

2016 Annual Report
First Congregational Church
of Georgetown, UCC

Sunday, January 29, 2017

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

January 21, 2016

2016 ANNUAL 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 the Annual Meeting will be held in the Church edifice immediately following the service of worship on Sunday, January 31, 2016 to act on the following articles:

Article I: To receive the reports of the individual Council Members & their teams and any others requested by the Council with the exception of the "2015 Financial Report and Proposed 2016 Budget", and the "Nomination Report" or take any other related action;

Article II: To receive the 2015 Financial report, to hear the Finance Team's proposed 2016 budget, and to approve a budget for 2016 or take any other related action;

Article III: To see if Our Congregation will allow the Council, if additional regular payments from a cell phone service provider begin, to raise the compensation to various employees and/or volunteers and adjust the percentage amount allocated to current expenses and future reserve or take any other related action;

Article IV: To see if Our Congregation will, by a two thirds or more majority vote, determine the fate of the slate covered louvers removed from the steeple by the installers of cell phone communication materials or take any other related action;

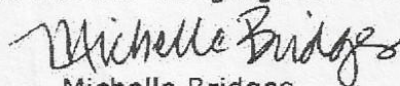
Article V: To see if Our Congregation will, by a two thirds or more majority vote, amend the Constitution and Bylaws article 5.6 by changing the word "two" to "four". Thus changing the Diaconate team's make-up from "the Chair and two other members" to "the Chair and four other members", or take any other related action;

Article VI: To see if Our Congregation will, by a two thirds or more majority vote, set the initial term of one of the new Diaconate Team members to two years and another to one year or take any other related action;

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

Article VIII: 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

The First Congregational Church Of Georgetown

Annual Meeting January 31st 2016

Clerk distributed attendance sheet to congregation for signature of attendance.
Reverend Lorraine led the congregation into a prayer of guidance. Annual meeting proceeded.

- Clerk read **Article I:** Joan Chatterton made a motion to accept, Steve Edwards seconded motion. Motion carries.
- Clerk read **Article II:** Peggy Smith made a motion to accept, Steve Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carries.
- Clerk read **Article III:** Bob Knapp reviewed the article with the congregation. Kirstin Arsenault made a motion to accept, Steve Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carries.
- Clerk read **Article IV:** Deb Lamoureux made a motion to accept, Steve Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carries.
- Clerk read **Article V:** Steve Edwards made a motion to accept. Tim Dougherty seconded the motion. Motion carries.
- Clerk read **Article VI:** Bob Knapp made a motion to accept. Steve Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carries.
- Clerk read **Article VII:** Nancy Aberman made a motion to accept. Steve Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carries.
- Clerk read **Article VIII:** With no other business to conduct, Bob Knapp moved to adjourn the annual meeting at 11:50am.

See attached: 2016 Annual Meeting warrant
Attendance roster
Articles and motions

Respectfully,
Michelle Bridges
Church Clerk

Special Meeting

Sunday, September 18, 2016

Article I was read:

To see if Our Congregation will allow the Council, by a two thirds majority vote, to enter into an agreement with the town of Georgetown through the Georgetown Historical Commission whereas a Preservation Restriction Agreement is necessary in order to receive funding from the Community Preservation Act for any applicable restoration work for the Church building and its property, or take any related action.

Deb Lamoureux made a motion that the congregation grant the church council the right to negotiate and agree to terms of a Preservation Restriction Agreement with the Town of Georgetown Historical, which is necessary to receive a grant from the Community Preservation Council for the purpose of replacing the exterior church doors. Motion was seconded.

Rich Brock read the reasons we meet and brought congregation up to speed on what will be done, the congregants received a 10 page print out as well.

Question - "How long before town has to respond?" was asked. Rich Brock responded, "60 days".

Question – Are the congregants voting to allow the council to negotiate with the town in terms of what will and what will not be included in the preservation restriction agreement?" Rich responded, "yes".

Question - "Is there a time line of one year to use the money for the doors to be installed?" Rich responded, "One year from the date of the signage of the agreement.

Congregant asked about the cell tower and its effect on the facade of the whole church and additional buildings. The current agreements that are in place (for Verizon and TMobile) are not impacted by this agreement. Rich further indicated that the preservation agreement indicates that, "There can be no impairment of the vision of the church from the street. Any exterior work, including replacing the walkway and/or expanding our parking will require approval from town. Other examples include replacement of the windows, front steps, etc.

The agreement with the town and CPA is for a 10 year period, a relatively short period of time. With the Historical Preservation Agreement, the church and the town of Georgetown is recognizing the historical significance of the building within the community. It is also widely recognized that the church building is widely used by the community.

Rich was asked if the town does not come into agreement, will Council pass it?" Rich
"The council will have the best interest of the Church in mind at time of vote."

The congregation was reminded that "A template is set by the Massachusetts Historical
Association when it comes to renovations."

After no further discussion, a vote was called by the moderator.

The motion passed unanimously.

Article II was read:

To hear and act on any other business relative to our Congregation and its property.
As no other business was raised, a motion was made to adjourn.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Cassidy – Church Clerk

Pastor's 2016 Annual Report

*"Therefore, surrounded as we are by so great a cloud of witnesses,
Let us...run with perseverance the race that is set before us,
Looking to Jesus who is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith."*

-Hebrews 12-1-2, NRSV

Beginning a year always holds the hope that our visions take form and transform this world. And so it is with a sense of awe and a deep gratitude for God's action and your agency that I recall how 2016 brought us to many new places.

On January 20 our church conducted the Ordination of Lawrence "Skip" Walker, Jr. The dignified service had many Essex UCC Association guests, family, and congregants in attendance. Congratulations to Skip on the fruition of his dream of becoming a Pastor. We also bless his continued success as a Hospice Chaplain.

Lent came in February and so did the Youth Super Bowl fundraiser. We want to thank the Patriots a bit for helping in the success our youth have had with their sub sales, but especially the congregation for its solid support to our youth.

For Lent, I offered a Lenten book group about "Bucket Lists for God", where we had exercises on defining and fulfilling our goals. Christian Development and Confirmation worked together to offer brief skits at the beginning of each Lenten service.

Confirmation 2016 Class also began in Lent. Heartfelt thanks to our Mentors: Deb Lamoureaux, Michelle Brock, George Comiskey, Gladie Kneeland, Eric Bratland, and Steve Pinto for their involvement. Our 2016 Confirmands are: Jillian Bridges, Zac Brock, Jordan Greenfield, Hannah Lamoureaux, Ryan Litch, and Sam Orender.

In March new members met with the Deacons and me over lunch to talk about our faith journeys, the history of our church and the UCC, and to take an excellent history lesson and tour of our building by Church Historian Chris Comiskey. On Palm Sunday, March 20th, the new members were welcomed into the church. Thanks to Deacon Janice Murphy for lunch and to Janice and Head Deacon Gladie Kneeland for taking part in the events.

We shared candlelight Maunday Thursday vigil communion service with scripture readers and choir. Our Easter Sunrise Service at Camp Leslie was led by our Confirmation class, with music by the Confirmands and our Music Director Bob Knapp. The warm and delicious church breakfast by Pam Sheehan and Rich Brock, Jeff Orender and the youth was most welcome after the chill outside. The breakfast extras were delivered to the

Emmaus house. Easter celebration service was a powerful expression of our hope in Christ with flowers, trumpet playing and the fun Easter children's message. And the morning was capped off with the traditional Easter Egg Hunt. Thanks to all the teams and leaders at First Church who helped build a month of events leading to Easter.

In April I went to an informational evening on the Jeanne Geiger Center hosted by Gloria Webster's daughter. The impressive way the Center has created innovative programs to address domestic abuse, that are nationally recognized, caused us to have our Neighbors in Need offering in October go to support this fabulous program.

Our Confirmation class organized, publicized and held the Earth Day town wide event featuring town and outside groups who offered environmental services. From swaps, to education, and bike fix up, we demonstrated the ways to engage in environmental conservation from resources that are already at hand. I worked with George Comiskey and Michelle Bridges in organizing and promoting the Confirmation Earth Day Event, including emails to churches in the Northeast Association. The Confirmation Class put up the large Earth Day Event Banner, which was resized and rehung (thank you, Bob Knapp!). The event was a wonderful gathering of local non-profits, and Susan Stead successfully ran our snack bar and the Youth Group, under Rich Brock's leadership, ran the recycling station, George Comiskey joined in, Jaime Krenn offered garden crafts, and the Missions team highlighted Heifer. Thanks to Allan Barlow and Alecia Balduf for their wonderful music, and to Allan for his Vermont sugaring display.

In April I spoke to the Ladies' Guild on "Spirit: images of the Spirit in our lives and in history". The teaching included discussion and a project. Thanks to our outstanding Guild leaders Joan Chatterton and Marion Harding.

After an unfortunate graffiti incident at the schools, I took part in a town wide Forum as Moderator, sponsored by the Superintendent's office. The Forum drew people to speak to their concerns, and will help to address issues going forward.

May also included our fantastic Women's Day Fair chaired by the hard working Michelle Bridges.

Confirmation Sunday was on May 22. It was a milestone in the faith journeys of our Confirmands; excellent work on the part of the Mentors, Parents and Deacons for this journey and this Sunday.

On Christian Development Sunday, we offered Godspeed for the Mumby Family, with special gifts and blessings. On Senior Sunday, a college graduate received a gift, card and blessing during the service, and we celebrated the baptism of John Magro and Teresa Weimann's son John, as well as Marion Harding's 90th Birthday during in the service.

Marion's family had an afternoon celebration in the Fellowship Hall which the Deacons and Congregation supported. Thanks to Gladie Kneeland, Janice Murphy, Ruthie Soper and Kevin Southwick for the additional support to Marion's family for the event.

Christian Development Chair Karen Harris and her Christian Development team, with Bob Knapp on music, did an outstanding job of making an inspiring Christian Development Sunday service. Our youth really put their seal on the service, and showed us all that they learned. Hearing the youth speak on their church experience was incredible. Congratulations to Christian Development Team Chairs Rich Brock and Karen Harris for their powerful leadership through this year.

At the end of May, I took part in the town Memorial Day Program held at the VFW Post due to rain.

In June we held the Strawberry Social, chaired by Emily Knapp and Janice Murphy, with the freshest and finest shortcake and treats found anywhere. The community and its generations gathered to mingle amidst the new green grass and summery night.

Summer Worship began in July, on Wednesday evenings. My theme for Summer Worship this year was "Come to the Living Waters: Spirit in action". We listened to Bible water themed stories, discussed with each other what they mean for our lives today, and created some wonderful projects. The services were preceded by a dinner time, where we came together to share in fellowship. Thanks to our set up person Janice Murphy and our chef team of Janice Murphy and Ruth Soper for our dinners. Our talented musicians Allan Barlow, Mary Ann Hunt, and Alecia Balduf shared their artistry with us, leading songs and helping us learn new music. We are also very grateful for the Bell Choir who played magnificently in one service. And Betsy Arsenault came from New Hampshire and shared with us her serene and beautiful harp music at another worship.

Thanks to Ruth Soper, who played the piano, and Gladie Kneeland as Head Deacon, for taking part in the Baptism service I performed for Henry Thomas Gervais, son of Kate and Bryan Gervais and grandson of Susan and Gary Stead. On Sunday, July 31st, in the morning, family gathered from across the states as little Henry was welcomed into Christ's family here at the church. He received, as all our Baptisms do, a calligraphy certificate (thank you Donna Desisto), a Baptism prayer ministry shawl, a book of nighttime prayers, a beautiful bulletin, and a candle blessing.

Hearty thanks to Head Deacon Gladie Kneeland and Deacon Janice Murphy who took over the Pastoral duties and Worship duties while I was on vacation. Rev. Laura Gronberg in West Boxford and Rev. Steve Edwards were my emergency coverage while I was out of town, and great thanks to them. I supplied emergency coverage for Rev. Gronberg and Rev. Bob Hagopian during the summertime, too. I have heard wonderful things about the

contribution everyone gave during my time away. It gives me great confidence to know that the church is in such great hands during my time away.

I collected materials through the summer for Bible studies, church management, worship and special service resources, bringing some to share with Deacons, Music, and Christian Development teams. This year continued with fresh directions and ideas. Summer Worship on Wednesday evenings ended on September 7.

The Nelson Wedding was a wonderful church wide collaboration on September 10, where the Bride's Room, the Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary were polished and decorated for the wedding of Paul Nelson and Mary Ann Hunt. Thanks to all the groups and people that came together for the joyous day: Ladies' Guild, Bob Knapp, Emily Knapp, Church Office, Kim Osgood, George Comiskey, our food crew with Ruth Soper, and all those who added so much.

Sunday Worship restarted September 11 with a service of Remembrance on the 15th anniversary of 9-11. I also took part in the September 11 Remembrance at the Public Safety Building, where our community gathered for remembrance.

Rally Day , September 18, started our season with a wonderful message from JT Turner, on the theme of "Ask, Seek, Find". We offered a back pack blessing and gift for the beginning of the season. An amazing Potluck lunch followed. Thanks to Christian Development, under Karen Harris' leadership, for such a lively and welcoming Sunday.

October 2 was World Communion Sunday where we remembered our bond in Christ with our brothers and sisters across the world. A variety of breads were served, and people were invited to take bread home and share it with others.

It was Apple Frapple season at our church fair headed by Michelle Bridges. Exceptional thanks to Michelle for her years as the Fall Fair Chair! We have so appreciated her great work to make our fairs such successes. And thanks to the hours and armies of volunteers that bring everything together for the event.

On Spooky Sunday, with special music by the Bell Choir and a Halloween themed Children's Message, we explored the second most cultural and commercial holiday after Christmas.

Our All Saints Service of Remembrance in November combined candle lighting with music in honoring those who have departed.

"Ask, Seek, Find"-great thanks to our dedicated Stewardship team of Team Leader George Comiskey, Sylvia Johnston, and Toni Cassidy for completing this Stewardship season with such spirit! Our speakers George Comiskey, Sam Orender, and Alecia Balduf really

offered wonderful words about the importance of contributing to support First Church so it can continue the many ways we experience spiritual growth and community here.

Our choir and I took part in the Community Thanksgiving Service, which was held this year at the Groveland Congregational Church. The combined choirs and church communities in the area all gathered as one, in worship and thanks. Special thanks to Bob and Emily Knapp for their support for the music part of the service. And I was very pleased to see such great attendance from our church community.

Deepest thanks to our church for the incredible service, gifts, and luncheon when you surprised me by celebrating my fifth anniversary here at First Church on December 4! You all gave to me such a great memory that I will always hold close. Thank you for the beautiful big bouquet and the charm bracelets. When I wear the bracelets it brings me back to the luncheon, greeting you all and watching you share fellowship with one another. I am so honored and blessed to share my spiritual journey with you in community!

For this Advent Season, we had Michelle Brock, Mary Ann Nelson, and Steve Edwards read inspired children's books about the Christmas spirit, following the themes of the Advent Wreath of Hope, Peace, and Love. They each reached out to the children and engaged them in the deeper meanings of the season. I worked with the families who lit the Advent Wreath, and shared with them the meaning of the symbols on the wreath. And a special thanks to Emily Knapp and Bob Knapp for all their inspired work to bring the joy of music to our services and to our community.

Thanks to Marilyn Crosby, our Church Office Administrator, for her work with Guidestar and Amazon to put into place Amazon Smile where people can contribute a portion of their purchase costs toward a donation to First Church. We will continue to promote this information through our church communication.

There has been an interest in our Shawl Ministry this year. We blessed our shawls and offered them when requested. We would appreciate donations of adult and Baptism shawls to replenish our supplies.

Hats off to Joan Chatterton for her leadership of the HOME gift drive. Every year there is a big effort to get the gift tags into people's hands and get the returned gifts ready to go to HOME. And yes, our generous congregation always makes such a generous contribution to the process.

I "participated" in the amazing Christmas youth fundraiser with the Potluck lunch, as we decorated Gingerbread Houses. I must thank Rich Brock and the youth with their families for such a great event. And I want to thank Shirley Powell for being my coach in putting

together my Gingerbread House so my house looked so much better than my first attempt last year.

Thanks to the Diaconate, under the leadership of Gladie Kneeland, for all their support with preparing us for this Christmas season! From Advent, to decorating the church, to organizing the poinsettia donations, it has been a busy, busy season.

Since Christmas fell on a Sunday this year, we had our candlelight and carols service Christmas Eve, then followed up with a Christmas morning interactive service featuring twelve gifts of Christmas service with scripture, reflections, gifts and music to celebrate Christmas story. We just can't get enough of Christmas!

Thanks to all the musicians, choirs, Diaconate, and volunteers that made this season so special.

Following Christmas, when I was away, the Diaconate and Rev. Alice Erikson took charge of pastoral duties. Great thanks to them. The Diaconate led a carols and scripture service January 1 and celebrated a church brunch on January 8th, Three King's Day. Both services were very well received.

As to wider church activities, I went to our UCC Northeast Association's fall meeting, the installation of Pastor Rich Knight in Chelmsford, and the Ma Conference training on the Pastoral Relations team responsibilities. I passed along training information to our Pastoral Relations team of George Comiskey, Susan Stead and Carol Sheehan, to whom I am grateful for their diligence and care. I attended a conference in Hopkinton on Church Safety featuring a national expert in this field who addressed all types of church safety and shared resources and ideas for ways to address this timely topic. I shared this information with the teams. I am also on the board of the Massachusetts Congregational Church Ministers, and I helped lead its Spring Annual meeting and took part in its theological conference, in Dedham.

My general duties included being the Fire and Police Departments Chaplain, visitation, preaching, strategic planning, meeting with Church Teams and staff and communication with the church. I also attended Northeast Association meetings and trainings, participated in my Professional Community of Practice, offered Communion and met with the Pastoral Relations Team. I reviewed and evaluated our Office Manager Marilyn Crosby using the form used in area churches.

I encouraged our church to take part in Amazon Smile! With the efforts of Office Manager Marilyn Crosby, Property Chair Deb Lamoureaux and Finance Chair Bob Knapp we are now listed both with the national non-profits site "Guidestar" and part of the Amazon Smile give back program. PayPal also continues to be available on our web site for convenient donating.

As always, I am only able to complete this calling by being surrounded by the amazing dedication of our staff. Thanks to the Music Director Bob Knapp, our Organist Emily Knapp,

and our choir, bell choir, band and various musicians for making such wonderful contributions to the worship services throughout the year. JoEllen Fielding as Collector and Kristen Arsenault as Bookkeeper keep our finances in order. Kim Osgood always spends her own time and resources above her allotted ones to make our church shine. And Marilyn Crosby makes our many overlaying missions all come together in her work and ministry as Office Manager. We really are blessed!

Deepest appreciation and thanks to the Teams and volunteers for an outstanding, busy, and fruitful year. Nancy Aberman leads a fabulous book group in our church. Appreciation to Janice Murphy and Ruth Soper for all of our wonderful fellowship hours and luncheons that lets our hospitality shine. And I'm grateful to Jaime Krenn for her amazing weekly alter flowers.

This year's Moderator Rich Brock has displayed such wonderful leadership for our church. Working with him, to bring the church to an outstanding place, has been a joy. We are blessed indeed!

And now I leave you with a blessing and a prayer for 2017:

"Holy Trinity:

*Be thou a bright flame before me,
Be thou a guiding star above me,
Be thou a smooth path below me,
Be thou a kindly shepherd behind me,
Today, tonight, and forever. Amen."*

-St. Columba

Blessings on the life of First Church in Christ,
Ms. Rev. Lorraine G. Edwards
Pastor, First Congregational Church of Georgetown, UCC

Pastor's Church Almanac

New Members:

Rachel Angerhofer
Carol Gaffney
Ruth Soper

Confirmands:

Sam Orender
Jillian Bridges
Hannah Lamoureaux
Zachary Brock
Ryan Litch
Jordan Greenfield

Funerals:

Natalie Stanwood Tidd funeral and burial by Rev Lorraine Edwards
Nina Kravchuk Roltsch funeral and burial by Rev Lorraine Edwards
Ann Roberts funeral and burial conducted by Rev Steve Edwards, July 2&3
Robert Rogers, September 3, 2016 funeral and burial by Rev Lorraine Edwards

Deaths:

Natalie Stanwood Tidd	January 11, 2016, service January 16, 2016
Robert Rogers	August, 29, 2016, service September 3, 2016
T. Louis Hamelin	December 27, 2016, service January 21, 2017
Lewis Pingree	December 28, 2016, private service at a later date

Wedding:

Paul Nelson and Mary Ann Hunt, September 10, 2016

Baptisms:

John Anthony Magro 4th, June 12, 2016
Henry Thomas Gervais, July 31, 2016
Nola Marie Quigley, October 6, 2016

Moderator's Report

It's amazing that a year has passed. At the onset of my role as the Church Moderator, I asked the church leadership three simple questions.

How can we grow our spirituality?

How can we expand our outreach?

How do we continue to excel at what we do well, while expanding our vision?

We will continue to ask these questions during the upcoming year and I would encourage everyone to share your ideas with the church leadership team so that we can continue to share God's blessings and teachings with each other and those that may be outside of our four walls.

During the past year, we voted to accept new members. Accepted to join the church were Rachel Angerhofer, Carol Gaffney, and Ruth Hoper. We also voted to accept the following six Confirmants as new members: Jillian Bridges, Zachary Brock, Jordyn Greenfield, Hannah Lamoureux, Ryan Litch, and Sam Orender. Many of our young adults have been and continue to be active within the church through their participation in the church's youth group.

In an effort to expand our outreach, the church hosted an Earth Day celebration on April 24th on the front lawn. Various stations set up camp on the front lawn including sports equipment swap, a bicycle tune-up area, as well as other stations that raised awareness of Earth Day. Many members of the church and the community participated.

Our annual events continue to be as successful as ever, and are anticipated by many within the community. Our Strawberry Social welcomes in the Spring Season. Who can resist fresh picked strawberries on top of shortcake, smothered with whipped cream? Behind the scenes, everyone rallies together for a time of fellowship as we pick, sort, and hull the strawberries, as well as bake the shortcake. Many thanks to Emily Knapp and Janice Murphy for their efforts and leadership.

Our Women's Day Fair has also become a wonderful annual event. This year a Lobster raffle was included where one lucky winner in Texas won 10 1.5 pound lobsters. The Women's Day Fair brings local crafters and our members of the congregation to share their many talents with the community.

The annual church fair has been very successful over the past few years. This two day event takes many months to schedule and coordinate, and each year seems to outperform the previous year. Many volunteers are needed to cook all the glorious pies, soups,

breads, cookies, breakfast sandwiches, lobster rolls, hotdogs, chili, corn chowder, and apple frapples that are sold during the fair. The Youth Group gives up their day to sponsor a Bouncy House on the front lawn and to assist wherever needed throughout the day. We have volunteers that work the candy store, the snack bar, the raffles, the white elephant, the clothing store, the cookie walk. To top it all off, we close with the best turkey dinner in town. Many thanks to Michelle Bridges and her team of volunteers for a job well done.

As with every fair or social event hosted by the church, we continue to expand our outreach to Georgetown and the neighboring communities.

Our food pantry continues to be well stocked, sometimes overflowing. We receive many donations throughout the year. These blessings are quietly shared with those less fortunate. We also continue with our donations to both Heifer International and HOME projects, along with donations to Ruth's House. Sharing our donations sends a simple message that there is hope no matter what the circumstances.

With our efforts to expand our outreach to the local communities continues to grow, we do receive some benefits for being active in our community. As you know, the church building is quite old and can be a challenge to maintain each year. During the past year, the Property Team led by Deb Lamoureux, secured a CPC grant in excess of \$26,000 to replace the front and side doors of the church. In order to secure the grant, the church entered into a 10 year Historical Preservation Agreement with the Town of Georgetown's Historical Commission. With the agreement in place, the Property team has secured the necessary funds to replace the doors and to make our entrance ways more efficient and secure.

Over the next 10 years, the Property team will work with the Town of Georgetown on any work that is performed on the exterior of the church. This could include replacing the front steps, replacing the walkways, replacing the windows, etc. With this agreement, the town is recognizing the church building as a historical community landmark within Georgetown. As such, we anticipate that we'll have access to other grants that are made available to the community.

The work on the doors is anticipated to begin in the Spring of 2017

I'd like to thank the Church Council members for their efforts throughout the year. Without your efforts and those of your teams, our outreach efforts and our spiritual growth, along with everything else we do to spread God's blessings would not have occurred.

I'd also to thank Marilyn Crosby, our Office Administrator. She works tirelessly to pull together newsletters, bulletins, the annual reports, announcements, as well as maintaining minutes and other artifacts. Her subtle reminders keep us on track and organized.

Lastly, I would like to thank Michelle Bridges for her efforts with the annual fair as well as her role as Clerk. During the past year, Michelle resigned from both positions after an extremely successful tenure. Her excitement, motivation, and leadership were evident in every activity she participated in. Her efforts to expand the number of vendors at the fair had a huge impact to fair's success. She also suggested that we take advantage of the sanctuary for the white elephant (Granny's Attic Treasures). She was never afraid to try new ideas, new formats with the solitary goal of making the fair more successful than the previous year.

As Clerk, while maintaining the official records of the church, she expanded her role by offering ideas and suggestions during council meetings, adding her thoughts and inputs to various topics that were up for discussion.

As Gladie mentions in last year's Moderator report, our community of God is precious and our slogan 'Extending God's Heart and Hands' is worth remembering. It ties in so well with our efforts to expand our spirituality and extending our outreach. God's love is amongst us.

I look forward to 2017 as there are many opportunities for us to continue to grow as a church. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your moderator.

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Brock, Moderator

Clerk's Report

Membership Information

Members as of 12/31/15	196
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Deaths	- 4
New Members	+ 9
Baptisms	3
Wedding	1
Transferred	0
Inactive Status	- 2

Members as of 12/31/16	199
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In Memoriam
Natalie Tidd
Robert Rogers
T. Louis Hamelin
Lewis Pingree

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Cassidy – Church Clerk

Diaconate

"He will cover you with his wings; You will be safe in His care; His faithfulness will protect and defend you." Psalm 91:4

Reflection, celebration and rededication....Three words that truly sum up the work of your Diaconate team this year. The responsibilities of this team are many and are done by these exceptional people: Kristen Arsenault, Donna DeSisto, Emily Knapp and Janice Murphy. You do so much, and do it quietly, tirelessly and without complaint. Thank you.

This year many goals were accomplished by the hands and love of our church members.

We are, as a family, blessed to have Reverend Lorraine Edwards leading us. Thanks to her for the gentle peace she brings to this Congregation. She is our "cup of magic!"

A big thank you to all who have participated in our services...our communion servers, scripture readers, Christian service helpers, and greeters. Our music program is superb. To our organist Emily Knapp, our choir, our bell choir and our band director, Bob Knapp, your God-given talents amaze us and fill our ears and hearts with love. Music is such an important and beautiful part of our services.

Thank you to Jamie Krenn, our very talented flower coordinator. Her tireless work adds so much to the beauty of our services. She also tends to our church garden, which provides nature's beauty for the entire community to share. If you would like to provide flowers on our altar please contact Jamie.

Our Hospitality Team continues our Church tradition of delicious food, hot drinks, and our every popular coffee hour after church. The sounds of laughter, good conversation and happiness echos through the walls! Sincere thank you to Janice Murphy and Ruth Soper for their ever present delicious goodies and warm smiles.

Kirsten Davis continues to provide Christian Service, thank you Kirsten for continuing with this important work.

To thank the Missions Team requires a large applause! Joan Chatterton, Marion Harding and the Guild Ladies. Your dedication and love for others is unsurpassed. These projects bring all of us, young and old alike, working together to help those less fortunate than ourselves. You provide so much to so many.

Our ushers: George Comiskey and Barry Games share their welcoming smiles and gentle caring to each of us every Sunday. Thank you.

Our Pastor Parish Relations Team is made up of Susan Stead, Carol Sheehan and George Comiskey. Thank you for the love you show for every member of our Church family.

Thank you to Peggy Smith for being our telephone communicator. Your job is so important to keep everyone 'in the loop.'

Greeters...such an important part of our church. As you enter our church you are warmly greeted by members of your church family. Thank you to Mary Ann Nelson for coordinating this important aspect of our service and to those who participated.

Our Stewardship Team: Toni Cassidy, George Comiskey and Sylvia Johnston."Ask and it will be given to you; Seek and you will find; Knock and the door will be opened for you." Matthew 7:7 . These words of faith are familiar. This year the stories you shared were heartfelt. Thank you for coordinating this important part of our church. As stewards you are called to care and preserve this Church in order to continue its missions and spiritual message. Thank you for all you do.

JANUARY: Our year of 2016 began with our traditional New Year's Brunch, incorporating our worship service with a beautiful Three Kings service. Thank you to our Kings and all those who provided the delicious dishes.

The Golden Chain of our Church Family was broken with the passing of Natalie S. Tidd. Her celebration of life was held here at our church. Her love for this church was unsurpassed.

Our Annual Meeting was held in accordance with our Congregation's Constitution and By-laws

MARCH: Earth Day Celebration was held on our front lawn. Many "booths" were available to answer our many of our questions on preserving our beautiful planet.

Palm Sunday was held in our traditional manner.

Maundy Thursday was our service of communion, music and scripture.

Easter Sunday, a glorious day filled with the joys and hopes of our beliefs.

We began this day with a moving sunrise service at Camp Leslie, followed by our Easter breakfast that fills our bodies and our spirits. Our Easter Service was inspirational. After the service our youth hunted for the Easter eggs and all the fun of the morning. Easter plants were delivered to members of our congregation by the Diaconate and helpers.

APRIL: Janice Murphy organized our pot luck luncheon with a Hawaiian theme. Our luau food was yummy, and the decorations were so colorful and fun. Enjoyed by all.

MAY: Woman's Day Fair. This fair brings local crafters and our talented members together to share their many talents. Chairperson Michelle Bridges and many others named and unnamed, deserve our heartfelt thanks and again points out the many

blessings of our Church family.

Confirmation Sunday was a wonderful day. The many weeks of lessons and projects by our Confirmands was celebrated. Our Confirmands were Sam Orender, Jillian Bridges, Hannah Lamoureaux, Zack Bridges and Ryan Litch. Blessings to each of you as you continue your lives with God's assistance. Special thanks to all of the mentors as well.

JUNE: Our STRAWBERRY month. Our Annual Strawberry Social was certainly happy and successful! Under the very capable leadership of Emily Knapp and Janice Murphy we enjoyed a wonderful time with a great turnout! It is a fine-tuned machine that works so well!

June also brings our traditional Children's Service and our Graduation Sunday. We all look forward to these special days of sharing with our wonderful youth.

A God-speed Service was held for Nicole and Mikayla Mumby and Ed Fredette before their departure to Arizona.

JULY: Our Wednesday evening worship services started in Fellowship Hall. Diaconate was responsible for two services in July while Rev. Lorraine was on vacation:

6th—Patriotic Theme and Music. Lots of fun with great participation from all. Special thank you to our musical talents: Alecia Balduf, Alan Barlow and Mary Ann Nelson.

13th: - Service of "Why did you come to Georgetown and why did you stay?" This was an amazing service, almost everyone who attended shared their stories. It was a lot of fun to learn new facts about our church family ..

JULY: Funeral for Ann Roberts. Stephen Edwards officiated.

31st: - Christening held at our church for Baby Henry son of Bryan and Kathryn Gervais and grandson of Susan and Gary Stead. Lorraine officiated with a very meaningful service, with Ruth Soper providing beautiful music.

AUGUST: Diaconate again responsible for two services in August while Rev. Lorraine was on vacation:

3rd— "Things you did not know about the Bible." Lots of surprises and laughter. Surprisingly, cats are NEVER mentioned in the Bible...who knew?

10th— We explored the "history of hymns" and sang a verse of each one. The most popular was "Jesus Loves Me"...I think we all identified with our past and our childhood. Also that evening we had a surprise birthday party for Janice Murphy.

SEPTEMBER: Our Sunday Services resumed.

10th—Wedding of Mary Ann Hunt and Paul Nelson here at our church. Attended by many of their church family, who wished them love and happiness.

18th-Rally Day with J.T. Turner. As tradition continues, J.T. never lets us down. A great speaker with great messages! The day continued with a delicious brunch, attended by many. Christian Ed board members were our greeters for Rally Day and we all got to wear our new badges and lanyards!

Baptism: A wonderful service and celebration for Nola Quigley, daughter of Stephanie and Eric Quigley.

OCTOBER: OUR FAIR!! So many thank yous to those who continuously share their talents and their time. To our Chairperson, Michelle Bridges, you amaze us all with your energy and love for this project.

World Wide Communion was held with special breads and a meaningful service.

NOVEMBER: Remembrance Sunday was held again this year with the lighting of candles in memory of loved ones.

22nd - Thanksgiving Community Worship Service was held at Groveland Congregational Church, UCC.

DECEMBER: Advent Readers and Candle Lighters; Christmas Pageant, Christmas Eve Magical Candlelit Service, Christmas Day Service with Opening of presents...my what a wonderful Christmas season we all shared. Also, continuing our Gingerbread House contest was a huge success!

The Diaconate and many helpers decorated the sanctuary. We hung garlands and wreaths, placed candles in the windows, and set up our beautiful crèche.

H.O.M.E. for Christmas is our annual Christmas gift-giving, and again our Christmas Tree was set up in the Narthex. Thank you for all who decorated and to all who gave so freely to make Christmas special for these children. Your generosity reaches far and wide!

The Diaconate delivered poinsettias and visited with members of our Church family.

Lastly, the “heart” of our Church...the Volunteer. I have never asked for help without receiving it, and receiving it with a smile and “anything else I can do?” as well. You are all so loving and generous with your individual talents and endless hours of time. Thank you.

Remember “God’s love is so large it can cover the world, but so small it can curl up in the corner of your heart.”

Respectfully submitted,

Gladys M. Kneeland, Chair

Christian Development Report

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.

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 contributed to the service on Children's Sunday, with the children singing 'Happy' as a way of conveying how much they enjoyed the Sunday School's program and teachings.

Recognitions of our children's accomplishments as well as our teacher's contributions were distributed as well.

Rally Day – JT Turner provided the message to kick off the Church 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. Members of the congregation were also asked to release their inner child and participate in the pageant. Before the pageant began, the children distributed bags to willing volunteers. Each bag contained costumes, their role, and instructions. We had many sheep, cows, angels, and stars amongst the traditional roles played by the children. Everyone demonstrated both ambition and enthusiasm, which resulted in a wonderful pageant for all to enjoy.

CD Team, Teachers & Sunday School - Many, many thanks to the volunteers who teach and mentor our children with the blessings of 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 – Interim Chair

Church Book Group Report

The Church Book Group has been meeting for eleven years! During the year 2016, the group met nine times. The get-togethers are social as well as book-centered, and we met in members' homes as well as in the Guild Room at church.

As usual, we read a range of titles: six novels and three non-fiction titles. All members contributed suggestions for reading, and, as a result, we enjoyed a variety of literature.

In 2016 the following titles were read and discussed:

January	<i>The Last Runaway</i> by Tracy Chevalier, hosted by JoEllen Fielding
February	<i>The Boys who Challenged Hitler</i> by Phillip Hoose, hosted by Carol and Pam Sheehan
March:	<i>The Valley of Amazement</i> by Amy Tan, hosted by Gladie Kneeland
April	<i>Ashley's War</i> by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, hosted by Lorna Scullin
May	<i>All the Light We Cannot See</i> by Anthony Doerr, hosted by Dee Wyatt
June	<i>The Boston Girl</i> by Anita Diamant, hosted by Nancy Aberman
September	<i>Life after Life</i> by Kate Atkinson, hosted by Carol Lutes
October	<i>Come to the Garden</i> by Jennifer Wilder Morgan, hosted by Pam and Carol Sheehan
November/December	<i>The Boys in the Boat</i> by Daniel James Brown

We now have a yearly newsletter! For anyone who is interested in the Book Group's goings-on, ask for a copy. All are welcome to attend the discussions—consider joining the fun!

Submitted for the Book Group by

Nancy Aberman

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. Proceeds were split between the food pantry and the youth group.

Lobster Raffle - The Youth Group sponsored a Lobster Raffle during the 2016 Women's Day Fair. Tickets were sold for \$5.00 for a chance to win 10 lobsters delivered anywhere in the United States. This event was very successful and may be an annual fund raising event for the Youth Group.

Mt. Major - Climbing Mt. Major once again kicked off the 2016 Youth Group Season as it presents a great opportunity to reconnect after the summer break. Our youth and their families join together for a fun filled day. 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.

Miniature Golf - We visited the new miniature golf course at Nunan's in Georgetown. It was a fun day on a beautiful sunny fall day.

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. While this year's fair was a bit on the soggy side, their willingness to contribute an hour or two demonstrates their energy and willingness to help contributed to a very successful fair.

The youth also assisted with the fair's turkey dinner, helping with set up, take down, and serving. Their smiles and willingness to help

Sky Zone – Trampoline Park - As a reward for their volunteer efforts during the Fair, the youth ventured to SkyZone for an afternoon of bouncing dodge ball, bouncing basketball, and a mini Ninja Warrior Obstacle Course. If they weren't playing these games, then they just bounced around and had fun.

Christmas Trees – During each holiday season, the youth group sets up and decorates the Christmas Trees that are in the Narthex and Fellowship Hall. Christmas Music is heard throughout the church while the trees are decorated.

Gingerbread House and Brunch - The youth hosted a luncheon during the Christmas season and a Gingerbread House contest. Fellowship Hall was filled with great food and plenty of holiday cheer as over twenty gingerbread houses, trains, and a church were constructed on a very festive afternoon.

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

Youth Group Donations - The Youth Group has decided to donate proceeds raised from the Super Sub Sales to a local animal shelter as well as to the upcoming 30 hour famine.

Skating - After the Christmas break, the youth group reconnected with an fun afternoon ice skating at the Graf Rink in Newburyport

Church Greeters - On the 2nd Sunday of each month, members of the youth group greet congregants as they enter the Narthex.

A huge THANK YOU to Deb Lamoureaux, Kirsten Orender, and Michelle Brock for they assistance throughout the year. Along with the youth's energy and friendship, your assistance and spirit is very much appreciated. Our youth group would not be as successful as it is without your participation and assistance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rich Brock – Youth Leader

Report of the Property Team

In accordance with the Church Bylaws, *"The Property Team shall oversee the care, custody and protection of Our Congregation's physical property and the safety of those who use it."*

The members of the Property Team, Chair Deb Lamoureaux, Steve Pinto and Tim Dougherty have had a productive year.

We also want to thank Bob Knapp, Alan Barlow & Rich Brock, Jeff Oreder, and Jeff Lamoureaux for all their expertise, time and help.

Activities under taken over the past church year:

- * Broken window in Narthex repaired.
- * Doorbells have been replaced.
- * New telephone system has been installed.
- * HVAC system (in addition) was cleaned and inspected.
- * Right side garden bed was installed.
- * New choir loft hand railing was installed.
- * Verizon cell tower has been activated.
- * Smile.Amazon account was established and is up and running.
- * New padlock on steeple door installed.
- * Plexiglass storm window replaced.
- * Replacement of the existing steam traps and repair of a circulating pump for the boiler.
- * New signage for Pastor and O&A made and installed.
- * Repair of HVAC motor.
- * General maintenance was performed.

The Georgetown Board of Selectmen's review of our contract with the town significantly impacted the ordering and installation of our new doors. This pushed back our order and installation to spring 2017.

Looking forward:

- * This spring will bring about some much needed doors – May
- * New stairs for both the front and side entrances will also be installed – May/June.
- * Repairs / Maintenance to the Fire Alarm Panel – Jan/Feb
- * A new awning over Cottage Street door.
- * Looking at options for new walkways.

I want to thank the Property Team for their tremendous work ethic and spirit of enthusiasm while dealing with a wide range of issues and concerns regarding the maintenance of this beautiful edifice we call home. We could not have performed our duties without the help and leadership of all the church staff, minister and members for their tireless dedication and effectiveness in making this church what it is today. I have enjoyed my tenure as chair of the Property Team and hope all feel I did the position justice.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Lamoureux, Chair

Annual Report of the Member-at-Large

Suggestions from the congregation this past year have resulted in a few changes here at First Congregational Church. This includes more pot luck dinners and use of the microphones for church announcements so that all parishioners can hear. The youth have agreed to help the church with once-a-month pre-church greeting and collecting the offering.

This year, thanks to Karen Harris, a new online program called "Sign Up Genius" was set up so that people can sign up via their computer to greet and/or take the offering. Interested parishioners can still sign up in person with the Member-at-Large. Special thanks to George Comiskey and Barry Games who instructed people in these Sunday morning duties. Thanks, too, to the many individuals and families who volunteered this year for these duties.

It has been a privilege to serve as Member-at-Large for the past two years. It has given me a chance to hear individuals' thoughts and concerns, to work with the other council members, and to get to know more of you personally. Thank you for your trust.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ann Nelson
Member-at-Large 2015 & 2016

Annual Report of the Women's Guild

The Women's Guild has entered the 94th year of their inauguration! How blessed we are to have this group relationship as a vital part of our beloved church, while many of our sister churches no longer enjoy this type of fellowship.

After the winter January/February hiatus, we gathered in **March** to meet Tad Morse, new owner of Wheelerbrook Farm. Tad told us of the unique ministry that his family has founded to assist mentally and physically challenged adults to lead productive lives. Wheelerbrook is playing a huge part in this ministry – where people are learning about the art of farming and animal husbandry. Rev. Lorraine's program in **April** was, as always, a delightful afternoon. We were "one in the spirit" as we explored the ways we can be reminded of the Spirit surrounding us in our daily lives. Before our **May** luncheon outing at the Bradford Tavern, we participated in a service project at the Giving Tree where we sorted and bundled teens, children's and babies' clothes according to sizes and specific items. We also took, with us, 80 dozen diapers and thirty personal care products for their Mothers' Day baskets. The diapers (again) came from the Penny Bowl proceeds.

Our service to the church has involved coordinating and manning the popular Cookie Walk Table at the Church Fair, providing refreshments when needed for Memorial Services, and helping with the May Women's Fair by running the Beverage Table. We also took part in the Earth Day Event by promoting Heifer Project's dedication to animal and earth management. Probably our most important function, however, is serving as our church's Outreach Team, an official committee and one that is re-elected every year. We come under the direction of the Diaconate, in terms of where we stand on the Church Council.

Our Neighbors' Table was the subject of the **September** meeting when we welcomed Lori Townsend as guest speaker. Lori, daughter-in-law of member Lilly, shared her experiences with the mission of Our Neighbor's Table, an Amesbury-based organization that provides food for struggling families in twelve neighboring cities and towns, including Georgetown. At the **October** meeting we met with Kaleigh Pare, Program Coordinator for the Buttonwoods Museum in Haverhill. Kaleigh told us the stories of many famous personalities who brought color and notoriety to the city of Haverhill. And in **November**, Lou Dispenza and Ann Jaroncynk entertained and educated us as to what life is like in Cuba at the present time. This was not a picture of Cuba from the side-lines of a resort, but rather it was about ordinary, hard-working people living under a dictatorship.

An early Holiday Party was held at the beginning of **December**, and this year, along with a luncheon, and story-telling by Judy Robillard, we enjoyed the talents of our own First Church Trio: Mary Ann Hunt at the piano; Alecia Balduf and Allan Barlow on strings. They played some wonderful Christmas songs for us and then we shared in a sing-along. Our Christmas gift-giving to Ruth's House brought in 165 pairs of socks, plus packages of children's underwear. And so we closed 2016 on a high note, and look forward to resuming our luncheon get-togethers in the New Year. Please contact us if you'd like further information on the Guild.

Respectfully submitted,
Marion Harding & Joan Chatterton

Annual Report of the Christian Outreach Team

Our annual pledge given through the **Wider Mission of the United Church of Christ, Massachusetts Conference**, and support for our **UCC Northeast Association's Scholarship Fund**, amounted to \$3,027.37 for 2016. These funds come from the congregation's individual yearly pledges. In the spring we give to **One Great Hour of Sharing**, a UCC special offering, which focuses on helping refugees abroad. This year that offering amounted to \$528. In addition, we also gave the **mission portions** (\$742) of our **Lenten** (spring) and **Advent** (Christmas) **offerings to the United Church of Christ Disaster USA Fund**. One hundred percent of this special denominational fund goes for assistance to victims of natural disasters. In 2016 there were widespread emergency situations caused by tornados, floods and hurricanes in the South, Southwest and Midwest. **Local aid**, from one of our church's endowment accounts, provided \$1,400 in assistance for those in crisis within our own community.

Our Team thanks those who faithfully contribute to our **Pantry Program** that includes providing non-perishable food items, paper goods, and grocery gift cards (in the amount of \$500 for 2016). The Pantry is a support system for our senior community and local families in need. We especially wish to acknowledge the efforts of our Church's Youth Group who have been raising money for the Pantry through their Super Bowl Sub Sunday project. The results are always Super Satisfying!

The annual **Heifer Project Candy & Craft Sale** was successfully organized by our youth and their leaders. In advance of the April Sale, our teens told amazing Heifer stories – stories about children and young adults in countries around the world who have benefited and become self-sufficient because of the animals given to their care. From the \$597 raised at the Sale, we purchased two goats, one pig, one trio of rabbits, two honey bee hives, one Flock of Hope, and four Flocks of Chicks! Another \$90, raised by children at the Church Fair, was sent for the purchase of three shares of a llama and three shares of a pig! Thanks to all of our children and teens who helped make these purchases possible.

In May we held an all-congregation **Sunshine Basket drive for the homeless**. Approximately \$350 worth of personal care and first-aid items were equally divided between two missions: the **Grace Center** in Gloucester (a drop-in daytime respite) and with the **Emmaus House** in Haverhill which offers shelter for families while professionals tackle the long-term solution to their homelessness.

The Women's Guild continue their mission work for the **Community Giving Tree** that helps thousands of disadvantaged children in the Merrimack Valley during the year by distributing children's clothing in excellent condition, baby equipment, layettes, diapers and blankets. Our Coffee Hour Penny Bowl contributions purchased diapers (80 doz. this

year). The Guild also gave a substantial donation to **Our Neighbors' Table**, a large food pantry/grocery store located in Amesbury that serves twelve neighboring towns, including Georgetown. Since we needed pantry space during our Fair, we donated five boxes of our extra non-perishables to the Amesbury facility in October.

Through the Coffee Hour Penny Bowl initiative, our Team introduced another important mission this year - **Holy Joe's Café**, a service chaplain's ministry. As a former chaplain herself, Rev. Lorraine brought this mission to our attention as it benefits chaplains who are serving on the front lines of conflict in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. This ministry purchases coffee from the **Equal Exchange** (which helps poor coffee growers) and sends the coffee to the chaplains who are ministering to our service people. During the summer and fall, funds from the Penny Bowl purchased eight cases of coffee for this project.

The Guild also sponsored a congregational drive for school supplies during the weeks of late summer that benefited **Ruth's House** in Haverhill with five large shopping bags of every type of needed classroom supplies. During the Christmas season, they gave 165 pairs of new socks to this organization.

This past fall the Outreach Team's focus was the **Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center**, located in Newburyport. The Center is a nationally recognized leader in the effort to end domestic violence and provide care for victims. For over thirty years, they have been providing advocacy and support services to families in crisis, or who are at risk. A month-long campaign led to an all-church congregation offering in October, resulting in a \$500 donation to the Center.

Our congregation again provided overwhelming support for the mission of **H.O.M.E. at Christmas**. H.O.M.E. provides services for one of the most impoverished areas of our country – far northern Maine. (This region is comparable to the poverty in the Kentucky hills.) There are five churches in Maine, Massachusetts and Connecticut (and we are one of those five) that provide gifts for the children in this community. They would not have gifts, otherwise. It was very gratifying for our Team to have witnessed the sixty beautifully wrapped gifts under our Narthex Tree that represented the children's wishes this past Christmas.

Sincere thanks to our Church Family, a family with a big collective heart, and one that never hesitates to reach out to our neighbors in need.

Respectfully submitted for the Outreach Team,
Marion Harding and Joan Chatterton

2016 Fall Fair Report

This year's fair was a success!

We held our Annual Fall Fair on Friday & Saturday October 21st & October 22nd 2016.

The food offered at the church was once again amazing! The breakfast, luncheon and turkey dinner each made with care from our congregation. The Cookie Walk was a favorite with all the visitors to the fair!

The Consignment Boutique & Granny's Attic Treasures once again had steady foot traffic each day, great bargains to be found!!

We had over 25 vendors this year, some new and some returning, We had a great assortment of artisans & crafters. There was also some excitement going on outside of the church as well, the bouncy house was a hit!

The raffles were a great success this year, we are thankful to the local businesses and organizations in our community who contributed money, products and services for our raffles.

A deep hearted thank you to everyone that worked tirelessly to make this year's Fall Harvest Fair an outstanding success.

Michelle Bridges
Fair Chairperson

Women's Day Fair

What a wonderful day it was... This spring fair welcomed the community to meet some wonderful vendors and shop!

The 3rd Annual Women's Day Fair took place on Saturday, May 21st , 2016.

We had corporate 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 Fellowship Hall. This fair was geared towards corporate vendors and wellness and 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 4th Annual Women's Fair 2017, this would not have been possible without the dedication and talents of the congregation everyone embraced this event and fully supported it.

Michelle Bridges
2016 Women's Day Fair Chair

Report of the Stewardship Team

The Stewardship Team would like to thank everyone who contributed their time, talent and donations to the First Congregational Church this year. This year's stewardship theme, "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you" lets us know prayer can be the appointed means on obtaining what we need.

The Team would especially like to thank our speakers this year, Sam Orrender and Alecia Balduf! Sam told us how fortunate he was to be a member of this Church family and how much it means to him to see his friends during fellowship every week. Alecia gave an inspiring speech on overcoming early struggles in her life, to a reconnection with the Church and its ministries. We wish the best in their future endeavors!

Once again, JoEllen Fielding did a tremendous job with the Giving Tree drive, which helps fund the church utility costs and needed office expenses. Thanks to all of the friends and family who managed to give a little bit extra this year. Reverend Lorraine continues to provide our team with materials and much needed spiritual guidance. Also, we cannot forget the behind the scenes effort and contributions from the Church Office Administrator, Marilyn Crosby. Thank you all so much!

For those who still wish to pledge this year, the pledge box and cards are located throughout the narthex. Please see a stewardship team member if you have not received one. Thanks again for those who give after much prayerful thought and sacrifice!

Blessings,

The Stewardship Team

Toni Cassidy, George Comiskey & Sylvia Johnson

Hospitality

The Hospitality Committee has continued to host coffee hours and special events during 2016. Fellowship after worship is an important time to meet new people to our church and to catch up with friends that we do not see during the week.

Special Thanks to Ruth Soper who has graciously offered to Co-Chair.

Thank you also to Kevin Southwick who has helped many Sundays with setting up and cleaning up.

Special Events in 2016 included:

January:	Natalie Tidd Memorial Service Skip Walker Installation Collation
March:	New Members Sunday with a special coffee hour
April:	Luau Pot Luck Lunch
May:	Confirmation Sunday with a special coffee hour for our Confirmands.
June:	Nicole, Mikayla Mumby and Ed Fredette God Speed Service
July & August:	Served hot dogs for our Wednesday Services
December:	Lorraine's Five Year Celebration Luncheon Christmas Eve Service – After the service we had fellowship time with punch. This was a great time to greet old friends.

Thank you to everyone for baking goodies this past year.

Respectively Submitted,

Co-Chairs Janice Murphy and Ruth Soper

Report of the Nominating Team-2017

Team	Name	End Year	2017 Nominating Action
Moderator	Rich Brock	2020	Re-Nominated
Clerk	Toni Cassidy	2019	
Treasury Team	Bob Knapp	2018	
	Peggy Smith	2019	
	Sylvia Johnston	2020	Re-Nominated
Diaconate	Gladie Kneeland	2018	
	Janice Murphy	2018	
	Emily Knapp	2019	
	Kristen Arsenault	2020	Re-Nominated
	Open	2020	
Christian Development	Sarah Young Pesche	2018	
	Michelle Brock	2019	Nominated (Replaces Karen Harris)
	Kirsten Orender	2020	Re-Nominated
Property Team	Steve Pinto	2018	
	Tim Dougherty	2019	
	Kevin Southwick	2020	Nominated
Council Member-At-Large	Open	2018	

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Brock, Moderator