

Steeple Talk

First Congregational Church of Littleton
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September 2009

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Pastor's Message



Contents

Pastor's Message	1
September Calendar	2
News of Note	3
"Classifieds"	4
Church Council Report	5
Church news	6-8

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Sept. 9th - 6:00 pm Choir Pot Luck and rehearsal (6:30)
- ◆ Sept. 12th at 8:00 am Men's Breakfast Fellowship at the Mockabee's
- ◆ Sept. 13th - Sunday School Begins and Cake Walk after church
- ◆ Sept. 20th - 11:15 am Special Coffee Hour with Joe Kratman and Taylor Morello
- ◆ Sept. 22nd - 7:00 PM Church Council
- ◆ Oct. 3rd - Harvest Supper & Silent Auction

On most Saturdays I do something a little different. I have a schedule on ham radio with friends around the US. Folks in Texas, Florida, Missouri and often Michigan, California and Canada. We get together at 10:30 am for half an hour to share a bit of our lives and to work together on a mission project in the Congo. These are amateur radio operators broadcasting from their own shortwave radio stations with signals that can be heard around the world. We are part of a group known as DARF/UCAN (Disciples Amateur Radio Fellowship/United Church Amateur Network). For years my home denomination, the Disciples, and our own UCC group have joined together to work in fellowship and mission projects. Already we have established stations in Lesotho (South Africa), Guatemala, and now we are adding over 17 mission radio stations in the Congo. This is an interest of mine for a number of reasons. #1. I was just elected to the board of Darf/Ucan for one. #2. The first stamps in my stamp collection were from a missionary to the Congo and I then started buying them from the Littleton Stamp Company. #3. But most of all it is because of the tragic situation in the Congo, with remote mission stations sometimes days of river travel from the next or the nearest hospital. These stations bring help, comfort, and a sense of Christian love to the hurting people there in that war torn country.

I think it also has something to do with us as we move toward calling a new permanent pastor. What kind of people are we? Are we "mission oriented" or "maintenance oriented"? Are we in the religion business for our own sakes - our own comfort, our own salvation, our own services of funerals, baptisms, weddings? Or are we about our "Father's business" of seeking to share God's Good News of love and forgiveness and caring all around.

Please don't misunderstand; we are about providing love and service to the people within our walls that must be done. But God uses that as a beginning place, a filling station so we have the energy to reach out in love to others as well, whether it is in Littleton, NH or in tragic needs here and abroad.

If we serve only our own needs then as someone once said, we will end up hoping the last person out will turn off the lights. We will die! But, if we let God's spirit fill us, there will be new life and new energy. Take a look at Matthew 5: 43-48. In it Jesus is speaking of his expectations for his people. I pray for you to be filled with that new life and new energy, His Spirit.

Your friend and interim pastor,
Gene

Editor: Alice Muh (muhfamily@roadrunner.com)
Production Staff: Pat Whipple, Anna Jackman

First Congregational Church

September 2009

Office Hours: Mon - Fri 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Dr. Gene's office hours: Mon - Thurs 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Music Director office hours: TBA

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 07:00 PM-AI Anon 07:00 PM-Mission Committee Meeting	2 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 08:00 PM-AA Weds. Night Big Book	3 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-Search Committee	4 8:00 AM-Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	5 7:30 PM-AA - Fellowship
6 10:00 AM-Sunday Worship with Communion	7 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-NA Meeting OFFICE CLOSED LABOR DAY	8 10:30 AM-Riverglen Service 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 05:00 PM-Property Committee 6:30 PM-Deacons Meeting 7:00 PM-AI Anon	9 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Ladies Society 12:00 PM-Store to Door 6:00 PM-Christian Ed Meeting 6:00 Choir Potluck 6:30 PM-Choir Rehearsal 8:00 PM-AA Weds. Night Big Book	10 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	11 8:00 AM-Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	12 8:00 AM Men's Fellowship Breakfast at the Mockabee's 7:30 PM-AA - Fellowship
13 9:15 AM-Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM-Rally Day 10:00 AM-Sunday Worship with Baptism & teacher dedication 11:15 AM-Cake Walk and coffee fellowship	14 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 5:00 PM-SLLC Board 5:30 PM-Finance Meeting 7:00 PM-NA Meeting	15 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-AI Anon	16 10:00 AM-Clergy 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 6:30 PM-Choir Rehearsal 8:00 PM-AA Weds. Night Big Book	17 8:00 AM-Gene at Conference 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-Search Committee	18 8:00 AM-Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 5:30 PM-North Country Assoc Franconia - potluck	19 7:30 PM-AA - Fellowship
20 9:15 AM-Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM-Sunday Worship 10:00 AM-Sunday School 11:15 Coffee fellowship with Joe Kratman and Taylor Morello trip presentation	21 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-NA Meeting	22 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-AI Anon 7:00 PM Council Meeting	23 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 2:00 PM-Store to Door 6:30 PM-Choir Rehearsal 8:00 PM-AA Weds. Night Big Book	24 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall GET YOUR SILENT AUCTION ITEM IN!	25 8:00 AM-Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	26 7:30 PM-AA - Fellowship
27 9:15 AM-Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM-Sunday Worship 10:00 AM-Sunday School 10:00 AM- Food Collection 11:15 AM Coffee fellowship 11:15 AM Music Committee Meeting	28 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-NA Meeting	29 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-AI Anon	30 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal 8:00 PM-AA Weds. Night Big Book	October 1 	October 2	October 3 HARVEST SUPPER and SILENT AUCTION

News of Note

SHARING THE JOURNEY: Please plan to attend a very special coffee hour on September 20th. Joe Kratman and Taylor Morrello were "People to People" Ambassadors this summer and will share their experience with us.

CONGRATULATIONS to Elissa Pollak who was accepted to Oregon State University for veterinary medicine. Pray for safe travels for her and her mother, Elaine, as they travel across the country to her new school.

Food for Thought



Here is a fun family activity for when the weather cools off. Get out your Bibles to find out what the ingredients are.

Biblical Cake

From the 200th Anniversary Cookbook
Submitted by Poppy Clark

Ingredients:

- A. 1 c. Judges 5:25 (last clause)
- B. 2 c. Jeremiah 6:20
- C. 2 tsp 1 Samuel 14:25 (last clause)
- D. 6 Jeremiah 17:11
- E. ½ c. Judges 4:19 (last clause)
- F. 4 ½ c. 1 Kings 4:22 (to taste)
- G. 2 heaping tsp. Amos 4:5
- H. 1 c. 1 Samuel 30:12 (second phrase)
- I. 1 c. Nahum 3:12
- J. 2 Chronicles 9:9 (second phrase: recommended are:
¼ tsp. mace, ¼ tsp. nutmeg, 1 ½ tsp. cinnamon, ¼ tsp.
ground cloves)
- K. 1 c. Numbers 17:8 or Song of Solomon 6:11

Directions:

Cream together A, B, and C. Beat D until frothy. Add E to D, then combine with the creamed mixture and beat thoroughly. The first part of F is sifted together with G, then the rest of F is added. This is mixed with the first ingredients. H and I are chopped and floured before adding. Add J last. Pour into a Jeremiah 52:19 and put into a Leviticus 26:26. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. While waiting for the cake to cook, reflect on the relevance of the Bible in our daily lives.

A good frosting for this cake is a creamy nut frosting.



** key to ingredients may be found elsewhere in this issue

Announcing the 30th Annual Harvest Supper and Silent Auction on October 3rd, 2009

The Harvest Supper and Silent Auction are coming right up. Saturday, October 3rd will mark our 30th Harvest Supper. The Silent Auction has been an important part of this for more than 10 years. Chairing the Harvest Supper will be Bob and Alice Muh and Alex and Janet Foryan. The Silent Auction is being chaired by Emily LaFlam and Marlene Baker. Helpers are needed for the dinner and donations needed for the auction.

Silent Auction items can be goods or services such as crafts, lawn or yard care, babysitting, car washing, gift certificates, homemade goodies, gift baskets, professional services, etc. Donation slips for the silent auction will be available soon. Please see or call Emily or Marlene for more information.

To sign up to help at the Harvest Supper or provide pies and rolls, please call Bob or Alice Muh. A sign-up sheet will be placed in the sanctuary and at coffee hour soon.

Remember that the key to the success of these events is your participation! Don't forget to come and eat....and bring some friends!



“Classifieds and Notices”

FOOD! FUN! SERVICE!

Save October 3rd for the annual Silent Auction and Harvest Supper. Helpers and donations are needed for both. Contact Marlene Baker or Emily LaFlam for the Silent Auction and Bob or Alice Muh for the Harvest Supper.

Wanted:

People to provide coffee fellowship and to be ushers and greeters and lectors for the Fall.



Call the church office if you can volunteer.

Neighbors in Need special offering will take place on October 4th

Through the Neighbors in Need offering, the church expresses a common commitment to justice and compassion throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. The offering supports grass roots and community projects. You can go on line at <http://www.ucc.org/nin/faq.html> to find out more about Neighbors in Need.

CALENDARS FOR SALE

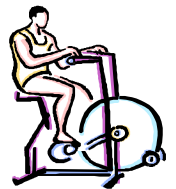
The Music Committee is selling calendars for the 2010 year complete with daily devotions. This is a fundraiser to obtain some new music. These make great Christmas gifts!

Food Cupboard Collection is the last Sunday of each month.

Suggested items include:
shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hand/bath soap, toilet tissue, disposable diapers, coffee, tea bags, hot chocolate mix, canned milk, dry milk, Jell-O mixes, soup, peanut butter mayonnaise, canned meat: turkey, ham, chicken, tuna, corned beef, Spam. Dry cereals, instant oatmeal, rice, canned fruits, vegetables, beans. Cake mixes, frosting, crackers. Pet food also accepted. Money for gift cards to purchase perishable items such as milk, eggs, and bread.

Free to a good home

Exercise bike in good condition
Please call Bev Nute at 444-5520 for details.



Financial Report

AS OF JULY 31, 2009

Pledge Income: \$78,036.50

Fund Raisers: \$1532.72

Other income: \$6826.85

Transf. from Trust Funds:
\$11,825.38

Total Income: \$98,221.38

Total Expenses: \$99,316.16

Net: - \$1094.78

Foyers Dinner Small groups

If you are interested in this wonderful opportunity to meet over a simple meal with a small group to get to know your fellow parishioners, please call Dottie Bailey for more information.

SING! SING! SING!

Love to sing? Come and join the choir! No special training required! You are invited to join the choir for a pot luck supper followed by rehearsal on Sept. 9th at the church at 6:00 PM for the pot luck and 6:30 PM for rehearsal.

Church Council Report

The Church Council met on September 24th and was led in devotions by Roger Petit.

Dr. Gene reported on upcoming baptisms and weddings. Youth group will start this fall with our church hosting the first 3 months of events. The planning meeting to firm up the events is happening this week. Youth will receive information via as many media outlets as possible. The website contract has been renewed and improvements have been added. There was a glitch in getting the sermons on, but this is now fixed. Sunday attendance through the summer has varied from 36-80 with very few children attending. He has therefore eliminated the children's time until the start of Sunday School. Men's breakfast fellowship will resume in September with the first meeting being hosted by the Mockabees. Gene is working on a 'bring a friend Sunday' and possible confirmation class.

Ann Craxton reported for the Search Committee. They are very pleased with the response from the congregation to the surveys and feel

they have a very representative sample. They will be working on completing the profile in the next two months. See also the Search Committee report page 6.

The Music Committee is pleased to announce their calendar sale starting in September and hope to raise enough money for some new music. They are also working on a potential organ concert in October that will include information on the refurbished organ.

The choir room is painted (with many extra thanks to Rich Reeve) and will be soon decorated with pictures and perhaps a mural. Karen Morneau will be taking over the chairmanship of the committee.

Christian Education reports that Rally Day is September 13th and they have lots of fun activities planned. Gene will also include a teacher dedication in the service. Shining Lights staff and children will be invited to attend. Sunday School classes will run every Sunday from September 13th until the second week in June.

A special thanks was given to the Property Committee for fixing the steps to the Ladies' Parlor. This has saved the church a lot of money.

All other committees submitted written reports.

The final tally for the Strawberry Festival fundraising dinner was over \$1000.00. Thanks to all who participated. Council plans to sponsor this dinner again next year.

The Harvest Supper and the Silent Auction will be the next large fundraiser and need everyone's participation (see also pg. 3).

The 2010 budget was discussed but not completed. Some information is still outstanding.

The Stewardship Committee was announced. Thanks to Dick Holland, Lars Nielson, and Dudley Bailey for agreeing to head this up.

Nominating committee will start gearing up. There will be 14 vacancies to fill.

Next council meeting is September 22 at 7:00 PM

Stewardship Message - Not Exactly 'Twitter'



Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns ... And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. (Matthew 6:26a,28-29 from Matthew 6: 25-34)

Anyone who now or ever has lived with a teenager recognizes the central fallacy of Jesus' argument. Flowers are beautiful, but they wear the same outfit every day! ... Retirement savings are a kind of "gathering into barns." Isn't it socially responsible, even if last year was a financial "barn burner?" ... It's fine to critique contemporary time-poverty, but, in a season of record unemployment, cruel to offer people laid-off sowing and spinning this twisted paraphrase: "Do not worry about tomorrow. Put today's worries on your credit card."

We have a love-hate relationship with Jesus' classic teaching found in both Matthew and Luke. It challenges common sense, responsible planning and even church stewardship. We hope it has nothing to do with our relationship to money, but is a gentle nudge to enjoy the summer weather, recognize how precious and brief time is with our children, and free ourselves of the hamster cage of worry. But Jesus is addressing our resource-attitudes. Every day we make choices about money, possessions, security ... and giving.

Today-living is the secret to giving, open-handed giving. Future-thinking easily becomes fist-thinking. In fact, nobody is *happier* giving than the person headed for a job interview, one with a shrunken 401K, a church community whose endowment is *en-down-ment*. Today-giving replaces *stress* with *bless*. As long as we can bless one other person, we have the perspective to recognize that God's tomorrow is another priceless today, what Jesus called God's realm. An old hymn sings across all our twitter, all our worry, "God's eye is on the sparrow and I know God watches me."



Search Committee Report

The Pastoral Search Committee is now meeting at least 2 hours a night twice a month in an effort to get our church's profile ready for review by the New Hampshire UCC Conference office and our church council in October. Because the congregation did a superb job of returning survey forms we have been able to make good progress. Thank you for your faithfulness in filling out all the forms and attending listening sessions at church and in homes.

There was remarkable consistency in the leadership expectations people want for our next pastor. We are limited to 12 qualities. Survey results show FCC Littleton wants a person who...

- is an effective preacher/speaker
- helps people develop their spiritual life
- is effective in planning and leading worship
- is a helpful counselor
- makes pastoral calls on people in hospitals and nursing homes and those confined to their homes
- has a strong commitment to the educational ministry of the church
- works regularly at bringing new members into the church
- is active in ecumenical relationships and encourages the church to participate
- is a person of faith
- encourages people to relate their faith to their daily lives
- is mature and emotionally secure
- deals effectively with conflict

It is easy to fill out the profile when the congregation agrees. It is tougher when we have a huge range of opinions and little unanimity. We are continuing to pray our way through the process and continue to request your prayers as we move forward.

Ann Craxton, Chair

Ladies' Society

The regular meeting of the LADIES' SOCIETY will be held on Wednesday, September 9, at 1:30 pm in the Ladies' Parlor. Come as a visitor, come as a member. All are welcome. We will unveil our plans for the fall and winter and review our accomplishments during our 160 years existence.

Long time members (40 years), Mil Spillane and Ginger Miller, were welcomed at a recent church service.

Thanks to Christina Wintturi, our church website includes the Ladies' Society activities. Check it out!

Think Green

Did You Know?

"Manufacturing and molding a ONE-LITER plastic bottle for water requires 1 kWh of energy - the equivalent of running a vacuum cleaner for an hour."

Submitted by Barbara Holland

Mission Moment

Habitat for Humanity

We received a thank you note from the Habitat for Humanity thanking our church for the donation of \$400.00 from the Chili Cook-Off. This is an update from them.

We have made a great deal of progress during our last few workdays. The exterior walls have been framed and sheathed, with cutouts for doors and windows. Temporary electricity has been connected and the interior framing with the top plate is in place. We have also been making progress on many smaller tasks - blocking for sheet rock, porch, shed, seeding the banks, etc, etc, etc. Saturday, August 8th was a big day - we put up all the trusses and were able to sheath half of the roof. The house is really starting to look like a house.

We realize that there are many "support jobs" that are equally important in getting a Habitat house built. Construction of this first house seems to have taken on a momentum of its own. However, if we are to meet our goal of building another house next year we need volunteers to help with publicity, fundraising, and other non-building activities. Please get involved. We need additional people to serve on many committees.

If you open this new link you should be able to see pictures of our progress - I will be making periodic updates.

<http://ammonoosucregionhabitat.shutterfly.com/>
Chuck McLure - profile1@worldpath.net 603-788-2645



Christian Education

RALLY DAY is September 13th and is the first day of Sunday School. We are planning a very special TREASURE HUNT for all grades.....Kids won't want to miss it. We will also be having our mission fundraiser CAKE WALK after church during coffee fellowship. Don't miss this opportunity to bring home a yummy dessert!

We would love some of our "bakers" to make us a cake for this event. If you can donate a cake, please call Cheryl Kerr or leave a message with Pat Whipple. We will also have a sign-up sheet in church.

Our curriculum this year is the "Whole People of God" for all grades. We are very excited to begin our 2009-2010 journey using this new curriculum. We are very much in need of a teacher's assistant for preschool to help Pam Adams and a teacher for grades 6 to 8 and we need assistant teachers/substitutes for all grades to help when teachers are out. If you can help occasionally or regularly, WE NEED YOU, please call Linda Warden or leave a message with Pat.

We also have very exciting news. We are in the process of getting an Ecumenical Youth Group together. A planning meeting will be held August 27th at the Methodist Office at 5:00 pm and you are welcome to join us.

Our dreams are big, the journey will be awesome, come join us in the walk.

Faithfully yours,
Su Schott, Cindy Sparks, Mary Hodgdon, Cheryl Kerr, Linda Warden

IMMEDIATE NEEDS:

We are in immediate need of two teachers for our 2009-2010 school year. Two of our teachers have made the very difficult and heart wrenching decision to resign. Both hope to come back at a later date but for personal reasons are unable to make the comment for this year. WE REALLY NEED YOUR HELP.

If you can help **BIG** or **SMALL**, please call Linda Warden at



****Key to Biblical Cake Ingredients**

A= butter	G=baking powder
B=sugar	H=raisins or figs
C=honey	I=water
D=eggs	J=spices
E=milk	K=almonds or nuts
F=flour	

Jeremiah 52:19=pan- angel food size
Leviticus 26:26=oven

Shining Lights

Shining Lights Learning Center is entering its fourth year with full enrollment. We will be starting out with larger classes than we have for the past three years and there is a waiting list. Director Dianah Hale has redone the employee handbook and the parent handbook as well as bringing the school in compliance with the new state standards. The board is so thankful for her faithful leadership.

The play yard was spruced up with help from the teachers, board, and parents with new bark mulch, a riding track, and toys cleaned.

Financially, the learning center has a balanced budget and some savings put away for contingencies. We should soon be able to offer more in the way of benefits to our dedicated full time staff.

Thanks to all who continually pray for our center that we might continue to help little children and their families grow in the love of the Lord.



Music Committee

The choir room, freshly painted, looks marvelous thanks to the Music Committee and especially Rich Reeves. Please make sure to thank these folks for their time and efforts.

The Music Committee announces that they will be selling calendars with spiritual verses in September. This is a fundraiser to buy new music as well as provide a new kind of daily devotional.

Choir rehearsals will be starting September and are normally every Wednesday at 6:30 PM. We will kick off the season on September 9th at 6:00 PM with a pot luck dinner followed by rehearsal at 6:30 PM.

All who love to sing are invited to join.

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Non-Profit Organization
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Littleton, NH
Permit No. 20

www.1stconglittleton.org

STEEPLE TALK

SEPTEMBER 2009

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A newsletter of the
First Congregational
Church of Littleton



Church Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. M. Eugene Mockabee
Administrative Assistant: Pat Whipple
Organist & Music Director: Dottie Morton

Officers

Moderator: Phil Krill
Vice Moderator: Alice Muh
Treasurer: Mary Menzies
Assistant Treasurer: Marti Faulkner
Financial Secretary: Joyce Krill

Committee Chairs

Christian Education: Linda Warden
and Cheryl Kerr
Deacons: Roger Petit
Finance & Stewardship: Marti Faulkner
Trustee of the Trust Funds: Dick Holland
Mission: Lars Nielson
Music: Karen Morneau
Personnel Relations: Judy Warden
Property Management: Arthur Hunt
Clerk: Rachel Clark

Shining Lights Learning Center

Board Chairperson: Suzanne Schott

Sunday School Happenings

Page 8

Come join the circle !
September 13th
Rally Day
Teacher Dedication
Sunday School Resumes
Treasure Hunt for all ages
Cake Walk