



2013 Annual Report
First Congregational Church
of Georgetown, UCC

Sunday, January 26, 2014

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

WARRANT

January 24, 2013

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, February 3, 2013, 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 teams and officers of the Church, except for the sections entitled, "Finance Team Reports" and "Nominating Team Report" or take any other action in relation thereto;

Article II: To hear and act on the report of the Finance and Committee in regard to the 2012 financial operations and the 2013 proposed budget, and to approve a budget for 2013 , or take any other action in relation thereto;

Article III: To see if our Congregation's Membership will vote to adopt version 5.0 of it's Constitution and Bylaws, or take any other action in relation thereto;

Article IV: To see if our congregation's membership will vote to allow the Nominating Team to stagger initial terms of service for those called to serve under the new version 5.0 of Our Constitution and Bylaws, or take any other action in relation thereto;

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

Article VI: 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;

Michelle Bridges, Church Clerk

Pastor's Report

Rev. Lorraine G. Edwards

*And we know that all things work together for good
to those who are called according to God's purpose. Romans 8:28*

I thank God for this past year of pastoring the First Congregational Church of Georgetown and ministering with you all! Our congregation celebrated many important events this year, strengthened the bonds of community, extended God's love to our community, and deepened our spiritual journeys together. The year offered many challenges, but these were embraced and addressed by the congregation joining together as one. With each day, sharing our best skills, we truly became a team.

In 2013 we began with my installation in the church with a service full of music, thanks to Emily and Bob, and celebration. People came from other churches, and from the community, to honor this covenant between First Church and me.

In worship we tried different innovations, while maintaining some of our most meaningful traditions. Our Lenten, Easter Sunrise, and Easter season services were a powerful expression of our Hope in Christ. Our church welcomed seven new members in May, after they participated in the new members' classes. During the summer services, we met on Wednesday evenings down in Fellowship Hall. There we began to integrate digital resources into the services with the assistance of Dwight Southwick and Chuck Davis. The Orender family donated a new barbecue to make it possible for us begin the services with a shared church barbecue dinner. I also spoke with the Superintendent of the Georgetown School System to offer her insight in what we had available to help out students, including our food pantry, which has allowed us to help more families in need. A generous donation of an AED machine led to many in the church taking CPR training following a service to make our church a safer place for all the groups who use it.

September started with an outstanding Rally Day where J.T. Turner delivered a lively and meaningful talk. October we redesigned World Communion Sunday, asking people to "travel the world" as they moved around the church sampling breads from different world traditions. I was also invited to be part of a healing ministry in the Essex Association, where four churches will hold healing services each quarter of the year. I took part in the first service at the Rowley Congregational Church. November began with the service of remembrance where we lit candles and held up the people of the church who have passed away during the year. We also celebrated, during church, the completion of Connor O'Grady's new lit and

large church sign for his Eagle Scout Project. What a blessing the many volunteers and donations for the sign were for us! Now we are proud and loud on the roadside. We also had a successful Ecclesiastical Council for Skip Walker where our many church members, Discernment Team, Ladies Guild, and Deacons joined together in all the steps necessary to make the Council succeed. That is a major accomplishment for the church that furthers its support of ministry in this world. Stewardship led the services in November with moving speakers and new ideas for the fiscal well-being of the church. The Community Thanksgiving Eve Service that we reinvigorated last year continued at the Groveland Congregational Church this year with our church music team, choir and me participating. The evening collected both money and canned goods for the feeding of the hungry in our community. In December our community created the drama "Martin the Cobbler", the Christmas Pageant, and the Christmas Eve service of carols and candlelight to a full congregation.

Pastoral visitation with members in the hospital, convalescing and homebound has been a steady component of my ministry this year, and I am especially grateful to the Deacons for their support. The Deacons, led by Janice Murphy, have been fantastic in their ability to carry out their duties with fewer numbers as part of our new By-Laws, demonstrating the true caring and commitment they have for our church. The workless suppers fundraiser by the Deacons created a gathering nearly every month where we enjoyed good food and great company. It has been an honor to work side by side with them. Our church took part in Georgetown Days this fall to help put us out in the community while raising money for the church. What a blessing they have been to the church!

Throughout the year I also attended and conferred with the church's team members and groups including Christian Development, Finance, By-Laws, Deacons, Council, Stewardship, Property, Ladies Guild, and the Book Group. Our church Moderator Chuck Davis, the Church Council and all of the Church's teams and groups have used great dedication and creativity in pursuing the missions that are entrusted to them in leading this church. Building up the presence of Christ in this world is only possible with the strength of commitment and joy of spirit that you have consistently shown.

This year I worked with Stewardship to broaden its base by pursuing multiple avenues of income, grants, gifts to the church, cell tower use, and fuel diversity which have been reviewed, accessed, and updated. This is a multiple year process to bring this church in line with the most current non-profit systems for fundraising.

Many people have worked diligently for church fundraising to help the budget, to extend our mission work, and to share their wonderful gifts and skills with others in a way that also served as great community building events! Thanks to Emily Knapp for the Strawberry Social, Michelle Bridges for the Church Fair, Tracy Southwick for the Craft Center and Janice Murphy for her fundraisers. And thanks to all who have volunteered time and donations to make it possible for the church to pursue its fiscal goals and commitments.

This year I extended my professional presence beyond the walls of the Church in several ways. I continued as the Chaplain of the Georgetown Fire Department, and in that role I offered prayers for the Memorial Day observance, marched in the parade and was part of the Fire Safety Open House at the station in the fall. I also attend the Tuesday night training at the Fire Station whenever possible.

During this year I led a six-week Cub Scout program with Rick Clough on *God and Family*. Getting to know the scouts and enrich the program with activities for the them was fantastic! I also offered the Blessing for the Blue and Gold Dinner for the Scouts, talking with scout leaders and parents. Thanks to Jeff Fitzpatrick, Rick Clough, Sharon Lee and Michelle Bridges and all the scouting leadership that our church sponsors. This is an important part of how this church connects with our community.

As part of a presence in the wider Massachusetts United Church of Christ, I have been become a member of the Essex Association clergy group Community of Practice recommended by the Massachusetts Conference to pursue excellence, attended many Ecclesiastical Councils, Ordinations, and Installations in the Essex Andover Associations, serve as a board member of the Massachusetts Conference of Congregational Ministers, a group that has been active in both training and enriching clergy since the 1700's. This group offers training and classes of the highest caliber to clergy in churches throughout the state. I have also participated in the Confessing Christ clergy group for faith development. During this year I have met with the church and ministry of Essex Association, U.CC. to support Skip Walker in his discernment process. Our church hosted the Essex and Andover Board meeting where I, along with Chuck Davis, Bob Knapp, Allan Barlow, and Peggy Smith discussed with them our church and held up our new By-Laws process.

This year I pursued classes that would help strengthen my ministry at First Church. Gordon College offered free classes that I enrolled in the field of youth: "Teenagers Matter" by the author of the book by that title and professor Mark Cannister. Gordon Conwell Seminary offered a two day program on refreshing church leaders by the renowned writer and speaker Paul David Tripp. It was an opportunity to speak with church leaders from across the nation.

As part of becoming a Chaplain in the Massachusetts Fire Chaplain Corps, I continued going to classes by the MFCC across Massachusetts and at the Fire Academy. One class was a two day program taught by specialist Paul Volper on stress management and assessment for safety professionals. This class held the newest training in the crisis intervention work that these public safety people encounter. In the summer, Michelle Brock and I went to a day long training and information class on the Stephen Ministry, in preparation of creating a Stephen Ministry at this church. I presented to the Ladies Guild a talk on women and the early church which was provocative in its discussion. Other new programs include "Mancave Ministry", a program to bring men of the church and community together over breakfast.

All the work I do would not be remotely possible without the supportive and talented staff of First Church: Marilyn Crosby as Office Manager, Emily Knapp as Organist, Robert Knapp as Music Director, Rachel Edwards as Sexton, and the volunteer staff JoEllen Fielding as Collector, Kristen Arsenault as Bookkeeper, my Newsletter Ladies, and my Pastoral Team Susan Stead, George Comiskey, and Carol Sheehan. We welcomed our new office manager Marilyn Crosby, who has brought her many wonderful skills and Christian spirit to the daily life of this office. We are blessed.

The transformational work of so many in 2013 has begun the important changes required by the new By-Laws and the mission of outreach to bring the church to new levels, focusing on improving our church's stewardship and finances, and with a church community of friendship in Christ.

In Christ's Spirit

Rev Lorraine Edwards

Church almanac notes:

Funeral services were held this year for:

Alberta Rogers

Dorsay Fawley

Marjorie Brooks

Richard Kwapniewski

Karla Szkutak.

Helen Snow

A wedding service was held for the Wallace Family.

Vow renewal ceremony for the Brocks' 25th Anniversary.

No Baptisms were performed this year.

New members this year were:

Rick and Tricia Clough

George Comiskey

Scott Edwards

Ed Fredette

Mary Ann Hunt

Nicole Mumby

Moderator

2013 has been a year of change for The First Congregational Church of Georgetown. We adopted our new Team structure at our 2013 Annual Meeting, and have been working with that new structure. While it was not largely different than how we had been operating, some of the new elements took adjustment. The Council (formerly Cabinet) is considerably smaller (8 members versus the former 12-14), but is able to focus on the issues requiring its attention. Each of the Teams have more independence and function well. Volunteers, beyond Team Members, are the key to making our teams function effectively. We had many people step up and add their help to various tasks and functions. As we move into 2014, we will be relying on volunteers even more. I hope more will step forward and see the value of assisting teams and activities.

Our Office Administrator, Michelle Brock, chose to move on to another opportunity. We thank her for her several years of capable service, and her assisting us through our transitions. We welcomed Marilyn Crosby as the new Office Administrator. She has begun to implement a new database which should streamline communications between the pastor, church office and the congregation.

We had many exciting events during the year. The Strawberry Social, under the capable leadership of Emily Knapp and Janice Murphy, was held in June. It unfortunately rained, but was well attended and enjoyed despite the downpour. The Harvest Fair was held in October under new leadership. Changes were made this year moving the White Elephant items to the sanctuary (among the pews), making more room for craft vendors on the first floor. We had several great meals and the usual incredible food table, and added some excitement on the lawn of the church as well. It was a great time to connect with fellow parishioners, the community, and was a successful fund-raising endeavor.

During the year the Deacons have continued hosting a number of "Workless Suppers" where we attend a local restaurant, purchase our meal and provide a contribution to the church. These were, and continue to be, well attended and a good means of connecting with each other in a social setting without time pressures of normal daily life.

Our food pantry has continued to be a focus for our local mission outreach. We know that it is being well used and that the donations are truly appreciated. We continued our association with Heifer International and H.O.M.E., as well as other mission ventures.

We mourn the passing of several members and friends during 2013. They served on committees and added to the life of our Congregation. Helen Snow, Susan Merrill, Merton Roberts, Thom Moore, Karla Szkutak and Dorsey Fawley will all be missed.

I would like to thank a number of people who made a significant impact on the success of the church in 2013:

- * Reverend Edwards, of course, who has guided us through worship and our spiritual journey. She has brought new thoughts and ideas to our congregation.
- * Our Music staff, Bob and Emily Knapp who have continued to provide and guide our exceptional music program throughout the year.
- * Marilyn Crosby and Michelle Brock (present and former Office Administrators, respectively) ,
- * Rachel Edwards (Sexton) who continues diligently in her job despite fewer paid hours.
- * Michelle Bridges took over the helm of the Harvest Fair ably guided by Deborah Lamoureux who has run the event for the last several years.
- * Our Diaconate who has been very self-sufficient and motivated throughout 2013, providing service coverage during Reverend Edward's vacations and on other occasions.

I want to personally thank the families who regularly attend Sunday Worship, church school and our other youth activities. I have been moved by their dedication to the fact that they "get it": Living the Word of God in their actions and personal lives. They all share with each other, treat others with respect, and remain an inspiration for the congregation and community. This especially shone through during the Pageant (presented by the Church School) this year. The children, no-doubt, will grow up to become leaders and personal inspirations for others. My wish is that we can once again grow our youth participation, with more families making church attendance a priority again.

I look forward to 2014 with hope for our continued presence and impact on our community (both locally and far away), and that we can help others find God's goodwill and meaning. I think back to the slogan we adopted a few years ago; "Extending God's Heart and Hands", and how that will guide us in our planning and moving the church forward.

Thank you for your membership and participation in our community of God.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chuck Davis, Moderator

Clerk's Report

Membership Information

Members as of 12/31/2012	219
---------------------------------	------------

Deaths	4
New Members	7
Confirmation Classes	0
Baptisms	0
Weddings	1
Funerals	1
Transferred	
Inactive Status	21

Death of Members:

Marjorie Brooks
Merton Roberts
Helen Snow
Karla Szutak

Members as of 12/31/2013	200
---------------------------------	------------

Diaconate

As I reflect on the Annual Report I have to begin by saying thank-you to Reverend Lorraine Edwards, and the following members of the Diaconate Team for their teamwork, energy and enthusiasm:

Emily Knapp (Secretary and Scripture Reader Coordinator)

Donna DeSisto (Birthday Roses and Cards)

Dwight Southwick (Videotaping Worship Services)

With new Bylaws many of the teams have been streamlined so that there are fewer members. Our Minister and Diaconate have put in countless hours behind the scenes adapting to the new bylaws.

As we say goodbye to 2013 and welcome in 2014, the Diaconate would like to thank many members of our church family who have helped us this past year.

Christian Service: JoEllen Fielding and Karen Young

Hospitality, Student Discernment and Workless Suppers:

Gladie Kneeland and Tracy Southwick

Missions: Joan Chatterton, Marion Harding and Ladies Guild

Flowers: Jaime Krenn

Pastor Parish Relations: Susan Stead, Carol Sheehan and George Comiskey

Stewardship: Richard Aberman, George Comiskey and Sylvia Johnston

Ushers: George Comiskey and Barry Games

Music: Dwight Southwick and Bob Knapp

Telephone Communicator: Peggy Smith

Delegate: Skip Walker

Thank you to our Communion and Christian Service helpers!

Thank you to our Organist - Emily Knapp, and to our Choir Director/ Band Director - Bob Knapp for their dedication and commitment.

Jaime Krenn is our flower coordinator. If you are interested in providing flowers on the altar for Sunday Worship please contact Jaime. Jaime also tends to our Church garden which provides vegetables for our Food Pantry.

The following is a summary of the year's events:

January:

- * A joyous musical installation was held for Reverend Lorraine G. Edwards. Our choir, band and bell choir provided wonderful music.

March:

- * On the 10th we had a reception for former Office Manager Michelle Brock was held.
- * **Lent:** A special thanks to Steve Edwards for another season of Georgetown Abbey. Our journey continued with the Crawley Family and Staff of Georgetown Abbey. Thank goodness Matthew is walking again, Mr. Bates is out of jail and we will not forget Sam Orender's wonderful rendition of Branson.

- * **Maundy Thursday** was observed with a service of communion, scripture and music.
- * **Easter morning** greeted us with a Sunrise Service at Camp Leslie and breakfast prepared by Pam Sheehan and helpers.
- * **Easter Worship** was inspirational and joyous. What a treat it is to see the children scramble for the Easter eggs after worship. Easter Plants were delivered to members of our congregation by the Diaconate and helpers.

April:

- * Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the tragedy at the Boston Marathon. Our church was open the evening of the 15th and the following day for anyone who felt the need to pray, light a candle or reflect on this terrible tragedy. On April 22nd George Comiskey rang our church bell to observe one week after the tragedy.
- * New member's classes began.

May:

- * Welcome to new members:
Mary Ann Hunt
Scott Edwards
George Comiskey
Trisha and Rick Clough
Nicole Mumby
Ed Fredette
- * On May 19th we welcomed Rev. Marie J. Lucca as our guest minister.

June:

- * Chris Comiskey and the Diaconate led us in worship on June 30th. Chris shared some history of Georgetown.

July-August:

- * Our Wednesday evening worship services started in Fellowship Hall. Thank you to Kirsten Orender for donating a grill. Each service started with "Grill and Chill". Hot dogs were provided or worshipers could bring their own items to grill before worship.

September:

- * Sunday Services returned.
- * Our Church had an information booth on Georgetown Day. We also held a bake sale that was a success.

October:

- * World Wide Communion Sunday: Our congregation "traveled around the world" sampling communion bread from around the world.

November:

- * Congratulations to Skip Walker for passing his Ecclesiastical Council.
- * Community Thanksgiving Service was held at the Groveland Congregational Church. Many churches in the area participated in this service.
- * Our Sanctuary was beautifully decorated for Christmas by members of the Diaconate and many helpers.

December:

- * Due to a snowstorm Caroling was cancelled on December 12th.
- * Poinsettias were delivered following worship on December 22nd.
- * Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Carols and Lessons was a very moving service.
- * On the 29th the Diaconate led the worship service with singing of many Christmas Carols and sharing some of the history of the Carols.

Thank you again to Reverend Lorraine Edwards and the Diaconate Team. Our church is truly blessed to have such hard-working people.

Please contact a Diaconate Team member or Reverend Edwards if you hear of a concern or need in our congregation. We would like to hear something many times than not at all.

Respectively Submitted,

Janice Murphy
Diaconate Chair

Christian Development

The Board of Christian Education had a very busy and successful year in 2013. Our goals are to offer opportunities for church members and their families to enrich their Christian Education through fellowship, small gatherings, and classroom participation.

Heifer Project - What is Heifer?

- * It's a gift of milk every morning for a malnourished child.
- * It's a gift of up to four gallons of milk a day so an anxious parent can sell the extra to pay for their child's food, clothes, school and medicine.
- * It's a gift that brings generations of renewed hope for an impoverished village as each family fulfills its promise to pass on the Gift of offspring.

In February, we raised almost \$500 as part of a candy sale. The money raised allowed the Church School to purchase many animals for Heifer.

Easter Sunday - After the Sunday worship, an Easter egg hunt occurred on the front lawn of the church. Children, both young and old, enjoyed searching and collecting the many eggs that were scattered on church lawn.

Graduation Sunday - During Graduation Sunday, which marks the end of the Sunday School year, we honored our graduates by presenting them with a key chain which included an inscription that stated 'If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matthew 17:30.' We wish them congratulations for their accomplishments.

Children's Sunday - The children and teachers of the First Congregational Church presented Life 101, a dramatization of the lessons Jesus was taught BEFORE his birth. During the play, the stage became a heavenly classroom, with scenes of Jesus attending preschool, elementary school, middle and high school, and finally graduation. The children have demonstrated a desire to act and to be a part of the Sunday service. We hope to offer more opportunities to showcase the talents of our children in the coming years.

Rally Day - JT Turner once again blessed us with his presence by dramatizing Christian stories as we welcomed in the new Christian year. During the Rally Day service, backpacks were blessed, hoping that God's presence would guide and nurture our children and adults throughout the coming year.

Coffee Hour - The Sunday School sponsored a coffee hour in the fall of 2013. The children made various types of cookies and snacks. The 5-7th grade students also met at the church the day prior to make their treats together. Many cookies, cupcakes, brownies, and other treats were made that day, with many laughs and fellowship shared by all.

Christmas Pageant

The Church School students presented 'A Christmas Story' for the annual Christmas

Pageant. While following the traditional story about the birth of Jesus, the children were given the opportunity to expand their roles to showcase their talents and to bring some humor to their presentation. The children demonstrated both ambition and enthusiasm, which resulted in a wonderful pageant for all to enjoy.

CD Team, Teachers & Sunday School

Many, many thanks to those that continue to help with teaching our children about God and his Love. Our classrooms have had steady attendance over the year, filled with much joy and laughter. The curriculum is relatively simple to both prepare for and to teach, and your involvement and excitement about teaching our children is truly appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rich Brock, Chair

Church Book Group

The Church Book Group has been meeting for many years and continues to be a source of fun, fellowship and stimulation for all who attend. The group meets monthly, rotating locations among attendees.

In 2013 the following titles were read and discussed:

January:	Labor Day by Joyce Maynard
February:	The Paris Wife by Paula McLain
March:	A Moveable Feast by Ernest Hemingway
April:	The Hare with Amber Eyes by Edmund de Waal
May:	Caleb's Crossing by Geraldine Brooks
June:	That Old Cape Magic by Richard Russo
July-August:	no meetings
September:	And the Mountains Echoed by Khaled Hosseini
October:	The Year of Living Biblically by A.J. Jacobs
November-December:	The Burgess Boys by Elizabeth Strout

Anyone is welcome to attend these discussions, watch your newsletter for a list of 2014 gatherings and books. No registration is necessary. Consider joining in on the fun!

FCC Youth Group

The youth group of the First Congregational Church is for all youth to feel welcome, appreciated, and accepted as members of the congregation through involvement in their own age-group, as well as intergenerational activities. The hope is that the youth will be spiritually fed and strengthened in their relationship with Christ through fellowship, worship, and outreach, with the goal of witness and service to the community.

Below are the highlights of youth group activities that occurred during the past year:

Food Drive

The youth group raised funds by selling subs on Super Bowl Sunday. Ham, Turkey, and Italian sandwiches were made and distributed to the community. All proceeds were contributed to the church's food pantry.

Ski Trip to Mt. Sunapee

A small group ventured to Mt. Sunapee for a fun day of skiing. We hope to make this an annual event.

Fundraising

Our major fund raising events for the year were to host the intermissions for the productions put on by JT Turner. In addition to hosting intermission, the youth group also hosts a Spaghetti Dinner before the Saturday show. The youth assist in the preparation, distribution, and clean-up. The spaghetti dinners have become a tradition, and participation and support has grown over the last couple of years.

Car Wash

This was the first fund raising event for the youth group. Many cars lined up on a beautiful fall day to have their cars washed by some ambitious and very wet youth members and leaders. It was a fun event and a great way to kick off the new year.

Mt. Major

The youth group hiked Mt. Major in October 2012. Mt. Major has an elevation of 1786 feet and is located in Alton, NH overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee. We traversed the Mount Major trail on the way, admiring the tremendous views of the countryside. At the summit, we enjoyed each other's company and a bite to eat, while trying to stay warm as it was much cooler on the summit. After many pictures, we took the Brook Trail for the hike down the mountain.

Yankee Swap

The youth group celebrated Christmas with a Christmas party and Yankee Swap, along with a game of Christmas Charades.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rich Brock, Youth Leader

Annual Report of the Member-at-Large

The position of Member-at-Large on the Church Council was newly created in 2013 with the restructuring of our church governance. The “job description,” as stated in our church by-laws, is to *“communicate with the people in the congregation to understand their expectations and opinions and to share Council goals.”* The intention in creating this position was to create a direct line of communication between the congregation and the Church Council.

In order to develop a forum for this conversation, I instituted a *“Question of the Month”* to our church newsletter, beginning in May 2013. The questions are as follows:

May—*“How welcoming are we, as a church, to newcomers?”* This question received a comment from a non-church member who is a regular reader of our newsletter whose experience was not positive. An e-mail conversation then took place which resulted in a more positive feeling on his part.

June, July, August, September--*“In a few words, describe what you think the mission of our church should be.”* This question actually resulted in one church member’s comments (*“To nurture those in our faith community and to act on our faith by reaching out to others.”*) being adopted as our church’s mission statement at our September meeting.

October—*“What is the single most meaningful thing to you about FCC Georgetown?”*

November—*“What is your favorite church fair memory?”*

December—*“What does our church mean to the community?”*

The Church Council hopes, as this position evolves, to gather feedback from members to address concerns and interests.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Aberman
Member-at-Large

The Women's Guild

The Guild enjoyed an exciting 90th anniversary year! We happily carried out our mission of extending our hands in friendship and in service to our church. Beginning 2013 with our annual Winter Work Bee for Missions, we ended our spring events with a Super Guest Social & Tea, and luncheon outing in May.

During our work session last winter we put together a number of quilts for children in crisis in the Merrimack Valley. Ten quilts were completed and distributed through the Community Giving Tree in cooperation with social workers and visiting nurses in this area. At the same meeting, Penny Bowl change was counted and the funds turned into fourteen dozen diapers, also given to the Giving Tree.

Our March meeting was a delightful and insightful talk about Mary of Magdala by Pastor Lorraine. She imparted so much interesting history about Mary and other women of the Bible. Lorraine also put herself in the position of being asked for another program in 2014 and we eagerly look forward to it!

Ninety women enjoyed the May 3rd Anniversary Tea. They were from many area churches, and we were pleased to receive rave reviews of the afternoon that was highlighted by J.T. Turner's presentation of the life and writings of C.S. Lewis, and enhanced by a beautiful afternoon tea. The Bradford Tavern was the site of our annual luncheon outing enjoyed by twenty women.

The September kick-off meeting welcomed back Chris Comiskey, a popular speaker of our church's history. Chris spoke about the Rev. Charles Beecher era, coinciding with the Civil War. She took on the persona of Elizabeth Nelson, a church member whose husband was away fighting in the war. Our church history is an ongoing fascinating subject that Chris always presents in new ways.

Two more meetings rounded out our anniversary year. In November, Rev. Alice Erickson spoke to us about the new North Shore Grace Center Mission for the homeless. Alice is well-known to our congregation, having served as Supply Pastor in the past. We enjoyed renewing our friendship with Alice and learning about this important work. In December our Annual Holiday Party was held at the church with nineteen attending. We shared a hot luncheon and inspiring Christmas stories by Judy Robillard, and ended the afternoon with a carol-sing, beautifully accompanied by pianist, Mary Ann Hunt. And so 2013 came to an end with some sad losses and encouraging gains.

This report is dedicated to Helen Snow, a long-time member whom we lost early in the year. Helen contributed her time and talent to the church and to the Guild her entire life and is sorely missed. Also, long-time members Lillian Kelloway and Vivian Rasmussen have moved to nursing homes in Vermont and Danvers respectively. Marge Orender has moved to her daughter's home in Sanbornville, New Hampshire. All of these women are missed, and we hope their paths will lead them back to Georgetown on occasion. On a happy note, we have welcomed several newcomers to our meetings and also two "old-comers", Norma Jean Lawson and Lily Townsend who were Guild leaders in past years, and who now, finding themselves retired, have been free to rejoin us!

We enjoy our Guild friendships, and equally enjoy serving our church. The Guild's Cookie Walk at the Church Fair continues to draw customers by the droves. And, we were honored to host the Reception for Skip Walker's examination at the Essex Association's Ecclesiastical Council held in November. The Guild's monetary donations have included travel expenses for the Heifer Mission worship speaker in March; a donation to the Grace Center; funds and material aids to the Community Giving Tree and to Ruth's House. Please know that the welcome mat is always out for our church women and their friends!

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Harding & Joan Chatterton

Outreach Coordinating Team

From our annual **Heifer Project International** Fund Drive in March to the end-of-year's collection of gifts for **H.O.M.E.**, 2013 was a year of generous giving on the part of our church family. Continuing from last year, the first Sunday of every month is designated "**Pantry Sunday**". Everyone is encouraged to bring several items for our Church Pantry, located just outside the kitchen door. Following the 2012 holiday season, the Pantry was low and so in January we concentrated on re-stocking the shelves. Because of the blizzard on Valentine's Sunday, February's Heifer Sale and guest speaker, the Rev. Marvin Caldwell, was postponed until March.

Our Church School children loved shopping for Heifer animals! With a total of \$471 to spend, following an inspirational worship service with Rev. Caldwell, and an amazing after-church-sale featuring a variety of St. Patrick's Day goodies and crafts, the children put aside \$250 for a water buffalo (their first priority) that would go to an Asian family to plow the rice fields. Then they had fun deciding what animals they could choose to accompany the water buffalo! They decided to buy one sheep that will help a family make warm clothing for themselves and others; a honey bee hive that will increase a family's income when they sell their delicious honey; three hens that will lay hundreds of life-saving eggs each year; and with the remaining \$11, they bought one share of a pig! Our Heifer Sale last year is already helping to change the lives of families in many parts of the world.

During the spring months there were a number of helping-people projects: Before Easter, with the encouragement of Rev. Lorraine, we held a drive for good clean clothing to take to **Ruth's House**. Thirty bags of in-season clothing was delivered, and received with gratitude, from this Thrift Shop that helps struggling families in the Greater Haverhill community. They were also the recipient of the mission portion from our church's **Lenten Offering**. Then there was the **Shoeman Water Project Drive** where hundreds of gently used shoes were collected and sent to street vendors in South America and Africa. The affordable shoes help people who have nothing on their feet; the profits are shared by the vendors and organizations committed to clean water purification programs in communities around the world. **The One Great Hour of Sharing**, a UCC collection, is also a part of our spring missions program, unifying our UCC churches nationwide in this annual offering to assist overseas health, education, and relief projects. Finally in May, the Outreach Team sponsored a drive for **Church World Service blankets** netting funds needed to purchase sixty-seven blankets that are given to refugees of war or victims of natural disasters here and abroad. And in June, the Diaconate sponsored a collection for the **Boston One Fund** for victims of the Boston Marathon bombing.

Our annual fall outreach included the annual **UCC Neighbors In Need** national offering that assists with, and advocates for emergency assistance, the homeless, educational and justice programs in our country; a disaster relief collection for the Philippines; funds to the **Community Giving Tree** from our Advent Offering that helps to provide necessities to needy children of the Merrimack Valley; and our **Annual Children of H.O.M.E. Christmas Gift Collection** (at an estimated value of between \$1,800 and \$2,250). For many years Diane Townsend was our H.O.M.E. coordinator. She organized lists of children and their wishes, kept track of the returned gifts and made sure that Santa came to all the children of the impoverished community in Orland, Maine. We are indeed grateful for her dedication to this project and her organizational skills, and wish her much happiness in her retirement. Thank you, Diane.

The Women's Guild provided material aids for the **Community Giving Tree** (baby, and toddler quilts and diapers) and 130 pairs of socks for **Ruth's House**, along with monetary help for these organizations and for the **Grace Center Ministry for the Homeless** in Gloucester.

The total funds received for the ministries described on the first page of this report (the Community Giving Tree, Ruth's House, Neighbors in Need, One Great Hour of Sharing, Seminary Scholarship support, One Fund, CWS blankets, Disaster Relief, Heifer Project) totaled \$3,324. In addition, one of our endowments provided \$2,070 in local aid and assistance to our High School's Senior Celebration. Our church also contributes (\$2,588) to the UCC's Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) basic support of our Massachusetts Conference ministries, and shared with the national setting. OCWM funds come from our members' annual pledges.

In closing, we do want to return to the first paragraph of this report, to remind everyone of the on-going ministry of our Food Pantry. We are reverting to the original mission, that of providing non-perishables and paper products for the pantry. Recipients are urged to speak with the Church Office of their needs on Mondays and Thursdays before taking items. Gift cards (donated by our congregation) for perishable items will be given to recipients at the discretion of our Pastor and Office Manager.

Thank you one and all for your thoughtfulness, generosity, and truly caring hearts in supporting the outreach ministry of the First Congregational Church of Georgetown.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Harding and Joan Chatterton
for the Outreach Coordinating Committee

Fall Fair

OCTOBER 25th and 26th, 2013

This year's fair was a success! This was my first year as chairperson of the fair and I learned so much from taking part in the planning and set up of the fair which was instrumental to understand exactly how the "magic" happens..

I am living proof –"magic" does exist.. I witnessed it at this year's fair!

To the members of all of the committees that helped out again this year, thank you so much for coordinating all of your talents. Your creativity, teamwork and dedication made the fair itself fun and productive.

Let's Eat! The food this year was outstanding! We received so many compliments about the breakfast, luncheon and turkey dinner, everything was delicious. The Cookie Walk was a favorite with all the visitors to the fair!

The Consignment Boutique & White Elephant had steady foot traffic each day and what great bargains to be had!

We had over 25 vendors this year, some new and some returning, each vendor unique in their own way. A great assortment of artisans and crafts. There was some excitement going on outside of the church as well, where everyone enjoyed the DJ playing music and the frozen yogurt!

We were so fortunate to have the support again this year of local businesses and organizations in our community who contributed money, products and services for our raffles. We could not have achieved what we did without their willingness to support our efforts so graciously.

I am grateful to everyone that worked tirelessly to make this year's Fall Harvest Fair an outstanding success.

Michelle Bridges
Chairperson

Report of the Bylaws Revision Team

At the 2013 Annual Church Meeting Our Membership voted to adopt our new Constitution and Bylaws. Since then we have been working on developing policies to support our new Bylaws. These re-designed Policies are intended for computer viewing (and printout) and contain links for easy, rapid access to each other wherever applicable. Because of this new approach it will be necessary to make some very minor wording changes to the Bylaws and re-adopt them to keep everything consistent.

During 2013 we concentrated on creating a series of short, consistent policies which are intended to be easy to find and work with. We plan to have them on our Church's web site. Policies completed so far are:

- Amendments to Duties, Procedures and Requirements
- Paid Staff
- Amendments to Policies
- Purchasing
- Calling a Settled Pastor
- Removal of a Council Member
- Conflict of Interest
- Removal of a Pastor
- Group Meetings
- Voting
- Membership Meetings
- Voting Without Meeting

The Bylaws Revision Team:

Allan R. Barlow, Robert Knapp, and Peggy Smith
with substantial input from Rev. Lorraine Edwards

Report from UCC Delegate to the Essex Association

This year we combined our Essex Association Church and Ministry Committee with the Andover Association as an experiment on sharing the workload. This worked very well and it was voted this past fall (2013) to keep the Committee combined.

There have been several events this year including two wonderful events here at our church in Georgetown. Those events were the instillation of Reverend Lorraine Edwards and the Ecclesiastical Council of Lawrence W. Walker, Jr., "Skip".

The biggest issue that the Essex Association is facing over the next year or two is whether or not to combine fully with Andover Association. There is a committee that is in the process of exploring how members of the Essex Association feel about this. This committee was formed with the charge to not to try to suggest one side or the other, but rather to gather the feelings, concerns, and ideas of members of the Association.

Submitted by

Lawrence W. Walker, Jr. "Skip"

Hospitality

My how the year as flown by! It is simply amazing how our church family bonds together. We simply want to say thank you. Each and every week, someone (or two or three) have stepped up to bake goodies, bring yummys, and lend a helping hand. Our sincere thank you to everyone who helped! We had an abundance of help with other special celebrations which we couldn't have done without your generous support. Coffee hour after church is a warm and happy time with much conversation and sharing of the past week or anticipation of the coming week. The workless suppers were a huge success which we plan to continue in the coming year. Blessings to all for the year ahead and your contributions are truly what make this church a very special place to belong.

Gladie Kneeland and Tracy Southwick

Safe Church Team

The Safe Church Committee has many duties, but its most known task is completing CORI checks and establishing fitness to serve for those who are in contact with the children and youth of our church.

Due to the new I-CORI established by the Massachusetts Department of Criminal Justice Information Services, we are now able to complete CORI checks on-line and receive a response in a short time period. We have updated the CORI request forms to reflect the information required to complete the on-line process. Most recently, we have updated our Safe Church Policy, Procedures, and Guidelines.

In the last few years we have focused on being diligent relative to completing all required CORI checks. Thanks to Marilyn we have been doing very well with receiving completed CORI forms and being in compliance.

Our most current efforts are focused on updating our “key sign out list”, also required per the Safe Church Policy, Procedures, and Guidelines. An audit has revealed we have many keys that have been issued in the past were never returned by those who no longer have a need to keep possession of a key. We are hopeful that we can come up with way to regain possession of these keys rather than spend funds on new locks and keys.

As stated in the Safe Church Policy, Procedures and Guidelines: Section 3.3 ALL ARE INVOLVED: The ultimate safety and security of the Church family and its property are the responsibility of all church members and visitors. Everyone is asked to notify a member of the Safe Church Committee whenever any situation occurs regarding our Safe Church Policy. I am pleased to announce that there have been no reportable incidents at our church that I am aware of and this is due to the diligence of everyone involved with our church family.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Gillen

Stewardship

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

This year's stewardship message, representing efforts to increase the congregation's awareness of what means the most to people in life, can be easily found in the Church mission and guidance from God. We thank everyone for their contributions as the 3-year rebuilding plan has come to pass, and welcome future gifts of the time, talent and treasures towards the health of the First Congregational Church of Georgetown.

The Stewardship Team would like to thank Church Collector JoEllen Fielding for coordinating the annual Giving Tree effort this spring, which raised a whopping \$4,910 from 48 members of the Church! Also, we would like to thank JoEllen for her touching and emotional stewardship message during the fall campaign.

Other stewardship speakers this year included Skip Walker (Congratulations to Skip for passing Ecclesiastical Council) and Eagle Scout Connor O'Grady. Connor described his inspiration for donating a new sign in front of the Church that will be welcoming visitors for many years to come.

To date, we have received 50 pledges for a total pledged amount of \$68,280. We understand that pledging involves thoughtful prayer and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for this sacrifice.

It has come to our attention that many churches, like other non-profits, receive funding from outside sources for capital and general operating support. This year, the focus of the Stewardship Team will be to explore what corporate donor sources are available that support our Church's mission. May all of us pray going forward that these efforts will bear fruit and make 2014 a successful year!

Respectfully,

The Stewardship Team

Sylvia Johnston George Comiskey Richard Aberman

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING TEAM - 2013

Moderator: Chuck Davis (2014)

Clerk: Michelle Bridges (2016)

TREASURY TEAM

Robert Knapp - Treasurer and Chair (2015)

Peggy Smith (2016)

Megan Lichty (2014)

DIACONATE

Chair - Janice Murphy (2015)

Emily Knapp (2014)

Donna DeSisto (2014)

Dwight Southwick (2016)

Position Open (Volunteer Sought) - (2014)

CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Rich Brock (2016) (Chair)

Marion Harding (2014)

Karen Harris (2015)

PROPERTY TEAM

Deborah Lamoureaux - Chair (2014)

Jeff Litch (2015)

Lawrence "Skip" Walker - (2016)

Council at Large Position

Nancy Aberman (2014)

**Respectfully Submitted,
Gladys Kneeland, Chuck Davis**

