



The Deaconer May 2007



Worship Services – May

May 6 – Fifth Sunday of Easter - Communion

Scripture: John 13:31-35, Revelation 21:1-6

Lay Reader: Craig Clark

Sermon: *Have you got a nametag?*

Usher: Ethan & Michelle Perry

Greeter: Cathy Mills & Mary Jane Sawyer

Deacon of the Month: Sandy Harding

May 13 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Scripture: John 20:1-18, John 1:1-18

Lay Reader: Martha Thomas

Sermon: *Just like a woman*

Usher: Alice & Frens Zwart

Greeter: Ed & Marti Gagnon

Deacon of the Month: Sandy Harding

May 20 – Seventh Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Matthew 6:1-18

Lay Reader: Barbara Wells

Sermon: *Pater Noster*

Usher: Doug & Linda Stather

Greeter: Stephen & Penny Chace

Deacon of the Month: Sandy Harding

May 27 – Pentecost Sunday - Craig Clark will be our guest preacher

Usher: Nancy Bogar & Sue Casey

Greeter: Steve & Laura Henrikson

Deacon of the Month: Sandy Harding

Celebration of Discipline

Our discussion group has been working with Richard J. Foster's renowned book, *Celebration of Discipline*, for several months, and we are finding our time together to be spiritually uplifting as we explore the classic disciplines of the Church and put them into practice in our lives. If you would like to be a part of this exciting journey, it's never too late to start. We meet once a month for about an hour, and our next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 22**, at 7 pm. We meet in the Sunday School room. If you'd like to check it out, there's always room at the table!

Common Grounds Coffeehouse

This month, **Friday, May 11**, Common Grounds features two up-and-coming singer songwriters, both of whom are young, yet seasoned performers. If you enjoy great guitar playing, driving rhythms, and lyrics that range from spiritual to emotional to sublime, join us for a great night of music and fellowship. Doors open at 7:30, admission is \$5, coffee and desserts are available at an additional charge, and the show starts at 8 pm.

Featured performers:

Zo Tobi - His playing may call to mind guitarists such as Ani DiFranco, Dave Matthews and Richie Havens. While transforming the guitar into an array of rich bass, lush open tunings, and signature pulsing beats, Zo Tobi's act is also powerfully simple and accessible – his vocal tendencies are reminiscent of folk-leaning Ben Harper, Shawn Mullins, and Jack Johnson.

The kind of performance you can expect from Zo Tobi is somewhere between a tea-sipping, coffeehouse-style excursion and an all-out, one-man rock experience. His songs cycle from the political, spiritual, and emotional, and his stories range from the sublime to the worldly to the bizarre.

As a young man in many worlds, Zo Tobi has managed to rock the college and coffeehouse circuit while also campaigning for diverse causes (electoral reform, global warming, political elections), traveling (Nicaragua, Israel, Germany, Mexico), and pursuing a joint Bachelors / Masters degree in International Development from Clark University in Worcester, MA.

Laura Bullock - Introduced to the world of folk music at a young age, Laura recounts fond childhood memories of being the little tot in footie pajamas up past her bedtime to hear some good old folk music in the Unitarian church basements and local coffee shops.

During her college years, Laura spent time perfecting her songwriting and performing around the Boston area. In 2004, Laura decided to pursue her music in earnest with the release of her EP, *in the everyday*. In 2006, she appeared on Club Passim's Open Mike Compilation CD and released her debut full length CD, *Points North*. Laura is rapidly developing a loyal fan base in the Boston area and throughout the Northeast.

On stage, Laura connects with her audience like two friends over a cup of tea. Her songs combine her sweet and simple voice, beautiful guitar work, and lyrics filled with depth and history.

LVA-EC Scholarships

The LVA-EC has scholarship forms available for the 2007-2008 school year. The deadline is **May 20, 2007**. They are available at the church or call Lois May, 899-6651 and one will be mailed to you.

Welcome Baskets

The Membership Committee has Welcome Baskets available. If you have a new neighbor this would be a nice way to introduce yourself and the church to them. They may be picked up at the church or speak to any member of the committee (Susan Casey, Steve Henrikson, Lois May and Marcie Miller).

TOWN – WIDE YARD / GARAGE SALE

MAY 5th, 2007 (8 AM to 3 PM)

The First Congregational Church in Rindge will host a town-wide yard / garage sale on May 5th, 2007 from 8 AM to 3 PM. (RAIN OR SHINE)

This event is open to all town residents. Sellers must pre-register and addresses will be put onto an up-dated map of Rindge.

The Church will charge a fee of \$10 (10) dollars and will mark town maps with the location of all sellers. The Church will also have paid advertisements for this event in several newspapers so that we may attract shoppers from outside the Rindge area.

Sellers will be responsible for displaying, marking and selling their own goods. All monies received will remain with the seller.

Maps will be available to all buyers & bargain hunters, (FREE), beginning at 7 AM on May 5th at the Church. Coffee & donuts will also be sold at this time.

“House” Prizes will be found at 3 locations on the map. When shoppers pick-up their map they may buy tickets. These tickets will be dropped into contains where the prizes are found and a drawing will be held at 3 PM at each of the prize locations.

This is a great way for all townspeople to get a handle on their unwanted “stuff” before the summer begins. During these long, dark, cold and icy days, as you clean a closet, cabinet, the basement or garage, just set items aside & you will be ready for the sale.

For this to be a successful event, we will need a few volunteers – especially on the day of the event. If you are interested in helping, please contact Jane Hannon at 899-5789.

The Church will have a table on the Common for the Yard Sale. If you have items that you would like to donate, please call Jane Hannon at 899-5789. We can arrange to pick up items if they are not to large or heavy. Thanks for your help.

JULY FAIR

NEEDED: ONE OR TWO COORDINATORS WILL TO ORGANIZE OUR JULY FAIR. The fair, a Flea Market as well as a Craft Fair, is held on the common and in the Meeting House with Vendors set up their goods and pay the Church for their spaces. Two months prior to the event, fliers with a sign-up application are mailed to all previous vendors announcing the fair and the current pricing. Publicity is notified of the event and makes arrangements to have the event advertised.

On the day of the event, vendors set up their booths on the common and one church representative collects the money from each vendor and gives it to our church collector for deposit. Other committees sponsor different portions of the event, such as the LVA/EC with food and refreshments and the music committee's antiques table.

Anyone interested in assisting us with the coordination of this event is asked to call Janet Goodrich at 899-5780

Church Council Minutes

April 19, 2007

Present: Janet Goodrich, Burt Goodrich, Pastor Jim Melhorn, Una Bigelow, Jeanne Norwood, Tony D'Ambrosio, Phyllis Ames, Sue Chatwin, Margaret Morabito

Following the opening prayer by Pastor Jim, the minutes of the February meeting were referenced. No changes. See March Deaconer.

Treasurer's Report: See written report. Burt distributed and reviewed the monthly financial statements. He noted that income is slightly behind budget estimates; however, Pledge Plus is working and more members are encouraged to pledge or increase their pledges.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Jim discussed our vision as a church and its expression through the actions of the Church Council. While meetings traditionally focus on the present, he suggested that the Council could improve by having a long-term vision of what we want to be as a church five years out. Within the various committees and the Council, we need to keep our purpose in front of us and then work on how to achieve it.

Old Business:

- **Pledge Plus:** Burt reported that we had 12 returns in two weeks and encouraged all committees to get involved with reminding members to participate.
- **Yard Sale:** Jane Hannon is in charge. Tony mentioned that 25 people had signed up, to date.
- **Coffee House:** Jim mentioned that while the coffee house is fun and going well, it is not self-funding, as was anticipated. He suggested that next year, we should try to leave some money in the budget for this activity. He also would like to see more young people attending, possibly by sending a flyer to the local college.
- **Retreat:** Jim discussed the retreat that is coming up on May 18-19. There are many activities and these involve all ages. He encouraged the committees to promote this event.
- **Policies & Procedures Binder:** Jan pointed out the value of the policies binder as a long-term "how-to-do-it" reference for current and future committees. She asked all committees to look it over and suggest updates, if needed.

New Business:

- **Energy efficient light bulbs:** Jane Hannon (via Jan) suggested that we sell energy efficient light bulbs as a fund raising project. Committees should discuss this and we need to decide who will head up the project and how to proceed.
- **Dance:** We discussed raising funds through dances. Una brought up the possibility of doing line dancing; maybe splitting it half with instruction and half with actual dancing. Whatever kind of dance we decide upon, maybe we will tie it in to a holiday such as Halloween. Ask Janet K. regarding a DJ and bands.
- **Book Club:** Who is in charge of the Book Club? How should we go about choosing a book? These were two questions raised regarding this fun club. Maybe we could buy books in bulk and sell them inexpensively to participants. We should plan a year in advance as to book selection and the list of hosts. Committees are asked to suggest ideas for book selection.
- **Floor:** the coffee hour room is having its floor refinished from April 23-May1.
- **Rindge Senior Housing:** Burt brought up the topic of apartments for low-to-middle income seniors in Rindge and suggested that our church should support this town project. A proposal was made for our church to make a \$100 donation in April; it was seconded; discussion ensued; and the proposal was passed unanimously.
- **Country Fair & Flea Market:** Who is in charge? This worthy project needs a leader. While discussing this need, Pastor Jim suggested that we mull over the prospect of replacing some events in the future with new ones instead of adding new ones that do not have the manpower to implement.
- **Web Site:** Tony welcomes news for the Web site, but emphasized the need for people to submit their requests in writing beforehand, instead of verbally at the last minute. The Web site is seeking a volunteer photographer for church events.

Committee Reports:

- **Deacons:** See written report. Sue mentioned that the deacons had to pay out of pocket for expenses incurred for the Seder Meal. She suggested that we need to explore ways to get funds for the deacons to perform their

functions and that they did not want this to deter potential future deacons. Possibly submit expenses to the Trustees for paying.

- **Mission Ministries:** See written report. Una informed us that they need another member.
- **Music:** See written report. Tony informed us that the organ needs repairs. This needs to be discussed with the Trustees. The problem stems from the faulty heating system that overheats and overdries the upstairs while underheating the downstairs. This led to Burt's discussion (next).
- **Trustees:** See written report. Burt pointed out that they realize that the heating system needs to be replaced, and it is an expensive project. They are talking with various heating companies now. Jim mentioned that he freezes in his office, and it would be nice if the Pastor had a laptop since he no longer has a computer at the church to use. :)
- **Pastoral Relations:** See written report.
- **Membership and Evangelism:** See written report.
- **Men's Club:** Tony mentioned that they are looking for a speaker to address the Mother's Day breakfast, which occurs on May 13.

Sharing Moment: Una shared a moment of faith with us.

Closing Prayer: Tony closed the meeting with a prayer.

Next Meeting: May 17, 2007

In God we trust,
Margaret Morabito, Council Clerk

Diaconate **April 17, 2007**

The Deacons met on April 17th at 7:00 P.M. In attendance were Sue Chatwin, Sue Campbell, Sandy Harding, Phyllis Groezinger, Jean Raymond, Barbara Wells and Rev. Jim Melhorn. Sandy will be the Deacon of the Month for May. Assisting her with communion will be Sue Chatwin, Phyllis Groezinger and Barbara Wells.

Standard Reports

- **Cards and Flowers** – A get well card was sent to Marcie Miller, encouragement cards to Jean Benson, Peg Brummer and Alice Zwart and thinking of you cards to Marcie Miller, Marge St. Pierre and Trudie Kalinen. Joyful

cards were sent to Burt Goodrich and to the D'Ambrosio family.

- **Nominating Committee** – Sue Campbell will make an appeal for more Deacons.
- **Pulpit Supply** – Rev. Melhorn will be away on May 27th so a member of the congregation will be asked to preach.
- **Coffee Hour** – There will be five over 80 birthdays in May.
- **Pastor's Report** –
 1. Rev. Melhorn will be at Horton Center from July 8-14 and July 22-28 but will be preaching those weeks.
 2. There will be a memorial service for Marge Raymond on July 21st.

Unfinished Business

- The plaques are up in recognition of Ella Dale's donation of the Last Supper picture and Mary William's donation of the altar rug.
- An item in a Deaconer explained the need for receipts when taking income tax deductions for charitable donations. Council will be asked if people may request a receipt from the treasurer for non monetary donations accompanied by sales receipts. Sales receipts would be submitted only once or twice a year.
- It was decided to put a notice in a prior bulletin to notify the congregation if the date of communion will be changed as it was in April for Easter.

New Business

- Burt Goodrich, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, spoke about the Finance Committee decision to launch a long range financial plan for the church and explained its three goals.

The meeting closed at 8 P.M. Barbara Wells will close with prayer at the next meeting which will be on May 10th at 7:00 P.M. in the vestry.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Wells, Secretary

Trustees Minutes

April 10, 2007

The meeting came to order at 7:05 pm with Burt Goodrich, Jane Hannon, Nancy Bogar, Larry Kabat, David Marr, Ed Gagnon, and Jim Melhorn present. Burt began the meeting with a prayer.

Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports were accepted as presented. Motion was made and approved to transfer \$5000 from the A.G. Edwards account to checking.

Old Business:

1. **Yard Sale – May 5, 2007** - Jane reported that 23 people have called to book space, and she continues to encourage everyone to talk with neighbors and friends to be included in the town-wide yard sale.
2. **Long-Term Financial Plan** – Burt and Marcie will be meeting with each committee to discuss the plan in detail and answer any questions people may have. Franz was not present, but Jim said that pledge cards have been received.

Jim closed with a prayer. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm. Next meeting will be Tuesday, May 8, 2007, at 7:00 pm.

*Respectively submitted,
Nancy Bogar, Secretary*

Mission Ministries Team April 14, 2007

The Mission Ministries Team met Saturday April 14th at 10am. Attending were Laura Henrikson, Mark Warner, Una Bigelow, and Marie Marr. Laura began the meeting with an inspirational reading.

The minutes were read and accepted. Laura reviewed the month's mail, which included appeals from Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention, Straight Ahead Ministries, Samaritan's Purse, Community Kitchen, and a Franklin Pierce College sponsored Uganda project. She also read some statistics from MATS regarding regional homelessness.

Burt Goodrich, Trustee Chairman, visited the meeting to explain the proposed Long Term Financial Plan. It is a 5-7 year campaign to

restore budget cuts and eventually fund the operating budget by 65% current contributions and 35% from endowment income. Also, there will be a Capital Campaign to fund needed repairs and an educational program to inform the congregation on 'planned giving', i.e. wills and endowment giving.

On Sunday, April 29th, we will again sell Fair Trade Coffee, Tea and Chocolate Bars during the Fellowship Hour following church. Mark, Una and Marie will co-ordinate the effort.

The Mission Ministries Team will sell ice cream again at the Rindge Family Festival on July 7th. This year the town is requesting that non profit organizations donate 10% of their profits to the Recreation Department. Una will ask the Women's Club for use of their tent. A decision concerning the recipients of this fundraiser was delayed.

The Women's Club has asked the Mission Ministries Team to provide food for the Craft Fair on August 11th. Proceeds from this fundraiser will go to the Food Pantry.

There was discussion on making sandwiches for Habitat for Humanity workers and also about possibilities for the Church Fair on July 21st. Decisions were delayed until next month.

Since our next regularly scheduled meeting falls on Mother's Day, it was decided to meet on May 8th at 7pm. Una will do the opening prayer and Marie will do the closing prayer.

*Respectfully submitted,
Marie Marr*

Music Committee April 15, 2007

Attending meeting was Bob Popple, Mary Lu Mathis, Tony D'Ambrosio, Jean Raymond and, guest from the Trustees, Burt Goodrich.

Burt came to talk to us about Pledge Plus 2007 & how we all can pull together to make an increase in our budget so we can restore some of the cuts that were made.

Bob said the piano needs tuning again. The organ needs repairs done very soon. The major

problem with the organ is of not being able to control the heat upstairs.

Thank you Marcie Miller for paying for the piano tuning for Easter.

The music Committee is talking about doing German Chorales with the Franklin Pierce Gospel Singers & our choir.

Next meeting will be May 6th after church.

Jean R. Raymond

Membership and Evangelism Committee March 22, 2007

The Membership and Evangelism Committee met on Wednesday February 22nd at 7:00^{pm} in the Vestry. Those in attendance were Steve Henrikson, Lois May, Marcie Miller and Jim Melhorn. Jim opened with a prayer.

Minutes of the February 22, 2007 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Church Council – There was no Council meeting (All Committee meeting).

Welcome Baskets – Lois will work with local realtors to see about new families in town. Jim has a new welcome letter.

Membership Database – Marcie indicated that there have been 2 additions. Marcie continues to provide labels and lists for various committees.

Web Site – Tony has indicated he would like to attend a meeting to discuss the web site.

Unfinished Business

New Member Class – Had a general discussion regarding potential new members. Looking at class dates of April 29th, May 5th and 20th with new members joining May 27th.

Name Tags – Marcie located 100 blue border labels for \$2.14 at Cosco.

New Business

Ready, Set, Grow – Marcie took a CD from the UCC called Ready, Set, Grow to report back to the committee.

Community Reach – We discussed various ways to get our name out into the community.

- Survey
- Yard Sale
- Town Fair

- Free Bibles
- 104 Ways to Grow a Church
- 8 for 8

The meeting closed at 8:15^{pm}. Our next meeting will be Sunday April 15, 2007 at 11:30^{am}.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Henrikson, Secretary

Does God Exist?

A lady went to a beauty shop to have her hair cut and her nails painted and trimmed. As the beautician began to work, they began to have a good conversation. They talked about so many things and various subjects.

When they eventually touched on the subject of God, the beautician said: "I don't believe that God exists." "Why do you say that?" asked the woman who has MS.

"Well, you just have to go out in the street to realize that God doesn't exist. Tell me, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God existed, there would be neither suffering nor pain. I can't imagine a loving God who would allow all of these things."

Then the woman thought for a moment, but didn't respond because she didn't want to start an argument. The beautician just finished her job and the customer left the shop.

Just after she left the beauty shop, she saw a woman in the street with long, stringy, dirty hair and not groomed at all. She looked dirty and unkempt.

Then the woman turned back and entered the beauty shop again and she said to the beautician: "You know what? Beauticians do not exist."

"How can you say that?" asked the surprised beautician. "I am here, and I am a beautician. And I just worked on you!"

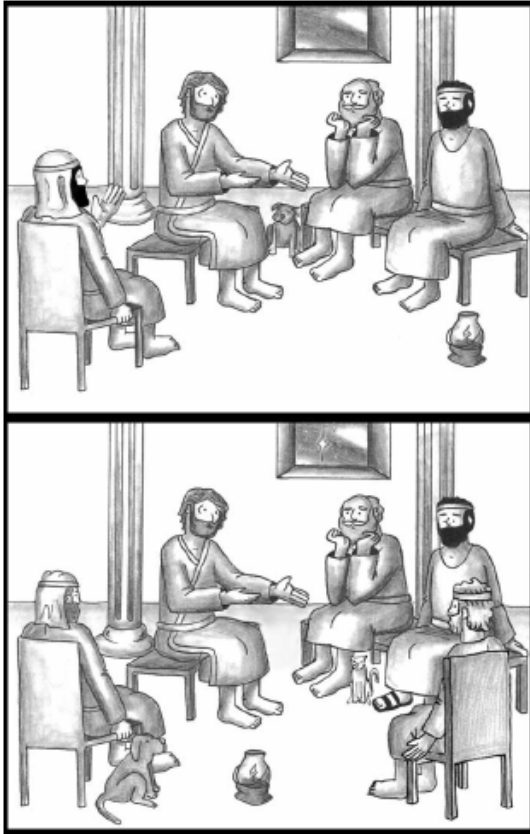
"No!" the woman exclaimed. "Beauticians don't exist because if they did, there would be no people with dirty long hair and be very unkempt, like that woman outside."

"Ah, but beauticians DO exist! What happens is, people do not come to me.

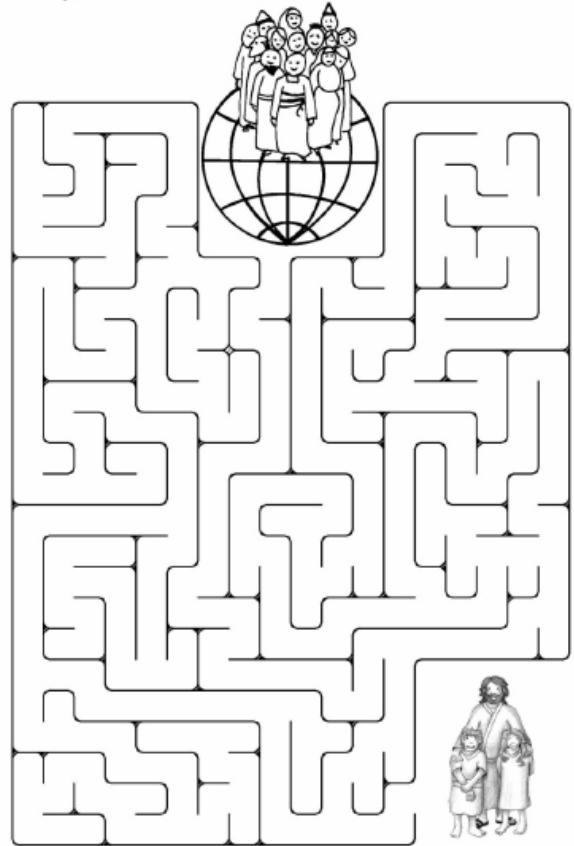
"Exactly!"- affirmed the woman. "That's the point! God, too, DOES exist! What happens, is, people don't go to Him and do not look for Him. That's why there's so much pain and suffering in the world.

Children's Corner

Jesus talks to the disciples at the last supper.
Find 8 differences between these pictures.



Help the people believe in Jesus.



"...so that the world may believe that you sent me." --Jn. 17:21b

Jesus prays for the church.
Find 7 differences between these pictures.



All-Church Retreat

Our Annual Church Retreat will be held **Friday and Saturday, May 18 and 19**, at the Woodbound Inn right here in Rindge. This retreat is intended for all members and friends of the church and all ages from children to seniors, couples, families, or singles, **ALL ARE WELCOME**.

What is the retreat all about? It's a time of rest and reflection, a time to get away without going too far, a time to focus on our vision and direction as a church and as individual Christians, a time to play and worship, a time for fellowship and friendship, a time to get to know others at the church in a 'non-churchy' setting.

How does it work? We'll gather on Friday at 5:30 pm for dinner and then have a workshop session that includes games, discussion, and activities. We'll end up Friday evening with a creative informal worship service, after which participants can either go home or stay overnight at the Woodbound. Saturday begins with a Bible Study for early risers followed by breakfast and two morning workshops along with an activity for our younger children. After lunch, we'll gather for concluding workshop, followed by dinner and a celebration of communion, departing by about 6:30 pm on Saturday.

What's the subject or theme? Rev. Nancy Wood-Lyczak, pastor of the United Church of Winchester and soon-to-be Chaplain at Keene Medical Center, will lead us through the topic "Authenticity in Evangelism". We'll ask ourselves what WE have to say about how God has worked in our lives, and how WE can share that with each other in the church and with others in our lives outside of church. We'll figure out what makes sense for US based on who we are and our own experiences. Nancy is an author and retreat leader who has led many congregations just like ours on a journey to discover the good news inside of each one of us.

What does it cost? Nothing. Food, activities, and a room for the night (if you'd like one) are all provided. What a deal!!

How do I sign up? There will be a sign-up sheet available at worship for the first two Sundays in May. OR, you can call the church office 899-5722 and leave a message with the number of people that will attend and whether you will need a room reservation at the Woodbound. It's so easy!

What if I still have questions? Call Pastor Jim at the church office 899-5722 or home 899-2268

Retreat Schedule

"Authenticity in Evangelism"

Central scripture text

"So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the good news of God, but also ourselves, because you have become very dear to us." 1 Thess. 2:8

Friday May 18

5:30 pm Dinner

6:00-8:30 pm Workshop session for all ages

8:30-9:00 pm Worship and singing

Saturday May 19

7:30 am Early Riser Bible Study

8:00 am Breakfast

9:00-10:15 am Workshop and separate children's activity

10:30-noon Workshop for all ages

Noon Lunch

2:00-4:00 pm Workshop and separate children's activity

5:00 pm Light Dinner and Closing Exercise with Communion

Depart



The First Congregational Church and Society (United Church of Christ)

PO Box 451, Rindge, NH 03461



Long Term Financial Plan

Spring
2007

Dear Church Members and Friends,

The Board of Trustees, through careful analysis and prayerful consideration, has come to the realization that God is speaking to us concerning the financial health of our church. In our attempt to build on our successes and address our shortcomings, we are developing some financial goals that will allow us to continue building this church into the future. These goals represent our vision, led by the Holy Spirit, of a financially-sound plan of action to ensure our continued growth and the prospering of our vitally important ministry to one another, our community, and our world. As a Board, we are excited to respond to God's leading, and we encourage you to read and prayerfully consider your role in this bold move forward.

First, let us give you some background information on the blessings and challenges that have led us to where we are today. There is much to celebrate:

- Both the total number of pledges and the total amount of pledges has been steadily increasing over the past 10 years.
- Although it has not been easy, our church has produced balanced year-end budgets over the past several years, even when deficit budgets have been presented by the Trustees.
- We are blessed with a substantial endowment, which has allowed us to do the ministry of a much bigger church. Worshiping in the Town Meetinghouse, we have been spared some of the major expenses associated with owning a building.
- Our church is generous. At least 10% of our budget is dedicated to mission, which includes help to local families in need, ministry to youth, support of our denomination, and various local and global charities.
- More people are participating in the church's financial decision making process, working together to build and grow our church. The church budget is increasingly becoming 'our' budget.

There is also cause for concern:

- In presenting a realistic, balanced 2007 budget for approval at Annual Meeting, the trustees have been forced to make deep program cuts in all areas of our ministry.
- Several years of extremely tight budgeting have not allowed us to attend to several 'big-ticket' items that we need to help our church grow into the future.
- We rely too heavily on our endowment income. While the standard for a financially healthy church is to rely on endowments for 20% of its annual income, our endowment income makes up about 50% of our annual budget income.
- This heavy reliance on endowment income does not allow our endowment to grow sufficiently to provide for the future of our church. If growth of the endowment does not meet or exceed inflation, it will eventually provide less and less income.

Overall Goal: To become financially sound within five years.

To accomplish this ambitious goal, the Trustees have identified three major areas of focus which are discussed in more detail below. By meeting these major objectives together we will significantly improve our financial position and place the church in a positive growth situation for the future. Key initiatives include:

I. Pledges: Increase pledges to 65 percent of the budget within five years.

- Increase first year (2007) pledges by 20%, 2008 pledges by 15%, 2009 pledges by 10%, with 5% increases thereafter. Meeting these interim milestones would allow us to reach the 65% goal in 2012, assuming modest increases in expenses each year.
- To accomplish our 2007 goal we have developed the “**Pledge Plus 2007**” program to meet the initial challenge. You’ll be hearing more about this initiative shortly.

II. Capital Campaign: Initiate a campaign by spring of 2008 to raise \$65,000 to address overdue facility improvements and create an account to fund future capital improvement needs. Improvements have been identified for several years and we could not fund them. A further long term delay of the maintenance aspects of these improvements could ultimately result in larger expenditures in the future. Looking towards the future, acknowledging the ongoing need and creating a process to fund anticipated improvements is the prudent tactic.

- Replace sanctuary carpet, refinish sanctuary floors, add sound system (\$30,000)
- Redesign and renovate the Sunday school, vestry, and minister’s office (\$30,000)
- Update the kitchen plumbing (\$5,000)
- Establish a capital improvement program
- Beginning in 2009, set aside 5% of the endowment fund income for the capital improvement program

III. Endowments: Increase endowment fund to one million dollars through an increase of \$300,000 (approximately 45%) within five years.

- With increased pledges, the amount of investment income needed to support ongoing operations will be lowered substantially, allowing the fund to increase.
- Establish a formal trust/annuity program to address informational and counseling needs of the congregation. Various annuity and endowment options provide opportunities to further grow the endowment fund over time.

Our church has relied on fund-raising activities to fill in the financial gaps, and we will continue to do so. But we seek a healthy balance. Too much fund-raising can easily cause us to lose focus on the church’s most important mission: spreading the love of God through Jesus Christ in word and in deed. And ultimately, fund-raising causes others to support the church, when the bulk of that support ought to come from within.

This program is ambitious, but we are excited about its outcome. We believe in the future of this church, and we suspect you do as well. Although most of the focus of this letter has been on money, we realize that the most precious gift any one of us can give the church is the gift of ourselves – our time and our talents. All the money in the world is no substitute for a group of loving, caring individuals sharing their hearts and minds and spirit with one another, with neighbors near and far, and with almighty God, the Giver of all good gifts.

The Board of Trustees: Burt Goodrich - Chairman, Joe Bigelow, Nancy Bogar, Cynthia Childs, Ed Gagnon, Jane Hannon, Larry Kabat, Rick Kohlmorgen, Dave Marr, Norman May, Marcie Miller, Frens Zwart, Jim Melhorn - Pastor

News and announcements from the NH Conference

“Digging Deeper into Annual Stewardship Education”

For stewardship leaders in local churches, here is a new opportunity to tackle some of the challenges of increasing financial resources for your annual programs, mission and ministry. On Saturday, May 31 from 6:30 to 9 pm, the Hampstead Congregational Church’s Stewardship Committee and the NH Conference, UCC Stewardship Development Team will co-sponsor a consultation of stewardship committee members and pastors dealing with such issues as engaging new and fringe members into the stewardship life of the church; talking about money in a language of faith; connecting stewardship with spirituality; and telling the story of our churches’ mission and encouraging generosity. Participants are invited to register at the Hampstead Church Office (603-329-6985) no later than Friday, May 25, and bring a “sack supper” for the gathering time of 6:30 pm. Beverages and desserts will be provided, and there is no cost. For complete details, please view the online event flyer on the NH Conference website at www.nhcucc.org/stew201_hamp07.doc, or contact Rev. Dave Williams at 603-875-0363, or by email at dwilliams@nhcucc.org.

Fair Trade Coffee House

Look out “American Idol!” Move over “Dancing with the Stars!” It is now time for the Second Annual New Hampshire Conference Fair Trade Coffee House during the 2007 Annual Meeting. On Friday, June 15 at 8:30 pm we’ll gather to drink delicious fair trade coffee and teas. Please consider singing, dancing, playing an instrument, telling jokes or yodeling. Contact Nancy Wood-Lyczak at 603-239-4465, or by email at revnwl@verizon.net to get into the act.

We hope that everyone, entertainers and audience alike, will join us. We had a great time last year and hope this year will be even more engaging and fun.

Save the Date...Annual Meeting 2007...Friday & Saturday, June 15 & 16

The NH Conference’s Annual Meeting is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, June 15 – 16 at Brewster Academy in Wolfeboro, NH. This year’s keynote speaker, Rev. Martha Grace “Gay” Reese, will present “Raising the Bushel Basket: Discovering Dynamic and Vital Ministries” based on Matthew 5:14-16. You are encouraged to purchase and read Rev. Reese’s book, *Unbinding the Gospel: Real Life Evangelism* before Annual Meeting. The book may be purchased through Chalice Press (1-800-366-3383), by visiting www.amazon.com, or by borrowing a copy from the NH Conference Center (limited copies available).

A new resolution process is underway! Save the date, Sunday, May 20 from 3 – 5 pm, at the NH Conference Center, 140 Sheep Davis Road, Pembroke, NH, for the Resolution Hearings! New guidelines may be reviewed on the Annual Meeting page of the NH Conference website at www.nhcucc.org.

The AMPC (Annual Meeting Planning Committee) is currently seeking on-site volunteers to assist with logistics, registration, hospitality, technical and other supports. Come lend a helping hand and be a part of what goes on “behind the scenes” at the next Annual meeting!

Youth and Adult Advisors...Save the Date...General Synod...June 22-26

Join the “50 4 50” Campaign: a grass roots movement of 1,000 youth at General Synod with 50 youth and young adults from every conference of the Church for 50 years of service to attend the “1000 Strong” 26th General Synod, June 22 -26, 2007 in Hartford, CT. A youth program is being planned to overlap Synod, so come for a day or for all five days to this exciting, once-in-a-lifetime party! Stay tuned to the Youth Ministry page of the NH Conference website (www.nhcucc.org) for details!

Save the Date! New England Association of United Church Educators Annual Conference on Christian Education

“Catch the Faith – Pass It On!” will take place May 8 – 10, 2007 at Craigville Conference Center, Craigville, Massachusetts, with keynote speakers and worship leaders from The Youth and Family Institute (www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org), Rev. Dr. Dick Hardel and Rev. Dr. David W. Anderson. The Conference will feature informative workshops, a bookstore, inspiring worship and networking opportunities, and is within walking distance of the conference center’s private beach. Registration forms and/or additional information may be obtained by contacting Nancy Murdock, NEAUCE Chair, at 603-432-2313, or by email at portia96@gmail.com.

Mark Your Calendar for Marcus Borg's Visit to the Congregational Church, UCC of Middlebury, Vermont!

World-renowned Jesus scholar and highly sought-after lecturer, Marcus Borg, with his clear and organized speaking style and warm, friendly personality, feeds the mind and soul. Please mark your calendar for Friday, October 19 through Sunday, October 21 for a weekend of inspiration and affirmation. Another announcement will be sent in the spring with details such as times and locations, tickets, bed and breakfast opportunities in homes of our congregation, and information on other lodging in the Middlebury area.

IRS now Demands Receipts for Even Small Church Donations

“The next time you toss bills into the church collection plate, you might want to ask the usher for a receipt. New federal rules for the 2007 tax year – which took effect January 1 – forbid tax deductions for charitable donations unless the taxpayer can substantiate the donation through receipts or official financial records. The rules, enforced by the IRS, require that people claiming charitable donations back up those deduction claims with canceled checks, records from banks, credit card companies or credit unions, or written notices from the charity or not-for-profit institution. In the past, the IRS has allowed personal notes, diaries or bank registers as sufficient proof that a person actually placed those \$5, \$10 or \$20 bills in the basket each week of the year. Congress approved the new guidelines in August as an add-on to the Pension Protection Act of 2006, which deals mostly with pension and retirement savings. President Bush signed them into law. The new rules cover monetary donations to all charitable institutions, not just religious ones. The changes shouldn't affect the giving habits of people who already use church-provided envelopes, write checks or donate over the Internet. They can still receive records from the church, bank or credit card company...” – Reprinted from The Christian Century magazine (<http://www.christiancentury.org/article.lasso?id=2970>)

U2charist

At 5:00 pm on Saturday, May 12, the Congregational Church of Amherst will do something it has never done before: host a U2charist. A what?! A U2charist is, for those familiar with the music of the Irish rock band U2, essentially what it says it is: a Eucharist featuring U2's music. Please mark your calendars for this event. It will be unlike any worship service you have ever experienced! For more information, please contact our Associate Pastor, the Reverend Catriona Grant, at 603-673-3231, ext. 13, or by email at catriona@ccamherst.org. The Congregational Church of Amherst is located in the village of Amherst, off Route 101, and facing the village green.

Synod in the City

The NH Conference, UCC will sponsor a chartered bus trip to Synod in the City, the day-long gala celebration of the UCC's 50th anniversary, taking place on Saturday, June 23, 2007 in Hartford, Connecticut, as part of the 26th General Synod.

The day begins with worship at 8:30 am at the Hartford Civic Center and a Keynote address by Bill Moyers. Other presenters will offer distinctive insights into our mission as a multicultural, multiracial, open and affirming, accessible to all, just peace church. A complete list of presenters and more information may be found at www.ucc.org/synod/pdfs/synodinthecity.pdf. In addition, the national UCC office has just announced that active UCC member U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) will be a featured afternoon speaker.

Synod in the City will close with a celebration at the Civic Center at 7:30 pm.

The NH Conference bus will leave the Pembroke Conference Center at 5:00 am and stop at the Park-n-Ride Lot in Windham, at Routes 111 and 93 (exit 3 off 93). We will depart from Windham at 5:45 am to arrive in Hartford by 8 am. The bus will depart Hartford after the evening celebration is over, at approximately 9 pm.

The bus fare will be \$30 per person. Please make checks payable to NHCUCC, with “Synod Bus Trip” in the memo line. Remember that separate registration is required for Synod in the City (\$50 per person). Synod in the City registration may be completed online at www.ucc.org/synod/.

If you would like to be part of the NH Conference bus trip, please contact Sue Farris at 603-225-6647, or by email at sfarris@nhcucc.org with your name, phone number and preferred pickup location (Pembroke or Windham). The deadline to reserve your seat is Thursday, May 31, and refunds will not be granted after Friday, June 8.

Frank Runyeon

5/6 & 5/7: On Sunday, May 6 and Monday, May 7 at Phillips Church on the campus of Phillips Exeter Academy, the series presents Frank Runyeon, a television and movie actor, translator and performer of biblical texts, in two plays and a lecture. The first play, "Signs," is based on an early text of the Book of John. The central tension of the play is between rural believers and urban skeptics. "Signs" will be presented on Sunday, May 6 at 7 pm. On Monday, May 7 at 7 pm, Mr. Runyeon will present the second play, "The Sermon on the Mount," and a lecture, "Hollywood vs. Faith," in which he argues that Americans live between two stories, Scripture and Hollywood. Runyeon's presentations are sponsored by Phillips Exeter Academy, "We the People," and St. Michael Catholic Church.

**Join us for an Evening with
Dr. Ira Byock**

"Saying the Four Things That Matter Most"

May 10, 2007 – 7:00pm
Union Congregational Church, UCC
33 Concord Street, Peterborough

Dr. Byock is a palliative care physician and long time advocate for improving care through the end of life.

Dr. Byock's book, "The Four Things That Matter Most: A Book About Living" will be available for purchase

His presentation is free and open to the public.

Sponsored by Hospice at HCS, Monadnock Community Hospital and the Union Congregational Church, UCC of Peterborough

May - Church Calendar

Wednesday - May 2, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Senior Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Saturday - May 5, 2007

- 8:00^{am} Town Wide Yard Sale

Sunday - May 6, 2007

- 9:00^{am} Senior Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 10:00^{am} Sunday Service - Sanctuary
- 11:30^{am} Music Committee – Vestry

Monday - May 7, 2007

- 9:30^{am} Bible Study - Vestry
- 7:00^{pm} LVA/EC – Vestry

Tuesday - May 8, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Trustees / Buildings & Grounds / Stewardship – Vestry
- 7:00^{pm} Mission Ministries Team

Wednesday - May 9, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Senior Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thursday - May 10, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Deacons – Vestry

Friday - May 11, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Common Grounds Coffeehouse - Zo Tobi, Laura Bullock

Sunday - May 13, 2007

- 9:00^{am} Senior Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 10:00^{am} Sunday Service - Sanctuary
- 11:00^{am} Fellowship - Town Hall
- 11:30^{am} Membership Committee – Vestry

Monday - May 14, 2007

- 9:30^{am} Bible Study – Vestry
- 7:00^{pm} LVA/EC – Vestry

Wednesday - May 16, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Senior Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thursday - May 17, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Council - Vestry

Friday - May 18, 2007

- 5:30^{pm} Church Retreat – Woodbound Inn
- All Committee Reports Due for June Deaconer

Saturday - May 19, 2007

- 7:30^{am} Church Retreat – Woodbound Inn

Sunday - May 20, 2007

- 9:00^{am} Senior Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 10:00^{am} Sunday Service - Sanctuary
- 11:00^{am} Fellowship - Town Hall

Monday - May 21, 2007

- 9:30^{am} Bible Study - Vestry
- 7:00^{pm} LVA/EC - Vestry

Tuesday - May 22, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Celebration of Discipline - Vestry

Wednesday - May 23, 2007

- 6:00^{pm} Membership Committee - Vestry
- 7:00^{pm} Senior Choir Rehearsal – Sanctuary

Sunday - May 27, 2007

- 9:00^{am} Senior Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 10:00^{am} Sunday Service - Sanctuary
- 11:00^{am} Fellowship - Town Hall
- 11:00^{am} Mission Team Coffee Sale – Town Hall

Monday - May 28, 2007

- 9:30^{am} Bible Study - Vestry
- 7:00^{pm} LVA/EC - Vestry

Wednesday - May 30, 2007

- 7:00^{pm} Senior Choir Rehearsal – Sanctuary

May Birthdays

- May 1 – Dorothy Hackett
- May 3 – Dean Skelton
- May 3 – Nathan Warner (Primeau)
- May 8 – Paul Chace
- May 9 – Vanessa L'Heureux
- May 10 – Zackery Cormier
- May 11 – Linda Tower
- May 12 – Emma Bolduc
- May 12 – Ernest St.Pierre
- May 13 – Phyllis Groezinger
- May 13 – Richard Keegan III
- May 14 – Kevin Miller
- May 15 – Joyce Kabat
- May 15 – Eliza Popple
- May 16 – Tatyanna Wunschel
- May 20 – Margaretta Mellen
- May 25 – Marcie Miller
- May 25 – Louis Thomas
- May 30 – Penny Chace
- May 31 – Barbara Nichols