



The First Congregational Church of Reading

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST • AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

Produced by our Church Family

November 2010

Volume 2010, Issue 11



First ChurchNEWS

Statement of Purpose

We gather as a
faith community to
love and magnify God.
Guided by the Holy Spirit,
we will love our neighbors as
ourselves, advocating for
peace and justice.
We will go out and
share our faith in Christ,
inviting others to join us.
We will be nurturers
of the spirit and
teachers of the Word.
We will welcome and
provide sanctuary to all.

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As gardeners of the spirit, we provide fertile soil to nurture both church and community, harvesting faith, compassion, and understanding of God's love, as taught by Jesus Christ.

Welcome!

At FCCR, you will find joyful hearts, open minds and a caring community. If you are a long-time church member, seeking a new spiritual community, or brand new to the very idea of "church"...if you are young or have young children or are mature beyond your years...if you are single, married, partnered, divorced, widowed, or in transition...no matter who you are, at FCCR, you are welcome to join us in celebrating God's love, sharing warm welcome, and offering sanctuary for all.

Small Groups to Discuss Building Repair Plan

The results of the Special Meeting of the Congregation that was held October 3 were very encouraging. Over 60 members attended and the dialogue was thoughtful, honest and open. The motion that passed allows us to begin work to preserve the integrity of the sanctuary, with the allocation of up to \$150,000 for repairs.



Five church members have graciously offered to host meetings of small groups (four to eight persons) in their homes members to discuss the repairs needed and how to achieve them while continuing to manage our church finances responsibly. Were you unable to attend the meetings regarding the repairs to the church that are taking place right now? Are you confused or concerned about what is planned for the future? Are you reluctant to ask questions or speak out in a large meeting? These discussions will be facilitated to ensure that everyone has a chance to ask questions and express themselves. The exact dates of the meetings are still being worked out with the hosts, the meetings should last about an hour and a half, and a light snack and beverage will be provided. Please take this opportunity to catch up on our church life. If you would like to put your name on a list for a meeting (day or evening) or if you have questions, please contact Laurie Tucker, 781-944-6786, tuckerlandb@yahoo.com.

Church Contact Information:
Office Phone: 781-944-0205

www.churchofreading.org
Office Email: office1.fccr@verizon.net

Dear Friends,

It is an exciting time at our church! The amazing first celebration of our building's centennial was full of fun, fellowship, and Spirit. It has reminded all of us of our tremendous history as a church and of the 'great cloud' of faithful folks who came before us. Their service and generosity have come to us as a wonderful gift and invaluable resource - First Congregational Church of Reading, UCC.

Even as we honor our history and those who were part of it, we can hear their voices joining with God's, urging us to carry on and go forward in faith.

This month, we respond to that call as we take steps forward into FCCR's future. Work has begun on the exterior of the sanctuary building, as authorized by congregational vote taken on October 3rd. (Please see more details on this elsewhere in this newsletter.) Also in response to that meeting (and also elsewhere in this edition), the Visioning Team is announcing a series of small group meetings designed specifically for you, and all members and friends of FCCR, to ask questions and share insights about our present status and our future. It is my sincere hope that you will plan to attend one of these small group gatherings. The schedule and sign-up information will be available next week in the enews and Sunday bulletins or by calling/emailing the church office.

One of the anthems sung by our wonderful Chancel Choir during the October 31st Centennial Celebration worship service asked the God of our ancestors who gave them the "grace to walk your way" to bless us as well, saying "May we like them arise to meet challenges, risks of our new day."

Dear friends, I am confident that God is indeed in our midst, filling us with the same Spirit that our church forbearers relied upon so deeply, and guiding us as we answer the call to go forward in faith and meet a new day.

With hope and joy,

Rev. Lisa

Worship in November

Sunday, Nov. 7 – Worship with Communion, Rev. Lisa Stedman preaching

Sunday, Nov. 14 – Worship with Rev. Chad William Kidd preaching

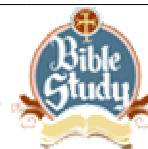
Sunday, Nov. 21 – Thanksgiving Sunday Worship, Rev. Lisa Stedman preaching

Sunday, Nov. 28 – Intergenerational Worship on the First Sunday of Advent, no Church School



Tuesday Adult Bible Study

Tuesdays at 1:30pm – We are currently reading "Bad Girls of the Bible". If that makes you curious, please come and join us!



There will be a **Mission Ministry** meeting on Sunday November 7th in the Dining Hall during Coffee Hour. We will be reviewing Mission's traditional activities and benevolence recipients, and to enlist the help of people who might be interested in running an activity or two. Please see Sharon Ofenstein if you have any interest in joining us.

Save The Date!!



Reminder For Daylight Savings Time 2010 Fall Back—November 7

On November the 7th, 2010 you will need to set your clocks back one hour for the "fall back time change." We won't be springing forward for another four and a half months.

Youth Activities Planned for November

Church School is continuing at a nice pace. We are nearing the end of session one and beginning to look ahead to the next session. We are always in need of teachers and assistants. They are the backbone of this aspect of Christian Formation. If you are interested in serving in such a capacity please see myself, Betsy Schneider or Lesley Kerr. We would love to have you!

We have several youth events planned for November. The Senior Youth (grades 9-12) meet regularly on the first and third Sundays of the month immediately following worship in the youth room. Rumor has it there are sometimes bagels and cream cheese. We are also planning a possible hiking trip or Laser Tag outing sometime soon. The Junior Youth (grades 6-7) will be meeting on either the first Friday or Sunday evening of the month. We plan to have one fun activity or outing each month, our first being a bowling trip on Friday evening, November 5. More details on this will come as the time nears. However, if you would like to attend, please let me know as soon as possible. Also, if you are not on either Youth Group's email list and would like to be please send me your address at bhuggins@bu.edu.



Finally, be sure to mark November 21 on your calendars. There will be an ALL Youth Event – Sunday 11/21 at 5:00 pm at FCCR. This is for all youth from 6th to 12th grades. Watch e-news for further details! There is quite a bit going on that day at FCCR and we hope to have a joint activity involving all the groups — the Confirmation Class, Senior Youth, and Junior Youth. More details to come!

Grace and peace,

Blake Huggins

Director of Children's and Youth Ministries

Confirmation 2010-2011

The 2010-11 Confirmation program has begun with 15 youth from the 8th & 9th grades. We are excited to have such a good size class and look forward to a great year. Each confirmand will be asking someone to serve as a mentor for them in the process. While this is not a low-commitment role, it is as HIGH reward one! If you are asked, please consider this prayerfully and feel free to contact Rev. Lisa if you have questions.



Confirmation Schedule – Gatherings on November 7th, December 12 from 6:00 to 7:30pm.

Don't miss the ALL Youth Fellowship Event on Sunday, November 21st at 5:00pm.

Epiphany Pageant—January 2nd

You may be asking "What's an Epiphany Pageant?". If you recall, last year's Christmas pageant was postponed due to snow and we ended up holding it after Christmas on Epiphany Sunday. The pageant was a wonderful reminder of what Christmas is all about. Having it after Christmas allowed us to enjoy the pageant without the stressful craziness leading up to Christmas. Since the timing worked so well last year, we have decided to intentionally schedule the Pageant for Sunday, January 2nd.

The Christian Formation Ministry is busy looking for a script with just enough speaking parts. Pageant sign up will begin on Sunday, November 21st. Watch for more details to follow. Please contact Lesley Kerr at lesley.kerr@comcast.net if you are interested in helping with the pageant or have any questions.

Please join us for our **annual advent workshop** after worship in Guild Hall on December 5th. Materials will be provided, and there will be something for all skill levels. If you have a craft or activity you would like to share, please contact us Betsy Schneider or Lesley Kerr.

Save The Date!!

Sponsored by the Christian Formation Ministry.

4th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner—Sunday November 21st



Sunday November 21st after church, we are again hosting our Thanksgiving Dinner. We are thankful for all our church does for us and would like to share a meal with you. There is no meeting agenda, just time to share a Thanksgiving meal with good friends.

We will have turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, squash, cranberry sauce and rolls. We would also like to ask that some of you bring a pie to share for dessert. We ask that not all families bring dessert since we only need one for every 6 people coming - so please check in with us if you want to bring a pie. There will be a sign up sheet for attendance outside the office or call us at 978-658-6829, or e-mail us at child-cornr@aol.com - just to give us an estimate on the number of people to prepare for. If you don't sign up you're still more than welcome and if you do sign up and find you can't attend, it's okay. We are just looking for an approximate head count. Please join us for dinner, Jack & Judy Austin

Thanksgiving Food Pantry Collection —Sunday November 21st

The Mission Ministry is organizing a special collection for the Reading Food Pantry on Sunday, November 21st, in celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday. Needed items include juice, juice boxes, hot chocolate, coffee, tea, herbal tea, canned fishes (not tuna), stew, hash, chili, canned fruit, mayonnaise, catsup, relish, salad dressing, lunch box snacks, granola bars, crackers, cookies, popcorn, raisins, boxed potatoes, brown and white rice, shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper, facial tissue, dish and laundry detergent, bar soap, cereal (hot and cold), canned pastas, sugar, brownie mix, and cake mix and frost-

Operation Christmas Child

Once again it is time to pack up small Christmas gifts for children around the world! Operation Christmas Child reaches out to children in over 95 countries to deliver Christmas gifts along the *Greatest Gift of All Gospel* booklet written in the native language of children. Participation in this program has become a wonderful Christmas tradition at our church.

Collections will be on **Sunday November 14 and 21**. Please bring any of the suggested items below or similar gifts. Children may drop off items with their Sunday School teachers and adults may leave items in the collection box in the office. Boxes are packed and labeled separately for boys and girls ages of 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14 years. We will assemble the boxes after Coffee Hour on November 21. If you would like to help, please join us!



Please also bring empty shoeboxes with separate lids. You may wrap the box and lid separately in Christmas paper beforehand if you have time.

TOYS —Small cars, balls, dolls, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small Etch A Sketch®, toys that light up or make noise (with extra batteries), Slinky®.

HYGIENE ITEMS — toothbrush, toothpaste, mild bar soap (in a plastic bag), comb, washcloth, etc.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES—pens, pencils and sharpener, crayons/markers, stamps and ink pad sets, writing pads or paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books.

Hard candy and lollipops (please double bag all candy), mints, gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries)

PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE: Used or damaged items; war-related items; chocolate or food; out-of-date candy; liquids; medications; breakable items; aerosol cans

We must include \$7 for each shoebox to cover shipping. We would greatly appreciate donations to defray this cost. Please make out your checks to the church with Operation Christmas Child in the memo line.

If you have any questions, you may contact Cindy Crampe at 781-942-7542 or ccrampe@comcast.net. Visit <http://www.samaritanspurse.org/index.php/OCC/> for more details on this wonderful program.

Cocoa and Cookies

November 28th



Our annual **Cocoa and Cookies** will take place on November 28th. Our tradition continues with FCCR opening its doors for hospitality along with cocoa and cookies after the annual Christmas Tree Lighting on the Common. We will enjoy Christmas Carols and refreshments following the tree lighting. Please plan to

join us and be sure to invite your neighbors and friends back to FCCR, UCC— for warm goodies and a few carols to get us in the mood for the season of light!

This is a great opportunity to welcome our neighbors into our building and tell them about our church. Brochures and flyers will be available to all. We need folks to meet and greet and chat people up. If you are able to help in any way — baking cookies, making cocoa, organizing and lighting the luminaries, singing, passing out flyers on the common and be extravagantly welcoming! Each year over 300 people walk through our beautiful sanctuary and enjoy being together as a community. We need your help!!! Contact Joyce Burnham, 781-424-1595, email: jaeburnham@comcast.net, to help out.

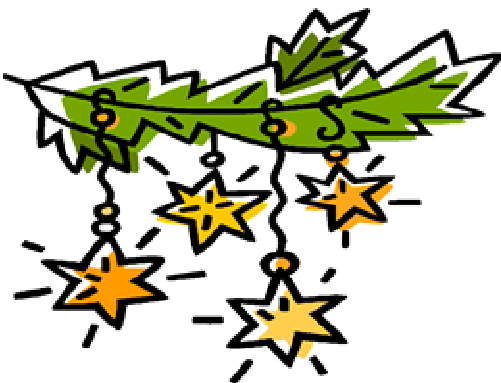


Very Important Serve Safe Information

We can continue to bake our cookies at home. However, brownies and bars must be *cut at the church*. If you are baking any bar cookies, please bring them to the church in the pan (disposable foil recommended) and we will cut them for you.

When any item is transported to the church by car, special care should be taken in enclosing the entire outside of the item in wrapping so that it is not contaminated by contact with pet hairs or other contaminants in the vehicle.

We greatly appreciate all of your contributions to this important outreach opportunity to our wider community!



Deck the Halls—Decorating the Sanctuary—November 27

On Saturday, November 27 at 9:00, the Altar Committee will gather to decorate the Sanctuary for the Advent/Christmas season. We need more hands this year because our committee is smaller than usual. If you would like to help, please join us to hang wreaths, to hang the greenery around the altar, choir loft and the chapel. Also join us on Friday, November 26 at 9:00 to assemble and decorate our 7 foot tree. Please call Mary Ann Higgins (617-347-8346) if you plan on helping. Thanks!

Poinsettias

It is time to think about ordering poinsettias. Look for the order form in the December Newsletter, and in the weekly bulletin beginning on Thanksgiving. Order forms will be due by Wednesday, Dec. 8th.





Cookie Swap—February 13

CWF usually has a cookie swap at Christmas time so everyone can enjoy some homemade goodies or purchase a homemade gift. We have decided to move the COOKIE SWAP to Sunday, February 13, so you can pick up a gift for that special valentine, or to give yourself a homemade treat. Wait till you see the variety of cookies!!

Christmas Bags For Our Shut-ins

Once again each Circle in CWF will contribute to the Christmas bags that Visitation brings to our shut-ins. Each Circle will be called to let them know the number needed.

CWF Board Meeting

The next board meeting of CWF will be on November 17th at 7:00 in the Church's library. If you can't be there, please let me know.

Ham and Bean Supper

About 100 people enjoyed a yummy home cooked meal on October 23. Many thanks to Diane Wilson, Joan Kingston, and the many people who prepared, decorated, and cleaned up.

Everyone left full and happy!

Annual Meeting

On Sunday, October 25, women of CWF gathered to enjoy a brunch and discuss a variety of things pertaining to the organization. The new slate of officers was introduced: Mary Ann Higgins, President; Shirley Holden, Vice-President; Kathleen Taylor, Secretary; Kathy Forsythe, Treasurer; Lorna Knapp, Remembrance; and Diane Wilson, Programs. Betsy Connor is Cookbook.

Cookbook

We have been busy working on "The CWF Cookbook; Breaking Bread Together for 100 Years," and are just about done with the typing of the recipes. We have a great variety—some reflecting the focus on healthy eating and some old fattening favorites!

Many thanks to those who typed their recipes or typed for others. We now need to tweak everything and send in the final form. It will not be ready for Christmas, but we will be pre-selling it at Church gatherings. The cost will be \$10.

Faire "Bottom-Line"

The number crunching has been done. All expenses have been paid out—we hope! Deposits have been made.

The fifty-third annual Olde Redding Faire netted a total of \$10,879.19—a slight up-tick from last year's results.

Many thanks once more, to all who did so much to make the Faire the great success that it was. This income will support the many ministries that this church offers for members and friends, as well as to the wider world.

Gay Williams, Treasurer



Bottom Line...
Rises!

Our Building's Centennial Celebration

1959 Building Addition

The new church building, completed in 1910, served the needs of the parishioners for almost half a century, until the mid-1950s. At that time, more room was needed to accommodate what are known today as the "Baby Boomers", the generation born in the post-World War II period, from 1946–1964. Sunday school classes had to be held in the church balcony, as well as several simultaneous classes being held in the Kitchen Hall, due to lack of space.

Planning for an addition was begun in the fall of 1956, with a Financial Campaign kick-off in November, 1957. Plans for the new addition were approved, and Paul Sheldon, pastor of the church at the time, broke ground for the new building on a rainy Sunday, November 9, 1958. Less than one year later, on Sunday, October 18, 1959, the new addition, officially known as the 'Chapel and Christian Education Building', was officially dedicated by Rev. Dr. Sheldon, Rev. Theodore Gregg—newly appointed Associate Pastor—and other dignitaries. The new addition included six new classrooms, a chapel, parlor, church library, and a spacious activity room downstairs (Pilgrim Hall). The new addition cost \$200,000 (in 1958 dollars). Three classrooms were gained in the previously existing build-

ing. This new 'Education Building' could now accommodate an enrollment of 750 students, with classes being held in double sessions. Indeed, during the mid-1960s, Sunday morning services were also 'double sessions', one was held at 9:30 and the other at 11. Attendance often reached 800 people (children and adults), with close to 1000 easily being reached during the Holiday seasons. By the early 1970s, however, the church was back to just one Sunday morning service.

Two years after the dedication of the 'Christian Education Building', in 1961, a new Altar was officially dedicated in the Sanctuary, in memory of former pastor Rev. Payson Pierce. This was in addition to the on-going stained glass window dedications, as well as other dedications in the church, which continued through the 1990s.

Next: Stained-glass window dedications and other memorials.
—John Meyers

Centennial Celebration Committee: Hazel Piper, Judie Williams, Nancy Ballantyne, Carol Patterson, Betty Wilder, Larry Piper, Mary Ann Higgins, Jennifer Tabor, Christine Georgilas, Dave Zeek, John Myers, Betsy Schneider, Kathy Guyott, Marcia Atkins, Rev. Lisa.

Still Celebrating

There were many fun things to enjoy about the Centennial luncheon and displays on Oct. 31st. For me one of them was getting a chance to look at old articles and photos relating to the church, many of which were unearthed by John Myers and displayed by Kathy Guyott and Betty Wilder. The other was the generosity of people who shared books, old photos, and just as important, memories of that period of time. For example, John and Shirley Fairchild searched their closets and attic and found a number of items from the early 1900s to share with us, including ice tongs, an ice scale and wooden children's toys. There are too many people to thank by name, but I want to say that working with such a great committee was also a pleasure for me. As I look forward to our final Centennial Celebration on May 1, 2011, I hope that just as we looked backwards and celebrated our forbearers in October, that we will look forward to the future of our church at the celebration in May.
—Hazel Piper

What a Day

The kick-off Centennial Celebration event on Sunday October 31st was exciting – and yes, educational. Our worship service was inspiring including some of the elements that would have been included in a service in the 1910 era and, as usual, beautiful music.

Approximately 150 people enjoyed a catered lunch while connecting with new and old church friends. Our own pastor Lisa's remarks led us on a trip through our own history. This came more alive with a poster display of pictures of our old buildings and copies of articles and newspaper clippings chronicling our church through the years. There

were also photographs on display of many church members in various groups and committees, some still with us! The artifacts table was a favorite – displaying books, postcards, clothing, china, etc. from the early 20th century. A highlight of the celebration was the Trivia game testing the guests on what they knew about events in our lives over this particular 100 years.

As you can see, it was a great day. If you were there, thanks for your participation. If you missed it, we look forward to seeing you on May 1st, the 100th anniversary of the dedication of our present building.
—Nancy Ballantyne

Advent Collection beginning in December

This holiday season, the Commission on Christian Outreach will again be conducting four collections – one on each Sunday of Advent – to help social-service agencies minister to needy individuals and families.

The first two weeks, we will be collecting items for the City Mission Society's annual Christmas Shop, which brings hope and joy to families and individuals during the holiday season. The CMS invites needy families and individuals to come and select gifts for themselves and their children. The gifts are donated by partner churches such as ours, and then sorted and packed by volunteers. Each year more than 200 volunteers gather and distribute over 10,000 toys and clothing items directly to CMS clients and other families in crisis.

On November 28th, we will collect items for children. The following Sunday, December 5th, we will receive items for adults. Rev. Stedman will lead a group of our youth to help sort items on Saturday, December 4th. And we are sorting on Saturday, Dec. 19th. The CMS sorting is open to all. We'll meet at the church at 11 and are due in Winchester at 11:30. Our shift is 2 hours.

The third Sunday in Advent – December 12th – the Outreach Commission will be soliciting toiletries for the residents of Emmaus House and other clients of Emmaus Inc. in Haverhill. Services provided by this nonprofit organization include emergency shelter and meals, counseling and substance-abuse treatment, and job training and placement. Over the past 20 years, the agency has grown to become a significant service provider and developer of affordable housing. Emmaus House, its best-known facility, is a family emergency shelter.

Finally, on December 19th, we will be collecting items for the Reading Food Pantry – just in time for Christmas dinner! We hope that all of you will join us in these collections to share our blessings with those in need this holiday season. Thank you!

NOV. 28 ~ CITY MISSION SOCIETY CHILDREN

New items for children: Infant clothing and layette items, stuffed animals, toys, games, brown/black/white dolls, backpacks, soccer or footballs, educational toys, art supplies, craft kits, clothing (especially larger sizes), hats and mittens, and gift cards.

DEC. 5 ~ CITY MISSION SOCIETY ADULTS

New items for adults: Clothing, wallets, perfume, scarves, hats, gloves, socks, electric razors, bathrobes, afghans, fleece blankets, and gift cards.

DEC. 12 ~ EMMAUS HOUSE

All types of toiletries (including hygiene products) for men, women, and children. Shampoo, razors, toothbrushes and toothpaste, etc.

DEC. 19 ~ FOOD PANTRY

Nonperishable food items, coffee (reg. and instant), tea (reg. and decaf.), juice and juice boxes, mayo, salad dressings, cookies, crackers, sugar, jam and jelly, brownie mix, pasta, and cereal. Also dish and laundry detergent, toilet paper, Kleenex, and paper towels. Cash donations are also welcome.

FCCR will be sorting with City Mission Society for the Christmas Shops – Saturday, Dec. 18 at First Congregational Church of Winchester from 11:30 to 1:30. More details soon!

Save The Date!!

Early on Saturday morning, October 2nd Rev. Lisa and five people from our church family climbed into two cars and headed off to “Super Saturday”, an event sponsored by the MACUCC. The day began with worship and then moved onto workshops—one in the morning and one after lunch in the afternoon. Following are the reports back of those in attendance. Feel free to talk to one or all about their experience!

On Super Saturday, I attended the workshop “Provoking Better Ministry through Evaluation.” We examined the model typically used by congregations to evaluate staff. This model operates as though the pastor is the performer, the congregation is the audience and God is the prompter. We discussed the pitfalls and the limitations of doing evaluations using this method. A newer model of healthy communication, mutual accountability, and effective problem solving is being offered as a way of provoking better ministry by staff, lay leaders, and members. This emerging model is based on a shift in the way the congregation views its ministry where the congregation is now the performer, the pastor is the prompter, and God is the audience. This shifts the evaluation onto the whole congregation and the way they do ministry *together* for God and for God’s people. *Deb Adams*

Church Finance - Taught by Rev. Karen McArthur. This session focused on duties that the Church Treasurer must perform. Rev. McArthur spoke about the importance of internal controls, with respect to cash receipts and cash disbursements. She stressed the church should have written procedures for cash receipts, to document the process of what happens when money comes in the door until it gets to the bank. She also spoke about classifying donations in one of three ways - Unrestricted funds (can be used for any purpose), Temporarily Restricted Funds (must be used for one specific use, i.e. One Great Hour of Sharing), and Permanently Restricted Funds (where only the interest, not the principal, can be used in perpetuity). Overall, Rev. McArthur said the treasurer has three primary responsibilities - Classify restricted and unrestricted funds, prepare complete financial statements (DON'T HIDE MONEY), and monitor all invested funds.

Capital Campaign - Taught by Margery Williams Lunenberg. Ms. Lunenberg spoke about the Financial Trinity - Annual Giving, Capital Campaign (every 8-10 years), and Planned Giving. She pro-

vided all the participants a demographic report of their respective towns (I have it for Reading). She gave us the various reasons for conducting a capital campaign, including missions projects, building the endowment, and a preventive maintenance fund. Ms. Lunenberg also indicated that a church should identify capital needs. She outlined the process of a capital campaign, including time-frames, participants, and the benefits (besides the financial benefit).

Overall, I thought Rev. McArthur and Ms. Lunenberg gave excellent presentations. I felt better about FCCR after attending the Church Finance session; while we certainly have some work to do with respect to tightening some things up, I think overall we're doing OK in that area. I know we've talked on and off during the past year about conducting a capital campaign; time-wise (and with the state of the building), it's probably time we begin exploring this more seriously. Rev. McArthur and Ms. Lunenberg were also very well prepared and encouraged questions during their respective sessions. *Chris Kerr*

“Demographics: Your Changing Community” An introduction to a system called MissionInsite, which can provide specific information and analysis about changing demographics in Reading and the surrounding area. This is available to our church through the internet and is paid for by our Massachusetts UCC. Demographics can and should inform our church’s visioning and planning for the future. I now have the information about how to create our own free accounts with MissionInsite and run reports specific to Reading and FCCR. In fact, I have even run some of the reports! Now, what to do??

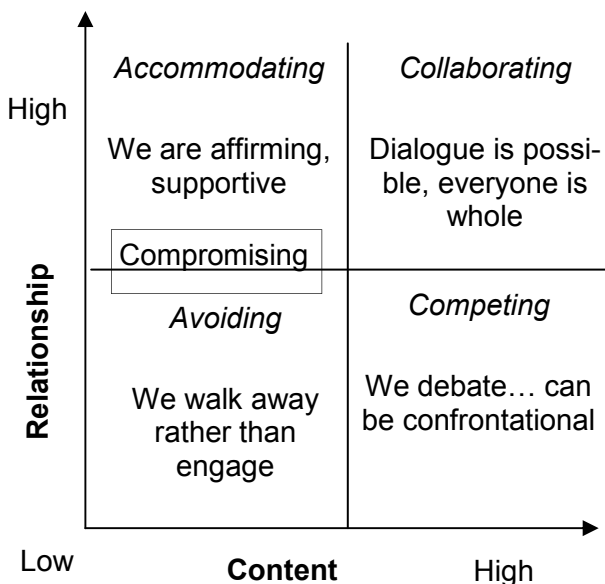
“Latest Trends in Hospitality” Topics discussed in this workshop included the newest thinking & practices about church websites and brochures, greeting Sunday guests and visitors, use of name tags, and ways to entice/invite new folks to church events. One great challenge for all church members is to ask “Can you remember why you came to this church AND why you came back?”, then set a goal to do/be/offer whatever that was to someone else. Its like church pay it forward, in a way! In addition, we viewed several short videos on YouTube: 1) “Top 10 Reasons I Don’t Go To Church”, 2) “Top 10 Reasons To Give Church Another Try”, and 3) “What If Starbucks Marketed Like a Church?”

My hope coming out of both these workshops was that our newly-forming Church Vitality group at FCCR will pick up steam early in 2011, and will study and make use of this information and some of the many other resources at our disposal.

Lisa Stedman

"Discipleship: A Model of Church for the 21st Century" I attended this workshop which had been advertised as one about Small Groups. (I have it in my mind that when I retire I'd like to lead a small group...) What it was instead, was a workshop which explained ways in which to move a membership model church to one of discipleship. In ministry with both Wendy Olapade and with Norm Bendroth we here at FCCR were exposed to much of this thinking—I felt ahead of the game! To shift from the one model to the other implies shifting our focus, primarily inward in the membership modes, and outward in the discipleship mode. Clearly the small groups I had hoped to learn more about are critical to the discipleship model: together we would work at growing in relationship with God, explore our individual calls to ministry, and to then bring the good news of that relationship to others.

"Covenantal Dialogue" I attended this workshop in the afternoon and really enjoyed it. The message spoke to me of relationship (a very important part of my life) and its significance in our ability to talk—dialogue—together successfully. A diagram explains it best, sourced from Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement, Pruitt and Rubin.



The message for me was that if we can only get to know one another—build relationship—we would have a better chance of routinely collaborating, dialoguing, finding solutions together. It fits with the small group concept. As someone said to me, it doesn't matter what sort of small group you have—whether you knit or sew together, study, pray or play—in being together, you will build relationship.

Gay Williams

Options for Struggling Churches I attended a 2 part seminar to learn about struggling churches. The most encouraging message was the fact that almost 80% of churches are facing the same issues as FCCR. I learned about the life cycle of a church and several ways that other churches have addressed their similar issues. Topics such as turning around into a growth phase, re-purposing the building, merges with other churches are just a few of the ideas discussed. I finished feeling things are not so bad for us and hopeful that the process of deciding where we should be heading will bring us all closer together to serve God.

Amy Imrich

Money Autobiography: Connecting Our Faith to Our Money Jesus talked more about money than any subject other than the kingdom of God. For people of faith, exploring our habits, attitudes and relationship with money and material possessions is not only healthy, but essential to living faithfully as disciples and stewards. This seminar talked about the practice of writing a "money autobiography" providing an opportunity for personal and small-group reflection and spiritual growth.

Creating Content on your church website and Facebook how-tos These two seminars (both Deb Adams and I attended the Facebook seminar) talked about converting web sites from "yellow pages" - places where you go to get information—to content filled sites where people want to visit to stay up to date and informed. This seems a little daunting. The second seminar which focuses on optimizing the social networking part of Facebook seems more fitting. Many churches are using Facebook pages to keep youth informed (the posts go out to people who are "friended" (all new to me too). Many churches are starting with Facebook for their youth (since they live in Facebook) and that seemed like something we might want to consider.

Linda Ananian

Daily prayers are invited for all of our friends and members-especially those who are dealing with these special joys and concerns. They and their families are most grateful for your spiritual support and cards of greeting.



Prayers for the Month of October

Following are many of the prayers shared during the past month

O God, We lift up our petitions and concerns in prayer..

- ✚ Ed Dombroski, who had liver failure.
- ✚ Nancy Graham who had foot surgery.
- ✚ Marilyn Fowler's brother who is ill.
- ✚ John Fairchild who was in the hospital with an infection.
- ✚ Ginny Davenport dealing with cancer.
- ✚ Danielle Pelluso recovering from an illness.
- ✚ Joyce Miller, healing from knee replacement surgery.
- ✚ A friend being treated for cancer.
- ✚ Sarah "Umby", Lisa's Goddaughter, recovering from surgery following a broken leg.
- ✚ Tom Murphy recovering from a stroke.
- ✚ For baby Teddy and his family as he has abdominal surgery this month.
- ✚ For my mother, struggling with congestive heart failure, but responding well to changes in her medicine.
- ✚ A friend who had a 1 lb. 14 oz premature baby. So far all is well.
- ✚ Our congregation as we discuss our path regarding the use and maintenance of our 100 year old building.
- ✚ A loveable teen in distress.
- ✚ All those struggling with anxiety and depression.
- ✚ For Janice Russell's brother Jeff who is battling cancer.
- ✚ God, turn our hearts from hate and intolerance-especially religious and sexuality intolerance. Empower us to know how to love - may that be our prophetic witness, not hate.
- ✚ All who are searching for jobs or dealing with change in career and work.
- ✚ For the recent cholera outbreak in Haiti.
- ✚ The Middle East Peace process.

O God, we lift up these celebrations and joys in prayer...

- ✚ Births of Lucas Lattimore and John Joseph ("JJ") Austin.
- ✚ Dear friends, Russ and Will, who are getting married.
- ✚ Ian and Linda's 18th Wedding Anniversary.
- ✚ Our Stephen Jack Hersey, Jack Kevin Prescott and Matthew Edward Evans, who were baptized on the 24th of this month and their families.
- ✚ The Deacons, Church School Teachers and Faire workers for their dedication.
- ✚ For the wonderful "Super Saturday", a day of workshops, celebration and fellowship, held in Franklin MA by the MACUCC and attended by six of our members.
- ✚ Ginny Davenport after her car accident, that she was not hurt.
- ✚ Our third graders who received their bibles this month.
- ✚ Our confirmands as they start their journey of discovery.
- ✚ The Chilean miners and their families.

O God, we pray for those who are grieving...

- ✚ The family of Bruce Shulman who died this month.
- ✚ Family and friends of Linda Jerrett's friend Jamie who died this month.
- ✚ A dear friend who lost her young child.
- ✚ Janet Colcough and family in the death of her mother-in-law.

And those who are cared for at home:

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Jane Rice | Peter Thorstensen |
| Grace Faulkner | Bill Rule |
| Doris Torppa | John Weston |

Please call the church office for these addresses if you would like to send a card or visit these friends.

Thanks to those who donated flowers to beautify our worship space in October

In loving memory of Russell and Inez Daley by the Daley and Oliphant families.

In loving memory of Robert Gray by his wife Sandra and their family.

In loving memory of Ruth and Donald McCord by Tom and Jane McCord.

In loving memory of Dora Evans by Kiernan and Judythe Meagher.

In Celebration of the 100th Birthday of our beloved building of worship by the Centennial Celebration Committee and the people of this church community.



calendar