

Steeple Talk

First Congregational Church of Littleton
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Summer 2009

volume 37, Issue 7



Pastoral Message



Contents

Pastoral Message	1
July Calendar	2
August Calendar	3
Church news	4-6
Search Committee Survey	7
Church Missions	8

A Prayer for Today

May today there be peace within.

May you trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith in yourself and others.

May you use the gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content with yourself just the way you are.

Let this knowledge settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us. Amen

I once heard of a search committee looking for their ideal pastor. On the internet I found this description. Does this reflect our longing?

The perfect pastor preaches exactly 10 minutes. He/she condemns sin roundly but never hurts anyone's feelings. He/she works from 8am until midnight and is also the church janitor. The perfect pastor makes \$40 a week, wears good clothes, drives a good car, buys good books, and donates \$30 a week to the church. He/she is 29 years old and has 40 years experience. Above all, he/she is handsome/lovely. The perfect pastor has a burning desire to work with teenagers, and he/she spends most of his/her time with the senior citizens. He/she smiles all the time with a straight face because he/she has a sense of humor that keeps him/her seriously dedicated to his/her church. He/she makes 15 home visits a day and is always in his/her office to be handy when needed. The perfect pastor always has time for church council and all of its committees. He/she never misses the meeting of any church organization and is always busy evangelizing the unchurched.

Now that would be a PERFECT pastor. Unfortunately there are no "perfect" pastors only imperfect ones. But then we aren't perfect people either, are we. But thanks be to the Lord, we are loved even while we are yet sinners. (Romans 5:8)

God may not find us a "perfect" pastor but will find us the "right" one. Your search committee is hard at work on this task. Help them by your attendance at one of the meetings you will be invited to participate in.

On another matter, I need your help with letting me know when someone is in the hospital. There is no chaplain at the hospital now and so, with all the privacy rules, we will not be informed if you or a friend are admitted to the hospital. Don't worry that others may have already called. I would much rather get 7 calls about someone than to never know.

I pray that your summer is going well. It's a good opportunity to bring visitors to church with you.

Your friend and interim pastor,
Gene

First Congregational Church

July 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 12:00 PM-Store to Door 08:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH	2 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	3 OFFICE CLOSED 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	4 07:30 PM AA in Fellowship Hall
5 10:00 AM- Worship with Communion <i>Soloist –</i> Ralph Aldrich	6 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	7 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 06:00 PM- Deacons Meeting at Mockabee's with spouses 07:00 PM- Missions 07:00 PM AI Anon/Ladies Parlor	8 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 08:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH	9 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	10 08:00 AM-Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall	11 07:30 PM AA in Fellowship Hall
12 10:00 AM-Worship <i>Soloist-</i> Lori Jo Gardner	13 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 05:30 PM-Finance Meeting 05:30 PM-SLLC Board	14 10:30 AM- Riverglen Service 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 07:00 PM AI Anon/Ladies Parlor	15 10:00 AM-Clergy 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 08:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH	16 08:00 AM-Gené at Conference 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	17 08:00 AM-Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	18 07:30 PM AA in Fellowship Hall
19 10:00 AM-Worship <i>Soloist-</i> Jesse & Samuel Lavigne	20 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 07:00 PM-Search Committee	21 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 07:00 PM AI Anon/Ladies Parlor	22 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 08:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH	23 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	24 08:00 AM-Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM AA - Fellowship Hall	25 07:30 PM AA in Fellowship Hall
26 10:00 AM-Worship with Food Collection <i>Soloist-</i> Dorothea Ruggles	27 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall Dr. Gene on vacation	28 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 07:00 PM AI Anon/Ladies Parlor Dr. Gene on vacation	29 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 08:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH Dr. Gene on vacation	30 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 07:00 PM-Search Committee Dr. Gene on vacation	31 08:00 AM-Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM-AA - Fellowship Hall Dr. Gene on vacation	

First Congregational Church

August 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 7:30 PM AA in Fellowship Dr. Gene on Vacation
2 10:00 AM-Worship and communion with the Craxton's <i>Soloist:</i> Chris Cote Dr. Gene on Vacation	3 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall Dr. Gene on Vacation	4 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 06:00 PM-Deacons Meeting 7:00 PM AI Anon/Ladies Parlor 7:00 PM Missions	5 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 8:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH	6 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-Search Committee	7 Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	8 7:30 PM AA in Fellowship
9 10:00 AM-Worship <i>Soloist:</i> Mary Beth & Grace Cote, Charles Micciche, pianist	10 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 5:30 PM-Finance Meeting 5:30 PM-SLLC Board	11 10:30 AM-Riverglen Service 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 5:00 PM-Property Committee 7:00 PM AI Anon Ladies Parlor	12 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 7:00 PM CEd 8:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH	13 11:00 AM-AA Fellowship Hall	14 Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 4:00 PM-Campbell Wedding Rehearsal	15 2:00 PM-Campbell Wedding 7:30 PM AA in Fellowship
16 10:00 AM-Worship <i>Soloist:</i> Mary Menzies	17 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	18 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-AI Anon Ladies Parlor	19 10:00 AM-Clergy Ladies Parlor 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 8:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH	20 08:00 AM-Gene at Conference 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-Search Committee	21 Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	22 7:30 PM AA in Fellowship
23 10:00 AM-Worship <i>Soloist:</i> Fran Day	24 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Council Meeting	25 11:00 AM AA - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM-AI Anon Ladies Parlor	26 11:00 AM AA - Fellowship Hall 12:00 PM-Store to Door 8:00 PM AA Weds. Night Big Book/FH	27 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall	28 Pastor's Sabbath 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall Dr. Gene Chaplain on-call at the hospital	29 07:30 PM AA in Fellowship Dr. Gene Chaplain on-call at the hospital
30 10:00 AM-Worship with Food Collection <i>Soloist:</i> Lolita Ball Dr. Gene Chaplain on-call at the hospital	31 11:00 AM AA Fellowship Hall Dr. Gene Chaplain on-call at the hospital			<i>Save the Date</i>	<i>Harvest Supper and Silent Auction</i>	October 3, 2009

News of Note

FROM JOSEPH KRATMAN

There are a few people I would like to thank for helping me with fundraisers for my trip to Europe this summer. First I would like to thank Pastor Gene for all of his help in lending me and my family the church hall for the spaghetti supper that raised a ton of money. Secondly, I would like to thank the Ladies' Society for all of their donations towards the supper and my other various fundraisers. And lastly I would like to thank the entire church family and friends for their generous donations and prayers to help me with the funding.
Joe Kratman

CALLING ALL FORMER EMMA MERRILL GUILD MEMBERS

In an attempt to piece together a collage depicting the 86 years of the Emma Merrill Guild, I am searching for any related photos, news clippings, programs, etc. I have compiled a list of members (all 215) but am missing the 20 yrs. period from 1979 to 1999. If anyone has programs during these years I would be indebted if I could glance at them. I will photocopy anything you give me and return the originals. If you don't have any programs but can remember the names of the members during the missing 20 yr. period, that will also be a huge help. Just give me a call.

Marlene Baker 869-2001

FAREWELL TO LOCAL CHAPLAIN

The recent dismissal of Reverend Mark Heinrichs as the chaplain in the Pastoral Care Department of Littleton Regional Hospital and the elimination of the position of chaplain brings sadness to many in the communities served by the hospital. Reverend Heinrichs' work, services and personal attention was professionally and lovingly offered to patients and to all who serve the sick and suffering. He truly enhanced the efforts of medical and social service personnel to bring healing to those being treated over the last ten years in our community hospital. For serving us so well from 1999 to 2009, we offer him our thanks.

Help Wanted:

Volunteers are needed now to serve in the following areas: Stewardship Committee, Nominating Committee, Silent Auction, Harvest Supper, Mission Committee, Deacons, Christian Ed, Music Committee, and Finance Committee. Please call Alice Muh (444-5228) or Phil Krill (823-5404).



Strawberry festival

Strawberry Festival served over 100 people with more than 15 supper dishes to choose from as well as strawberry shortcakes, strawberries with ice cream or angel food cake, and chocolate dipped strawberries. Six people picked 75 pounds of strawberries. Many, many folks helped in advertising, setting up, serving, cleaning up, cooking casseroles, shortcakes, and angel food cakes. Thanks to everyone's hard work, \$946.00 was raised.



Committee Updates from Church Council

Pastor's Report

There were two baptisms and one confirmation this month. Dr Gene continues to attend Interim Ministry Group at the NH Conference. He attended National Interim Ministry Network conference beginning of June. He also continues with work on the Ecumenical Youth Group formation with Methodist and Episcopal churches. He is working with the local pastors in a reformulation of the Pastoral Care program at Littleton Regional Hospital since the chaplain position there was eliminated. Individuals are being encouraged to express their feelings about it. Gene will be participating in being the chaplain on call.

Dr. Gene has made web site changes so that a slide show and audio sermons can be added. He has initiated the collection of aluminum as a fundraiser for the youth group that could possibly bring in \$150- \$200 a year. The video projector is now in use and we have an opportunity to get creative with its use, for example: slide shows at events, announcements on Sunday mornings, etc.. Gene and Sonnie will be taking a vacation July 27th to Aug. 3rd. This brings him up to his one year anniversary!

Capital campaign

As of May 30th the balance of CC fund is \$175,110.03 (plus what is in the 'kitchen fund'). Still left to do in Phase 1 is finish the organ repairs, carpet the vestibule, audio-visual updates, mission (other than the \$10,000 to Shining Lights). The Capital Campaign is due to be finished Jan. 1, 2010. Council members have agreed that a celebration during worship or coffee hour would be most appropriate. Council discussed offering the opportunity to keep the campaign open to raise the additional funds needed for the Phase 2 accessibility project. Universal access has been coming up as an issue on the surveys that have been collected to date and will be an issue for future growth of the church. Grant funding to help with the project is still a possibility.



Our newest members



Financial Report As of June 30, 2009	
Pledge Income:	\$68,434.17
Fund Raisers:	\$1,462.72
Other income:	\$9,903.34
Transf. from Trust Funds:	\$ 10,136.04
Total Income:	\$89,936.27
Total Expenses:	\$89,030.00
Net:	\$906.27
Capital Campaign Contributions:	\$20,245.00

Finance Committee

Year to date as of the end of May, we are at 51% of budget for pledges and trackable offerings. Loose offerings are at \$2,000. Total income including withdrawal from trust funds is \$73,901 (total budget income expected 168,122). Year to date expenses are \$73,820.39 (total budget expected expenses \$181,447). Net operating as of the end of April is + \$81.23. The auditor's final report for the 2008 year was received and she found the books to be in good order.

Trust funds

All endowed accounts have been identified and been restored to their designated levels. Funds available for use have been identified. Any income made on these accounts will be moved to unrestricted general expense funds. The account labeled 'kitchen fund' will be deleted and any funds there moved to Capital Campaign Phase 1 fund as the kitchen project has been completed those monies have been spent. African mission funds will be maintained for future use as designated. See report below or you may see the detailed trust fund report in the church office.

Trust fund reports from Dick Holland, Trustee of the Trust Funds.

FCC Capital Campaign Trust Fund Activity Summary Report January 1 to June 30, 2009

Description	Date	Amounts Received		Amounts Paid	Line Total	Current Balance
		Church	Wachovia			
Beginning Balance	12/31/08		168,775.47			168,775.47
6 Mo. Activity as of	6/30/09	14,636.00	8,235.85	(19,728.65)	3,143.20	171,918.67

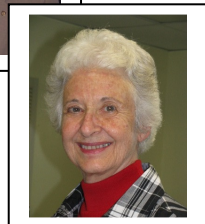
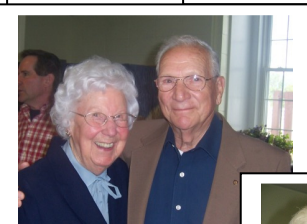
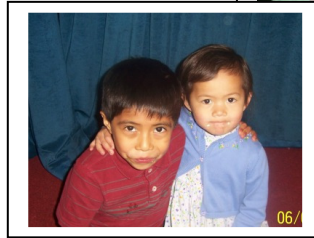
FCC General Trust Funds Activity Summary Report January 1 to June 30, 2009

		Wachovia	Sched. W/D	Dep.(Wdrl)	New Balance	Profit/Loss	Current Balance
Beginning Balance	12/31/08	323,570.65					
6 Mo. Activity as of	6/30/09		(10,136.04)	(10,039.40)	303,395.21	(22,390.85)	281,004.36

Committee Reports from Church Council

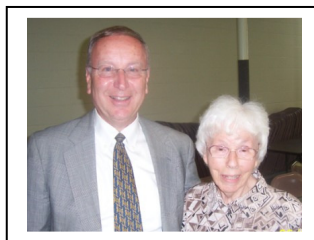
Christian Ed

Christian Ed. and the Sunday school teachers will be meeting this summer to set bench marks, choose and order the curriculum, and discuss the formation of youth group. Childrens' Sunday was awesome and special thanks to all who supported the program. It was nice to see Shining Lights families there as well. Christian Ed. would like to invite the children attending Shining Lights Learning Center to Sunday school and will invite them to the welcome with the kids in September.



Shining Lights

The center continues to flourish. Tuition, fundraisers, and donations are covering expenses. SLLC board voted to give \$1000.00 back to the church to help with fuel costs. The board is very grateful for all the prayers and support the council has shown over these last three years. The center has passed all inspections and received its new license. The center has engaged Pat Whipple to do their bookkeeping. Both the toddler and preschool classes are almost full for both for the summer and the fall sessions. There will be wait list. New teachers have been hired to fill vacancies and Dianah Hale will continue on as director. She has done an awesome job and we are blessed to have her.

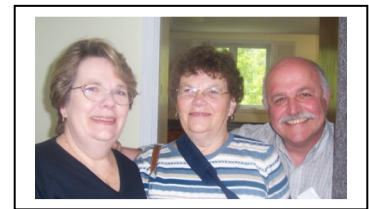


Personnel

Performance appraisals have been completed and communicated to each employee and their supervisory committee. The committees will act on any recommendations at their next meeting.

Deacons

Beginning July 5th Dr. Gene will be training deacons to be giving home communion to homebound parishioners. A traveling communion set was donated to the church in memory of Sara Dudley.



Property

The Property committee reports that the fire-escape door in the Ladies' Parlor needs some work and they will try to insulate it. Also on the project list is to fix the big sign in front of church, re-cement steps to Ladies' Parlor, help with painting the choir room, attend to trees that need to be taken down, and carpet cleaning.

Mission

Our final Dinner Bell for the season was Tuesday, June 9th. 48 people were fed and there was just enough food. In August the area churches will set up schedule for next year. Lars Nielson, chair, is looking to spread out our commitment for Dinner Bell over the coming year. There is a core group of volunteers who shows up to work for each time we host and they are greatly appreciated. The Mission Committee is down to 3 people. New members are essential for effective outreach. The Chili Cook-Off netted \$968 with \$400.00 going to support to Habitat for Humanity. The church collected \$246.00 for the *Strengthen the Church* special offering.



Pastoral Search Committee

The primary task before the Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) for this two month period is to complete the data collection for the *Local Church Profile*. It is an extensive snapshot of our church including its statistics, giving patterns, desires for the future, and history. Pastors looking for a call online can read the profile and see whether they think they meet our criteria. Therefore, in order for our candidates to be men and women whose dreams for ministry match ours, the PSC needs to do a good job articulating our church's vision.

To this end, we are asking everyone who has any interest in our church to help with the data collection. We are asking some church committees for help. We have published an ALL CHURCH SURVEY which was in the bulletin in June and is included below. We have sent out 3 other surveys to many of you asking for your input on pastoral leadership expectations, family statistics, and your feelings about our church. After worship listening sessions have been schedule for July 19th and 26th to collect these surveys and answer your questions. We have also asked about five groups outside the church to give us their perceptions about our life, mission and future.

Please participate in the entire information gathering process by filling out the surveys, turning them in, attending a listening session, and talking or writing to one of us if you have individual concerns. Right now the committee is praying for God's will for our church to become clear and we are asking you to do the same.

Ann Craxton, chair

The people are the ones who must have the visions, who must seek the Spirit's guidance, and who must lead the way, and give themselves to the going of God's work; for no one will do it for them.

The
Congregational Way
of Life, p. 110

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE ALL CHURCH SURVEY

This is the same survey included in the Sunday bulletin for three weeks in June.

If you did not submit this to the Search Committee in June, PLEASE, take a few minutes and complete it now.

You can send your completed form to the Church Office, 189 Main Street, Littleton, NH 03561, personally deliver it to the office, send it to Ann Craxton, 317 Mountain Road, Dalton, NH 03598, or e-mail it to ascraxton@yahoo.com.



1. Tell one positive thing about our church.
2. What attracts you and keeps you coming to our church?
3. What do you think is the most important thing a new minister could bring to our church?
4. What do you see as our church's most important need and how do you think we should accomplish this?
5. What do you think that God is calling our church to do/become over the next few years? (Suggested scripture studies you could reference in responding to this question: 1 Peter 2:9-10; Luke 4: 18-19; II Corinthians 4:1 and 7-16a; and Isaiah 58:6-11.)
6. How could we make the church more welcoming?
7. Other comments or concerns (Use the back, if necessary.)

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STEEPLE TALK

SUMMER 2009

Steeple Talk
A newsletter of the
First Congregational
Church of Littleton



Missions of the First Congregational Church Page 8

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
Clerk: Rachel Clark
Treasurer: Mary Menzies
Assistant Treasurer: Marti Faulkner
Financial Secretary: Joyce Krill

Committee Chairs

Christian Education: Linda Warden and Cheryl Kerr
Deacons: Roger Petit & Mark Blodgett
Finance & Stewardship: Marti Faulkner
Trustee of the trust funds: Dick Holland
Mission: Lars Nielson
Music: Elaine Pollak
Personnel Relations: Judy Warden
Property Management: Arthur Hunt

Shining Lights Learning Center

Board Chairperson: Suzanne Schott

- BACK BAY MISSION BUILDING FUND
- COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL
- DINNER BELL (LITTLETON COMMUNITY DINNERS)
- EPIC CHURCH (CHURCH PLANT IN BETHLEHEM, PA)
 - HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
 - HEIFER PROJECT
 - LEARN TO EARN
- LITTLETON ECUMENICAL RELIEF FUND
 - LITTLETON FOOD PANTRY
 - LIVING WATER
- MEALS ON WHEELS OF LITTLETON AREA
- NORTH COUNTRY HOME HEALTH AND HOSPICE
 - OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION (MISSIONS AT THE CONFERENCE LEVEL)
 - SHINING LIGHTS LEARNING CENTER (CHRIST-CENTERED DAY CARE AND PRE-SCHOOL)

Little church with a big heart