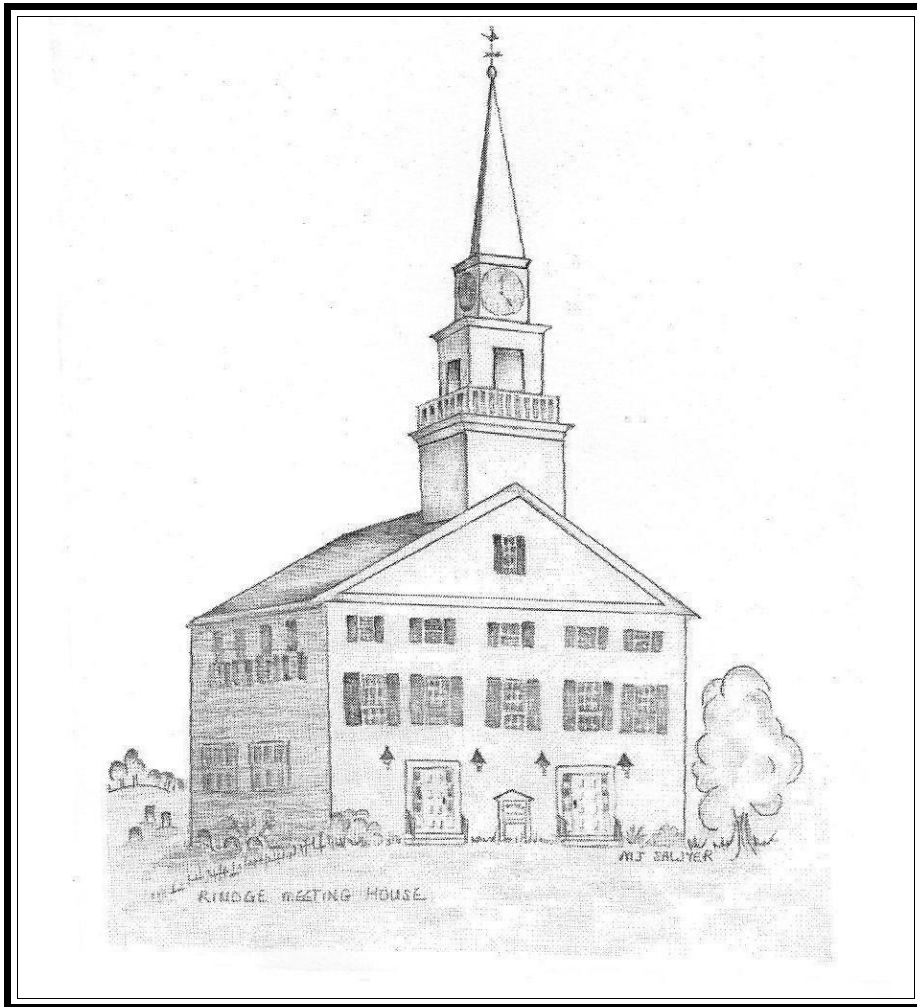


First Congregational Church and Society of Rindge, NH
United Church of Christ

Deaconer - February, 2010



Pastoral Letter: page 2

Worship Schedule: page 3

Announcements: pages 3-7

Council Minutes: 8

Pastoral Letter – From the Desk of Reverend Roger CB Daly

Dear Friends,

For people of faith for whom Jesus is guide, friend and savior, Lent has been traditionally a serious time -- a time of reflective self-examination and of personal spiritual resolution. Each year, Lent gives us a new opportunity to weigh the choices we have made with our lives, to bravely look into the dark corners and shadows to seek both forgiveness and affirmation, to let go of those things that are weighing us down in our life journeys. Consider this metaphor.

On a long hike, it's good now and again to pause; good to catch your breath; check your bearings and your equipment; maybe have a cool drink and a snack. Then, with general assurance, stronger legs and heart, and a freshened awareness of your journey and your surroundings, you move on. This is especially good because the path ahead can become rugged and trying.

Lent is a pause, a time to suspend some of the rigorous activity of our very committed lives, for personal reflection. We can become so focused on what's immediately under, before and around us that we lose a sense of the bigger picture -- of "what it's all about." For us who want to be faithful, it's not so much about getting to some specific destination. It's more about being connected to God and to the people we have been given to love while we're on the way. It's about how and with whom we walk.

The surest movement toward this center of our lives is to reflect on some specific questions. "*Am I using my energy and ability in ways that enable what I love to flourish?*" "*Am I further from or closer to God than when I started?*" "*Do I feel distant from the people I love? and from the hopes with which I began this journey?*" These are hard questions, and the thought of facing them makes us anxious. Our general busyness enables us to avoid them.

The church at worship in Lent invites you to accept the risk of pause and reflection. Its great rewards are: the quiet strength and confidence in the presence of God; partnership in life with Jesus and with the people we love; and a bright and enduring vigor from rest and resolution of purpose. Such "faithful" pause and reflection may lead to decisions for change, sometimes gradual and graceful, sometimes anxious and radical. However, for us not to pause, reflect and change may lead to the possibility of deeper and sustained loss.

Lent, like any pause, has an end. It is the point where we move on again. Lent's end is Easter. It's an end, yet it's also the beginning of the rest of the journey. If we have not paused, or if our movement to the cross has been only a ritual or habit, Easter will be just another day. However, if the pause has been earnest and has brought us once again to what's at the center of our lives, if Jesus has brought us to the cross, Easter will be a day of great and new joy. It will define our faith, and we'll continue our journey with its assurance and delight.

God asks us to follow Jesus to the cross. This is the Lenten journey we may make together. So, let's pause in Lent and, at its end, celebrate the great joy of life at Easter. Then we'll move forward together with freshened faith and resolve.

With affection and a prayer for peace,

Roger Daly, Interim Pastor

LENT 2010



The **Ash Wednesday Contemplative worship** will be a simple, touching way to begin our Lenten journey. On **Palm Sunday** we'll begin "Holy Week" and join our children in the parade that may remind us of the ironic celebration of Jesus' "triumphal" entry into Jerusalem that led him to the cross. On **Maundy Thursday** we will remember the tender moments of foot washings and a last supper shared, the hard and lonely hours in the garden, the betrayal, the trial, and the crucifixion. **Easter morning**, our sad and anxious approach to the tomb will be transformed by the joyful news that life and love have triumphed over death.

Worship in February

- 7th **Celebration of Holy Communion** **Jeanne Norwood, and Janet, Rick and John Kohlmorgen** will share from their recent experience of touring the Holy Land. Ever been on a pilgrimage? Ever went looking for something and "found" something unexpected? This is often the experience of people who have chosen to follow Jesus.
- 14th **Worship led by Reverend Deb Hill**
- 17th **Ash Wednesday Evening Worship** at 7:00pm, a contemplative and poignant worship service of prayer, song, story and ***Holy Communion*** to begin together our Lenten journey.
- 21st **First Sunday of Lent**. Reflection on the Lenten symbol of palm branches. Sermon: "Resisting Lent From the Beginning" from Jonah 1:1-13. We'll look at the creative and persistent hesitation of "the faithful" to follow Jesus toward the cross.
- 28th **Second Sunday of Lent**. Reflection on the Lenten symbol of the money bag. Sermon: "***Unsavory Friends***" John 8:2-11 -- Jesus sought to make a fundamental change in human attitudes that religious people -- his day and ours -- strongly resist. Worship next Sunday will invite us to reflect on how people so often use "the law" to judge other people, to their great detriment.
- March 7th **Celebration of Holy Communion. Third Sunday of Lent** and reflection on the Lenten symbol of the basin and towel. Focus of worship today is formed by the third symbol of Lent -- "A Basin and Towel" -- and Psalm 8 both of which assert the great value of ordinary people to God and the invitation of Jesus to be servants loving one another. Sermon, "***What Are People?***", is also grounded in Philippians 2:1-8.

February Scheduled Ushers, Greeters and Liturgists

February 7

Ushers	Alice Zwart & Penny Chace
Greeter	Joyce Kabat
Liturgist	Tony D'Ambrosio

February 14

Ushers	Maura Keegan& Nancy Bogar
Greeter	Mary Jane Sawyer
Liturgist	Bernice Martin

February 21

Ushers	Linda & John Pickering
Greeters	Bob & Cynthia Childs
Liturgist	Burt Goodrich

February 28

Ushers	Sue Chatwin & Sue Campbell
Greeter	Marcie Miller
Liturgist	Phyllis Groezinger

Please mark your calendars. If you have a problem with a date, please try to change with someone else on the list. If you are unable to make other arrangements, please contact Deacon of the month, **Phyllis Groezinger** and notify the Church Secretary so the Sunday bulletin is correct.

February Birthdays **Date**

Eileen Abbey	1
Kyle O'Day	1
Marsha Washburn	3
Nada Foster	4
Nancy Bogar	8
Laura Shirley	10
Mary Jane Sawyer	13
Julie Popp	14
Burton Goodrich	16
Emily Thomas	17
Ella Dale	18
Jordan Melhorn	21
Jacob Berardi	22
Mary Lu Mathis	22
Jean Benson	23
Robert Popple	23
Helen Unger-Clark	26

No February Wedding Anniversaries

Meetings and Other Scheduled Events

Wed. February 3	Deacons Meeting @ 2:00 pm Nominating Committee @ 4:15 pm
Thurs. February 4	Bible Study @ 9:30 am Choir Practice @ 7:00 pm
Tues. February 9	Trustees Meeting @ 7:00 pm
Wed. February 10	Membership Committee Meeting @ 5:00 pm
Thurs. February 11	Bible Study @ 9:30 am Choir Practice @ 7:00 pm
Sun. February 14	Rev. Deb Hill – guest pastor
Tues. February 16	Church Council Meeting @ 7:00 pm
Wed, February 17	Ash Wednesday Service (tentative) @ 7:00 pm
Thurs. February 18	Bible Study @ 9:30 am Choir Practice @ 7:00 pm
Wed. February 24	Membership Committee Meeting @ 5:30 pm
Thurs. February 28	Bible Study @ 9:30 am Choir Practice @ 7:00 pm

*Note: If your meeting is not listed, it's because you did not tell us. Please email all of your scheduled meetings and events to **Marcie Miller** by the **23rd of each month!** Or, if you do not use e-mail, please leave a written note in the secretary's church mailbox. Thanks. Marcie's email is quiltmm@gmail.com.*

Reminder: Annual Meeting is Scheduled for Sunday, March 7th

Calling all church members and associate members:

We Need You!

Please plan to attend the church's annual meeting on Sunday March 7th directly after church. Everyone is invited, although only members and associate members may vote. We have a number of critical issues to be discussed and approved, including the 2009 annual reports by the various committees and boards, board and committee members for the next twelve months, approval of the 2010 budget and approval of two recommended policies: the computer use policy and the church property use policy. Also, the "Salt of the Earth" award will be presented!!!

Plans are to make the 2009 Annual Reports available at least a week before the meeting, the last Sunday of February.

Deacons Publish Updated usher, Greeter and Liturgist

The Ushers, Greeters and Liturgist List for Feb, 2010 thru Jan. 2011 will be out by the end of January. If you haven't received a copy and would like to join us, let one of the Deacons know so we can include you.

Church Secret Pal Update

First Mary Jane Sawyer and I would like to thank the church members who participated this year. I have heard from several recipients that they have loved receiving their cards and "tell me who my secret pal is?" In the past year, a church member became Secret Pal by sending out a card to a member who was somewhat isolated for one reason or another.

Well now- the year is drawing to a close on Valentine's Day. You may now reveal yourself, or not, to your Secret Pal. Those who have participated will receive communication from us regarding their options.

What now? The Church Secret Pal will continue for another year. You can sign up or not. You will receive a new name. PLEASE JOIN US. We have identified some other church members who we think would enjoy receiving a card from a church secret pal next year.

Please let Mary Jane or me know if you would like to be a Secret Pal. It is very rewarding to both parties involved in this endeavor.

We will start the next year by the end of February.

Sue Campbell

Calling All Readers

Have you found yourself asking the question, "What is really important?" We've all heard the statement "Don't sweat the small stuff." In the end, a lot of things we sweat ARE small stuff. Our next Book Talk choice, THE LAST LECTURE by Randy Pausch, reminds us to pay more attention and evaluate the difference between big and small stuff. This book is humorous, entertaining, moving, engaging, serious, reflective, inspirational - all things that make it an absolute must read.

Join us at Sue Campbell's home on Saint Patrick's Day, Wednesday, March 17 at 7 PM for a lively, thought provoking discussion of a book that gives us permission to dream and have fun while we're at it.

Thanks to our town library, multiple copies of THE LAST LECTURE will be available at coffee hour.

Tax Donations and Documentation

In 2006 the IRS amended the Tax Code to require all individual cash contributions be documented in writing by the recipient. You can no longer rely on your own records except those substantiated by a bank record or a canceled check. Your personally-maintained records are no longer accepted by the IRS when it comes to donations.

In addition you can no longer take a tax deduction for cash or any property contributions of \$250 or more unless you receive a written acknowledgement from the church that meets various requirements.

As you know, the church collectors mail quarterly statements that document your pledge contributions which satisfies the cash contribution aspect of this ruling.

So, what about property or materials donated to the church? In the past few years, substantial donations were made including the paint and ceiling tiles for the Sunday school room, The church treasurer will provide the necessary written acknowledgement on behalf of the church, if you document the dates, costs and have the receipts. Please contact Marcie Miller @ 899-5419 to discuss this further. Even if you make donations of flowers or other materials that total less than the \$250 level but you have the necessary receipts and would like a letter as documentation, let me know.

So, even if you can't take advantage of this benefit this year, be sure to keep those donation receipts for next year's taxes!

Beginnings – The Spiritual Life

The Membership & Evangelism Committee has scheduled the next Beginnings program on Sunday evenings starting on **March 21st** and running **through June 14th** (skipping several Sunday's for Easter, Mother's Day and Memorial Day holidays). Again, the program will be held in the Rindge Town Meetinghouse.

The Spiritual Life is a **10 session**, video-based study of Christian spirituality that introduces and explores spiritual "habits of the heart" and is the perfect follow-up to the *Beginnings: An Introduction to Christian Faith* course previously offered.

The Spiritual Life centers on a series of questions, one per session:

- Where is the Spirit in Spirituality? (*Introduction to the Spiritual Life*)
- How much am I willing to risk? (*The Spiritual Habit of Courage*)
- What is most important to me? (*The Spiritual Habit of Loving*)
- Can I find balance in a whirlwind world? (*The Spiritual Habit of Centering*)
- What do I want to be when I grow up? (*The Spiritual Habit of Simplicity*)
- How do I keep my possessions from possessing me? (*The Spiritual Habit of Giving*)
- How do I get ahead? (*The Spiritual Habit of Serving*)
- Can I go deeper without going under? (*The Spiritual Habit of Trusting*)
- What can I do with my doubts? (*The Spiritual Habit of Questioning*)
- Can a change in me change the world? (*The Spiritual Habit of Engaging*)

Each session begins with a meal, in the meetinghouse. Participants then view a 20 minute video

in which Rob Weber (the same presenter as in the previous series) explores the week's topic through story and Scripture.

If you would be interested in attending or have questions, please speak to one of the members of the committee or Rev. Daly. Current members of the committee include: Susan Casey (899-6161), Steve Henrikson (899-5456), Janet Kohlmorgen (899-2069), Marcie Miller (899-5419).

Church Council Minutes - January 19, 2010

Present: Janet Goodrich, Marcie Miller, Ellen Gadegaard, Jane Hannon, Mary Jane Sawyer, Sue Campbell, Margaret Morabito

Opening prayer by Janet. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Marcie reviewed the financial statements. We were in the black for 2009. She reviewed the 2010 budget planning.

Old Business:

1. Policies and Procedures Notebook: Updates are still being requested.
2. Parsonage: We approved a motion to have an ad hoc committee, including a Trustee, to discuss and explore what to do with the parsonage.
3. Giving Tree: We discussed ideas from the Council for the Giving Tree. Ellen is the contact person on this. Submit suggestions in writing to her.
4. 2010 Budget: We approved a motion to accept the 2010 Budget. See blue handout.

New Business:

1. We voted to approve the addition of two items to the Warrant, including the topics of computers and borrowing church property.
2. Beginnings: They changed the dates. It will be held on Sunday evenings, starting on March 17 and ending on June 7. It will not be held on Easter, Memorial Day, or Mother's Day. They are working on lining up facilitators for the program.

Committee Reports: See written reports posted on bulletin board.

1. Secret Pal Program: Mary Jane discussed plans for 2010. They would like more volunteers.
2. July Country Fair: Start thinking of this now. Plan to contribute a Theme Basket.
3. Prayer Chain: This is almost completed.
4. Lorri: Get well soon. We discussed handling of the Deaconer and Annual Report.
5. LVA will start up again in March.

Closing prayer by Jane.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 16, at 7pm.

In God we trust,
Margaret Morabito, Council Clerk