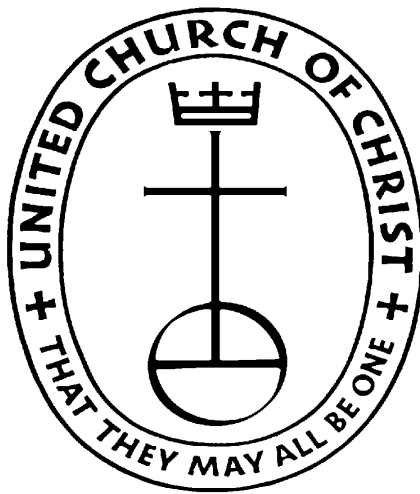


Rindge UCC Deaconer

April, 2009



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Pastoral Letter

As many of you know, the Melhorn's have bought a house in Rindge, and as you are reading this, we are deeply into the process of settling in while we finish up the moving. While I've talked about the reasons for and results of the move with various groups and individuals before this, I wanted to take an opportunity to explain as much as I can to the whole church.

The process really began last Fall. Due to some unfortunate deaths in both our families, Cindy and I had some unexpected money become available. We now had all the children out of the house (at least for a good chunk of the year). And, as the financial market collapse threatened our retirement savings, we began to consider the possibility of buying some real estate as an investment. Through many twists and turns, we simply allowed the process to work, and God to work through the process.

You may ask why we would even consider such a move, when the church provides a perfectly fine house, the parsonage, as part of my benefit package. While the use of the parsonage has been a wonderful blessing to our family over the past 9 years, the reality of current tax law is that pastors are required to pay taxes on the fair market rental value of church-supplied housing. That means I pay taxes on 'income' that never really comes to me as income. In owning my own home, I am able to get a significant tax benefit. I can deduct mortgage interest like any other homeowner, and I do not pay tax on the part of my salary the church designates as housing allowance. (More about that a bit later) The other deciding factor for us was the fact that we were unable to gain any real equity by not owning a home. Some churches deal with this issue by setting aside money to compensate for a pastor's lack of building equity.

While I have tried to keep the leaders of the church informed throughout the process, I have not freely shared much about this with most of you until very recently. Please understand that my silence was not intended to be sneaky. Part of the reason was that we weren't completely sure that everything would work out until just before our closing date. Also, since this was a personal decision we made, I felt it unfair to get the church too involved in the process. That's why we haven't asked for help with moving and such. I feel like our getting from one house to another is our responsibility.

That leads me to the issue of expectations. Customarily, churches provide housing allowances to pastors who own their own homes. These allowances, which are separate from salary, are used for housing-related expenses like mortgage, taxes, utilities, and repairs. Let me say clearly, that I do not expect the church to add any additional money to my compensation package at this time. Again, I think that would be a completely unfair request on my part. If there comes a day when the church either sells the parsonage or begins using it as an income-generating property, then I think discussions about changes in compensation may be more appropriate. I will be working with the Board of Trustees to determine what part of my current salary may be converted to housing allowance to allow me to maximize the tax savings.

So what does this mean for the church? I see this as an opportunity for growth, change, and reflection. The Trustees have formed a small group to begin discussing options for the parsonage. I am convinced that they will consider all options, work through all possibilities, seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and present you with a plan that best serves this church and this community.

If you have additional questions, PLEASE come and talk to me. If you have any suggestions for the Trustees, please contact Rick Kohlmorgen and offer him your thoughts and your efforts.

Worship Schedule for March 2009

April 5 Palm Sunday

Ushers: Betty Chenausky and Bernice Martin

Scripture Readings: Mark 11:1-11 Mark 15:15-34

Lay reader: Lois May

Sermon: Earth Day

April 9 Passover Seder Meal *We'll meet at 6:30 pm to celebrate the Jewish Passover much as Jesus and his disciples did before his death. The traditional seder meal is designed to teach children the meaning of the Passover story, and our meal will be very kid- and family-friendly. We'll be having a pot luck meal, which means there will plenty of good food, so come and bring family and friends. If you can bring a main dish or salad, that would be great. But come even if you don't have time to prepare anything*

April 10 Good Friday *The church will be open from 1-3 for quiet meditation and prayer.*

April 12 Easter Sunday with communion

Greeters: Sue Campbell and Mary Williams

Ushers: Nancy Bogar and Sue Casey

Scripture Reading Mark 16:1-8

Lay Reader: Marcie Miller

Sermon: Deleted Scenes with an Alternate Ending

April 19 First Sunday in Easter

Greeters: Rick and Janet Kohlmorgen

Ushers: Marty Ferwerda and Carleen Eicher

Scripture Readings John 20:19-31

Lay reader: Mary Jane Sawyer

Sermon: OMG!

April 26 Second Sunday in Easter

Greeters: Charlie Berry and Phyllis Sesia

Ushers: Marie and David Marr

Scripture Readings Luke 24:36-48

Lay Reader: Lou Thomas

Sermon: Funeral Punch and Finger Sandwiches

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April Birthdays

Day

David Bogar	6
Doug Stather	8
Michael Skowronek	9
Phyllis Ames	11
Michele Cormier	13
Jessica Perry	14
Bernice Ferwerda	15
John O'Day	17
Douglas Popp	19
Martin Ferwerda	24
Anita Phillips	26
Alice Zwart	27
Robert Childs	30

April Anniversaries

Joyce and Larry Kabat April 26

Beginnings – It's Not too late to "begin" (sorry, I couldn't resist !!)

The Beginnings program started on March 26th but it's not too late! Even if you didn't make it to the first session, you're welcome to join us for the next session on Thursday, April 2nd at 5:15 pm in the Meetinghouse. The sessions start at 5:30 but we suggest you arrive a few minutes early. This series of twelve sessions will take you on a spiritual journey with others who are seeking or exploring their faith. The program includes a simple meal, short video and small group discussion. Those church members who attended the sessions last fall experienced a renewed spirituality and had a wonderful time. So, please consider joining us. For more information contact Pastor Jim at 899.2268 or Marcie Miller 899.5419, or speak to anyone on the Membership committee (Susan Casey, Steve Henrikson or Janet Kohlmorgen).

3rd ANNUAL TOWN-WIDE YARD / GARAGE SALE

MAY 2nd, 2009

8AM to 3 PM (RAIN OR SHINE)

FLEA MARKET -- LAWN AREA AT THE RINDGE MEETING HOUSE

YARD / GARAGE SALES -- EVERYWHERE IN RINDGE

FREE maps of Rindge with the location of all Yard / Garage Sales will be available at the Rindge Meeting House, beginning at 7AM.

To be placed on the map or to reserve space, please call: 899-5789

LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON

WHEN: 11:30 SUN., APR. 5

WHO: **COMMITTEE MEMBERS** and EVERYONE interested in joining in the discussion on ways to move the church forward.

April Meetings

Thursday, April 2 @ 5:30 pm Beginnings Session #2: Who is Jesus, and why should I care? *Jesus Christ*

Sunday, April 5 @ 11:30 am – Leadership Luncheon

Tuesday, April 7 @ 7:00 pm – Book discussion at Dave and Marie Marr's home

Thursday, April 9 @ 6:30 pm – Maundy Thursday Seder Meal

Tuesday, April 14 @ 7:00 pm – Trustees

Thursday, April 16 5:30 pm – Beginnings Session #3: Why am I not where I want to be? *Sin and the Cross*

Friday, April 17 @ 8:00 pm – Common Grounds Coffee House featuring Davey O and Nice Ash

Tuesday, April 21 @ 7:00 pm – Rescheduled Council Meeting

Thursday, April 23 @ 5:30 pm – Beginnings Session #4: What happens when I die? *Death and the Resurrection*

Thursday, April 30 @ 5:30 pm – Beginnings Session #5: Can I trust God? *Providence and Suffering*

Deaconer Distribution: Mail, Pick-up or E-mail

We currently distribute the Deaconer in three different ways: by US Mail, in printed format to be picked up at the church and e-mail. Our goal is to provide it to you in the most cost-effective way,. However, we know that many don't or can't use email due to the lack of high speed internet available here in town. In any case, if you would like to receive the Deaconer differently than you do today, please let us know by leaving a note in the Membership Committee's church mailbox or emailing your information to Marcie Miller at QuiltMM@gmail.com.

Membership Database

As you may know, the Membership & Evangelism committee maintains a database of our church family's names, addresses, phone numbers, birthdays, wedding anniversaries and email addresses, which allows us to keep in touch with everyone. To that end, it is important that our data be accurate and up-to-date. So, please let us know if or when your information changes or you notice an omission or inaccuracy. Email updates to Marcie Miller at QuiltMM@gmail.com , or leave a note in the Membership committee's mailbox at church.

Also, did your **email change from Verizon to Fairpoint?** Please notify us of you new email address!

Do you have children at college who have email? Let us know their email and we'll include them on the church email list.

An opportunity is available to place memorial flowers in the church at Easter time. Barbara Wells will be accepting orders for Easter flowers. For your convenience, please use this order form and return it to Barbara, or call her at 899-5460.

- Yes, I would like to order ____ plants to be used in the Sanctuary at Easter time.
- I am enclosing cash/check (\$10.00 per plant). Checks should be made payable to Barbara Wells.
- I will bring/donate a plant.

This plant is given

- in loving memory of:
- in honor of:

Signed: _____
Telephone: _____

- I wish my plant to be DELIVERED to friends and family of our church family.
- I WILL pick up my plant after the Easter service.

Please return this form to:

Barbara Wells P.O. BOX 152 Rindge, NH 03461

Church Council Minutes

March 19, 2009

Present: Mary Jane Sawyer, Marcie Miller, Pastor Jim Melhorn, Janet Goodrich, Sue Campbell, Jane Hannon, Ellen Gadegaard

Leaders Gathering in the Presence of God

Worship/Prayer/Scripture/Sharing:

Jim led us with a reading from Paul's letter to the Ephesians and a prayer.

Old Business:

1. February minutes were approved as presented.
2. Retreat planning:
 3. Fall retreat is being planned
 4. Several sites/venues have been identified and Janet is gathering costs and availability.
 5. Next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, March 29th after church.
6. Cleanup Day ; Deacons – Scheduled for Saturday, March 28th at 9:00 am. Bring buckets and gloves (if desired). All cleaning supplies, rags and light bulbs will be provided. Arrangements have been made to use Steve Henrikson's ladder.
7. “TO DO LIST” – We have decided to create a “giving tree” where each leaf will identify a job, chore or needed item. Each committee is asked to identify supplies or small jobs that need attention. Be sure to consider both inward-focusing as well as community-based needs. Examples may include, purchasing a ream of computer paper, purchase and replacement of light bulbs, volunteering at the food pantry for a month. Mary Jane has agreed to develop the “tree”. Each item will be printed on a leaf and placed on the tree. Once the task is completed, the leaf is placed in the offering plate. We'll figure out the best way to “publish” the receipt of these gifts, but discussed identifying the gifts received in the Deaconer.
8. Safe Church Policy - A list of tasks has been developed based on the requirements of the safe church policy. A six month time frame has been identified to complete the first round of activities including background checks, completion of self-disclosure forms, initial training and reference calls.

Listening for God's Word to the Church

Guided Discussion:

Jim continued our discussion using the polarity model and we discussed Law/grace and easy discipleship/hard discipleship. Lots of discussion ensued.

To further our discussion Jim will distribute a “congregational health inventory” to each committee/council's representative to complete in preparation for our April meeting, where we will tally and discuss the results. Jim will leave a copy of the inventory in each committee's mailbox. He encouraged each one of us to individually complete the survey and to be honest in our evaluations.

We decided to celebrate the many leaders of the church by scheduling a “**Leadership Potluck Luncheon**” on **Sunday, April 5th at 11:30 am**. All committee members are encouraged to attend for a time of celebration and fellowship. Anyone else who may be interested is also welcome to attend. Food will be provided. Each committee member is being called and invited to attend.

The Church Responding in Faith Action Items – New Business – what decisions need to be made?

1. *Committee meeting schedule, chair, recorder, council rep*

- Be sure to identify these roles for your committees and get the info to Janet Goodrich.
 2. *Church Council responsibilities from By-Laws*
- Each council member is asked to review these items.
 3. *Committees to review By Laws for their committee*

Each committee should review their respective duties in the by-laws and determine if changes or updates are needed.

4. *2009 Review of the Constitution: temporary committee*

Mary Jane, and Ellen agreed to work with Jim.

5. *other*

April and May council meetings have been rescheduled due to a conflict with Beginnings. Council meeting dates have been rescheduled to: **Tuesday, April 21** and **Tuesday, May 19**. Janet will notify Lorri to ensure these changes are noted in the Deaconer and on the weekly calendar.

Janet will not be here next meeting – Jeanne Norwood will be asked to chair the meeting.

Leaders Going out to share the Good News

Upcoming plans/events – Ministry groups within the church (not reading minutes)

May Breakfast – May 23rd - we need a coordinator

Yard Sale – May 2nd - Jane will be looking for assistance

Beginnings – Starts Thursday, March 26th

Financial resources/stewardship – how are we doing financially?

We're doing okay, no surprises to date. However, it's going to be a difficult year. Reports are available on the bulleting board.

Closing worship/prayer - Jane ended the meeting with a prayer

Reminder: Deaconer deadline is the 23rd of each month

Next Meeting: **TUESDAY, April 21 (Note change in date)**

Respectfully submitted,

Marcie Miller, acting scribe

Minutes for Annual Meeting: March 1, 2009

Roll call by Margaret Morabito, Church Council Clerk for 2008. Thirty-two were present for roll call, which exceeded the minimum needed for a quorum. Favorite Bible passages were spoken by members. The opening prayer was given by Pastor Jim. The meeting commenced at 11:35am and was called to order by Janet Goodrich, Church Council Moderator for 2008.

There were six articles for consideration and all were approved, as follows:

Article I To hear and act upon all reports of Officers and Committees.

Motion was made to approve; seconded; no discussion . Article I was approved.

Article II To choose all necessary Officers and Committee Members for their delegated teams.

Motion was made to approve; seconded; discussion was led by Jeanne Norwood who thanked everyone for serving and mentioned that they need more Deacons. Article II was approved.

Article III To adopt the budget for the Fiscal Year 2009

Motion was made to approve; seconded; discussion was led by Marcie Miller, who provided an overview of our deficit budget for 2009, which stems from expected increased expenses and less income. Last year, we ended in the black and everyone was thanked for their frugality. Further discussion was made regarding how we will make up the deficit this year. Article III was approved.

Article IV To amend the Trustees section of the By-Laws to read as follows: “The Board shall ~~raise funds~~ **work with Council** to meet the financial needs of the Church and to support its mission.” “The Finance Committee shall ~~provide~~ **work with Council** for raising funds for the support of the operating budget....”

Motion was made to approve; seconded; discussion by Marcie Miller and Burt Goodrich explaining why the wording was changed: to clarify the mission of Trustees and Finance Committee. Article IV was approved.

Article V To adopt the Policy for Maintaining a Safe Church Environment as approved by Council.

Motion was made to approve; seconded; discussion by Janet Goodrich regarding the new Safe Church Policy which has been two years in planning and development. We will have six months to implement the Policy and we will offer training to members over that time. The Council and Pastoral Relations Committee will handle the implementation of the Policy. Article V was approved.

Article VI To act upon any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Sue Campbell presented the “Salt of the Earth Award” to Bernice Martin. Bernice was in attendance and received the award. Congratulations, Bernice! Article VI was approved.

Motion was made to adjourn; seconded; no discussion; approved. The meeting was adjourned at 12:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Morabito, Council Clerk