



2014 Annual Report
First Congregational Church
of Georgetown, UCC

Sunday, January 25, 2015

First Congregational Church

Annual Church Meeting January 26th 2014

Moderator: Chuck Davis called the meeting opened at 11:38AM.

Michelle Bridges: Clerk – distributed the attendance roster.

Reverend Lorraine called upon the opening prayer

Chuck Davis: Thanked all of the boards for their hard work and dedication.

Article: 1 was read:

To receive the reports of the individual Council Members & their teams and any others requested by the Council with the exception of the “2013 Financial Report and Proposed 2014 Budget” and the “Nomination Report”, or take any other related action;

Barry Gaines made a motion to move that Our Congregation’s Members vote to accept the reports of Council Members and their Teams and any others requested by the Council with the exception of the “2013 Financial Report and Proposed 2014 Budget” and the “Nomination Report.” Steve Edwards seconded the motion.

With no other discussion a vote was taken and the Motion carried.

Article: II was read:

To receive the 2013 Financial Report, to hear the Finance Team’s proposed 2014 budget, and to approve a budget for 2014, or take any other related action;

Bob Knapp reviewed the finances for 2013 and the budget information for 2014.

Kirsten Arsenault made a motion to move that Our Congregation’s Members vote to accept the 2013 Financial Report which includes both the Collector’s and the Treasurer’s reports, and to approve the proposed 2014 Budget. Joellen Fielding seconded the motion.

With no other discussion a vote was taken and the Motion carried.

Article: III was read:

To see if Our Congregation will, by a two thirds or more majority vote, amend Version 5.0 of the Constitution and By-laws by adding and deleting words as proposed in the document “2014 Proposed By-law Changes”, or take any other related action;

Peggy Smith made a motion to move that Our Congregation’s Members vote to adopt Version 5.1 of its Constitution and Bylaws which contains the added and deleted words proposed in the document “2014 Proposed By-law Changes” with said changes to become effective immediately. Bob Knapp seconded the motion.

With no other discussion a vote was taken and the Motion carried.

Article: IV was read:

To see if Our Congregation will, by a two thirds or more majority vote, continue for another year the two person increase in the Diaconate Team, or take any other related actions;

Janice Murphy made a motion to move that Our Congregation's Members vote to continue the two person increase in the Diaconate Team for the year 2014. Kirsten Davis seconded the motion.

With no other discussion a vote was taken and the Motion carried.

Article: V was read:

To receive and hear the "Nomination Report" and call persons to fill Council and Team vacancies, or take any other related action;

Steve Edwards made a motion to move that Our Congregation's Membership vote to authorize the Clerk to cast one Ballot in favor of electing the slate of Council and Team Members who have been proposed to serve terms of office under our Constitution and Bylaws. Bob Knapp seconded the motion.

With no other discussion a vote was taken and the Motion carried.

Article: VI was read:

To see if Our Congregation will, by a two thirds or more majority vote, amend the March 28, 2010 Special Meeting vote, by allowing the Property Team, with Council approval, to lease space in the church steeple and other necessary areas to any cell phone service provider for not less than \$2,000 per month or take any other related action;

Deb Lamoureux made a motion to move that Our Congregation's Membership vote to, amend the March 28, 2010 Special Meeting vote, to allow the Property Team, with Council approval, to lease space in the church steeple and other necessary areas to any cell phone service provider for not less than \$2,000 per month. Kirsten Davis seconded the motion.

With no other discussion a vote was taken and the Motion carried.

Article: VII was read:

To hear and act on any other business relative to Our Congregation and its property.

With no further business to transact the meeting Kirsten Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:55AM. Bob Knapp seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Bridges – Church Clerk

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

June 22, 2014

2014 SPECIAL MEETING WARRANT

In accordance with Our Congregation's Constitution and By-laws, the members and friends of The First Congregational Church of Georgetown, Inc. are advised that a Special Meeting will be held in the Church edifice immediately following the service of worship on Sunday, June 29, 2014 to act on the following articles:

Article I: To hear the report of the Finance Team;

Article II: To see if the Church will vote to amend the vote of the 2012 Annual Meeting, adjusting the endowed amount of the housing endowment to \$40,00.00 and continuing to allow the usage of the proceeds of this fund for more than just support of the Pastor's Housing Allowance, or take any other related action;

Article III: To hear and act on any other business relative to Our Congregation and its property.

By direction of Our Congregation's Council

Michelle Bridges
Clerk

Special Church Meeting 6/29/14

The meeting opened with a motion for Bob Knapp to be Moderator Pro Tem. Motion was seconded and passed. Another motion was made for Janice Murphy to be Clerk Pro Tem. Motion was seconded and passed.

Article I: To hear the report of the Finance Team:

Bob Knapp discussed the need to transfer \$20,000.00 from the Housing Allowance to the Church Budget.

Article 2: To see if the church will vote to amend the vote of the 2012 annual Meeting, adjusting the endowed amount of the housing endowment to \$40,000.00 and continuing to allow the usage of the proceeds of this fund for more than just support of the Pastor's Housing Allowance, or take any other related action:

Motion: Joe Rawlins made a motion to adjust the Housing Endowment to \$40,000.00. Motion was seconded and passed.

Article 3: To hear and act on any other business relative to Our Congregation and its property: No action taken.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,
Janice Murphy, Clerk Pro tem

Pastor's Report

Rev Lorraine G. Edwards

*Whatever your hand finds to do,
Do it with all your might.*

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Just as the pioneers set out to new lands with a vision for the future, we set out together in 2014 to build new programs and strengthen the bonds of our church life. The year saw church projects and passions put into place. Combining traditions with innovations has brought us to a level of excellence that showcases the talent and commitment of our people.

We began 2014 with team visioning as we looked toward forging the unique interests and personalities of our teams into a year of celebrating those qualities in church life.

In worship, we infused new ideas into worship in balance with our most meaningful traditions. During Lent, our youth offered skits in worship meant to highlight the purpose of the season. Our baptism and reception of five new members on Palm Sunday, candlelit Maundy Thursday vigil, lakeside Sunrise Service at the 4H Camp led by our Confirmands, the warm and delicious breakfast (with extras taken to the Emmaus House), and Easter Celebration service were a powerful expression of our Hope in Christ. We even included a special Blessing of the Sneakers for our Boston Marathon runners, as the runners raised money for cancer research.

In June we received five new young members through Confirmation. I want to take a moment and share with you how I was honored to meet and work with this amazing class. These Confirmands showed such a spirit as they participated in the Walk for Hunger in Boston, completed their volunteer projects for the Nursery and Food Pantry, and led the Sunrise Service and Confirmation Service. No one doubted the strength and spirit of these youth as they confirmed their baptisms and dedicated their lives to a Christian path. Our church has such a gift in these youth: Megan O'Grady, Nicole Hogan, Sam Knapp, Nicole Galley and Amanda Lee. The Mentors for the class: Gladie Kneeland, Bob Knapp, Kim Knapp, Pat Barlow, and Carol and Jenn Lutes shared the best of their faith and their character with our Confirmation Class.

During summer services, we gathered on Wednesday evenings in Fellowship Hall over dinner. One evening we hosted one of the quarterly healing services that we share with the Rowley, Newburyport, and West Gloucester UCC churches; this candlelit service of music by Ross Varney, confession with dissolving paper, anointing, and prayer embodied the healing ministry of Jesus.

September started with an outstanding Rally Day where our adults and youth put on skits that shared humor and purpose. We blessed the backpacks for the year ahead. October World Communion Sunday asked people to "travel the world" as we moved around the church sampling breads from different world tradition. November began with small colored candles lit in remembrance of the people of the church who had passed away during the prior year. Our Stewardship team led the services in November with moving speakers and new ideas for the fiscal well-being of this church. The Community Thanksgiving Eve Service that our church reinvigorated several years ago rotated to the Rowley Congregational Church this year, with our music team, choir, and me participating; the evening service's offering collected both money and canned goods for the feeding of the hungry in our community. In December, our church spread the holiday spirit with the Youth Fundraiser Dinner with Theatre, the Christmas Pageant, and who can forget the tears of joy that greeted the carolers as we sang for our homebound friends? We concluded the year with the Christmas Eve service of carols and candlelight in a filled church as we pondered the beauty of the poinsettias in the folk tale of Pablo and Maria.

Pastoral visitation with members in the hospital, convalescing and homebound continued to be a steady and significant component of my ministry this year. I am especially grateful to the Deacons for their support. Our head Deacon, Janice Murphy, has begun sending out post cards to invite people who are moving into Georgetown to come to our church, and we have welcomed new faces to our services. This church has been part of many funerals this year, where families were comforted and cared for in celebrations of life and the consolation of fellowship. The workless supper fund raiser by the Deacons created many gatherings for fellowship and shared evenings. The Deacons, under the leadership of Janice Murphy, have excelled in their expert carrying out of responsibilities as an expression of their dedication to the mission of this church. They leave me in awe at their abilities and talents. My ministry and our church have been blessed by their giving spirits.

Throughout the year, I attended and conferred with the church's various 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 engaged their time and talent 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 spirit that shines in their commitment and joy they have shown throughout the course of this year.

With the Stewardship team, we have pursued its goals of multiple avenues for income that include grants, gifts to the church, and cell tower use. In February, George Comiskey of Stewardship and I took a class from the Essex County Community Foundation on how to pursue grants. As a result, a Grants Team began this summer to formulate an information base to acquire available grants and assemble grant application materials. As Richard Aberman steps away from Stewardship after many dedicated years on the team, I want to express my thanks for his talented contribution to the church's Stewardship team throughout the years.

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 and outreach events! Thanks to Emily Knapp and Janice Murphy for the Strawberry Social, featured in a Georgetown Record article, Michelle Bridges who stepped up to create a new one day Spring fair in addition to the impressive two day fall fair she chaired this fall, Chris Litch with her amazing yoga classes, Janice Murphy for her fundraisers and the many people who have contributed gifts to the church this year. And a heartfelt thank you to all those 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 by being the Georgetown Fire Department Chaplain, a role in which I offered prayers for the Memorial Day observance and marched in the parade, took part in the September 11th observance at Georgetown Public safety, attended Fire Station trainings on Tuesday evenings, and helped with the Toys for Tots event. As part of being a Fire Chaplain I continue going to classes given by the Massachusetts Fire Chaplain Corps across Massachusetts and at the Fire Academy. One class was a two day program taught by specialist Tom Greenhalgh and Hayden Duggan, EdD on new approaches to Post Traumatic Stress Injury. I attended the two day Fire Chaplain Harris Conference training on meeting the needs of a religiously

diverse community. I traveled to Stowe, MA for the spring training for Fire Chaplains. This Fall I took part in a class for clergy and churches on suicide prevention by a professor at Gordon Conwell that was sponsored by the Raynham UCC Church. I was also honored this year to begin serving as Chaplain to the Georgetown Police Department at the request of Chief Donald Cudmore.

I attended the Blue and Gold Dinner for the Scouts, wrote letters of support for scholarships and references for those applying to different programs. I spoke with the Girl Scouts about our Food Pantry and sent a letter of thanks for their summertime garden project to provide fresh produce to our pantry. Thanks to Jeff Fitzpatrick, Sharon Lee and Jody Moore and all the scouting leadership that our church sponsors. This is an important part of how our church connects with our community. We also started an initiative to help some small businesses start up through our church in the belief that we should foster the economic health of our community.

As part of a presence in the wider Massachusetts United Church of Christ, I have been a regular participant in the Essex Association clergy group Community of Practice recommended by the Massachusetts Conference to pursue excellence. I have attended Essex Association meetings, this year focused on the merger of the Andover and Essex Associations. I serve as a board member of the Massachusetts Conference of Congregational Ministers, a group that has been active in both training and classes of the highest caliber to clergy in churches throughout the state. I attended Essex Andover Association monthly clergy meetings covering different topical trainings. I also participated in the Spring and Fall Essex Andover Association Meetings and the Massachusetts Conference UCC Annual Meeting in Sturbridge. And I provided vacation coverage for area clergy to help my colleagues take time away for renewal and restoration.

This year I pursued continuing education seminars to strengthen my ministry at First Church. At Gordon College I enrolled in a seminar focused on youth ministry addressing "The Juvenilization of Christianity", led by the author of the book by that title Thomas E. Bergler. My MCCM group offered a two day training on current issues of immigration. I have conducted classes for our Confirmation Class, our baptism families, our new members, our Ladies Guild (where we made 23rd Psalm bracelets along with discussion),

Lenten Series with the book "Return to Me", and our Advent Meditation Series. I thank you all for your support for these classes.

All the work I do would not be remotely possible without the supportive and talented staff of First Church: Emily Knapp as Organist, Rachel Edwards, and now Kim Knapp as Sexton, Marilyn Crosby as Office Manager and our volunteer staff of Bob Knapp as Music Director, JoEllen Fielding as Collector, Kristen Arsenault as Bookkeeper, our stalwart team of Newsletter Ladies, and my Pastoral Relations Team of Susan Stead, George Comiskey, and Carol Sheehan. For everyone's outstanding contribution and wonderful spirit, I give thanks! I want to take a moment and hold up Rachel Edwards for her years of faithful and able work as Sexton at First Church. Our church has benefitted from her gracious spirit and she will be missed.

Our church has found new ways to flourish in 2014, adapting to our new By-Laws changes, new missions of compassion and outreach, our new approaches to Finance and Stewardship, to become a church of outstanding welcome in Christ.

In Christ's Enduring Spirit-

Rev Lorraine Edwards

Pastor, First Congregational Church of Georgetown

Year of our Lord 2015

Church almanac notes:

Funeral services were held this year for:

David Bean

James Boynton, Sr. (member)

Donn Chatterton (member)

Elisa Eaton

Raymond Farnell

Marion Gatchell

Dolores Green

John Green

Lillian Kelloway (member)

Arthur Outran

Don Paddock

Joseph Sheehan (member)

Douglas Stewart

Baptisms performed this year for:

Juliana Capri Carpenter

Hudson James Murphy

Ryan Robert Quimby

Robert A. Rogers

New members this year were:

Toni Cassidy

Robert A. Rogers

Elisabeth Thomas

Christopher Watts

Gentiana Watts

Confirmation Class of 2014:

Nicole Galley

Nicole Hogan

Amanda Lee

Megan O'Grady

Samuel Perley

Moderator's Report

Chuck Davis

2014 has been a year of coming together at The First Congregational Church of Georgetown. Our Teams have adopted the new structure and have been empowered to move forward with their best ideas about fulfilling our Church's mission.

Reverend Edwards and the Diaconate have been exceptionally busy exploring new ideas in worship while maintaining the traditions. Worship participation has been good throughout the year with several new people visiting and returning.

We had many exciting events during the year. Michelle Bridges organized the Women's Day Fair in May which consisted of local crafters and merchants as well as some of our members. Due to its success another fair is planned again in May 2015. The Strawberry Social, under the capable leadership of Emily Knapp and Janice Murphy, was held in June. We had great weather and the turnout was wonderful. The Harvest Fair was held in October; attendance was great. We had several great meals and the usual incredible food table, and on Saturday had additional activities on the lawn of the church. It was a great time and was a successful fund-raising effort.

Council formed a team to investigate whether and how our church would become "Open and Affirming"; a thoughtful and prayerful process to be an all-inclusive church. They will be bringing a motion to adopt an Open and Affirming Policy to the 2015 Annual Meeting for adoption by the Congregation.

Our Youth activities and church school have seen a resurgence during 2014. The energy surrounding the children in attendance and the adults who shepherd them is incredible. I believe it is their infectious energy which continues to attract more participants and members to the congregation.

Our food pantry has continued to serve those in the community in need. Its use and donations have expanded. We continued our association with Heifer International and HOME, as well as other mission ventures.

We mourn the passing of several members and friends during 2014. All will be missed:

- * Donn Chatterton who served many positions within the church as well as a long term Moderator. I always remember Donn (and Joan) as the unofficial "cheerleaders" and greeters here at the church. They always made everyone feel welcome.
- * Jim Boynton who was active for many years and always had an interesting story to share.
- * Lillian Kelloway was an active participant in the Women's Guild.
- * Joe Sheehan was active in many aspects of church life.

I would like to thank a number of people who made a significant impact on the success of the church in 2014:

- * Reverend Edwards, of course, who has guided us through worship and our spiritual journey. She continues to grow with us and brings a peaceful presence to the Congregation.
- * Our Music staff, Bob and Emily Knapp who have continued to provide guide our exceptional music program throughout the year.
- * Marilyn Crosby - Our Office Administrator who keeps us all connected through communication.
- * Rachel Edwards who has been our Sexton for many years and who has moved on to another very rewarding job. Kim Knapp has assumed this position as of December 2014.
- * Michelle Bridges, who once again ran the Harvest Fair, of course assisted by the countless volunteers.
- * Richard Aberman and the ONA Ad-hoc team for their investigation of the "Open and Affirming" topic and bringing a recommendation to the Congregation.
- * All of our volunteer Team members who give so generously of their time and talent. It is our volunteers that allow our church to provide such a wide array of events and activities throughout the year.

All of our volunteers, members, visitors and youth make our community of God one of vibrancy and support. We are each other's church family cheering each other through the good times and supporting each other in times of hurt and crisis. We remember our slogan adopted a few years ago; "Extending God's Heart and Hands", and how this applies to our community. This includes our church community, our town, and the world we share with each other.

I look forward to 2015 with hope for more wonderful things that we can share with each other.

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 12/31/2013	200
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Deaths	4
New Members	5
Confirmation Classes	5
Baptisms	4
Weddings	0
Funerals	13
Transferred	0
Inactive Status	10

Members as of 12/31/2014	198
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In Memoriam
James H. Boynton
Donn Chatterton
Lillian Kelloway
Joseph Sheehan

Diaconate

As I reflect on my second year as Diaconate Chair I still feel truly blessed to be a member of this church. Thank-you to Reverend Lorraine Edwards, and the following members of the Diaconate for your teamwork, energy and enthusiasm:

Emily Knapp (Secretary and Scripture Reader Coordinator)

Donna DeSisto (Birthday Roses and Cards)

Dwight Southwick (Videotaping Worship Services)

Kristen Arsenault who “volunteered” to become a member of the Diaconate.

As we say goodbye to 2014 and welcome in 2015, the Diaconate would like to thank many members of our church family who have helped us this past year.

Christian Service: Kirsten Davis

Hospitality 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

Greeters: Nancy Aberman

Delegate: Skip Walker

Thank you to our Communion and Christian Service helpers!

Thank you to our Organist - Emily Knapp, and to our Choir, Bell and Band Director - Bob Knapp. Each Sunday morning we listen to your beautiful music. Thank-you for your 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 food for our Food Pantry.

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

January:

1/5 - The Diaconate led the worship service with the sharing of Christmas memories.

1/12 - Three King's Day. Thank you to our Kings: Eric Bratland, Brenden Comiskey and Steve Pinto.

February:

Confirmation Classes began.

March:

The Diaconate welcomed Kristen Arsenault as a member of the Diaconate Team. The Diaconate began to send out "Welcome to Georgetown" cards to people moving into town.

In addition to being the Chaplain for the Georgetown Fire Department, Rev. Lorraine Edwards was asked to be the Chaplain for the Georgetown Police Department.

April:

4/13 – On Palm Sunday we welcomed 5 new members:

Bob Rogers

Elisabeth Thomas

Chris and Gena Watts

Toni Cassidy

Our Church Family mourned the passing of Don Chatterton.

4/17 - A service of communion, scripture and music was held on Maundy Thursday.

4/20 - 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.

4/21- Eileen Schneider ran and finished the Boston Marathon. Congratulations, Eileen!

May:

5/4 - We welcomed Steve Edwards as a guest minister.

June:

6/8 - Confirmation Sunday. We welcomed Nicole Hogan, Nicole Galley, Samuel Perley, Amanda Lee and Megan O'Grady as members.

Our Church Family mourned the passing of Joe Sheehan.

6/24 - An absolutely beautiful evening for the Strawberry Social.

July-August:

7/9 - Our Wednesday evening worship services started in Fellowship Hall with the Ladies Guild speaking about their mission work.

8/13 - The Diaconate led the worship service, with the assistance of Gladie Kneeland with the congregation sharing early Church Memories

Our Church Family mourned the passing of Lillian Kelloway and Jim Boynton, Sr.

September:

9/7 - Sunday Services resumed.

October:

10/5 - World Wide Communion Sunday: Our congregation once again "traveled around the world" sampling communion bread from around the world.

10/12 - We honored Lorraine and Steve Edwards on Clergy Appreciation Sunday.

10/23-24 - Another successful church fair.

November:

11/2 - Remembrance Sunday was held with the lighting of candles in memory of loved ones.

11/25 - Community Thanksgiving Service was held at the Rowley Congregational Church.

Many area churches in the area participated in this service.

11/29 - Our Sanctuary was beautifully decorated for Christmas by members of the Diaconate and many helpers. New window candles and plant stands were purchased in Memory of Lillian Kelloway.

December:

12/7 - Our Church took part in the 375th Celebration of the First Congregational Church of Rowley.

12/14 - Caroling Around Town.

12/21 - Poinsettias were delivered by members of the Diaconate following a wonderful Christmas Pageant.

12/24 - A donation was given to the First Congregational Church of Rowley to help replace the gift cards for needy families that were stolen during their worship service on 12/21.

12/24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Carols and Lessons was a very moving service.

12/28 - The Diaconate led the worship service with the singing of many Christmas Carols and sharing some of the history of Christmas traditions.

Thank you again to Reverend Lorraine Edwards and the Diaconate. Our church is truly blessed to have such hard working people committed to the First Congregational Church.

Respectively Submitted,
Janice Murphy, Diaconate Chair

Christian Development

The Board of Christian Education had a very busy and successful year. 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, the money raised as part of the Valentine candy sale was directed to the Heifer Project, allowing the Church School to purchase many animals for Heifer.

Lent – During Lent, the older students performed skits during church service, providing a humorous perspective of the lessons that were taught over the course of the year. The skits that were performed included an Adam and Eve Tale, Ask Judy, A Samson and Delilah Tale, and Ask Judy Again. Our younger students delivered one line jokes related to Christian characters and events with the assistance of their teachers.

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 of the First Congregational Church presented the story of Three Trees, a dramatization of the lessons from Jesus when things don't seem to be going your way, always know that God has a plan for you.

The children also sang 'Jesus is the Only Way', 'L-O-V-E U God', and 'VIP' during the service.

Rally Day – Members of the congregation dramatized many of God's stories as we welcomed in the new Christian year. During the Rally Day service, backpacks were blessed, hoping that God's presence with guide and nurture our children and adults throughout the coming year.

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 and mentoring 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 Report

The Church Book Group meets monthly from September through June, with the exception of a joint November-December session. Members get together to discuss a book, selected by members. Sessions take place in member homes or at church. The group is open to all members and friends who are looking for a good read and some fellowship.

In 2014 the following titles were read and discussed:

January: *Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker* by Jennifer Chiaverini (hosted by Gladie Kneeland)

February: *The Leftovers* by Tom Perrotta (hosted by Pat Barlow)

March: *The Kitchen House* by Kathleen Grissom (hosted by Tracy Southwick)

April: *The Heist* by Janet Evanovich (hosted by Lorna Scullin)

May: *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens (hosted by Dee Wyatt)

June: *Daisy Fay and the Miracle Man* by Fannie Flagg (hosted by Nancy Aberman)

July-August: no meetings

September: *Hattie* by Anna Bozena Bowen (hosted by Kirsten Davis)

October: *The Talk-Funny Girl* by Roland Merullo (hosted by Dee Wyatt)

November-December: *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd (hosted by Karen Young)

Anyone is welcome to attend these discussions. 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:

SkyZone

The youth group visited Sky Zone, an indoor trampoline park. After a few hours bouncing around, we stopped at Putnam Pantry for some delicious ice cream.

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.

Fund Raising

Our major fund raising events for the year are 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.

Six Flags & Heifer Farm

The youth group closed out the season by venturing to western Massachusetts for a weekend camping trip. To celebrate the hard work, contributions, and fellowship of the youth group's activities, we spent the day at Six Flags amusement park, enjoying the various rides and each other's company. All youth and leaders wore fluorescent yellow 'THING' t-shirts. Not only were we highly visible, but also talked about throughout the park. The youth were asked about their t-shirts and which group they represented, which they proudly proclaimed 'We're with the First Congregational Church of Georgetown's Youth Group.'

In addition to visiting Six Flags, the youth group visited the Heifer Farm where they learned about the animals that the church purchases each year. We even had the opportunity to milk a goat.

Crop Walk

The youth group participated in the Danvers Crop Walk. Donations were received from the congregation, which was used to purchase food for those in need.

Mt. Major

The youth group hiked Mt. Major again this year. 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.

Church Fair – Bouncy House

The youth group sponsored a bouncy house on the church's front lawn during the fair. The youth assisted with the set up and take down of the bouncy house, as well as contributed their time to help supervise the younger children that used the bouncy house throughout the day. Their energy and willingness to help contributed to a very successful fair.

A Not So Normal Christmas

During the Christmas Season, the youth group sponsored a Dinner and a Show. The dinner was a spaghetti dinner to raise funds for the Youth Group. The Show was an original production directed by Stacey Fix, with one of our youth group member performing in the play. Transportation and companionship was provided to members of our congregation that also attended the show.

Yankee Swap

The youth group celebrated Christmas with a Christmas party and Yankee Swap, along with a few 'Minute to Win It' games and Christmas Charades.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rich Brock – Youth Leader

Respectfully Submitted,
Rich Brock, Youth Leader

Property Team

2014 was again a quiet year for the property team and the care and upkeep of our church. The ever present but invisible support team that keeps this church running has been diligent in its ministrations. Steve Pinto, Chuck Davis, Bob Knapp and Dwight Southwick have been invaluable and the church would not be what it is without them! - Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Some of the smaller projects that were completed this year are the replacement of 5 window sills, removal of all old paint from the building, maintenance of the sump pump & well, a well needed cleanout of the shed. Most of this was done on a weekend by a bunch of guys who thought the church's "honey do" list was more fun than the home list.

We are moving ahead with some of the grant funding available for the church. I met with the Historical Commission and got their support and approval to move forward with a proposal to the Georgetown Community Preservation Committee (GCPC). In November a formal project suggestion was submitted to the GCPC. They asked me to meet with them to discuss our needs. The Commission seemed receptive to the ideas for the replacement of the doors and windows. They have asked for a formal proposal which is now being worked on.

Our Sexton Rachel Edwards has stepped down and we appreciate all her hard work. Our new Sexton Kim Knapp hit the floor running just in time for Christmas week. Please thank both ladies for their hard work.

T-Mobile extended their Lease Option for another year (expires March 2015) and Verizon is still working on their building permit. Hopefully 2015 will be the year of the tower! We also became a Commissary for the Classic Hot Dog Co. using our church as their base of operation. Jim Conroy, the owner is also a handyman and will be helping us update our kitchen at no cost!

The church received a gift from Don Chatterton this year on his passing. He requested that new folding chairs be purchased. We now have 270 beautiful new folding chairs. The heavy old blue/black chairs and the odd-ball tan and maroon chairs were advertised on Craig's list and were immediately taken by another church at no cost. We are now looking for a home for all the metal folding chairs. The schools have been contacted to see if they might be interested.

Respectfully,
Deb Lamoureaux

Annual Report of the Member-at-Large

Nancy Aberman

A "Question of the Month" in our church newsletter, generated some responses, and the council took action in response to one comment. The questions were as follows:

- * January: *What is your faith background?*
- * March: *Thinking of FCC Georgetown, what are you most proud of?*
- * April: *Where do you see our church 100 years from now?*
- * May: *How were you welcomed (and by whom) the first time you came to FCC Georgetown?*
- * June: *What is your favorite part of the church service?*
- * July-Aug: *What are the important issues facing our church at this time?*
- * Sept: *Did you visit any other churches this summer while you were on vacation? What were your impressions?*
- * October: *What are some ways in which we can make our church attractive to families with children? How can we reach out to these families within, and outside, our church?*
- * November: *What is your favorite tradition at our church during the holidays?*
- * December: *What should our Church's 'New Year's Resolution' be?*

In response to March's question, members responded that our church has survived for over 200 years, and another reminded me that our very own church was the first church in the country to declare slavery illegal.

As a result of feedback from a member to May's question, the tradition of having greeters/welcomers at church has been reintroduced. The Member-at-Large is now coordinating greeters twice monthly (with the able assistance of Joan Chatterton; thank you, Joan!)

Other feedback concerned how we value our members and sparked a conversation among Council members regarding Church procedures as to how we follow up on members who stop attending church services.

In a separate, but related note, the Member-at-Large served on the Essex Association's committee to study a possible merger between the Essex and Andover Associations. To this end, a number of churches in the Essex Association were visited, and interviews were conducted. This was a great opportunity to see how other churches handle their governance issues.

I have been honored to have served as Member-at Large for the past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Aberman

The Women's Guild

The Guild began 2014 with their annual baby quilts work party for “at risk” babies, and counting Coffee Hour Penny Bowl change for missions, projects that benefit the Giving Tree, an outreach program that ministers to families of the Merrimack Valley who are experiencing hardships.

The March program, “Life on the River”, was a presentation from the Buttonwoods Museum of Haverhill. From the Pentucket natives to the residents of today, our guest speaker described the major role that the Merrimack River played in their lives. Rev. Lorraine spoke at our April meeting and facilitated a wonderful surprise project: the making of 23rd Psalm bracelets. Each bracelet bead represents a line in the Psalm, a gift that keeps on giving us inspiration.

Eighteen members gathered at the Bradford Tavern in May for our annual luncheon outing at which time we got to know each other a little bit better after sharing our histories, including where we grew up, our past church affiliations, and what we did for work in the past.

After a summer hiatus, we’ve enjoyed a number of guest speakers each month beginning with Faith Johnson’s poetry reading and story-telling in September; revisiting favorite children’s classics in October with Nancy Aberman, along with learning about the “new classics”! At our November meeting Marilyn Diehl, former school committee member, and town nurse, spoke to us about her life experiences in facing prejudice.

Our “share-the-cost” Christmas Party luncheon was held at the beginning of December, featuring Christmas stories and poetry told by Judy Robillard, and ending with a carol-sing, an inspirational way to begin the Advent Season.

Although we are a small group, we are devoted to our church, and to the friendships that are nurtured by getting together for sociability, learning and serving. The Cookie Walk, which we sponsor for the Church Fair, enjoys a huge popularity with Fair-goers, and turns a neat profit! The Diaconate asked Guild members to prepare the message for the July 9th summer service, and so we told personalized stories of our Church missions at sermon time. Our members also helped with three Memorial Service Receptions with food and floral arrangements.

The Guild’s outreach programs include gathering new socks and gently used clothing for Ruth’s House in Haverhill, and we continue to support the ministry of the Giving Tree in Boxford with our baby quilts and diapers donations. During this past fall we also sponsored a Sunshine Basket to assist with the Grace Center Ministry for the homeless. With the help of the congregation, we donated a large assortment of personal care items and first aid care to this cause.

Our meetings are always open to our church members and their friends. Please contact us for information or a copy of the program for this spring.

Respectfully Submitted by

Marion Harding and Joan Chatterton

Outreach Coordinating Team

There are many missions near and far, and we are inundated daily with letters soliciting our contributions! We are acknowledging this reality to emphasize our gratitude for your tremendous support of church-related missions. These missions, we are convinced, stretch the dollars we contribute, and faithfully serve those in need, with very little taken for administrative expenses.

Our on-going mission of supplying the **Church Pantry** had many helping hands this year from outside of our congregation. The Girl Scouts held a food drive devoted to our Pantry, as well as the employees of the Newburyport branch, Pentucket Medical Association. In addition, the Girl Scouts grew and provided fresh produce during the summer. We are grateful to our members who supply goods and grocery store gift certificates, and to other groups for continuing to support this ministry.

Everyone looks forward to the Valentine's Candy & Craft Sale, sponsored by our Christian Education Team that benefits **Heifer Project International**. We are wild about Heifer because it's fun for our Church School children to decide what animals will be purchased from sale money. Through this illustrious mission, animals are helping to change the lives of families in every corner of the world including the United States. Our sale, netting \$600, bought a variety working sheep, goats and chickens, providing families an income from wool, milk and eggs.

During the spring months we held a drive for good, gently used clothing for **Ruth's House** in Haverhill, a Thrift Shop Plus. The "Plus" means that Ruth's House is more than just a thrift shop. It is a life support for many families living "on the edge" who are given free clothing for each season of the year, for each family member, and are assisted with household necessities. They were also the recipient of the mission portion from our church's **Lenten Offering**. The **One Great Hour of Sharing**, United Church of Christ collection, is also a part of our spring program which focuses on assistance for overseas health, education, and refugee relief projects.

September brought new challenges to the Outreach Program of our church. Our Team sponsored a Sunshine Basket to benefit the **Grace Center Mission**, a day program for the homeless in the Greater Gloucester area that is an ecumenical endeavor by the community of faith. The basket overflowed with donations of personal care products and first aid items with an estimated dollar value of over \$300. And, for the first time in several decades our church reached out to sponsor the Youth Group's participation in **Church World Service's CROP Walk**. It is the oldest walk in the country to raise awareness and funds for hunger, and this year the Maple Street UCC church in Danvers picked up the CROP Walk banner and began the process of building participation again for the walk. We thank our Youth Group and their leaders for their willingness to "walk the walk". Proceeds from our Church Family's pledges of \$385 not only served Church World Service, but it also brought in funds for **Family Promise**, an Essex Association mission where some churches are providing overnight shelter for the homeless. (Twenty-Five percent of the Walk's proceeds always benefits a local organization.)

The Women's Guild continues their mission work for the **Community Giving Tree**, a local organization devoted to the needs of children in struggling Merrimack Valley families. Social workers identify the needs and go to the Giving Tree for client assistance. During this past year the Community Giving Tree helped over 6,000 local children with clothing, cribs, strollers, new diapers and backpacks. The Guild donated 12 hand-made quilts and purchased 42 dozen diapers from the Coffee Hour Penny Bowl collection. They also donated new socks for Ruth's House and funds for Emmaus House.

On World Wide Communion Sunday, we take a UCC sponsored collection for **Neighbors In Need**, a national offering that assists with, and advocates for educational and justice programs in our own country, and provides assistance in times when disasters strike.

The mission portion (\$694) of the Advent collection went to **Emmaus House in Haverhill**, a multi-faceted organization with several satellite sites serving families who find themselves homeless through no fault of their own. The typical family is one where their children are enrolled in school, they are good tenants, most are employed or enrolled in educational programs, but are not earning enough to keep a roof over their heads because of the economic recession and lack of jobs that pay livable wages. Over the last three years Emmaus has placed over 500 families into permanent housing. That is their mission.

We commend our Church Family for their overwhelming support for the mission of **H.O.M.E.** at Christmas. Seventy-Five beautifully wrapped and thoughtful gifts, representing the wishes of many children, were banked under the Narthex Christmas Tree, waiting for the H.O.M.E. van that assists Santa! The monetary value amounted to hundreds of dollars, but no one's counting. We are blessed with the knowledge that our gifts brought much happiness to a deprived, small community in Northern Maine. Please stop by the Missions bulletin board to see the pictures!

Most of the missions, mentioned in this Report, have been written up in Newsletters. However, there's the quiet work that takes place behind the scenes: local aid from discretionary funds; assistance for Seminary students, and Pantry cash donations, all of which amounted to \$1,400. And, through the United Church of Christ, we contributed to **Our Church's Wider Mission** in the amount of \$2,649. These funds come from our Church family's annual pledges.

In closing, we'd like to note that the First Congregational Church has another ministry. Not only do we give financially, and through material aids, but we give our Church Home over to many other non-profit organizations in town! It is their "home", too!

Sincere thanks for the good will and generosity that you give and that you share.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Harding and Joan Chatterton for the Outreach Team

Fall Fair

October 24th & October 25th

This year's fair was a success! This was my 2nd year as chairperson of the fair and I truly enjoyed every minute of the fair from the marketing and planning to setting up!

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.

Once again the food was amazing!! 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! The layout was the same as last year and we got many compliments on how easy it was to shop!

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 bouncy house and this year we had some vendors joining us as well!

The raffles would not have been such a success without the support again this year of local businesses and organizations in our community who contributed money, products and services for our raffles.

I am once again proud to have chaired such an amazing event! A deep hearted thank you to everyone that worked tirelessly to make this year's Fall Harvest Fair an outstanding success. Total profit generated from the fair was \$13,127.34.

Michelle Bridges
Chairperson

Women's Day Fair 2014

Woman's Day Fair!



Saturday May 17th 2014

First Congregational Church Georgetown



10:00am to 6:00pm

**Celebrate your womanhood
& shop with over 20 vendors!**



TABLES AVAILABLE!

For more info: Michelle 978-361-5646

womensfair2014@gmail.com



It all started with a vision... an idea.. a fair to welcome spring and welcome the community to meet some wonderful artisan and vendors and shop!

The 1st Annual Women's Day Fair debuted on Saturday, May 17th.

The fair had everything out fall fair had, but on a smaller scale.. We had artisan and vendors that were not at the fall fair – this was a successful way to introduce the community.. there was a DJ to provide music for the occasion as well as food and lots of fun! The day was buzzing with foot traffic through out the fellowship hall. The lawn was active with vendors and artisans. The fair was geared towards vendors and artisans, our marketing team really worked hard to get the word out about this event..

Due to the success of the event, we are in the stage of planning the 2nd annual Women's Fair 2015, this would not have been possible without the dedication and talents of the congregation everyone embraced this event and fully supported it.

Michelle Bridges

2014 Women's Day Fair chair

The Bylaws Revision Team

During 2014 we have been concentrating on preparing the *Duties, Procedures and Requirements* Policies of the Church Council and its various Teams and personnel. These policies are designed for use on the computer and are equipped with hyperlinks for easy transition among the various policy documents, the Bylaws, and the Constitution. They may also be printed when hard copies are desired.

Completed:

- Finance Team
- Property Team

Nearly Completed:

- Safe Church under the Property Team

Underway and Well Along:

- Diaconate Team
- Pastor

Waiting to be started:

- Clerk
- Christian Development Team
- Church Council
- Member at Large
- Moderator

The Bylaws Revision Team:

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

UCC Delegate to the Essex Association

A lot has happened this year within our Association. First, on June 7, 2014, the Andover Association and Essex Association voted separately to combine into a new association. While this was not a unanimous vote, it was overwhelmingly supported by both associations. Several committees were formed to start to work on setting up the Bi-Laws and Vision of this new merged association. For many people the joining of these two associations seemed logical as we have worked closely together in many of our endeavors for the last few years, especially with a combined church and ministry committee.

In November, there was a worship meeting held for this new combined association. While most of the meeting was a time of worship and fellowship, there was the presentation of the vision statement of the new emerging association. That statement is: Connecting Congregations, Supporting Pastors, Building covenantal Relationships, In the Unity of Christ. While that is the Vision, there are some explanations for each of the four aspects of the vision:

Connecting Congregations

We aspire to be a covenant community of local churches called together by God, connected in Christ, and inspired through the Holy Spirit.

In the days to come, our churches will live in covenant as sisters and brothers in Christ, actively seeking to have relationships with one another beyond the walls of local congregations, accepting differences, while recognizing our oneness in Christ

Supporting Pastors

We see our community of churches joyfully supporting clergy, prayerfully guiding those seeking authorized ministry, and thoughtfully walking with each of them in discernment at the urging of the Holy Spirit.

Building Covenantal Relationships

We envision a community of churches and their leaders that will be quick to care about one another, eager to communicate openly with each other, intending to share in each other's joys and suffering, seeking to support one another as we practice worship together and serve in the world.

In the Unity of Christ

There will be a day when all our churches will join the voices of their individual local congregations to become a commanding and compassionate chorus for Christ's peace and justice.

This vision was accepted by a majority vote at this meeting.

The Bi-Law committee has been meeting and will be presenting them over the next few months and they will be voted on at an upcoming Association meeting.

Submitted by Lawrence W. Walker, Jr. "Skip"

Hospitality Team

We would like to send our heartfelt thank you to the many of you who have made coffee hour delicious here at our church .we are blessed with an abundance of great bakers and great friends. Coffee hour is a warm room to share conversation , memories and the overall feeling of a caring family. The workless suppers will be starting up again in February. Your input and ideas are always welcome and needed.

"Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud"

~Maya Angelou

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.

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.

Stewardship Team

The Stewardship Team would like to thank everyone who contributed to the church mission this year. The campaign message, "Blessed to be a blessing" shows when God reaches out to us in our daily lives, people tend to increase their generosity towards others. We heard from so many wonderful speakers this year that touched upon this theme, which included Karen Harris, Barry Games and Julia Southwick. Thank you all for sharing your wonderful moments and good luck Julia in college next year! We also appreciate all the contributions Richard Aberman has brought to the campaigns throughout the years. Richard will be stepping down from the Stewardship Team this year, but his heartfelt sermons have touched many a soul.

JoEllen Fielding once again did a wonderful job coordinating the Giving Tree drive which helps fund the church utility costs and needed office expenses. At last count, people contributed a total of \$3500 in 2014. Thank you all who managed to give a little bit extra last year!

Pledge cards are coming in slowly, but people have heard the message and we have seen an increase of \$12,690 from 37 individuals and families thus far. For those who still wish to pledge this year, the pledge box and cards are located throughout the narthex. Thanks again for those who give after much prayerful thought and sacrifice.

Blessings,

The Stewardship Team

Richard Aberman George Comiskey Sylvia Johnston

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING TEAM - 2014

Moderator: Chuck Davis (2017)

Clerk: Michelle Bridges (2016)

TREASURY TEAM

Robert Knapp - Treasurer and Chair (2018) - Re-nominated

Peggy Smith (2016)

Sylvia Johnston (2017)

DIACONATE

Chair - Janice Murphy (2018) - Re-nominated

Dwight Southwick (2016)

Kristen Arsenault (Council Vote - 2/14) - (2017) - Nominated (to continue position)

Emily Knapp (2016) - re-nominated (1 year term)

Donna DeSisto (2016) - re-nominated (1 year term)

CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Rich Brock (2016) (Chair)

Kirsten Orender (2017)

Karen Harris (2018) - Re-nominated

PROPERTY TEAM

Deborah Lamoureaux - Chair (2017)

Steve Pinto (2018) - Nominated

Lawrence "Skip" Walker - (2016)

Council At-Large Position*

Mary Ann Hunt (2016) - Nominated

Respectfully Submitted,
Chuck Davis
Moderator

***Note: All terms are 3 years with the exception of At-Large position which is a 1 year term.**