

# Steeple Talk

First Congregational Church of Littleton  
189 Main Street, Littleton, NH 03561

May 2011

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volume 39, Issue 5



## Pastor's Message



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### Upcoming Events

- ◆ May 8<sup>th</sup> @10:00  
Mother's Day  
Celebration during  
worship
- ◆ May 14<sup>th</sup> @8:00 am  
Men's Breakfast @  
Krill's
- ◆ May 15<sup>th</sup> @11:15  
Special Church  
Meeting in Fellowship  
Hall
- ◆ May 29<sup>th</sup> Food  
Collection Sunday
- ◆ STAY TUNED FOR  
DATE- Annual church  
clean up day

It's Easter. The Season of Easter lasts for eight whole weeks. I'm very excited. The powers of death and darkness have done their worst. Jesus has risen from the grave and moves among his disciples with mysterious power. He is cooking fish for them on a fire by the lakeshore, breaking bread with them at a table by the way, talking with them and calling their names in intimate conversations, appearing to them in rooms that are locked and barred. And the Risen Christ moves among us now with that same mysterious power. He is walking with us, conversing with us, meeting us at table, and appearing in our hearts which are often, way too often, locked and barred.

When I was growing up we celebrated Easter the Day, but as far as I can remember, we didn't pay any attention to Easter the Season. We didn't observe eight whole weeks of Easter. I've enjoyed making the change. Easter is just too big to be contained in one day, just as the gift of life is too big to be contained in the grave, and the love of God is too big to be contained in fearful hearts. I'm glad Easter isn't just a day. I'm glad it's a season. It gives us the chance to explore its many stories, ask important questions about what they mean for us. Most of all it gives us a chance to invite the Risen One to come and take part, not only in the Big Celebration of Easter Sunday, but also in the ordinary moments of our lives.

By celebrating Easter for eight whole weeks, we'll have a chance to

let God's radical newness into our whole lives—our work, our play, our friendships, marriages and families. We'll have a chance to see what happens when God's indestructible love invades our relationships, when the new life that bursts from the empty tomb finds its way into every corner of our daily lives. We'll have a chance to invite the Resurrection into our board and council meetings and see how that witness changes the way we plan and do our business. We'll have a chance to include the Risen One in our ongoing prayers and conversations about the future of our church, to let the bright, impossible mystery of Easter shape and empower our thinking, planning and working together in community. And when we come up against our very real limits of energy, time, money, and commitment, we'll have the chance to break out of our outgrown graves and discover instead what the God of Abundant Life has in mind for our little church.

So I'm very glad Easter is a season. I'm glad we have eight weeks to ponder, to wrestle, to think, plan and work together in the irresistible energy of Life that pours out of the empty tomb of Jesus. We have such amazing and wonderful things to do together now. And what could be better, I ask you, than to begin these exciting and joyful things in the Season of Abundant Life?

blessings,  
*david*

Editor: Alice Muh  
[muhfamily@roadrunner.com](mailto:muhfamily@roadrunner.com)  
Production staff:  
Pat Whipple & Anna Jackman

# First Congregational Church

## May 2011

Office Hours: Mon – Fri. 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Pastor's Office Hours: Tues – Fri 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Music Director's Office Hours: Sun. 8:30 am – 11:30 am Weds. 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 9:00 AM-Adult Bible Study 9:00 AM-Choir Rehearsal  10:00 AM-Sunday Worship / Communion Sunday School  11:15 AM-Fellowship Time	<b>2</b> Pastor's Sabbath  11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	<b>3</b> 10:30 AM-Clergy Meeting Methodist  11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  5:00 PM-Property Meeting  7:00 PM-AI Anon Meeting	<b>4</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  12:00 PM-Store to Door  7:00 PM-Mission Committee  8:00 PM-Weds. Night AA	<b>5</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  7:00 PM-Deacons Meeting	<b>6</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	<b>7</b>      7:30 PM-AA - Fellowship Hall
<b>8</b> 9:00 AM-Adult Bible Study 9:00 AM-Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM-Sunday Worship/Sunday School <b>Mother's Day Celebration</b>  11:15 AM-Coffee Fellowship  7:00 PM-Ballroom Dancing	<b>9</b> Pastor's Sabbath  11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  5:30 PM-SLLC Board  7:00 PM-No. Country Recovery Board	<b>10</b> 10:30 AM-Riverglen Service  11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  5:30 PM-Finance Committee  7:00 PM-AI Anon/Ladies Parlor	<b>11</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  12:00 PM-Store to Door  12:00 PM-Ladies Society @ Oasis  6:30 PM-Choir Rehearsal  8:00 PM-Weds. Night AA	<b>12</b> 7:00 AM-Ladies Ecum. Breakfast  11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  6:30 PM-Christian Ed Meeting	<b>13</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall    5:00 PM-Youth Group Ipswich Mass Overnight	<b>14</b> 8:00 AM-Youth Group Ipswich Mass-leaves  8:00 AM-Men's Breakfast/ Krill's    7:30 PM-AA - Fellowship Hall
<b>15</b> 9:00 AM-Adult Bible Study 9:00 AM-Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM-Sunday Worship/Sunday School 11:15 AM-Coffee Fellowship / <b>SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING</b>  7:00 PM-Ballroom Dancing	<b>16</b> Pastor's Sabbath  11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	<b>17</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  <b>7:00 PM-Council Meeting</b>  7:00 PM-AI Anon/Ladies Parlor	<b>18</b> 10:00 AM-Clergy Group/Ladies Parlor 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 6:30 PM-Choir Rehearsal 8:00 PM-Weds. Night AA	<b>19</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	<b>20</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	<b>21</b> ?8:00 AM-Clean Up Day     7:30 PM-AA - Fellowship Hall
<b>22</b> 9:00 AM-Adult Bible Study 9:00 AM-Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM-Sunday Worship/Sunday School 10:00 AM-Celebration Sunday 11:15 AM-Fellowship Time  7:00 PM-Ballroom Dancing	<b>23</b> Pastor's Sabbath  11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  7:00 PM-No. Country Recovery Board	<b>24</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  7:00 PM-AI Anon/Ladies Parlor	<b>25</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  12:00 PM-Store to Door  6:30 PM-Choir Rehearsal  8:00 PM-Weds. Night AA	<b>26</b> 8:00 AM-Ladies Ecum. Breakfast  11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	<b>27</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	<b>28</b> 7:30 PM-AA - Fellowship Hall
<b>29</b> 9:00 AM-Adult Bible Study 9:00 AM-Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM-Sunday Worship/ <b>FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY!</b> Sunday School 11:15 AM-Fellowship Time 7:00 PM-Ballroom Dancing	<b>30</b> Pastor's Sabbath  MEMORIAL DAY CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED    11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	<b>31</b> 11:30 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall  7:00 PM-AI Anon/Ladies Parlor			<i>Then Jesus told his disciples,            "If anyone would come after me,            let him deny himself            and take up his cross            and follow me."            Mathew 16:24</i>	

## First Things First

Excerpt from Luke 12: 29-32

"And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying . . . Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well."

*Reflection by Anthony B. Robinson*

I was speaking at a conference where teams from a bunch of congregations had gathered. After a while, someone said, "Listen, the question for us is survival. Will our church survive? We don't have many members. No young people. Our pews are emptying out and so is our bank account. We need you to tell us what to do to survive."

I had to respect the pain and the earnestness. I knew the feeling was real, and the anxiety genuine. I said, "I understand, I do. And yet, 'How can we survive?' is the wrong question. And I suspect that worrying it to death isn't helping you."

"Well, what should we do?" said that worried, good man.

"I'd suggest that you ask God to show you God's purpose, God's calling and mission for your church. What is God calling you to do? Call on the Lord to show you that and give you what you need to be about it, and leave the other things to sort themselves out. I suspect it was something like that Jesus had in mind when he said, 'Seek first the Kingdom and these things will be given to you as well.'"

There are so many congregations today worrying and wondering if they will survive. Trust me—better, trust Jesus. It's the wrong question. The right one is **"What's God's purpose for our church today?"** Discover that and go after it with holy love and wild abandon. ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ Nothing else matters.

### Prayer

God, give us the courage to seek your will and way for us. Let your purpose and call so take hold of us that we lose ourselves for your sake, and thus are truly found. Amen.



## New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ Outdoor Ministries presents a summer to remember!

From Heather Flint Davis, Chair of the Outdoor Ministries board:

Greetings to the First Congregational Church!

On behalf of the OMB, I am excited to invite you back to your mountain home this year. The NH Conference is offering a variety of summer youth camping programs at Pine Mountain and Geneva Point. There are adventure camps, family camps (for all ages and all kinds of families), traditional weeks, and of course work weekends, which are especially great for local mission trips. Your church group can even rent the mountain top site for a church retreat, wedding, or special interest event. Brochures are available and you will also want to look at our new website [www.hortoncenter.org](http://www.hortoncenter.org). We have a great video clip posted, and it really captures the essence and energy of our program.


In October over 100 people traveled to Horton Center (some driving more than 9 hours) to attend a celebration of 40 years of organized youth camping at the site. The NH Conference churches should be proud of the investment in youth and the future of our church that this program's longevity and excitement represents. Our youth deserve a safe, fun place to continue their faith journey and relationships with God, each other, and the church. We'd love to see the program grow, and with it see the use of our resources maximized by the churches and people of all ages. This is your program and your mountain home. Outdoor Ministries is excited to welcome you on the mountain this summer.

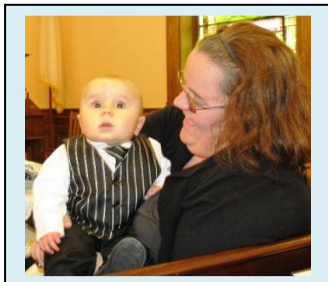
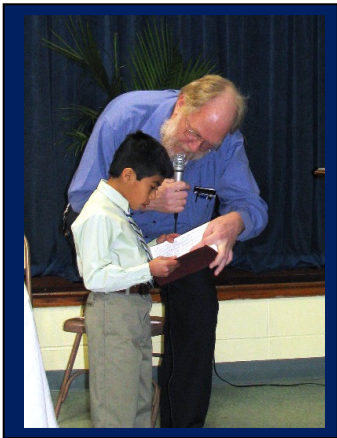
Shalom!

**'See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are..'**

**1 John, 3:1**

## “Classifieds and Notices”

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Summer Music</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Calling all singers, musicians :</p> <p>The music committee is planning summer music and would like to hear from you if you are interested in participating or if you know someone who might be</p> <p>Please call or email Karen Morneau for more information.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Wanted</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday Ushers and Greeters</li> <li>• Coffee Fellowship hosts</li> </ul> <p>Please sign up on board in front of church or call Ginger Miller @ 444-5565. Coffee Fellowship and Greeters are an important ministry and create a more welcoming atmosphere for members and visitors!</p>	<p><i>Elementary Bible school test results(spelling is original):</i></p> <p>⇒ The Egyptians were all drowned in the Dessert. Afterwards Moses went up to Mount Cyanide to get the 10 commandments.</p> <p>⇒ Solomon, one of David’s sons had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.</p> <p>⇒ The greatest miracle in t!he Bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.</p>														
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vacation Bible School</b> <b>June 20-24, 2011</b> <b>Franconia Community Church</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Children from all communities are welcome to participate!</b></p> <p>We are also looking for <u>volunteers</u> to help out for the week, or just a day.</p> <p><b>Here’s a hint of what’s to come:</b> Fun activities are planned around the theme “God and Nature”: tie-dye fun, a trip to Echo Lake, block printing ferns.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For more information call Amy Welsh, at 348-2123</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>JESUS –</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">came into this world before we were living in it;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">He gave His life before we had ever committed a sin.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If He did that much before we were born,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Think of all He desires to bless us with now</p> <p style="text-align: center;">That we are here!</p> <p style="text-align: right;">By Roy Lessin</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Food Collection Sunday - May 29th</b></p> <p>The Food Cupboard suggests the following items: shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hand/bath soap, toilet tissue, baby diapers, coffee, teabags, hot chocolate mix, canned milk. Dry milk, Jell-O puddings &amp; gelatins, soups, canned meat (turkey, chicken, ham, tuna corned beef, Spam). Dry cereals, instant oatmeal, rice mixes, pasta, canned beans, canned vegetables, cake mixes, frostings, crackers. Dog and cat food- canned and dry</p>														
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Coming in May</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ALL CHURCH WORK DAY</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO DO A VARIETY OF CLEAN UP / FIX UP CHORES.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center; color: blue;"><b>Stay tuned for Date and Time</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mission Statement of the First Congregational Church of Littleton</b></p> <p>As followers of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we are called to provide a loving invitation and welcome to all, to inspire and uplift through the worship of God, to reach out to heal and enrich lives through the Holy Spirit, and to nurture people of various stages of their spiritual growth.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>FINANCIAL REPORT</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 60%;">AS OF MAR. 31, 2011</th> <th style="width: 40%;">YTD</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Member support:</b></td> <td>\$ 31,630.12</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Other income:</b></td> <td>\$ 2117.49</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Transfers from Trust Funds</b></td> <td>\$5,068.02</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Income:</b></td> <td>\$ 38,815.63</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Expenses:</b></td> <td>\$43,636.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Net:</b></td> <td>-\$4,820.70</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	AS OF MAR. 31, 2011	YTD	<b>Member support:</b>	\$ 31,630.12	<b>Other income:</b>	\$ 2117.49	<b>Transfers from Trust Funds</b>	\$5,068.02	<b>Total Income:</b>	\$ 38,815.63	<b>Total Expenses:</b>	\$43,636.33	<b>Net:</b>	-\$4,820.70
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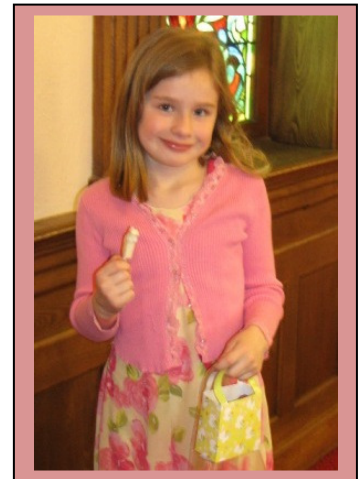
Lent and Holy Week were a very special time this year. Community pastors came together to provide ecumenical Lenten services on Wednesday evenings in each of their churches, enabling attendees to experience a variety of styles of worship.



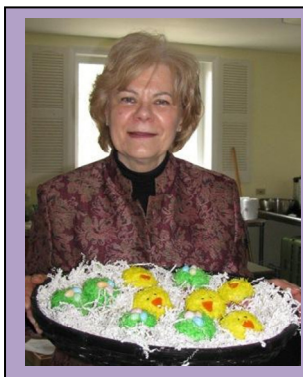
On Maundy Thursday we had a pot luck supper followed by a communion and tenebrae service with Kyle Pospesil receiving his first communion.



On Good Friday, once again the community pastors came together to provide a wonderfully moving service with each taking the role of an eyewitness to Jesus's crucifixion, bringing us right to that moment. The combined voices of the Methodist and First Congregational Churches choirs filled the sanctuary.

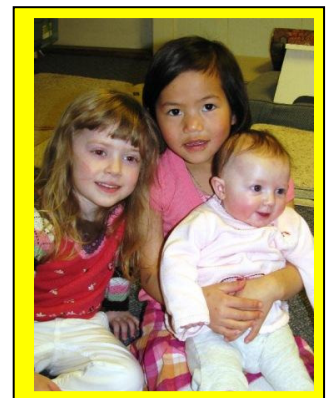


Easter Sunday services were a joyful celebration of Christ's resurrection and the light he brings to the world and our lives. The children enjoyed an egg hunt in the sanctuary after church while the adults enjoyed delicious treats sponsored by the deacons and provided by Glenda Iles.



All these activities took lots of prayerful work and coordination. Thank you, Pastor David, for your inspiring services and thank you to the deacons, who worked with him to make it all come together.

We invite you all to come and continue to celebrate the Easter Season in worship and Sunday School!



## Christian Education News

Our children have been learning the “Easter story” and the gift God sent to us in Jesus. We talked about the palm parade, communion and the last supper, and the meaning of betrayal. Pastor David did a special communion lesson on April 10<sup>th</sup> with Kyle Pospesil and Quentin Eastman ending with Kyle having “First Communion” at Maundy Thursday service, where Kyle read to us from his new Bible. It was a very special moment for our church.

The children had a wonderful time gathering hidden eggs in the sanctuary on Easter. It was a glorious celebration of Jesus resurrection and love for us.

AND.....

We have a very special “COMING EVENT” planned

+++++

**CELEBRATION SUNDAY on May 22, 2011**

Please come and meet ‘women faith heroes and others’ and join us in giving thanks to our students and teachers for all they do and are to the life of our church. Come learn with us.

We give thanks and praise to God for his blessings to us through you.

Faithfully yours,

Christian Education Committee

## Group Cares Christian Youth Ministry

New Hampshire Catholic Charities and Group Cares, a non-denominational Christian Youth ministry based in Colorado, are co-sponsoring a *Group Work Camp* in our area from *June 26<sup>th</sup> to July 2<sup>nd</sup>*. More than 450 youth from across the country will be traveling to Bethlehem NH and will be housed at the High School.

During the week they will be doing home repairs for up to 70 elderly, disabled or very low income home owners. Work will be done during the day, followed by evening rallies build on solid youth ministry in which participants will focus on the faith driven nature of this special experience.

To make this happen, *YOUR* help is needed on many levels. Consider volunteering in one of these areas:

1. Home inspections of applicant families
2. Prepare and serve welcoming dinner
3. Financial assistance to cover cost of building supplies (need \$19,000- Group Cares will match with \$12,000)
4. Identifying homeowners that will benefit
5. Participate in a local steering committee
6. PRAYERS for the success of this ministry.

☑Contact Tony Poekert at [tpoekert@nh-cc.org](mailto:tpoekert@nh-cc.org) for more information.

Visit Group Cares work camp web site at [www.groupworkcamp.com](http://www.groupworkcamp.com)

## Mission Moment



Thank you to all of our members and friends who generously supported the first of four special mission offerings within the United Church of Christ, “One Great Hour of Sharing”, with contributions totaling \$940.00.

Sunday, June 12 marks our church’s participation in the second special mission offering, “Strengthen the Church”. This annual offering helps build our denominational future at the local, conference and national levels by funding new church starts and invigorating existing congregations, nurturing lay and pastoral leadership, building youth and young adult ministries, and by enhancing the UCC’s presence as a community of extravagant welcome.

Special offering envelopes will be placed in the church bulletin on Sunday, June 12 and Sunday, June 19. You may also donate on-line at [www.ucc.org/make-a-gift](http://www.ucc.org/make-a-gift) and click on “Strengthen the Church” under “Find a Fund”.

Contributed by Bob Muh,  
Chair of Missions

## Church Council Meeting Summary

Church Council met on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Devotions were led by Linda Warden. Pastor David shared that Holy Week went well and he received a lot of positive comments. The community enjoyed the Wednesday night Community Lenten Services. He has been visiting with members who have been ill. He is very excited about the deacons' proposal for how to organize our care for the people in our congregation and keep contact with those whose attendance wanes as well as follow up with visitors. Kyle Pospesil and Quentin Eastman prepared for their first communion. Coming up are two baptisms within the next couple months - Trevor Adams and Isabelle Paul.

Phil Krill and Eric Pospesil have been working with Lawton Contractors and E.H. Dansen architects to develop plans for the Phase II access project. Plans were presented to council that include front entry, stairwell, lift, ADA-compliant bathrooms, new tile in the office area hallway, structural renovations, further bracing, modify current flat roof. The original estimate was \$215,000 but the structural engineer determined extra bracing was needed for the existing hallway which will increase the cost by probably another \$20,000. There are sufficient funds in the Capital Campaign account to complete the project, but we still need to fund the audio-visual project as well as the mission component. The council voted to present the plans at a Special Congregational Meeting to be held after Church on May 15<sup>th</sup> with announcements from the pulpit on the previous two Sundays. Phil Krill will make the presentation which will include the plans and how to fund the anticipated overage so that we can still complete the other projects. How that impacts the overall financial situation of the church will be included. Eric Pospesil will put the plans on poster board so that the congregation may look at them during coffee fellowship.

The council has cancelled the Strawberry Festival this year because of the anticipated construction. Also discussed was use of facilities - the Property Committee will take responsibility for the requests. The issue of mid- year vacancies on committees was brought up and there will be further discussion on that.

Committee chairs will be getting, if they don't have them, an Operations Manual with By-Laws. Judy Warden reported that Personnel Committee has updated job descriptions and they will be added to the Operations Manual.

As more requests for assistance are coming to the church, it was clarified that individual requests will be handled by the Deacons through the Deacon's Fund and any community, national, or global assistance requests will be forwarded to Missions.

Elaine Strop reported for the Music Committee that repairs were done to the organ at a cost of \$988.07 which is over their budget, as well as tuning the piano which was \$105. They have decided to take the overage from the Haynes Memorial Fund. There is still some work to be done and they will work with Property Committee on the recommendations.

June 12<sup>th</sup> is the collection for "Strengthen the Church". Bob Muh will be getting more information on this special offering out soon. This is one of five offerings the UCC conference sponsors that we participate in. The others are One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors in Need, the Christmas Fund, and Our Church's Wider Mission. For the past few years we have received the designation as a "5 for 5" church, which means we take offerings for all 5 of the UCC Missions.

The annual financial audit is still underway and should be completed a couple weeks. Also Dudley Bailey has recommended and it was approved to purchase on-line back up for the computer. Financial reports were distributed and are available in the church office.

Next steps were discussed for follow up to the "Thriving Church" book study sessions. The council will be planning a leadership retreat to sift through all the information gathered at the sessions and come up with main themes with which to develop a cohesive plan. This will be discussed in more detail at the next council meeting which will be May 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. Council meetings are open and any interested party may attend.

'This is how we know that we love the children of GOD; by loving GOD and carrying out HIS commands. This is love for GOD: to obey His commands. And His commands are not burdensome.'

1 John 5:2,3

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# STEEPLE TALK

MAY 2011



## Steeple Talk

A newsletter of the  
First Congregational  
Church of Littleton

## Special Church Meeting

Page 8

### Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. W. David Weddington  
Administrative Assistant: Pat Whipple  
Organist & Choir Director: Dottie Morton

### Officers

Moderator: Alice Muh  
Vice Moderator: Tina Peabody  
Treasurer: Marti Faulkner  
Assistant Treasurer: Dudley Bailey  
Financial Secretary: Joyce Krill

### Committee Chairs

Christian Education: Linda Warden & Cheryl Kerr  
Deacons: Ann Craxton & Emily Laflam  
Finance & Stewardship: Dudley Bailey  
Mission: Bob Muh  
Music: Tina Peabody  
Personnel Relations: Judy Warden  
Property Management: Art Hunt  
Trustee of the Trust Funds: Dick Holland

### Shining Lights Learning Center

Board Chair: Suzanne Schott  
Director: Dianah Hale  
Treasurer: Bob Iles

## Announcing a special church meeting

**When:** May 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:15 am

**Where:** Fellowship Hall

**What:** To approve moving forward with the new plans for Capital Campaign Phase II Universal Access to include:

- New street level entry way
- New lift to office and sanctuary levels
- ADA access bathrooms

