

THE BRIDGE

Connecting the Fair Haven Community

Spring 2005

GOOD NEIGHBORS

Educating Betsy

How Betsy Haugh found a mission to work with children and made a new home in Fair Haven

IT'S OFTEN SAID THAT CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD. As a community-based organization, St. James' Church shares this belief and takes particular interest in finding ways to support the needs of the children of Fair Haven. Ever since she was a young girl, Betsy Haugh, the church's Director of Children and Family Ministries, has held a keen interest in helping young people improve their minds and find spirituality in their lives. At the early age of eleven, she found herself embarked on a lifelong love of teaching when she first taught Sunday school. Betsy firmly believes that, by nurturing children and introducing them to the love of Jesus Christ, the world will be a better place for all.



Betsy Haugh enjoys working with young children and has helped to develop a free Saturday afternoon literacy program at St. James' Church where primary schoolers can work on their English skills.



Betsy came to New Haven from Philadelphia about four years ago at the time her oldest daughter Jane moved here to study at the Yale Divinity School. She knew her daughter would be extremely busy as both a graduate student and a mother raising a family, so offered to relocate here to help. Upon Betsy's arrival in

Connecticut, Jane gave her a list of local churches and thought one in particular might be just the place where Betsy could be involved in community work. The church was St. James' and Betsy was keen to learn more about its intercultural approach. The day she first visited, Betsy knew she had found a home, and that this was surely in God's plan.

Long before Betsy joined the church, the need for an affordable day care center in the community, after careful study, was underway at St. James'. The project had raised limited funds for doing the necessary remodeling to meet the strict facility requirements of a day care center but was struggling. One problem was the lack of a full time individual to do all the work necessary to guide the project through the complex regulatory requirements. With her training in Christian education, the vestry thought Betsy an ideal choice as director. Betsy had long prayed for an opportunity to use her knowledge and faith in teaching children and quickly accepted the offer to work on saving the program.

Betsy also brought along plenty of practical knowledge gained in the school of real life. As a single mother of three now-grownup children, she gained insight into their complex needs. Sadly widowed when her kids were small, Betsy found herself in the challenging position of raising the three by herself. This meant managing a career, mortgage payments and the demands of single parenting. The experiences of those days taught her to "Rely on God!" and to value her faith.

Her interest in intercultural work dates back some fifteen years ago to when Betsy traveled to Ecuador, visiting a close friend who taught the children of prison inmates. Inspired by the work of her friend who developed this program to aid disadvantaged youngsters, Haugh fell in love with the Ecuadorian people and prayed she might also find ways to perform equally challenging and rewarding work. Betsy quips that when she first came to Fair Haven with its rich Hispanic influence, she felt like "South America came to me!"

Betsy enthusiastically threw herself into the difficult job of getting the day care center open. With only a short six months to do so, sadly, time and money ran out and the obstacles turned out to be insurmountable. Betsy was discouraged and now faced the prospect of the day care closing. She turned to God for some advice.

Often it seems, as one door closes another opens, and Betsy turned her energy towards helping to create another new program at Saint James' Church. Fair Haven is home to many children who are first generation Americans of Hispanic descent. Often, these children grow up learning English, but their parents have limited skills in that language. Here was

an extremely important need to fill and the Saint James' Literacy Program was born. As Providence would have it, Betsy's mission received help to purchase furniture through the loving memory of a close friend who left a generous gift, and with additional support from the Rose Mead Memorial Fund. Community Action paid for the new program's educational materials.

In the past year, the program doubled in enrollment offering dozens of children in Kindergarten and First Grade a much-needed boost and valuable practice in mastering the English language. One of the unforeseen side benefits of the Literacy Program was an ESL - English as a Second Language class that grew out of the children's classes. It helped some parents of those enrolled in the literacy program gain more knowledge of English as well.

Betsy is optimistic about the role this educational program will play in helping the local children. So much so, she decided Fair Haven is her home now and recently bought a house in the neighborhood. She loves her work with both the kids she teaches and in the Preservations Department of The Yale University Library, and so is here to stay!

✠ St. James' Response Card **Please, let us hear from you!**

- I would like to make the following comments on this issue of *The Bridge*:

- I would like to request prayers from the church for the following:

- I would like a pastoral visit from the church.
- I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the ministry of St. James' Church in Fair Haven. Enclosed is a check for the following amount: \$ _____

Name:
Address:
Telephone:
E-mail:

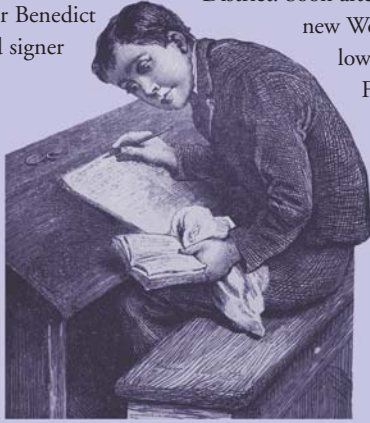
Please clip and mail to: St. James' Church, 62 East Grand Avenue, New Haven, CT 06513
(Or, better yet, drop it by the church office anytime.) **Thank you!**



HISTORICAL HAVEN

RECALLING THE LEGACY OF EDUCATION IN FAIR HAVEN

From its earliest days, the city of New Haven has been synonymous with education. Ever since Yale College moved to the Elm City in 1716, the people here have taken special pride in their educational institutions. A number of American education's most familiar names made New Haven their home. Yalie Noah Webster created the first American dictionary while living by the harbor on Water Street in the house once owned by the infamous traitor Benedict Arnold. Yale trustee, mayor, governor and signer of *The Declaration of Independence* Roger Sherman, schoolmaster and martyr Nathan Hale, organizer of the Congress of Mothers (later the PTA) Francis Sheldon Bolton, and Head Start founder Edward Zigler are just a few whose legacy left an impression on the schooling of children here and across this country.



PUBLIC EDUCATION came to Fair Haven in 1808, after Captain Nathaniel Grannis deeded three quarters of an acre in this growing neighborhood for building a school and meetinghouse. This new building, erected on the present site of Strong School at the corner of Grand and Clinton Avenues, was just the first of many institutions of learning created during Fair Haven's long legacy in public schooling.

In 1830, the neighborhood replaced their original red brick schoolhouse with a new church and meetinghouse. Over the next twenty-five years, classes were held in the basement until the meetinghouse moved to a new building and the school took over the entire house. This structure was remodeled in 1864 and renamed to honor Yale College President Theodore Dwight Woolsey. Eleven years later, in 1873, a new Woolsey School was built on Woolsey Street, and the old school became Grand Street School. Later known as Fair Haven School,

it was replaced in 1895 by the Horace H. Strong School, named for the Fair Haven civic leader. In 1914, fire destroyed the original Strong school, but it was rebuilt two years later and is today a New Haven magnet school with 365 students attending grades K-4.

IN THE EARLY 1870's, Fair Haven was annexed to New Haven and its schools became part of the city's Woolsey District. Soon after, the cornerstone was placed for the new Woolsey School. In the decade that followed, three new schools were built in Fair Haven: Lloyd Street School, Ferry Street School and Cheever School—named for the city's first schoolmaster, Ezekial Cheever. About the same time, in 1881, the school system expanded when Fair Haven east of the river joined New Haven.

IMMIGRATION brought many new children here in the early part of the 20th Century. The need for additional schools pushed the development of facilities like Clinton Avenue School, which today teaches a bilingual K-4 program with an enrollment of 410 youngsters. In 1927, a large school project began in the neighborhood. The new Fair Haven Junior High School, built for 1.3 million dollars, boasted many modern innovations including a 1660 seat auditorium, two large gymnasiums with lockers and showers, a cafeteria, and modern classrooms including a soundproof music room—the first installed in a Connecticut public school. Known today as Fair Haven Middle School, the teachers at the recently renovated facility join their fellow schools in valuing the need for learning and in carrying-on the legacy established in this neighborhood centuries ago.

The following sources were the basis for this article:
 Fair Haven. *A Journey through Time* ©1976 by Doris B. Townshend
 Fair Haven Neighborhood Schools website: <http://ctschoools.net/nscp>
 National Center for Education Statistics website: <http://nces.ed.gov>

RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

Virtually Your Neighbor

If you are interested in the neighborhood schools and want to learn more about how a group of elementary schools contributes to the community, you should visit the **Fair Haven Neighborhood Schools Collaborative Process** website at: <http://ctschoools.net/nscp/index.html>. The World Wide Web is central to this community project, which is an educational consortium of seven public, two parochial and a private school in Fair Haven and The Heights.



This inventive project began nearly ten years ago in 1996 when a group of educators proposed it as a way to enrich the "educational and neighborhood environment for the children" here. By involving thousands of students, teachers, parents, administrators, and staff from Bishop Woods, Clinton Avenue, Cold Spring, Columbus Family Academy, Fair Haven Middle, Jepson, Quinnipiac, St. Francis, St. Rose of Lima, and Strong Schools, the NSCP is bettering the greater community by the sharing of learning and ideas, and in the exploration of the unique history of Fair Haven.

Through the NSCP's Fair Haven Studies Project, curriculum and resources are developed and shared virtually by means of the web or in workshops on Fair Haven historical, cultural and environmental topics. The project hopes to show how, with a commitment between the schools, much may be achieved for furthering children's education and to the preservation of local history.

Pastoral Reflections

Letting Kids Decide for Themselves about Jesus



BY THE REV. GEOFF LITTLE
 PASTOR, ST. JAMES' CHURCH

In a recent *Time* magazine cover story about how parents today relate to school- teachers, the suggestion was made that in teacher conferences parents should "inquire about (their) child's progress in areas that aren't easily measured by grades." The implication is that parents are more apt to intervene in matters of their children's achievement than they are in matters of their character development.

Whether or not this is true, I know that when it comes to "religion" or "believing in God" many parents in our neighborhood believe their children should be free to make their own way and form their own opinions. Perhaps you don't feel compelled to expose your children to church, the Bible or prayer because you know your kids can decide for themselves later in life whether or not these things will be important to them.

What is the gospel perspective on this way of thinking? First, it is true that following God is ultimately a personal decision. Jesus makes his personal appeal to each one of

us in our lifetime just as he did to each of his twelve disciples. "Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. 'Follow me,' Jesus said to him, and Levi got up. Left everything and followed him" (Luke 6:27-28).

Second, however, your input as a parent has more influence than you might think. Unbelief is as much as a "tradition" as belief. By not exposing your children to the Gospel, you are not so much freeing them to decide for themselves as training them in the lifestyle of unbelief. One Old Testament Proverb says, "He who fears the Lord has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge" (Proverbs 14:26).

Last, and perhaps most importantly for Jesus, following Him is not only about character development but also life and death: "I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life" (John 6:47). How does your attitude change about exposing your kids to Christian faith if what is at stake is truly their eternal destiny?

My purpose here is not to make you as parents feel compelled to bring your children to church but rather that you consider the claims of the gospel for yourself. Jesus died and rose again to provide the only liberation we can ever have from the power of sin and death. This is the true focus of the Lent and Easter seasons, which we are now passing through. I guarantee that if you understand this to be good news for your own life, you will eagerly pass it on to your children.

Family Matters

Raising Children with the Help of God

BY BETSY HAUGH
 DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN
 AND FAMILY MINISTRIES,
 ST. JAMES' CHURCH

Raising children is not easy. As a parent, do you sometimes wonder, "What do I do now?"

As the mother of three children I certainly did. I decided to take God at his word in a very practical way and I will share with you my thoughts.

Begin with thanks. Frequently when Paul prayed for someone, he thanked God on his or her behalf. This is a good place to begin. It affirms the value of that defiant teen or difficult child. Next, ask, "How do I handle this problem now?" James 1:5 says if we lack wisdom, God gives it to us liberally. Then wait. In Psalm 32:8 God says, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go."

The answer will come. Sometimes it comes as a quiet thought or through something we read or hear. Sometimes it comes through another person. However, it will come. My three children are grown up now but I could not have done it without God!



For information about children's programs at St. James' please call the church at (203) 467-6958 or send me email at elizabethbhaugh@hotmail.com.

Created for the Fair Haven community by



62 East Grand Avenue, New Haven, CT 06513
 Voice: (203) 467-6958 • Fax: (203) 469-0564
 E-Mail: GLittle.CMS-USA@snet.net

THE BRIDGE SPRING 2005

Managing Editor: Tom Shultz
 Editor: Geoff Little
 Contributors: Betsy Haugh, Geoff Little, Tom Shultz
 Design: Tom Shultz/Creative Attitude
 On the web at: tomshultz.com

© 2005 St. James' Episcopal Church



COMMUNITY AND CHURCH CALENDAR SPRING 2005

Services every 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays
 10 AM: Bible teaching and Holy Communion, English language.
 12 NOON: Bible teaching and Holy Communion, Spanish language.

Service every 1st Sunday
 10 AM: Bible teaching and Holy Communion, bilingual. Community lunch after service.

Good Friday, March 25: Services, St. James' Church, 12 Noon and 7 PM.

Easter Sunday, March 27: Services, St. James' Church, 10 AM and 12 Noon.

St. James' Literacy Program: Saturdays, 2-4 PM, St. James' Church. September - June. For kids ages 5-8. Call Blanca Little at 467-6083.

Boy Scouts: Mondays 7-9 PM, St. James' Church. Call Bill Mason at (203) 469-0786

Quinnipiac River Community Group: every 2nd Tuesday, 7 PM, Yacht Club

Mary Wade Alzheimer's Support Group: every 1st Wednesday, 7 PM, Wade Home, 118 Clinton Ave. Call (203) 562-7222