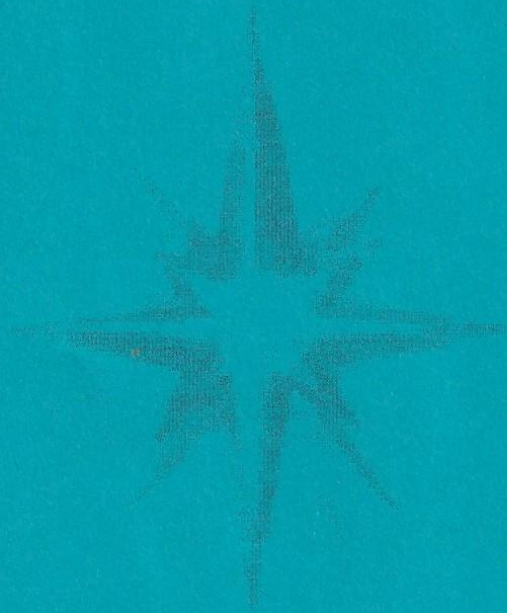


First Congregational Church of Georgetown, UCC

Annual Report 2008

Rev. Deborah L. Adams, Interim Minister



2/1/2009

Meetings

The First Congregational Church of Georgetown, Inc.
7 Andover Street, PO Box 200
Georgetown, MA 01833

January 15, 2008

WARRANT

The members of the First Congregational Church of Georgetown are hereby advised that in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of said Church, The Annual Meeting of the Church will be held Sunday, January 27, 2008, immediately following worship, in the Church Sanctuary, then and there to act on the following listed Articles:

Article I: To receive the reports of the several boards, committees and officers of the Church and to take action thereon:

Article II: To see if the Church will vote to amend the votes of the Special Church Meeting on October 20, 2002, establishing the Pastoral Housing Fund by declaring an initial endowment amount of \$260,000.00 and allowing for usage of the proceeds of this fund for more than just the support of the Pastor's Housing Allowance, or take any other action in relation thereto;

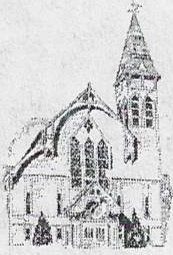
Article III: To hear and act on the report of the Finance Committee in regard to the 2007 financial operations and the 2008 proposed budget, or take any other action thereto;

Article IV: To hear and act on the report of the Nominating Committee, or take any other action in relation thereto;

Article V: To hear and act on any other business and to take any other actions, relative to the Church and its property, which may be brought before the Annual Meeting in accordance with the Bylaws, or take any other action in relation thereto.

By direction of the Church Cabinet

Emily J. Knapp
Clerk



The First Congregational Church of Georgetown

United Church of Christ

7 Andover Street, PO Box 200 Georgetown, MA 01833

(978)-352-8443, www.georgetowncongregational.org

Rev. Eric M. Marean, Co-Pastor

Rev. Sara E. Marean, Co-Pastor

Annual Meeting

1-27-08

The meeting was called to order at 11:33 AM by Moderator Pro-Temp, Allan Barlow. Pastor Eric Marean led us in an opening prayer.

Allan indicated that he would dispense with the reading of the Warrant Articles during the meeting. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand and an usher will provide you with a microphone. Please sign the attendance sheet that is circulating around so we know who is in attendance at the meeting.

Nominating Committee reports and Budget motions for 2002 were distributed to everyone to have access to during the meeting. Allan indicated that the Cabinet had appointed him Moderator Pro-Temp for the Annual Meeting.

Article I:

Marion Harding moved that the Church vote that accept the 2007 reports of the several Boards, Committee and Officers of the Church. The motion was seconded. The Moderator Pro-Temp asked for discussion. The Clerk indicated that on page one that it was intended that it be the Warrant from the 2007 Annual Meeting. Copies of the 2007 Warrant are available if anyone wishes to swap out that page. Also, on page 2 of the Clerk's report, the last word on the page should read "carried" not "varied".

The Moderator Pro-Temp asked that the Annual Reports be accepted as amended – the motion carried.

Article II – two motions –

Bob Knapp moved that the Church vote to amend the motion approved by the Church at the Special church meeting of October 20, 2002, establishing the Pastoral Housing Fund as real property by changing "its principle" to "the initial amount of \$260,000.00". The motion was seconded and Allan asked for discussion. Bob explained the motion – in 2002 the funds from the sale of the parsonage were taken and endowed – meaning that these funds could not be touched except by Church vote. The total amount came to \$260,000 which is why the Finance Committee asking for this motion to be amended. How much is in the fund at the present time? \$315,000 at this date in the fund. This requires a 2/3 vote to pass –

The vote taken – the motion carried by more than a 2/3 majority

Motion 2 under Article II – Bob Knapp moved that the Church vote to amend the motion approved by the Church at the Special Church Meeting on October 20, 2002 establishing the procedure for handling the proceeds from the Pastoral Housing Fund by changing the phrase “...to expend the remainder of the Pastoral Housing Fund earnings to help offset the Pastor’s Housing Allowance” to “...expend the remainder of the Pastoral Housing Funds earnings first to help offset the Pastor’s Housing Allowance and then to supplement the Reserve Fund to make up for any current expense deficit”. The motion was seconded.

The Moderator asked for discussion – Bob Knapp explained this motion. Funds were taken from various accounts. This has left us with \$15,000 in reserve to start out the 2008 year. In the budget for 2008 – we have a 40-50 K deficit. Housing Fund at this time is the best choice of where funds can be tapped – the Finance Committee would like to be able to tap the funds without having to call a Special Church meeting to receive authorization.

Moderator asked for questions – Dorothy Blanchard asked if this is only to come from interest of this fund? Bob indicated that it is coming from interest and capital gain. Dorothy asked if it is possible to have a restriction on this for one year – Dorothy indicated that she would rather not like to see something that is carte blanche without a restriction on it. If all were in agreement – Bob said he would withdraw the motion – and make a revised motion. Bob Knapp withdrew the motion – the second was also withdrawn.

A motion was made that the Church vote to allow the Treasurer with the approval of the FINCOM – to expend proceeds from the Housing Endowment – first to offset the Housing Allowance and then to offset any deficit for 2008. Seconded – discussion requested – the vote taken and the motion carries unanimously.

Article III –

George DesRochers moved that the Church vote to accept the 2007 Financial Report and 2008 Budget as printed. The motion was seconded – discussion called for. Bob Knapp. said that the top of page 16 should read for year 2007-2008 not 2006-2007.. Bob had some general comments: Receipts from the collection plate have remained at about \$110,000 for the last three years and we are projecting the same for this year. Our disbursements continue to rise each year, while our total income has declined. Taking in less and spending more doesn’t work well. Our investments showed modest gains through October but then nosedived during November and December. Since there were no raises in 2007, we voted a cost of living increase of 3% for our long serving employees (Ministers, Music Director, Organist, Collector and Treasurer). Utilities – fuel prices have increased \$2,000 for 2007. Please be mindful of making sure lights are out, doors are closed etc.

The FinCom also decreased the percentage of our pledges that we send to UCC for mission work from 6.8 to 5%. We hope this is temporary. We will take all Church Fair profits and apply it to the general fund. In the past half of the fair proceeds were used for the General Fund and half were added to our Reserve Fund. There are no savings plans of any type for 2008. Our building is aging and has not had attention for some time. These are not things that the FinCom enjoy reporting, \$44,000 lost in 2007 on top of the \$26,000 we lost in 2006. We are hopeful that initiating the Hospitality and Stewardship Committees will help to assist our church to grow,

Any additional questions or comments – the vote taken – the motion carried unanimously. Anyone wishing to have a detailed financial report – please see Bob Knapp.

Article IV

Joan Chatterton moved that the church vote to elect the slate of Officer, Boards, Committees, Coordinators, and Auditors listed in the Nominating Committee's Report for the January 27, 2008 Annual Meeting and that to signify such election, the Clerk be directed to cast one ballot in favor of the slate as presented. Michelle Brock presented the slate of Officers, Boards, Committees, Coordinators and Auditors to be elected for 2008. The motion was seconded. The moderator asked for discussion – any questions – Are the TBA's going to be filled. The Nominating Committee is working on this and have not yet found people to fill the open slots. The vote taken – the motion carries.

The Church By-laws require that the Clerk of the Church be sworn in to office. Allan Barlow, Moderator Pro-Temp swore in Emily J. Knapp as Clerk of the Church.

Article V – To hear and act on any other business and to take any other actions, relative to the Church and its property, which may be brought before the Annual Meeting in accordance with the Bylaws, or take any other action in relation thereto;

Dorothy Blanchard indicated that she has thought over many things and has spoken to many people prior to this meeting in regards to the budget, Church school etc. She is extremely concerned with what is happening in this Church; including Karen Flom's letter accusing us of not being open to change. Dorothy has not seen a resistance to change by the members in this Church over the years. That we have been open to try new things. Dorothy said that when she came up the elevator and saw that there were only two classrooms to take care of children from grades 1-9 she was greatly shocked. This is so wrong from an educational stand-point. Dorothy indicated that she has much experience in education (secular and religious). When we discussed having a Co-Pastorate it was to aid in strengthening the Church school and Youth programs. In 2003 this Church had 130 Church School children. Why is Church School so small – because we don't have teachers – then there is something wrong. Dorothy said that she feels it is a reflection of the Church – some people have walked away from the church – it appears to be a crisis – we are an independent Church – no one will pull us out of this unless we take care of this ourselves. At Special Church Meeting in 2006 when it was voted to have the Co-pastorate, it was voted there would be an evaluation criteria set up by the Diaconate, with the help of Area Minister. We all need to pull together – reach out to those who aren't here at the meeting. We are the only ones to help get us out of this situation.

Dorothy moved that the Diaconate, with the help of the Church Cabinet and with input from the pastors, establish an evaluation criteria for the Co-Pastors positions. This would include some measurable objectives. These criteria would be used for the Annual Evaluation of the Co-Pastors. The criteria to be completed by April 30, 2008. The motion was seconded. Allan asked for comments, questions, discussion

– is April 30th an achievable goal? It seems that the expectations of the Co-pastors and the expectations of congregation is different – if we can come with some agreement on this, the better off we will be. Beth Desrochers asked if it was felt that we need the help of the UCC I this matter? Do we need the help of an impartial person to help us to accomplish this? By giving the discretion of the Diaconate and the help of the Cabinet they can decide who can help.. Is this going to get lost with an April 30th date?

Joan Chatterton indicated that she is very concerned with this matter. The Nominating Committee has worked to try to fill open positions. We do not have a full house in the Diaconate. This is going to put tremendous burden on the Diaconate. Brand new people going onto the Diaconate who need to get their feet wet. It was suggested that the evaluation criteria be completed by the June 30th. Moderator asked if this was an amendment to the motion – Joan indicated that it was. The motion amended to change date to 6/30/08 – motion seconded.

Kristen Arsenault, a Diaconate member indicated that it was her opinion that the evaluation process is a very serious process – without a full committee it will be difficult to complete this criteria by April 30th. This is new territory for all of us – the Diaconate will want to look at all the options and be able to do the best for the Church and to the Co-Pastors. Logical to give the Diaconate until 6-30-08. Jeff Fitzpatrick, also a Diaconate member indicated that the April date would be a real challenge – the Diaconate does need to get at this – Diaconate complete this in May and bring to the Cabinet in June 2008.

Ready for a vote on the amendment or a June 30th date??? Joan changed her amendment to “report back at the June Cabinet meeting.” The motion was seconded. Criteria to be completed by the June Cabinet meeting – voting on the amendment only
Amendment carries –

Vote was taken – the motion carries.

Any other business to be brought up under Article V.

Seeing no additional business at hand, Tom Stewart was asked to come forward and officially close the meeting;.

Motion was made to adjourn and enjoy the Pot-luck luncheon at 12:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily J. Knapp
Clerk

Pastor

Interim Pastor's 106-Day Report!!!

(Sept. 15 – Dec. 31, 2008)

Dear friends in Christ!

Grace and peace to you in the name of Christ Jesus! Being an Interim Pastor often gives me glimpses of what it must have been like for Paul to travel among the New Testament churches of the Mediterranean in the sense of having the privilege of witnessing how the Word and grace of God have called forth the faith of the people in particular times and places. It is especially good for me to be spending this time with you. I am grateful for the call as your Interim Pastor and I am especially joyful at walking with each of you in this very unusual and historical time that we are living. We have been given a unique opportunity to contemplate God's will for our lives in this time and place.

It is also good for me to be here in the Northeast where I can spend time with my Mother, brother, and sister as well as old friends and colleagues. I am enjoying being a bicoastal family and have appreciated your encouragement and support as I travel back and forth to Seattle for the marriage of our daughter, Kate. I arrived here in September soon after the marriage of our son, Hans. Some days I just marvel at the fullness of life these last few months having BOTH my children now married, having negotiated a move across the country to my beloved northern New England, settling in as a 'townie' in my downtown 'hermitage', and thriving as your Interim Pastor because you have been so responsive to the work of this interim time. Most days I still find myself chuckling about the Australian aboriginal practice called 'walk-about' where one stops and rests along life's journey so 'the soul may catch up with the body.' I feel as if I am becoming a master of this 'walk-about' path.

'Walk-about' is also an appropriate term for interim ministry. The congregation gets to stop for as many months as needed to wait together as you discern what God is calling you to be and become. Another way to talk about the interim time is as an 'in-between' time; that is, 'in-between' settled pastors. This precious time allows the congregation to catch its breath and reflect on where you have been as well as discover where you are called to move on together. One of the mistakes that congregations make if they don't take the interim time seriously is to enter the pastoral search process asking the question 'what kind of minister do we want' rather than 'what kind of congregation is God calling us to be.' To take the time to contemplate God's desire and call to this congregation FIRST will allow the next pastoral search committee to find a settled pastor with the right gifts to support you in your call as a congregation. This is what we mean when we talk about finding a 'good match' between pastor and congregation.

At my request the Church Cabinet, in collaboration with the Board of Deacons, has set up an Interim Team (please see their report enclosed) to work with me during this interim time. The initial design of this interim period was that the first three months would be spent 'getting acquainted' with the congregation including beginning getting to know the congregation and the Massachusetts conference. After the first three months, we would set up a series of congregational reunions for the congregation to assess more deeply its identity, its gifts and resources, and its dreams for ministry – which when combined will help us all articulate the 'kind of congregation God is calling you to be'. We begin those reunions January 18 and will continue through early April – weather permitting! After these reunions are complete the Cabinet will begin talking about setting up the Pastoral Search Committee.

My first three months with you have been mostly delightful, curious, heart-warming, challenging, intense, full of humor, good will, and food! (As one of you keep reminding me 'we love to laugh, sing, and eat!' That seems to be true!) We are beginning to get to know one another and the healing has begun. I believe it was mid-October that I realized that some sort of cloud had lifted in the congregation – and I could actually sense the deep faith of the congregation. The cloud of fear had begun to lift. I knew you were on your way to discovering yet again who you were, whose you were, and what God wanted you to be about. It has been very, very good to drop into the midst of such a dedicated staff in Bob and Emily, Rachel, and Michelle. Our competent staff increased by one with the hiring of our new CE Director, Gloria Webster. We've all begun the process of team building as a staff by meeting at least twice a month since October.

In December I gave the Church Cabinet an abbreviated 90-day Interim report. After visiting and meeting with lay leaders and members as well as friends these first three months I wanted to make an observation and a request. The observation was that it seemed that there was much misinformation and misunderstanding even within the Church Cabinet as to just what had happened leading up to and including the Marean's resignation and departure. In addition to leaders and members having left the congregation hurt and frustrated, many congregants were still unclear and uncomfortable at not having an outlet for sharing their experience. These realities have also led to misunderstanding between members and lay leaders. I have spent a great deal of time listening and facilitating staff, lay leaders, and small groups of members and friends as they have come to grips with their experiences and perceptions. My request to the Cabinet was to set aside an evening separate from the regular meeting time to invite those who shared leadership these last two years to come together to process their own individual experiences as well as ask one another questions so as to have some more closure around these last two years. The Cabinet agreed and set Monday, January 12 as an evening to begin this intentional story-telling. The hope by all is that more mutual understanding will emerge and healing will continue so that the leaders/staff/congregation may move on. After this meeting these leaders will decide what next steps need to take place in order for the wider congregation to also have opportunities to process their experiences in addition to the congregational reunions.

You are a friendly, strong and resilient congregation with a deep faith in God and a deep longing to be a vital Christian community. That so much good humor exists in the midst of your disappointment and grief is all good. The Church Fair, the many community groups using your facility, the expanding Church School, the desire for more adult education and Christian spirituality, the visits you make on one another, the hours you give to 'inreach' and caring for one another, the wonderful 'outreach' and missions opportunities, the music programs, the commitment to children and youth, your patience with me – all these speak volumes of the life in Christ that you already share. I look forward to continuing my quest to visit with every member/friend during my time with you. I look forward to the congregational reunions and discovering with you how you will see and articulate your sense of God's call.

Thank you for sharing this 'walk-about' with me. "God is good. All of the time!"

"RevDeb"

Moderator

MODERATOR'S REPORT

I would like to take this opportunity to review the Moderator's participation in the business of the church over the past year and discuss goals for the future. Before discussing the last year, I would like to thank the members of the First Congregational Church of Georgetown for the opportunity to serve as your Moderator. I respect this office and the church and promised at the onset of my service to make decisions which I believe are in the best interest of this church while putting any personal relationships aside. While there were many challenges over the last year, there were also many wonderful moments. I believe that 2008 will be viewed in the history of this church as a year of transition. It is an honor to be entrusted to serve as the Moderator during such a transitional time in our church as these periods are often met with distinctive challenges.

After being elected during the 2008 annual meeting, my first official duty as the Moderator was to close the meeting. Immediately following that meeting, the Co-Pastorate, Sara and Eric Marean, informed me in private they would be giving their notice at some point in the near future and leaving the First Congregational Church. This was surprising and it also placed me in the midst of a challenging situation. As a first term Moderator I had to learn and understand what the issues of the church were and quickly decide how to best deal with these matters in a manner that was in the best interest of the church. Some of the first meetings I scheduled were with United Church of Christ (UCC) Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Carol Atwood-Lyon, previous Acting Moderator and then Chair of the Trustees, Alan Barlow, Finance Chair/ Music Director Bob Knapp, Diaconate Chair Jeff Fitzpatrick, and, Co-Pastorate Eric and Sara Marean. I also had conversations with previous Moderator Karen Flom and other members of the church community. Some of these members had actually left our church. Additionally, I joined the Alban Institute weekly newsletter distribution and began reading as well as researched information regarding churches. One topic I explored was the process leading up to the creation of a Search Committee for a Settled Pastor. I learned that while interviewing for a position of Settled Pastor, most clergy members closely examine how a church said goodbye to the previous Settled Pastor. Candidates for a Settled Pastor position will both ask Search Committee members directly and indirectly as well as consult with other clergy members on the process of a church community saying goodbye to the previous Settled Pastor. This process of saying goodbye is considered by some in church circles to be one of the first steps in the search process for a future Settled Pastor.

On Sunday May 18, 2008, The First Congregational Church of Georgetown said goodbye to the Co-Pastorate Sara and Eric Marean. The process of saying goodbye to clergy is challenging under any circumstance. And, saying goodbye to Sara and Eric Marean was no different. It was in the best interest for each of us, the Co-Pastorate and the future of our church to create an ending experience that was positive, respectful and Christian in nature. For each of us and the Co-Pastorate it was important to establish as much closure as possible while saying goodbye. And, for the future of our church, it was critical to say

goodbye in a way in which we could look back upon and be proud. As previously mentioned, it was important to be mindful of the fact that any future candidate for Settled Pastor will closely examine how our church said goodbye to our last Settled Pastor. This process was the first corner stone laid in beginning a search for a settled pastor. The First Congregational church of Georgetown met this challenge by saying goodbye the best way possible. During the 90 day period following the resignation of the Co-pastorate, it was the responsibility of the Moderator to assist the Co-pastorate and the church in developing an ending experience that was positive. At the conclusion of the 90 day period, both Eric and Sara Marean individually thanked me for assisting in making the period of closure a positive experience for them.

While the church was working on the process of saying goodbye, the Diaconate was working with Rev. Carol Atwood-Lyon developing a profile of our church to begin the search for an Interim Minister. During a meeting on March 5, 2008 with the Reverend Carol Atwood-Lyon, the Diaconate identified some issues. The possibility of having a consultant work with our church was discussed and the Diaconate agreed this would be worth exploring. After the meeting via email, the Rev. Atwood-Lyon provided three names of consultants and I contacted two. Leading up to a July 8, 2008 joint meeting, the Rev. Ellie Richardson of Transpective met with the Diaconate and Cabinet with the intent of "having a conversation". On July 8, 2008, Rev. Ellie Richardson presented a one year and two year proposal for her services as a church consultant. The meeting concluded that the church would decline the Transpective proposal at this point in time but it may be reconsidered in the future after the Pastoral situation was settled.

In total, the Diaconate and I interviewed eight candidates. The role of the Moderator evolved into discussing challenging developmental issues of church over the last several years. In late June 2008, we were ready to make an offer to one candidate for the position of Interim Minister. This candidate essentially withdrew as she decided to relocate out of the area before the offer had a chance to develop. This left some feeling discouraged as a whole 'pool' of candidates we had interviewed found other positions. I suggested in an email to the Diaconate that "good things come to those who wait". The Diaconate and I began interviewing again in July. As many know, my family spends much of the summer in Prince Edward Island, Canada. Prior to leaving for Canada, we interviewed one candidate. Additionally, Chairman Jeff Fitzpatrick and I drafted a letter which was sent out to the congregation after I left for Canada in July. During my time in Canada, church business continued to be managed. I remained in touch with Chairman Jeff Fitzpatrick and the church office via dial up email and telephone. And, the Moderator participated by interviewing two candidates via telephone. One of course, was the Reverend Deborah Adams who we hired in September 2008.

In summary, there were many challenging events during year of 2008 for our church. And for a newly elected Moderator, the learning curve was rapidly accelerated. I have enjoyed all of the challenges and opportunities to contribute to our church while serving in my role as Moderator. I thank all of the members of the church for their support and challenges over the last year. On a personal note, I especially want to thank my wife Jo, our children Skye and Cameron for their support and patience as the time commitment to

our church as I serve as the Moderator has meant that I have been, at times, less available in my role as a husband and Dad. I also want to thank my mother, Charlotte, for all of the babysitting both here in Georgetown and in Canada as I attended to church business. I also want to thank Chairman Jeff Fitzpatrick and the Diaconate for their support and efforts in answering the call to hire an Intentional Interim Minister. The following are some goals I believe are in the best interest of our church for 2009:

1. It is my goal that we all work together in supporting our first ever paid Christian Education Director with the intent of helping our Christian Education program grow. It is my hope and prayer that more families will attend our church resulting in an increase of the number of participants in our Christian Education program.
2. Continue to embrace the leadership of our Interim Minister and support her strong presence at the pulpit. Rev. Deborah Adams was the best candidate for the position and we are very fortunate to have her as our Intentional Interim Minister. I pray that our relationship as a church will continue to grow and develop while she serves as our Intentional Interim Minister.
3. I look forward to hearing from and embracing the recommendations from the newly created Personnel Ad hoc Personnel Committee that began meeting in January 2009 following a vote from the Cabinet in late in 2008. This committee will be taking a look at whether or not our church should form a Personnel Committee. In March 2008, I contacted the UCC National office in Cleveland, Ohio to discuss personnel practices in UCC churches nationally. After many conversations and much dialogue within our church, the Cabinet voted to form this Ad hoc Personnel Committee.
4. As a church, I believe we all need to develop and implement a plan to resolve our financial issues. We need to discover new ways of increasing our revenue intake. I believe that all members of the church, including the children, should participate in this dialogue.
5. There has been discussion in the Diaconate and other areas in the church regarding the creation of a Covenant/Decorum of behavior for elected/appointed church officials. I feel strongly we need to have further dialogue about this issue. As a church, we should have the highest expectation of our own behavior while conducting church business.
6. 'Rev Deb' has introduced the concept of "Dialogue versus Debate". Developing our capacity to dialogue as a church is in the best interest for the future of our church. Over the last year in my role as Moderator, there have been times in which I have shifted into full debate mode. During some of these moments, I acknowledge feelings of some have been hurt. I feel it is appropriate to look towards the Lord's Prayer "forgive me for my sins (trespasses in some churches) as I forgive those who sin against me". In 2009, the Moderator hopes to "mend some fences" and heal relationships which may have gone awry.
7. I believe we need to work towards changing our bylaws and functioning much like the Diaconate currently operates. Some key positions in the church should have an assistant with the intent of that individual serving as an understudy who will in serve in the lead position in the future. I believe that such a path of leadership development is helpful to our church for many reasons. First, an organization which has leadership opportunities helps both the individual and organization grow. Second, after any individual serves in a

leadership role, that individual is more likely to have a higher degree of investment in the organization. I look forward to much spirited dialogue over this issue in the future.

8. The church will be ready to form a Search Committee for a Settled Pastor after we complete 'Rev' Deb's' workshop series.

9. We are blessed with a wealth of historic documents in our building. Some, I believe, are over two hundred years old. We need to protect these documents by storing them in our building with a fireproof and flood proof method.

10. A former member of our church told me they believe the church is "struggling to find its' identity". With that, some others have suggested there is a struggle between traditional and liberal members of the church. I raise these questions for dialogue, why can't we be both? Why can't we work towards a model of having two Sunday services with one being more traditional and the other being more progressive? This, I believe, will help our church grow and meet the challenges that all churches face in this day and age.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas W. Stewart, Moderator

Clerk

Report of the Church Clerk

Listed below you will find the many activities and events that were held at The First Congregational Church of Georgetown during 2008.

- January:**
- Three Kings Sunday
 - Annual Church Meeting
- February:**
- Accept letter of resignation from Revs Eric and Sara Marean with regret
 - Valentines Candy and Craft Sale for Heifer Fund
 - Lenten Offering – 80% Reserve Fund, 20% Diaconate Fund
 - Book Club – “Selling the Lite of Heaven”
- March:**
- One Great Hour of Sharing
 - Annual Church Clean-Up
 - Palm Sunday Service
 - Maundy Thursday Pot Luck Supper, Passover Seder and Service of Tenebrae
 - Easter Sunrise Service and Breakfast
 - Christ Has Risen – Easter Morning Worship
 - “Giving Tree” set up in Narthex
 - Blessing of the Animals Service
 - Book Club: “Snowflower and the Secret”
 - Moonlight Productions – “Nunsense”
- April:**
- Communion and Bread Exchange
 - Moonlight Productions – “Aladdin, Jr”
 - Book Club – “Eat, Pray, Love”
 - Youth Sunday Worship Service
 - Sr. Youth Group – “Boston Mission Day”
- May:**
- Confirmation Sunday - welcome three confirmands into Church Membership
 - Book Club – “A Patchwork Planet”
 - We say our good-byes to Revs. Eric and Sara Marean with remembrances and a special coffee hour.
 - Memorial Day Remembrances
 - Church Yard Sale and Cookie Walk
- June:**
- Children’s Sunday and all Church picnic
 - Emmaus House Food Drive
 - Graduate Recognition Sunday
 - Book Club – “Three Cups of Tea”
 - Strawberry Social on front lawn of Church

- July/August:**
- Union services with Second Church W. Boxford in Georgetown
 - Moonlight Productions – “Guys and Dolls”
 - Moonlight Productions – “Twelfth Night”
 - Cabinet votes to accept the recommendation of the Diaconate and call Rev. Deborah L. Adams as Intentional Interim Minister
- September:**
- Rally Day – Welcome Back service with JT Turner
 - Book Club – “Dream When You’re Feeling Better”
 - Welcome Rev. Deborah L. Adams, Intentional Interim Minister
- October:**
- World Wide Communion
 - International Church Fair
 - Walk Against Violence – Newburyport
 - Crop Walk – Danvers
 - Book Club – “Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid”
- November:**
- Moonlight Productions – “Brigadoon”
 - Book Club – “Whitethorn Woods”
 - We Welcome Gloria Webster, Director of Christian Education
 - Interfaith Thanksgiving Service – Trinity Episcopal Haverhill
 - Advent Offering – 50% Reserve Fund, 50% Grocery Gift Certificates
- December:**
- Bd. of Christian Education – Advent Workshop – crafts, songs, lunch!
 - Advent Bible Study
 - Wednesday Evening Advent Vespers in sanctuary
 - Caroling around Georgetown followed by cookies and cocoa
 - Book Club – “The Blue Bottle Club”
 - Gifts for HOME
 - All Church Christmas Pageant during morning worship
 - Christmas Eve Service of Candles and Carols

Our Church building is home to many outside groups and organizations. Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Brownie Troops, Joyce Dance Studio, AA, TOPS, Moonlight Productions, Georgetown Garden Club, Georgetown Women’s Club and the Georgetown Council on Aging make use our building for meetings, rehearsals and performances. It is a busy place, our Church, and we thank all who work hard to keep our beacon of light shining for all to see!

Respectfully submitted,

Emily J. Knapp
Clerk

Membership Information

Members as of 12/31/07 240

New Members - Confirmation Class 3

Membership Removal:

Deaths 5

Request for Removal 5

Letter of Transfer 1

Total Membership as of 12/31/08 232

In Memoriam

*Helen Boynton
Donald E. Gordon
Richard Harding
Elaine Kimball
H. Nelson Pingree*

From The Ministers Records

Baptisms: 6

Weddings: 2

Funerals: 7

Respectfully submitted,

Emily J. Knapp, Clerk

Diaconate

Diaconate

Rewarding. Challenging. Spiritual. Toiling. Fellowship. Transition. Teamwork. Renewal.

These are but a few of the words that describe a unique and robust year of great accomplishments for the Board of Deacons. I share with our Church Family a heartfelt thanks to all of the members of the Diaconate that made 2008 a great success! Kristen Arsenault, Betty Bruce, Brett Davis, Chuck Davis, Barry Games, Cheryl Gould, Gladys Kneeland, and Tracy Southwick were exemplary members and provided the sustained leadership at a time when the path forward was not clear for our Church. It has truly been an honor to serve with this team this past year.

The tone and pace for 2008 was set at the outset. Moments after the election of new positions for the Diaconate in the February meeting, our co-pastors announced and submitted their letter of resignation. From that moment forward, there was no time to look back, only to the challenge ahead. The search was on for an interim minister to guide us and lead us through a time to a settled pastorate. The search had all the characteristics of a challenging event. It called for strong teamwork, soul-searching, the highs and lows that come with the various and unplanned twists and turns of rising to the challenge. In the end, and I am quite sure with Divine Intervention, we extended an offer that was warmly accepted by Rev. Deborah Adams. We have been blessed to have Deborah, "RevDeb", in our midst. In the few short months she has been with us this year, she has quickly settled in and set to the task of the transition ahead and as importantly, providing a steady, thoughtful and caring spiritual leadership to our congregation.

Beyond the search, the Deacons were hard at work tending to the spiritual life of the church through:

- Maunday Thursday service including Seder Meal and Pot-Luck dinner
- Easter Sunday - Sunrise and morning worship services
- Laity Services
- Communion Services
- Union Services with West Boxford
- Recognition and Remembrances through cards, letters, and flowers throughout the year and during Easter and Christmas seasons
- Coordination of congregation support and meals to ease challenges for families experiencing life's challenges
- Help for those in need

The Diaconate provided financial support to the Women's Guild for restoration and mounting of historical pictures of the church, the Georgetown High School Senior Celebration, First Church Library Tile, the Music Committee for the first installment of new hymnals. Diaconate Funds were allocated to support members of the church and greater community with unique and pressing needs.

The leadership of First Church has also demonstrated a powerful sense of commitment to our continued growth and enrichment. I want to offer special thanks to our new Moderator, Tom Stewart. Tom accepted the many challenges facing the church following our Co-Pastor's resignation. Working closely with Tom, I can speak to his caring nature and interest in fostering a vibrant leadership and healthy church structure. Special thanks also goes out to the Cabinet at large and their extended committees for their support of the Diaconate's work this past year. It was truly a TEAM effort across all committees to put a "strong wind back in our sails"!

For those looking to serve the church and further Jesus' ministry, I can attest there is no better way to do so than through serving on the Diaconate.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Fitzpatrick
Chairman

Christian Education

Board of Christian Education

Chairperson's Annual Report 2008

The Board of Christian Education started '08 with the surprise news that our pastors would be leaving in May. This was of particular concern to the committee since this meant that we would be losing our Director of Christian Education.

In February the Sunday School held the annual Valentines cookie and candy sale to raise money for the Heifer Project. We raised \$321 at this event. In the Spring the SS classes would vote for an animal to buy with the funds raised.

In March, Eric decided to reorder the Seasons of the Spirit curriculum since teachers seemed to feel positive about using this curriculum.

In June we honored our High School graduates by having them participate in the service and tell their plans for the future. We also honored Susan Stead for her many years of service as the High School youth group director. Susan held this position for 13 years.

In her absence, Michelle and Richard Brock have volunteered their time to lead the group along with Chuck Davis. The BCE awarded one Star Island scholarship this year of \$250 to Brian Stead. June also brought Children's Sunday when the SS students presented skits to the congregation on the subject of homelessness. Sunday School teachers, helpers and nursery care providers were recognized at this time as well. Afterward the BCE held a cookout/picnic at American Legion Park. This event was not well attended and it was thought that spring sports schedules as well as jr. champ day may have influenced the attendance. The BCE appreciated the efforts of Mike Kaflin who set up his grill and used his expertise to grill up some good food for those who were able to attend.

The committee advertised the Director of CE position at Andover Newton and also in the UCC conference newsletter. For the longest time we had no responses to these ads and recruitment of teachers was a continuing concern.

The committee met in August to finalize plans for Rally Day. We enlisted JT Turner, who generously donated his time and talents to present a service with the theme of New Beginnings. It was well received by the congregation and importantly the children of the church. Sunday school registration was set up following the service.

The committee recruited teachers for the Fall and divided the roster into four groups; pre-school, grades 1&2, grades3&4 and middle school grades5-8.

In October a miracle occurred when Gloria Webster submitted a letter of interest in the position of CE Director. An interview committee was formed including Rev. Deb and Moderator Tom Stewart. Gloria was well received by all and the CE committee chairs presented her to the cabinet for hire. Gloria accepted the position and began as Director on Nov. 1.

Thus the Board of Christian Ed. Ended '08 on a positive note with a successful Advent workshop where families participated in a light lunch and craft activities and an upbeat and successful Christmas pageant. The committee looks forward to more successes in '09 with our new leadership in place.

Respectfully Submitted
Jo Anne Kelly

Youth Fellowship

Middle School Youth Group

As leaders of the Middle School Youth Group, we have enjoyed our 3 1/2 years with our ever-changing group of young people and we have accomplished many things together. We've been bowling and hiking, sledding and skating, had pizza parties and yankee swaps, made dinners for Emmaus House and lots of HOME tags for the trees, made gingerbread houses and stepping stones, and served goodies at countless Moonlight intermissions. We have had so many laughs with the kids and many good memories. As the energy of the group has shifted, ours has as well, and we are resigning as leaders. Hopefully this will make room for a new team to come in and lead our middle schoolers in more experiences that enrich their lives through our church. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the incoming leaders and share our information and lessons learned.

Thank you and God bless, Rachel and Scott Edwards

Senior High Youth Group

Annual Report 2009

The Senior High Youth Group had several events to close out their 2007-2008 year. They had several fun events driving go carts, attending movies at Chunky's Theater and kayaking at The Davis's family camp in Maine.

A one-day mission trip was held in April. Clothes were sorted for various shelters around Boston. Group members brought along their own clothing they had outgrown or no longer wear. Teen clothing is very much in demand, unfortunately shelters usually have a lot of children and adult clothing but not much clothing for youth. After the group finished in Charlestown we headed to the UCC church in Dorchester. The church is an actual homeless shelter subsidized by the Federal Government and provides a place for 150 homeless men a night. This was an eye opening experience for all. Every Saturday the church holds a yard sale to benefit their shelter. Thanks to the generosity of our church family we provided 50lbs. of ground beef for the meal that evening. With the culinary skills of Carl MacDonald with Boston City Mission we all cooked up quite the meal!

We want to once again thank all the youth who participated and contributed their hard work and dedication. We have a very special group of young people in our church family! We also want to thank you, the congregation, for your very generous support of our mission day. Without the money we raised on Youth Sunday, our day in Boston would not have been possible!

After many years of service with the Senior High Youth Group, Susan Stead has passed the reins to us. We appreciate all she has done for the High School Youth in our church. It is important that our High School family be connected to church and Susan has done that with much enthusiasm and joy. Chuck Davis has thankfully stayed on with us to help. We appreciate his time and energy to the Youth Group.

For the 2008-2009 the youth have been busy. We started off the year with a pizza party where the kids got to make their own pizza's in our kitchen. We got to know each other and made plans to convert our Christian Education storage room into a more inviting space for our youth that is warm and inviting. We are very fortunate to have George Comiskey support our youth group. He coordinated with his friend Frank Puopolo of Greer & Kirby Co., Inc, a salvage company owner, to donate a large screen television. We appreciate their efforts and have already used it for a Rock Bank night.

We also want to thank two families who donated some of their own furnishings. The Lamoureaux family donated a loveseat and large area oriental area rug. The Perry family donated a couch. We hope to fill our room with things that have been donated by such a supportive congregation. In addition to the things that have already been done, the youth will be painting their room during 2009.

We have many more possible activities planned for this year including a White Water Rafting trip, Paint Ball, a mission trip, snow tubing, and a spaghetti dinner. We look forward to sharing them with you.

Michelle and Richard Brock, Chuck Davis

Trustees

Trustees

The members of the Board of Trustees, Chairman Rich Brock, Chris Pinto, Steve Pinto, Jeff Gillen, Alan Barlow, and Jo Stewart have had a productive year.

Chris Pinto served as a Trustee until September 2008. He vacated his position as a result of attending college. Steve Pinto filled this vacancy. We also need to extend a special thank you to Chuck Davis and Steve LeBlanc for their ongoing assistance with the electrical, heating, computer, and sound systems.

The lawnmower broke down at the beginning of the season and it was beyond repair. The decision was made to delay the purchase of a new one in the hopes of either purchasing an inexpensive used one or receiving a donated one. While these options materialized, the trustees used their personal mowers. Finally, at the end of the season, a lawn mower was donated to the church. Special thanks to the Trustees that donated their lawnmowers, as well as to Benjamin Brock, Jonathan Brock, Chris Pinto, and Alex Pinto for their willingness to assist.

Mulch was donated to the church and spread amongst the bushes and flower beds. The Trustees assisted with the set up and dismantling of tables and shelves before and after the Church Fair. The boiler was cleaned and serviced, with no notice of needed work. However, during the summer, a valve became faulty, causing the boiler to overflow. This was repaired, with no additional issues.

The fire alarm box has an internal alarm that has gone off on occasion. The sensors throughout the church were checked and corrected, which has solved the issue. The emergency lights and fire extinguishers were inspected. Per instructions from the Fire Department, the emergency lights in the kitchen were repositioned.

Shoveling was done as needed, with sand and salt laid in for general use. The snow blower is still running and has had a busy 2008/2009 winter.

The structural damage on the front of the church was not repaired as anticipated. The work will be done in the spring of 2009. The estimate of \$12,000 includes the necessary repair, as well as painting the front trim. The structure is temporarily secured, with assurances from the contractor that it will hold up until the repairs are done.

The fee schedule for the general use of the church was revised this year, which includes a fee for the Sexton, who is responsible for keeping the church clean. New contracts for the church use will incorporate these new rates. Changes to existing contracts are also occurring. Changes are necessary to help defer the daily costs of running the church.

The property and workman's compensation insurances were re-evaluated to determine whether savings can be realized if we change Insurance Company. The final evaluation and recommendation will be made during the 1st quarter of 2009.

The Sexton has done an excellent job this year. We are grateful for her efforts in keeping the church clean and tidy for all that use the church.

The storage room for CE has been converted to a Youth Group Room. The new CE storage room is now located on the second floor. In terms of the Youth Group Room, all materials have been donated, including the furniture and the television. Some repair work is needed along the doorway, which will be done in the spring.

Respectfully Submitted

Richard Brock, Chairman, Board of Trustees

Music

Report of the Music Committee

The Music Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank our leaders for their faithful and talented contributions to our music program: Organist – Emily Knapp; Music Director – Bob Knapp; Assistant Junior Choir Director – Marion Harding. The congregation is truly blessed to have their musical leadership.

We were truly saddened with the resignation of Evelyn Boose from our music program. Evelyn had served as an unpaid director for many decades and will be sorely missed.

We would also like to thank all those who participate in the Junior Choir, Senior Choir, Bell Choir, and Band, as well as those who accompany and support these groups whenever necessary. Music is a vital part of our worship and your efforts enable us to truly 'Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord'.

The Music Committee, in their search for a new Hymnal, selected the First Congregational Church of Houston publication "Hymns of Truth and Light" as our new Hymnal. Your Music Committee has worked to distill down the 74 suggested hymns to 57 hymns that will be included in our 64 page bound-in Supplement to that Hymnal, along with 1 Phil Southwick prayer, a brief history and a drawing of our Church. The new Hymnals should be available in time for Easter.

In June the 'World's Most Dangerous Church Band' provided entertainment for the Strawberry Social.

Music is so important during the Advent and Christmas season. We continued the tradition of having our Brass playing before Worship during Advent. On December 14th we celebrated our third/second annual Outdoor Caroling event, with 20 joyful voices we walked around Georgetown center caroling and having an all around good time, returning to the Church for hot cocoa and homemade cookies.

Our music groups are always looking for additional members. The only requirement is your desire to 'Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord'.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Rawlins, Chair

Guild

Report Of The Women's Guild

We held our first meeting of the year at the end of February when we worked on baby quilts for children in crisis situations. The end result, with much guidance and extra work from Millie Gangloff, were three boxes of twenty-five quilts shipped to our local missions distributor. We learned later that many of our quilts went to India where there was a great need for this kind of comfort.

Judi Rocheleau, Outreach Advocate for Ruth's House in Haverhill, was our guest at the March meeting. Most of us were surprised to learn of all the help Ruth's House offers to those in need in many of our surrounding communities. Our members made a generous donation that day to this wonderful mission, as well as voted to make a donation to the Senior High Youth mission project for the homeless.

The Guest Social this year, held in April, was a big hit with members and guests from various organizations. Seventy women gathered for tea, goodies and entertainment by actress, Rita Parisi, as she portrayed a woman of means in the Edwardian era. Rita engaged the audience with her stories and encouraged questions. Her answers were given in the character she created. It was a thoroughly delightful afternoon.

As spring came to a close, we enjoyed a luncheon at Leah Mae's Tea Room in Haverhill. It also serves as a consignment store, and all of the furnishings in our new "Heritage Room" came from this shop. The Guild has completed furnishing the room (located off of the "Long Room") and it is for all Church members and friends to enjoy. All we ask is that food and drink not be taken into the room. We thank members of the Board of Trustees for painting the room and wallpapering a border. Members of our group, Isabel Gammon and Vivian Rasmussen, gave much time and attention to this renovation. Future plans are to refurbish the shelving, add glass doors, and display archival objects.

In May we said goodbye to the Marean family, Sara, Eric and little Zeph, as they moved on in their ministry. We expressed appreciation for the attention they gave to us as a group, and wished them well in a new calling.

"Creating Miles of Smiles" was the subject of the September meeting, presented by photographer, Lisa Bartlett. Lisa told of her trip, with the Rotary International, to Columbia where she served as official photographer to record the good works of doctors and nurses who treated children with cleft palate deformities due to vitamin deficiencies. Her stories were inspiring, and again our members made a generous contribution to this ongoing Rotarian project.

We explored Georgetown's past, with the help of Joe & Beverly Knapp at the November meeting. They brought a terrific slide show of old photographs, many of them involving our church's history. And finally, the year ended with a warm and hospitable Wheelerbrook Farm Christmas party, hosted by Barbara Morehouse in December. Instead of gifts for each other, we gave socks to Ruth's House, numbering 125 pairs.

We welcome women from our church fellowship, as well as their friends from the community, to join us for afternoon meetings during the fall and spring months. These gatherings are described in the monthly Church Newsletter. This report serves as a way to say "thank you" to all who have contributed quilting supplies, and coins and bills to the ongoing Penny Bowl collection at the Coffee Hours for mission projects. We sincerely appreciate your support.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Chatterton, Secretary

IN MEMORIAM: Dorothy Shea

Mission Coordinator

Report Of The Missions Coordinator For 2008

Thanks to all for your contributions to the mission efforts and activities of our Church. Your time, talents, efforts and resources are much needed and greatly appreciated. Many opportunities exist on a daily basis for each one of us to make a positive difference in our local communities and beyond. The following are some of our mission activities for the year while additional activities are reported by other groups, committees and/or boards:

- The Church School Valentines' Candy and Craft Sale raised funds for Heifer International.
- The Lenten Offering was divided with 80%, or \$855.20, being directed to the Reserve Fund and 20%, or \$213.80, to the Diaconate Fund.
- In April a donation was made to Habitat for Humanity to aid Lawrence fire victims. We donated \$225, of which \$100 was contributed by the Diaconate.
- Offering collected for One Great Hour of Sharing in May was \$262.00.
- During the summer the Diaconate approved \$100 to help fund a two-week missionary trip to China for a local family.
- Newsletter information for various events: Earth Day in April; Hike for Habitat for Humanity in NH and Milford, MA, in June; and Emmaus, Inc.'s "Cycle for Shelter" in July.
- Non-perishable food items, gift certificates and checks were collected Children's Sunday and Thanksgiving Sunday for Emmaus House in Haverhill. Food was critically low.
- In October we participated in and raised funds for the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center 17th Annual "Walk Against Violence" (\$380.00) and the First Annual Crop Walk (\$100) to raise awareness of and support efforts to end hunger and poverty locally and internationally.
- In November I attended a meeting at Maple St. Church sponsored by the Essex Association and the Mass Conference Team to End Homelessness.
- The Advent offering was divided with 50% being allocated for food gift certificates for local families in need and 50% directed to the Reserve Fund.
- Christmas gifts were donated to H.O.M.E. (Homeworkers Organized for More Employment) in Orland, ME, for children who would otherwise not receive gifts.
- Contributions to the Massachusetts Conference UCC for funding of outreach programs were 5% of our weekly pledges for a total amount of \$4,056.13 for the year.
- Offering collected for Neighbors in Need was \$309.00.
- Church contributions were made to the scholarship fund at Andover Newton Theological Seminary, \$300.00, and the Essex Association fund for in-care students, \$400.00.
- Donations were made to stock the Church Pantry for those in the community needing a helping hand.

Please let me know of any suggestions, ideas or thoughts you may have for future mission activities/projects we might pursue. Quoting English Evangelist John Wesley, "Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the souls you can, in every place you can, at all the times you can, with all the zeal you can, as long as ever you can."

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Townsend

Fair

Annual Church Fair – International Fair October 24 & 25, 2009

Co-chairs: Michelle Brock & Deb Lamoureaux

Another successful fair has come and gone. Our entire church family has to be thanked for their hard work and dedication to our biggest fund raiser of the year.

This year our “International Fair” had some outside help from the gorgeous weather and “Georgetown Days” who decided to run their weekend long activities on the same weekend and included our fair as the kick off to the weekend.

Once again our favorite committees were present and accounted for.... The Pie Machine - a formidable bunch to be around, just don't get in their way! The White Elephant – the most tireless team in the group! The Lunch Bunch – as usual, a well oiled machine! And of course the Saturday Night Blue Plate Special – who did so well, they barely had enough for themselves! These along with our other teams, the Country Store, Baked Goods & the Cookie Walk (sorry, not enough funnies to go around!) All are the best the church has to offer without them the fair would cease to exist.

This year we added a mother & daughter tea with two sold out sittings!

After many successful years of church fairs, this year it was decided by the committee to change the format slightly. This year outside handicraft vendors were invited to join our fair. These vendors were selected by the quality and type of product they were selling. The vendors paid for their rental space and tables. Each vendor donated an item to our raffle.

We have received positive feed back from many of the vendors who have told us they will return again this year.

We have decided to co-chair the fair for another year so we can get the vendor portion of the fair fully integrated into our format. We are hoping this will grow and grow using all the available space our church has to offer. Our goal is to make The First Congregational Church of Georgetown a local hub for quality crafters.

Thank you all for your generous love & support.

Michelle & Deb

Flowers

Flower Committee

An icy crust covers the church gardens, but in the frozen stems of last years blooms, it's not too hard to imagine next year's colorful blossoms. The first crocuses and daffodils will be poking up in another few months, and we have the flowers on the Communion table every Sunday to remind us that even in the dead of a New England winter, it's warm somewhere else. We would like to thank everyone who has helped to bring the nature's beauty into our church by donating flowers for the Communion table: the Kennedy family, the Sheehan family, Janice Murphy, Roland Spofford, Lynn Cowles, Emily and Bob Knapp, and Joan and Donn Chatterton. We also thank those who donate to the poinsettias and Easter flowers in memory of loved ones. These lovely plants grace the sanctuary, then go out into the community to brighten the lives of those who are unable to join us on a regular basis.

The gardens around the church continue to flourish, and we even made progress in the war against the weeds thanks to a generous donation of bark mulch from the Country Gardeners. Thanks go to Bob Eaton for pickup and delivery and the Pinto and Brock clans for spreading it around the flower beds. A few more small bushes and shrubs have found their way into the flower beds around the church, and with time and patience should reward us with spring flowers and foliage.

As always, we extend an open invitation to anyone who would like to help with flowers for the Communion table. It doesn't have to be anything fancy – a bouquet from your garden or the local supermarket, the first blooming branches of forsythia or pussy willows, or the loan of a pretty houseplant or silk arrangement are all greatly appreciated. Although we love it when someone volunteers for a whole month, a week here and there is great, too! Just let us know in advance when you'd like to help out. We also welcome monetary donations to purchase flowers. If you would like to donate any amount in memory of loved ones or to honor someone special, just put your donation into the collection plate and label it for flowers.

Once again, we extend our thanks to all who have brought the beauty of flowers to the inside and outside of our church this past year.

Sincerely,

Michelle Brock and Jaime Krenn

Social

Report of the Social Committee/Hospitality Team

The Social Committee (Kirsten and Janice) have somewhat combined with the Hospitality Team (Deb Lamoureaux and Laura Zalewski) to continue the church's work in welcoming new families, guests and members to our congregation.

The Social Committee helped facilitate several funeral collations this past year. We thank all those church members and friends who provided refreshments for the families as well as their time in helping out.

We welcomed Rev. Deb with a special fellowship hour in September and thank you to the Board of Christian Education for their special cake welcoming Gloria Webster, our new CE Director in November! We also sponsored a "Sunday Soup" luncheon for one of our after-church congregational meetings and plan on several more in conjunction with the Interim Team this winter. Plan your soup recipe now and prepare to taste some great recipes!

Our Fellowship Hall continues to be used by many. In addition to Coffee Hour on Sundays, many scout troops and community groups are using our church for their gatherings. This leads us to Hospitality...

The Hospitality Team is working vigorously to invite and welcome new families and members to our church. We sent out invitations to our Advent and Christmas services to all new 2008 Georgetown residents. We hope to be seeing some of these new folks in our church soon! Please be sure to invite your neighbors and friends to join us!

New pew cards have been ordered and should be available soon. We would like to thank Barry Games for his kind donation in purchasing these new cards. If anyone has any ideas (and energy) to help us in our endeavors to remain an open and welcoming church to any and all, please see one of us!

As always, we are constantly looking for help with Coffee Hour on Sundays. Please consider giving a few hours of your time to help set up one coffee hour. We are always complimented on our "goodies" and need the entire congregation's help to continue our weekly Fellowship Hours.

Sincerely,

Kirsten Davis
Janice Murphy
Social Committee Coordinators

Kirsten Davis
Janice Murphy
Deb Lamoureaux
Laura Zalewski
Hospitality Team

Interim Steering

Report Of The Interim Steering Committee

An Interim Steering Committee was established in late December 2008, and members of this team were invited to participate by the Diaconate. The primary purpose of this team is to serve as a confidential support and advising group for the Interim Pastor, to monitor the progress of Interim Tasks, and to act as a communications link between the Interim Pastor and the congregation. The Interim Pastor and/or Interim Steering Committee will provide monthly status updates to the Diaconate and Cabinet.

The team elected Cheryl Gould as its chairperson. Cheryl will be responsible for leading the team as well as interfacing with Reverend Deborah Adams, the Cabinet, and the congregation throughout the interim period.

Over the past three weeks, the team has met several times. The initial focus has been on organizing a series of reunions that were officially named "Back For The Future...NOW." These reunions are intended to lay the ground work and foundation for a new pastoral leadership. We have invited the church congregation and friends to attend these reunions through a series of communications including: announcements during worship services, in weekly service bulletins, in the monthly newsletter, and direct mail invitation.

For the next four months, we will continue to make preparations for the reunions that are already scheduled for January 18, and February 8, as well as future ongoing ones.

Over the course of 2009, and Interim Period, we will devote our attention on identifying, prioritizing, and supporting the Interim Tasks that need consideration.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Gould, Nancy Aberman, Allan Barlow, Karen Chiklakas, Donna DeSisto and Steve LeBlanc

UCC Delegate

Report of the UCC Delegate

The duties of the UCC delegate include the following: representing the First Congregational Church of Georgetown at the annual meetings of the Essex Association, including voting on the annual budget and matters of importance to the Association; representing our Church at ordinations of area ministers; and representing our Church at Ecclesiastical Councils.

Attending Ecclesiastical Councils is one of the most important duties of the UCC Delegate as it helps to ensure the future of the Church. Ecclesiastical Councils are gatherings of Area lay delegates and pastors to examine the fitness of an in-care student for ordination. In-care students are individuals who have finished their course of study and have been working with the Association's Committee on Church and Ministry to prepare a lengthy paper that summarizes their background and faith journey, their personal theology, and their place in the wider UCC Church. I would like to thank both Janice Murphy and Emily Knapp who attended several Ecclesiastical Councils with me (in Janice's case—twice, since one was rescheduled for lack of a quorum!) I very much appreciated their interest in the process and the fellowship they offered.

As delegate, during 2008, my activities were as follows:

- attended four Ecclesiastical Councils
- attended one ordination
- attended the annual spring business meeting of the Essex Association, and accompanying workshop on the topic of Public Relations
- attended the annual fall meeting of the Essex Association which was on the topic of *Green Discipleship*; I attended the individual workshop about how our churches can save energy; I also attended a training on the duties of UCC delegates

In addition, I have been elected to the Board of Directors for the Essex Association. In that capacity, I attend a monthly meeting. I served on the program planning committee for the annual fall meeting, and I am currently Chairperson of the By-laws Revision Committee. I have been enlightened as to UCC polity and to the many ways in which the Association supports and encourages all of the churches in our area.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Aberman, UCC Delegate

Stewardship

Report of the Stewardship Team

The Stewardship Team would like to thank all the members of the Church community for their generosity this year. We have continued to reach out to our members and UCC hierarchy for guidance during this interim period.

This past year, the Stewardship Team attended a UCC regional conference with other UCC congregations to share ideas about giving. Team members found this conference extremely useful. Not only did we share helpful tips, but there was also a general consensus from our table gathering that we are not isolated from our brethren during these difficult financial times.

This year's stewardship focus was on our many missions. We would like to thank our speakers this year; Chris Comiskey, Dianne Townsend and Susan Stead. A special thanks to Susan who stepped in for Marion Harding during her time of mourning. It is a shining example of how our Church family comes together during hard times.

The Team also brought back the Church Golf Tournament. A number of members and friends participated in the fun and memorable experience.

Let the light shine through to others in the community about the wonderful deeds that abound from our Church and may we look forward to a fruitful year!

Blessings,

George Comiskey, Tim Clift and Richard Aberman

Finance

Report of the Finance Committee

A great big thank-you to all who contribute to this church. Your continued support keeps this church and it's ministries a vital part of Georgetown and beyond. The Finance committee would also like to thank JoEllen Fielding & Peggy Smith for the amount of time and effort they devote to their respective positions as Collector and Treasurer. These are tough, detail oriented jobs which they continue to cheerfully perform. Finally, a special thank-you to Dave Smith, not only for assisting Peggy, but also for producing our Lenten & Advent envelopes.

We were happy to begin 2008 by welcoming Tim Clift as our newest member. His investment expertise is a much appreciated addition. 2008 turned out to be a very tough year, financially. Like many of you, the church was hit hard by our economic down-turn. Our investments declined in value more than 28% or approximately \$105,000. Additionally we needed to withdraw a little over \$21,000 to make up the difference between what we took in to run the church and the actual costs.

The church finished the year with a current expense deficit of nearly \$40,000, despite the fact that we saved some \$25,000 by not paying for ministerial leadership for 4 months. Our income was down almost \$17,000 when compared to 2007.

The Finance Committee is also concerned that our Quantity of pledgers and regular givers has declined by half since 2003. Expenses, as you may have suspected, continue to rise every year. Our aging facility, long overdue for renovation, again received only absolutely necessary attention. Our proposed budget, cut to the bone, is some \$75,000 out of balance. The only way to cut further is to make some drastic changes, which will be very difficult to restore once they are made. With input from the cabinet, we decided to "limp" along for another year on the backs of our endowments as we look for divine inspiration.

We are optimistic that, with our fresh start with Rev. Adams, we will grow our church family and find additional opportunities to raise capital. We trust, with God's help, that we will meet this challenge.

Respectfully submitted,
George Desrochers Tim Clift Robert Knapp
Lay members of the Finance Committee

Collector

2008 Collector's Report

2008 Collection Plate

Description	Number	Pledged	Collected	Unpaid
		\$	\$	\$
2008 Pledges	71	77,870.00	65,693.00	12,177.00
2007 Pledges			847.00	
Regular Contributors			13,747.50	
2009 Pledges			0.00	
Loose Cash			3,407.00	
Church School			7.00	
Stewardship Total	71	77,870.00	83,701.50	(12,177.00)

2008 Pledges by Range

\$	Qty
1 - 300	11
301 - 600	18
601 -1000	10
1001-1500	15
1501-2000	6
2001-3000	8
3001-4000	2
4001-5500	1
5501-	0
Total	71

\$ 77,870.00

2009 Pledges by Range

\$	Qty
1 - 300	7
301 - 600	14
601 -1000	11
1001-1500	12
1501-2000	2
2001-3000	7
3001-4000	2
4001-5500	2
5501-	0
Total	57

\$ 67,543.00

Respectfully Submitted,

JoEllen Fielding

Collector

GIVING TREE FUNDRAISER 2008

	# of envelopes	amount on envelope	amt. coll.
Heating- Gas	1	327/month	
Heating-Gas	2	75.00/week	75.00
Pipe Organ Maintenance	1	500.00/year	500.00
Telephone	3	31.00/week	124.00
Telephone	2	134.00/month	268.00
Heating- Oil	3	26.00/day	78.00
Heating- Oil	2	187.00/week	627.00
Electricity	3	75.00/week	550.00
Electricity	2	325.00/month	
Easter Carnations			
Office Supplies	2	230.00/month	230.00
Office Supplies	3	60.00/week	120.00
Rubbish disposal	1	300.00/year	
Rubbish disposal	5	25.00/month	125.00
Piano tuning			
Water	4	25.00/month	100.00
Punch for coffee hour	2	10.00/15.00/20.00	70.00
Sprinkler Maintenance	2	300.00/year	300.00
Sprinkler Maintenance	2	30.00/month	90.00
Sunday school supplies	3	5.00	10.00
Sunday school supplies	3	2.00	26.00
Coffee hour supplies	3	10.00/15.00/20.00	125.00
Elevator Maintenance	3	36.00/wk	147.00
Elevator Maintenance	2	158.00/month	608.00
Totals	54	\$5,160.00	\$4,173.00

Treasurer / Budget

2008 Financial Report and 2009 Budget

The following pages contain a basic breakdown of our church's income and expenses for the year as well as the proposed 2009 budget.

Each category has 4 columns of figures.

The first column (2007 Actual) shows what we received & spent in 2007

The second column (2008 Budget) shows what we planned for 2008

The third column (2008 Actual) shows what we actually took in & paid out in 2008

The fourth column (2009 Budget) shows our plan for 2009

At the top of page 1 is a recap of our financial assets at the start of the year.

Following that is a listing of annual receipts.

Finally there is a review of our investment's performance.

We acquire capital from our investments two ways.

First, in dividends and interest, which are paid to us on a regular basis;

Second is Capital Gains. The various items (stocks, mutual funds etc.)

that we possess increase (hopefully) in value.

We only receive this if we "cash in" our investments.

The second page lists all of the ways we spent our money.

Beginning page 3 is a recap of our financial assets at the end of the year.

The second section demonstrates the annual results.

95 % of pledges and 100% of all other non designated income
are used to keep the church running.

5% of pledges, a portion of special collections, and 100% of any direct
appeals or fund raising is donated to those in need. (Missions)

A portion of special collections and our
investment's income is set aside for our future.

When expenses exceed income, (We wish that was "If" instead of "When")
we must dip into our savings to meet the short-fall.

The last section on this page explains where we do the dipping.

Page 4 presents the various Funds & Endowments that make up the church's assets.

The Finance Committee:

Tim Clift Robert Knapp George Desrochers
Collector: *JoEllen Fielding* Treasurer: *Margaret Smith*

2008 Financial Report and 2009 Budget

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>2007 Actual</u>	<u>2008 Budget</u>	<u>2008 Actual</u>	<u>2009 Budget</u>
<i>Church Assets 1/1</i>				
Checking Account	19,512.73	15,256.12	15,256.12	1,007.05
Investments	429,852.86	392,147.15	392,147.15	265,695.12
TOTAL Assets	449,365.59	407,403.27	407,403.27	266,702.17
<i>Receipts</i>	<u>2007 Actual</u>	<u>2008 Budget</u>	<u>2008 Actual</u>	<u>2009 Budget</u>
Collection Plate	110,617.04	110,400.00	85,445.50	89,550.00
<i>Pledges, Regular Givers, Loose Collect</i>				
Special offerings/donations	14,657.00	13,850.00	20,767.00	15,025.00
<i>Advent, Lenten, Memorial etc.</i>				
Fund Raising	15,770.11	12,600.00	17,651.62	17,239.88
<i>Church Fair, Youth Groups etc.</i>				
Mission Giving	2,078.01	1,300.00	1,117.00	950.00
<i>Neighbors In Need, Disaster Relief etc.</i>				
Use of Facilities	12,860.00	12,564.00	11,210.00	13,175.00
<i>Theater Group, Weddings, Sr. Center etc.</i>				
Investment Dividends	14,578.44	12,750.00	13,592.64	9,679.00
<i>Payments from our investments</i>				
Other	3,183.00	1,100.00	7,059.03	6,245.94
<i>Reimbursements, refunds etc.</i>				
TOTAL Receipts	173,743.60	164,564.00	156,842.79	151,864.82
<i>Investments</i>	<u>2007 Actual</u>	<u>2008 Budget</u>	<u>2008 Actual</u>	<u>2009 Budget</u>
Investment Capital Gains	-4,658.33	20,200.00	-105,397.49	15,225.00
<i>Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds, etc.</i>				
<i>This can go up or down</i>				
Investment Dividends	14,578.44	12,750.00	13,592.64	9,679.00
<i>Same as Receipts</i>				
NET PROCEEDS Investments	9,920.11	32,950.00	-91,804.85	24,904.00

2008 Financial Report and 2009 Budget

Disbursements	<u>2007 Actual</u>	<u>2008 Budget</u>	<u>2008 Actual</u>	<u>2009 Budget</u>
P Salary	69,957.36	71,758.08	51,443.63	68,847.19
A Salary & Housing				
S Insurance, Tax & Pension	30,073.37	31,273.69	25,548.20	30,531.12
T Health Insur., Soc. Sec., Pension				
O Reimbursed Expenses	2,142.63	2,000.00	1,879.01	4,142.00
R Continuing Ed. Auto & Business Exp.				
Staff	33,746.17	37,136.45	35,878.75	47,146.05
Office Mgr, Sexton, Organist etc.				
Office Expenses	5,295.39	3,651.54	3,220.57	3,250.00
Office Supplies, Copy Machine etc.				
Utilities	19,589.89	19,673.00	19,347.74	19,455.00
Electricity, Telephone, Gas, Oil etc.				
Maintenance	8,782.75	13,125.00	9,082.68	19,850.00
Snow Rem., Cleaning Sups, Elevator etc.				
Improvements	0.00	2,200.00	3,923.18	1,500.00
Insurance	14,305.50	13,906.00	16,486.72	17,000.00
Liability, Comprehensive, Worker's Comp.				
Missions	12,393.35	9,381.00	7,540.13	7,532.50
To aid the needy, what comes in goes out				
Conference Dues	3,927.00	3,840.00	4,080.00	4,080.00
Support for the United Church of Christ				
Christian Education	7,451.09	5,000.04	2,162.35	4,048.42
Sunday School & Youth Groups				
Worship & Fellowship	2,545.01	2,600.00	8,172.36	3,475.00
Birthday Roses, Flowers, Punch etc.				
Other	838.08	2,578.73	3,381.08	4,209.88
Music, Finance exp., Miscellaneous etc.				
TOTAL Disbursements	211,047.59	218,123.53	192,146.40	235,067.16

2008 Financial Report and 2009 Budget

<i>Church Assets 12/31</i>	<u>2007 Actual</u>	<u>2008 Budget</u>	<u>2008 Actual</u>	<u>2009 Budget</u>
Checking Account	15,256.12	4,404.55	1,007.05	1,000.00
Investments	392,147.15	369,639.19	265,695.12	197,724.83
TOTAL Assets	407,403.27	374,043.74	266,702.17	198,724.83
Net Change in Assets	-41,962.32	-33,359.53	-140,701.10	-67,977.34
<i>This will differ from the gain or loss for the year as capital gains or losses appear here and any unpaid obligations do not.</i>				
<i>Yearly Gain or Loss (-)</i>	<u>2007 Actual</u>	<u>2008 Budget</u>	<u>2008 Actual</u>	<u>2009 Budget</u>
Day to Day expenses	-44,328.56	-46,530.76	-38,995.49	-75,577.36
<i>Keeping the Church Open</i>				
Mission Expenses	-392.67	-1,243.79	-136.86	-993.86
<i>Helping those in need</i>				
Investing in our Future	7,229.84	-5,504.94	3,760.36	-6,282.70
<i>Saving for improvements or emergencies</i>				
NET Gain () or Loss (-)	-37,491.39	-53,279.49	-35,371.99	-82,853.92
<i>When our Income fails to cover current expenses, we take money from our savings and investments.</i>				
<i>Transfers for deficits</i>	<u>2007 Actual</u>	<u>2008 Budget</u>	<u>2008 Actual</u>	<u>2009 Budget</u>
Reserve Fund	18,063.13	10,859.53	9,347.71	2,943.75
<i>For Day to Day expenses</i>				
Local Aid (Dole) Endowment	962.22	23.23	0.00	839.93
<i>For Diaconate Fund</i>				
General Expense Endowment	19,237.59	0.00	7,128.27	824.74
<i>For Day to Day expenses</i>				
Housing Endowment	7,027.84	35,671.23	22,519.51	71,808.87
<i>To Offset Housing & other expenses</i>				
TOTAL Transfers	45,290.78	46,553.99	38,995.49	76,417.29

2008 Financial Report and 2009 Budget

12/31 Ending Balances

Equity & Liabilities	2007 Actual	2008 Budget	2008 Actual	2009 Budget
<i>What makes up our Assets</i>				
Capital Outlay Fund	11,627.24	9,804.37	6,917.88	7,640.26
Diaconate Fund	1,666.11	1,000.00	1,160.62	1,368.30
Heifer Project Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Memorial Fund	8,629.76	8,383.53	6,995.90	8,065.52
Renovation Fund	18,724.51	14,756.04	17,484.62	4,274.78
Reserve Fund	7,495.74	0.00	522.39	60.14
Fair Seed Money Fund	1,500.98	1,500.00	1,102.36	1,289.88
School Mission Fund	17.60	0.00	0.00	0.00
Youth Group Funds	225.04	0.00	348.42	0.00
Transition Day Fund		0.00	1,531.25	6,827.19
Southwick Star Is. Endow.	3,741.00	3,587.90	3,124.19	3,405.65
Expense Endowment <small>Combination of Henry Hilliard, Elizabeth M. Bateman, Bradstreet, Chester Brown, Fletcher Means, Jessie H. Bateman, Bertha L. Poole, Philip Driscoll & Alice Gurley, Elliott, Sara P. Wright and Baker Adams Endowments</small>	19,032.63	20,219.84	11,089.19	10,700.00
Local Aid Endowment <small>The Dole Endowment. For the "Poor of good habits of the Parish" Proceeds support the <i>Diaconate Fund</i>.</small>	11,608.33	12,309.20	10,907.80	10,496.30
Music Endowment <small>Combination of E.E. Pingree, Beth Arsenault, Bill Rasmussen, Dominic DeFilippo, and Mina Hartman Endowments</small>	7,187.03	7,635.34	6,753.31	7,018.55
Housing Endowment	315,909.90	294,847.52	198,764.24	137,563.79
Remaining Liabilities	37.40	0.00	0.00	0.00
	407,403.27	374,043.74	266,702.17	198,710.36

Funds are for dedicated purposes. Money has been raised or donations accepted with the understanding that they will be used for the stated purpose only.

Endowments are special donations to the Church, with the stipulation that the original amount be invested but never spent. The Church may use the proceeds. We reinvest 10% of the dividends & interest back into the endowment to help it grow. Capital gains are left in the endowment but are available should the need arise.

To have our **Assets** work for us, our **Funds** and **Endowments** are invested in higher yield accounts. We currently use A.G. Edwards and the United Church Foundation to handle this for us.

Nominating

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

I want to thank the members of our Committee: Pat Barlow, Michelle Brock and Marion Harding. We regret that we are bringing to the Annual Meeting a number of unfilled positions on committees and boards. We will continue working to bring in people to fill these positions.

We have become aware that perhaps our Bylaws call for more members than are actually needed on each of the boards/committees, and recommend that a future Bylaw Revision Committee look at the possibility of downsizing these requirements in keeping with the size of our church. Reverend Deborah has pointed out that our committee numbers are more in line with a 250-member church! It has been suggested that our church officers and all our committees/boards have assistants or vice chairs in order to broaden our leadership. Creating new positions is difficult when we have so many positions to fill on our standing committees, while also having a number of delegated members and friends serving ad hoc committees.

We thank all those who have faithfully served and are leaving leadership positions this year. And we are grateful to those of you who have agreed to either take another term, or are going on a committee/board for a first term.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Chatterton, Chair

Report of the Nominating Committee 2008

The Nominating Committee nominates the following Church Officers (*) and Committee/Board Members (* or **) to be elected at the Annual meeting of the first Congregational Church of Georgetown

***The following are elected for a 1- year term**

Moderator	Tom Stewart*	Treasurer	Peggy Smith*
Clerk	Emily Knapp*	Collector	JoEllen Fielding*
		Asst. Collector	Vivian Rasmussen*
Auditors:		Jeff Moore*	
Coordinators	Ushering	Donn Chatterton* & George Comiskey*	
For:	Missions	Diane Townsend*	
	Social	Kirsten Davis* & Janice Murphy*	
	UCC Delegates	Nancy Aberman*	
	Flowers	Jaime Krenn*	
	Honorary Historian	Chris Comiskey*	

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Robert Knapp (2010)	Tim Clift(2011)	TBD (2012)*
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SAFE CHURCH ADVOCATE Pam Sheehan (2010) *

*The following are elected for a 2-year term & restricted to 2 terms or **elected to fill a vacancy for the last year of a 2-year term & restricted to 2 terms.*

DIACONATE

Gladys Kneeland(2010)	Allan Barlow (2011)*
Chuck Davis (2010)	TBD(2011)*
Betty Bruce (2010)	TBD(2011)*
Cheryl Gould (2010)	TBD(2011)*
Tracy Southwick (2010)	TBD(2011)*

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Lauren Kalfin(2010)	Kirsten Orender(2011)*
Michelle Wilson(2010)	Joanne Kelly(2011)*
Karen Young(2010)	TBD(2011)*

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jo Stewart(2010)	Alan Gould(2011)*
TBD(2010)*	Rich Brock(2011)*
Jeff Gillen(2010)	Steve Pinto (2011)*

MUSIC COMMITTEE

Dwight Southwick (2010)	Sharon Lee (2011)*
Pam Sheehan(2010)	Katy Pelletier(2011)*

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

TBD(2010)	Marion Harding(2011)*
Pat Barlow(2010)	Joan Chatterton(2011)*

Respectfully Submitted

Joan Chatterton, Marion Harding, Pat Barlow and Michelle Brock