weeks, we now approach our finances as a team and feel we are benefiting from the structure and tools the class has provided us....I would love to teach it some day."

Another attendee, Kellie Wilder, said "Financial Peace University has changed my life in just nine weeks. It's amazing. I wish I had this knowledge years ago. I highly recommend it. "

For more information about Financial Peace and related resources, please contact Carl Rubin at [crubin@webindustries.com](mailto:crubin@webindustries.com) or Amy Cornwell at [amy@newenglandchapel.org](mailto:amy@newenglandchapel.org)

## Explore the Franklin Trails Right Outside NEC doors!

By Jodi Koeman

On April 25, NEC Healthy Futures Franklin representatives and over 50 adults and children gathered at the YMCA and then the SNETT (Southern New England Trunkline Trail) trail to dedicate the newest DCR Heart Healthy trail. The SNETT trail is located on Grove Street before you reach Washington Street. It eventually will run approximately 22 miles from Franklin to the Douglas, passing through the towns of Douglas, Uxbridge, Millville, Blackstone, Bellingham, and Franklin, and is one of the longest trails in southern Massachusetts. The Heart Healthy trail is a 2 mile section that is flat and easy for all abilities. This trail connects with the Franklin State Forest trails also off of Grove Street. Families will be taking advantage of these trails on June 8. Join them as we enjoy this wonderful natural resource right outside NEC's doors.





# Restoration: Regional

## Are you a Mentor?

By Jodi Koeman

One of the most important things in the life of young adults is having a positive role model. Young adults are highly influenced by caring adults that step into their lives. Being a mentor can be as simple as showing up and standing by someone as they make transitions in their lives. Straight Ahead, a partner organization working with young men and women at risk who are involved with the juvenile justice system, is looking for men and women who can act as mentors. There are two opportunities to help.

In Worcester: work alongside youth at the StraightUp Cafe or The New You consignment store. Help youth develop working habits, customer service, and meaningful relationships that will help them move forward as they step into a new life.

In Westboro: work alongside girls at a locked facility in the horticultural program. Teach them gardening skills, help them plant and harvest flowers and plants, be a positive role model in these girls' lives as they make the transition back home.

If you are interested in either of these two opportunities, please contact Stephen Vono, or Jodi Koeman, [jodi@newenglandchapel.org](mailto:jodi@newenglandchapel.org), for more information.



Runners in the 2013 Franklin 5K (Run for Bob)

## Run for Families

By Jodi Koeman

On June 1, the Franklin YMCA, will hold its annual Franklin 5K (formally called Run for Bob) to run, walk or roll to support families and children with special needs. This is a family event, started to honor Bob Biagiotti. Bob believed that no child should have to sit on the sidelines. This run celebrates children of all abilities, and the money raised allows children with special needs to participate alongside their peers in social and recreational programs and activities. NEC supports this event through our Healthy Franklin Futures partnership. People can participate in or volunteer for this event. Registration is at 9:00 and the event starts at 10:00 at Marsh & McLennan Companies, Inc., 431 Washington Street, Franklin. Come out, whether to run, walk, roll, or cheer. Enjoy children's activities, free refreshments, raffle prizes, and more!. All Ages welcome. To register, go to: <https://hockymca.ejoinme.org/MyPages/2014Franklin5K/tabid/528732/Default.aspx>.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact Tim Shaw at the Franklin YMCA at 774-235-2746 or Jodi Koeman at [Jodi@newenglandchapel.org](mailto:Jodi@newenglandchapel.org).



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## THE FRANKLIN 5K RUN. WALK. ROLL No child sits on the sidelines

All proceeds benefit the Hockomock Area YMCA Reach Out for Youth and Families financial assistance program and the YMCA's Integration Initiative, a program serving children with special needs.

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2014

9:00am Registration / 10:00am RUN. WALK. ROLL



TEAM KRIS AND KAYLA BIAGIOTTI

## Restoration: Regional

### Disaster Response team accepts Plan B with Grace

With 3 months before the planned trip to New Jersey to do disaster response work in New Jersey, team leader, Dena Gauthier, received disappointing news. "Good Morning Dena, I have been in contact with several work sites in the last few weeks concerning placement for your large group. New Jersey is unable to accommodate you for the week of your interest; however, Shamokin, PA has available work and housing for the week of July 5-12 for approximately 35-40 people. Would you be interested in Shamokin?"

Dena, who is also the Global leader for NEC Restoration, showed courage and faith. Her first response was to pray and she wrote to me, "I've prayed about this trip and feel God has a reason for us to go somewhere else." She, and her co-leaders Gwen Clark and Tracy Natale, informed the team the first week of May, and they also responded with grace, not a single person has backed out. The team will now be going to Shamokin, PA to work on houses that were damaged by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee in Aug 2011. Please pray for this team as they adjust to this change of plans. Thank them for their faith and grace in following where God leads.



## Contact Us

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## Live it out...

**PRAY:** For the disaster response team members as they prepare for trips to Pennsylvania.

**GIVE:** Support an individual goindon a mission trip or give to an NEC partner mission organization such as ME4.

**ACT:** Volunteer for the Frankin 5K on 6/1 or at the Franklin Community Gardens on King Street.

## Restoration: Global

### Faith in Action: NEC Family Paying it Forward!

By Lynn Duquette

A couple of months ago, Joe and Kelli St. Germain approached the Global Restoration Team with a unique idea. Although their family cannot personally go on a mission trip this year, they wanted to support someone who is planning to do that. They were particularly interested in involving their two boys, Ty and Quynh, modeling for them what it means to serve. The Restoration Team was very enthusiastic about this idea and identified Jake Halpin, who is on staff at NEC working in youth ministry, as a good candidate. Jake will be part of the October team going to Haiti with Mission E4. The St. Germain's kicked off their fundraising on Jake's behalf by participating in the Global Market and Café and selling Kelli's amazing apple cheesecakes. They also took sign-ups for people willing to donate their returnable cans and bottles to the cause. Many people signed up, and on April 19th, the first batch of cans was turned in, raising \$74 toward Jake's trip. The St. Germain's will continue this fundraising project throughout the summer. If you are interested in having your cans and bottles picked up, you can contact the St. Germain's at [jstgermain43@hotmail.com](mailto:jstgermain43@hotmail.com). We appreciate Joe, Kelli, Ty, and Quynh for selflessly giving of themselves to impact others. As they help Jake to go to Haiti, they are allowing him to serve the Haitian people - a true example of "paying it forward!"