

# **2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

## **COMMUNITY CHURCH OF DURHAM**

**United Church of Christ**

**Durham, New Hampshire**

### **Our Covenant**

**We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the will of God. It is our purpose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of this Church to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did our forebears, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.**

**PLEASE BRING THIS REPORT WITH YOU TO THE ANNUAL MEETING ON**

**May 3, 2009 AT 11:30 AM IN THE SANCTUARY**

***WE SUGGEST ONE REPORT PER FAMILY***

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**COMMUNITY CHURCH OF DURHAM  
ANNUAL MEETING  
May 3, 2009**

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**MAY 2009 REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE**  
(5/1/09)

**Names in Capital Letters to be elected at Annual Meeting, May 3, 2009**

\* =Council Member

**VCH** =Vice Chairperson

**CH** =Chairperson

| <u>Elected Positions to Expire</u> | May 2010                           | May 2011                             | May 2012                               |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| *Council, Chair                    | KATIE WHEELER                      |                                      |  |
| *Council, Vice Chair               | GARY CILLEY                        |                                      |  |
| *Clerk                             | GRETCHEN FORBES                    |                                      |  |
| *Historian                         | DOUGLAS WHEELER                    |                                      |  |
| Treasurer                          | Bob Eckerson                       |                                      |  |
| Assistant Treasurer                | Sam Pollard                        |                                      |  |
| Warden                             | JONATHAN PENNOCK                   |                                      |  |
| Assistant Warden                   | Frank Pilar                        |                                      |  |
| Auditor                            | David Ellis                        |                                      |  |
| Collector                          | Mark Chutter & Lorna Ellis         |                                      |  |
| Moderator                          | BOB HOUSTON                        |                                      |  |
| *Women's Guild Representative      | EMILY COOK                         |                                      |  |
| <hr/>                              |                                    |                                      |  |
| DIACONATE                          | Charlie Clark                      | Carolyn Puffer                       | KATIE ELLIS                            |
| * Chair & V Chair                  | AUDREY DROGSETH Co-CH<br>Bob Wear  | JOHN MARZINZIK Co-CH<br>Paul West    | ANN HOTCHKISS<br>DENNIS MATHEWS        |
| <hr/>                              |                                    |                                      |  |
| BOARD OF STEWARDS                  | MARK CHUTTER Co-CH                 | Andrea Fenn                          | PAM MONROE                             |
| * Chair & V Chair                  | Bob Eckerson<br>KAREN HILTON       | Frank Pilar<br>BILL TANGUAY Co-CH    | BOB SIMPSON<br>NANCY SMATH             |
| <hr/>                              |                                    |                                      |  |
| CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CABINET        | Rob Cinq-Mars                      | Tracy Demers                         | RUTH DAVIS                             |
| * Chair & V Chair                  | Ernie Downs<br>HELEN MASON CH      | Kristin Forselius<br>Melissa Gianino | KIM MILLER<br>PAM WHITE                |
| <hr/>                              |                                    |                                      |  |
| HOME AND WORLD MISSION BOARD       | Ruth Kane                          | DARIEN LAUTEN VCH                    | KEN ANDERSEN                           |
| * Chair & V Chair                  | Maura Milner<br>CYNTHIA WATKINS CH | Dave Smack<br>Margo Pennock          | MANDY ARMSTRONG<br>DICK GSOTTSCHNEIDER |
| <hr/>                              |                                    |                                      |  |
| CHURCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE        | RUSSELL MASON Co-CH                | Marge Clark                          | WALLY DUNHAM                           |
| * Chair & V Chair                  | Dan Miner<br>DONNA SIMPSON Co-CH   | John Puffer                          | ELLEN ERVIN<br>SOOTY TANGUAY           |

**SPECIAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

*(which nominates members of the Church Nominating Committee)*

Council Chair: Katie Wheeler

Immediate Past Council Chair: Joanne Sasner

Minister: Mary Westfall

Retiring Members of the Church Nominating Committee: Nancy Clarke, Marion Ellis, Pri Phenix

The Church's staff includes the Minister, the Director of Educational Ministries, the Director of Music, the Organist, the Office Assistant, the Business Administrator, and the Sexton(s).

## REPORT OF THE PASTOR

The Brazilian writer, Paulo Coelho, once noted that “the three most important words in all languages are the small words. Yes. Love. God. They are words that are easy enough to say and which fill vast empty spaces.” In a world so filled with words I find myself drawn to this quote and the way it speaks about my work as a pastor and the ministry in which I am engaged with the members and friends of the Community Church. For me these three words, a living trinity of sorts, sum up our task as well as our accomplishments as a church family.

In the past year I have been moved and inspired by the ways this community of faith has said “yes,” hosting blood drives and the Peace Pilgrimage walkers, collecting countless coats and warm clothes for those in need, serving at the Dover Friendly Kitchen, bringing items for residents of area shelters, or children in Honduras and the hungry in our own community. We have said “yes,” with casseroles and flowers delivered, potlucks planned and attended, volunteer hours generously offered to make angel costumes, shovel snow, clean the grounds, chaperone youth events, drive shut-ins to appointments, serve on committees, lead a choir, lead a book group, sing, add insulation to our building, serve as a lay reader, welcome in countless building users. Through these and many other moments and tasks I have been delighted to see the way we are seeking to live the word “yes” with our lives – as we say yes to friends and strangers, yes to the Spirit calling us into new avenues of service and mission.

Likewise, I have been witness to the ways this congregation also has said “love,” as we celebrated the anniversary of our Open and Affirming Commitment, provided space for funerals and memorial services for those known and unknown, hosting receptions for those services with lovingly prepared and served food. I was encouraged seeing love made visible as hands were extended in friendship to visitors and strangers, prayers and tears were shared over losses, comfort offered to those who lost a job, faced an illness, struggled with addiction, dealt with mental health issues. That love was present when members took time to “pass the peace” and really mean it, linger over coffee hour making deeper connections, learn the names of children in our congregation, reach out with our hands, hearts, dollars and hope. Through these and many other moments and exchanges I have been encouraged to see the way we are seeking to live the word “love” with our lives – as we seek to love friends and strangers, and exhibit compassion and tenderness in a world hungry for those gifts.

And finally, I have been uplifted by the ways this congregation has also said “God,” even as we lean into deeper understanding of who and what God is. Through book discussion groups, and tearful hugs, words of encouragement, moments of deep silence, in worship that pushes our comfort zones, and worship that speaks to our deepest joys and hurts, in music that moves our spirits, and children’s words that stop us in our tracks. Through actions, relationships, commitments, words and silence, worship and service, this congregation moved into deepening experiences of the Holy in our midst. Through loss and challenge, uncertain times and personal struggles, we have made God’s light and love increasingly visible and present in healing and life-giving ways. Through these and many other moments and encounters I have been blessed to see the ways we are saying “God” with our very lives – seeking to be present and compassionate to friends and strangers while remaining open to Mystery.

Yes. Love. God. Three small words, easy enough to say, which fill vast empty spaces. In this year we have shared, I celebrate the ways we have sought to fill the empty spaces with such holy work and tender care. I am keenly aware of the Spirit that is present among us adding to all we do, and filling my own hearts with healing, joy and gratitude. With courage, a sense of adventure, and an openness to the delights and challenges that await us, we move into new opportunities to live our faith and lift our light!

In the coming year, as I prepare to mark 10 years as your pastor, I will also hope to undertake with the church leaders and all those interested, a time of visioning and planning as we reflect upon who we are as a congregation and our goals for the coming years. My hope would be that such a planning process can truly be a time of renewed faith and commitment as we celebrate and clarify who are are and look with

creative eyes and bold hearts to where the Spirit is calling us. Sometimes congregations only undertake such a process when they are faced with crisis or impending change. I believe that to engage in this kind of shared visioning without the constraints and weightiness of a crisis will be truly beneficial and energizing for us all and look forward to what lies ahead.

Again, thanks to each and all of you for the ways you support my work among you and for helping me expand my own sense of "yes," "love," and "God."

Peace be with you. . . .

The Rev. Dr. Mary E. Westfall

## **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CABINET**

Last June, we closed out the year with our annual CElebration Sunday in mid-June. At that time, we presented each of our teachers and volunteers from our education and youth programs with a certificate of appreciation and made a donation in their names to the UCC Myanmar Cyclone Fund through Wider Church Ministries. In late June, we held the Vacation Bible School program once again in collaboration with St. Thomas More and St. George's Episcopal Churches in Durham. The theme was God's Big Backyard and we had about 35 children in attendance with help from some of our middle and high school students, along with other adult volunteers in our church and from the other local churches. It was a really fun and exciting week and I think everyone truly enjoyed the experience.

In late summer, plans began for Rally Sunday in September. A group from the CE Cabinet helped organize soup and breads, along with sandwiches for the kids for a light luncheon following church. We registered children for the program and invited more adults to join us as teachers and volunteers. All went smoothly.

While we faced some challenges in terms of teacher recruitment, things seemed to fall into place by late September and the Church School programs were up and running. More than 100 children are registered with attendance varying each week from 30-50 children during the course of the past year. The Kinderkirk was staffed this year by Jaime Morris, a sophomore at UNH. She was joined by other parents and volunteers in helping care for our youngest children. The Young Preschool program has continued to develop, offering something both age appropriate and spiritual for our 3 and 4 year olds. The Godly Play classes have continued to be very popular and we invited more parents to help us out as door persons in supporting the lead teachers. It certainly takes an investment of time and planning to prepare the lessons in Godly Play and they do a wonderful job. We are hoping to get more folks trained who would be willing to be the storytellers/lead teachers this coming year.

Last spring, Gloria and Bill Mason and I attended the Godly Play Training in Exeter, NH. This year, Bill joined the Godly Play 3 group as a lead teacher. We made some adjustments to our class groupings this year with the Young Preschool group offered for our pre-schoolers, GP 1-K/1<sup>st</sup> grade, GP2-2/3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and GP3-4/5. Our Middle school group consisted of students in grades 6-8 with a Pathfinders Meeting once a month during Sunday School time.

The Pathfinders Group for folks in grades 5-8 has been led by parents Nancy Smath and Nat Balch who have done a wonderful job of leading fun activities and good discussions. The group visited the NH Shaker community in the fall, helped out at the Dover Friendly Kitchen and the Christmas Fair among other activities. They met for pizza and a movie in March. They are planning a trip to the Heifer Farm in June.

The high school group too has been invited to monthly meetings on Sunday mornings. It has been somewhat more challenging to find meeting times that fit into their busy schedules. Helen Mason and I have met with the group. They had a successful Superbowl sub fundraiser in early February which helped raise money for their April mission trip to Boston. A Three Worlds dinner was held in early April and

guests randomly selected cards which placed them at a grouping which consisted of a more elaborate dinner for the few, soup and bread for more, and plain rice and water for the largest number to represent the manner in which food resources are distributed in our world. We hope to continue to build this group in the coming year. The high school group will again travel to Boston for the CityReach program in late April to learn about issues of homelessness.

We are presently looking for adult volunteers who would enjoy making a commitment to helping lead both the Pathfinders and high school groups in the coming year. Nancy and Nat will be moving on to other challenges and the Silverios, who were a great help with the high school group in the past, have decided to focus energy on the church in their town of Dover.

Music for the young people continues to thrive under the direction of Nancy Miner and the Rejoice Choir and Lorna Ellis and the Alleluia Choir. The kids seem to always be eager to go to the practices and we are so grateful when they share their music with the entire church community. Thank you to Nancy and Lorna for their wonderful work!

The Christmas Musical this year was written and directed by our Music Director, Dave Ervin, with tremendous help from his wife Ellen, along with some dedicated parents. Rehearsals began in late November and a great deal of coordination went into the production of this amazing performance. This was presented on the Sunday before Christmas and on Christmas Eve at the 5pm Service. The kids really enjoyed the experience and many in our church and the local community became involved with the experience. Many thanks to all who put in great time and effort to provide this wonderful opportunity.

During the past year, I have continued to work on finalizing Safe Church procedures and an Emergency Response Plan for our Church. We held trainings at the beginning of the year for teachers and volunteers to provide information on our procedures. At the mid-year, I again met with teachers to update them on our plans. Once they are adopted by the Council, and certainly as we begin the coming year, we plan to publish them for the entire church community so that we may all be aware of the best policies for keeping our entire community safe.

In the coming year, I hope to continue to focus on providing support to our teachers and volunteers in the Church school programs. We have purchased a number of new children's books for the classes with spiritual/religious themes and we hope to continue to update the resources available for our teachers. We are also planning to create resource books of some of the wonderful activities teachers have found most useful when working with our children. Our hope is to once again gather as many names of teachers and volunteers before the summer so that we may work on scheduling during the summer months. In this way, Gloria and I can best attend to all of the scheduling needs. My hope too is to provide some opportunities for fellowship for our teachers and volunteers as well as for our families who participate...this may be in the form of an occasional breakfast held before Services on the school wing or other opportunities to meet.

The Adult Education Programs have been very successful this year with the help of several wonderful leaders. The weekly Bible Study continues to meet on Sunday mornings before Church as they discuss the scripture for that week. A group also meets on weekday mornings to undertake a book discussion group.

My great thanks to Gloria Mason for her continued good work on behalf of all of our Church School programs. Along with her husband Bill, Gloria has been tireless in her commitment to providing the organization and support for our Vacation Bible School and year-long Church School program. We are so grateful to both of them. I also want to extend my gratitude to all of the wonderful members of the CE Cabinet and to the Chair and Vice-Chair, Helen Mason and Dick Weyrick. They have been very supportive of me and of all of our programs and I cannot thank them enough.

As I look ahead to the coming year, my hope is to continue to work on improving our offerings in Christian Education and to supporting the overall spiritual and educational development of our church community. I feel most privileged to work with this wonderful group of people. I am also interested in extending further support to Pastor Mary, particularly in the area of Pastoral Care and support. I have training and experience in Spiritual Direction and would be available to meet with anyone who might be interested in getting together on a regular basis to talk about their lives in the context of their faith and spirituality. When I served as a college chaplain, the work of Pastoral Care, Grief Support and Spiritual

Direction was something I greatly enjoyed and I look forward to sharing more of those gifts with this community. Finally, I am open to any new ideas for events and programming that might further enhance our Christian Education offerings.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paula Norbert  
Director of Educational Ministries

Helen Mason  
CE Chairperson

Dick Weyrick  
CE Vice-Chair

The Council is the Church's policy-making body. It delegates responsibility for programs to the ministries and committees as appropriate, and appoints ad hoc committees as needed. The Executive Committee meets, if necessary, to transact urgent business between Council meetings, acts as a steering committee for the Council, and prepares annual contract renewals for staff members.

### REPORT OF THE COUNCIL AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Church Council is charged "principally with matters of policy and shall transact the business of this church". More informally, monthly meetings give the leaders of the four boards an opportunity to coordinate the programs and projects each of them are planning.

In June we held an appreciation and farewell for Leslye Dedopoulos, who served as church administrator, and our long time church school assistant, Gloria Mason, as a part of dealing with a budget deficit. Gloria has continued 'pro bono', and Audrey Drogseth has done a good job of keeping the office running while working fewer hours. We appreciate the work of all three!

In August members of the Council sent a protest to the Durham Town Council against an effort to lower the minimum lot area per dwelling within the Church Hill District. This would result in increased density of development around our fairly sizeable property, which includes the Church Hill apartments. The initial motion did not pass, but there will continue to be pressure for zoning changes to accommodate in-town housing.

Our volunteer coordinator, Diana Marzinzik, chaired the work of the church wide Yard Sale, held in conjunction with other churches in town. With a great deal of work from many members and friends, the sale was very successful and helped cope with budget deficits.

The Rev. Westfall, a Council member ex officio, attends all our meetings and has been leading us in an education program about the beliefs and activities of the national United Church of Christ, including how the Durham Community Church fits into that entity. She furthers our discussion by keeping us informed on the recent history and practices in this church, and is an inspirational leader.

In September the Council approved updates to the description of the Personnel Committee, which is a standing committee of the Council.

The Christian Education Committee has initiated, with Council involvement, a Safe Church policy in order to deal with any emergency, in either the church school building or the sanctuary. There is more work to be done on this matter and information will be distributed when available.

Please review the page titled "Leadership Team" submitted by the Nominating Committee. You will observe that in addition to the forty five members serving on the Boards, another twelve are listed above the line, and seven staff members down below. In addition to the four committees listed, we have a

number of other committees, all of which are working for and with the Council to “transact the business of the church”.

In other words, there are many people contributing to the life and work of this church, promoting its growth as a caring family/community. We have an opportunity to participate in an institution whose purpose is to “seek and respond to the will of God” and to support each other in doing so.

My experience in working with the Council has been an interesting and rewarding time. We are extremely fortunate to have such a capable and dedicated group of leaders. Blessed, actually, would be a more appropriate term!

Respectfully,  
Joanne V. Sasner

The Constitution calls for the Council to appoint standing and/or ad hoc committees as deemed necessary to carry out the programs of this Church. Currently such committees are: Memorial Garden, Memorial Gifts, and Constitutional Review.

### REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL GARDEN

During the year, Owen Rogers began the process of restoring Garden plantings, as some had become overgrown. Arrangements were made for two trees to be planted along the walk in spring 2009 in memory of Nathan Hardy and Joshua Hardy.

Since plantings cannot be identified on site, Nancy Hubbe sketched a drawing of the Garden, kept in the Memorial Book, with the memorial trees noted so that family and friends can identify them. The Board of Trustees gives special thanks to Nancy for her significant and continued help. The Garden remains self-supporting financially, with the generous help of Members and Friends of the Community Church.

Some wonder who can use the Garden. Trustees review all applications, but, in general, current and past Church members, friends of the Church, and those with a strong or lengthy connection to the Church can use the Garden. All should contact a member of the Board of Trustees for advice. Pastor Mary, the Chair, and the Vice-Chair are available to discuss requests for a specific use of the Garden and answer any questions. The fee for each Garden use remains \$500.00, unless some other arrangement is made with the Board of Trustees. The Trustees welcome questions, suggestions, comments, and any concerns.

A protective case on the Mezzanine holds the Memorial Garden Book, which has information on persons memorialized in the Garden. A binder, kept in the church office, contains the Administrative Guidelines for the Use of the Garden, which describes Garden policies as currently approved, together with other helpful items, such as photographs of the Garden stones, reservation forms, and information for estate planning. Memorial Garden Brochures are available in the Church Office, the Narthex, and other locations throughout the Church.

William Mason, Chair

Board of Trustees of the Memorial Garden

#### TRUSTEES AND CONSULTANTS

|               |                |               |               |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| William Mason | Sarah Urban    | Owen Rogers   | Donna Hardy   |
| Emily Cook    | Carolyn Puffer | Mary Westfall | Willard Urban |

As one of the four ministries of the Church, the Diaconate's principal mission is to assist and support the Minister in the spiritual affairs of the Church. Other responsibilities and duties are enumerated in the Church's Constitution. The report of Diaconate activities for the past year follows.

## REPORT OF THE DIACONATE

As we reflect back on a busy and successful year, we are struck by how quickly the time passed. Here are the highlights of our year:

- We are engaged in an on-going discussion of worship, acknowledging the diversity of spiritual beliefs and needs. We shared the information gained by talking to parishioners about various components of the worship service, including multigenerational Communion and the passing of the peace.
- In monthly meetings with Pastor Mary, we continue to support her in areas of pastoral concern.
- We successfully implemented the inclement weather policy initiated last year.
- We committed to help plan summer worship and music. To that end, together with the Music and Arts Committee and Volunteer Coordinator, Diana Marzinzik, we hosted an evening of "Art for the Arts" to raise needed money. The evening included hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction, and wonderful music provided by Brenda and Marc LaForce, Nat Balch and Dan Miner.
- We worked with the Christian Education Cabinet to establish "Safe Church" procedures.
- We joined with the Women's Guild to host an Epiphany Celebration. The worship hour was a theatrical presentation by seminarian Leslie Coates, followed by a pasta/salad bar luncheon and a children's scavenger hunt. Donations at this event were contributed towards Les' seminary expenses at Andover Newton in accordance with Community Church's commitment to support the development of future pastors.
- We continued to seek ways to make the church more hospitable and accessible. The Deacons will be involved in seeking greeters to welcome all through our doors.
- We continued to refine the changes made to the 9:00 pm Christmas Eve service and hosted the Christmas Eve Fellowship Hour between the two services.
- We reinstated the practice of recording Sunday services so they can be shared with home-bound parishioners. We extend our thanks to Al Frost for his work and dedication in amplifying the sound during worship and making the recordings. The recordings are available in the Church Library.
- We supported a month-long environmental emphasis entitled "Green Sanctuary".
- In the spring, the Diaconate planted a flowering crabapple tree in the Memorial Garden in honor of Steve and Donna's son Nate. Steve's service on the Diaconate over the past three years has been deeply appreciated.

Sooty Tanguay and Audrey Drogseth, Co-Chairs of the Diaconate

Diaconate members:

Sandra Estes

Charlie Clark

John Marzinzik

Steve Hardy

Audrey Drogseth

Carolyn Puffer

Sooty Tanguay

Bob Wear

Paul West

The Constitution calls for the Diaconate to appoint standing and/or ad hoc committees as deemed necessary to carry out its responsibilities. Reports of the Music/Arts and Visiting Committees follow.

## REPORT OF THE MUSIC/ARTS COMMITTEE

The Music/Arts committee has continued in an effort to fulfill its own declared mission:

“To be a catalyst and support system for music and arts events within the church and its ministry while also providing a channel through which committee members may grow spiritually, emotionally, and socially. Our success will equip us to offer the same growth to those affected by our efforts.”

Some of our time this past year has been designated toward devotional reflection within the context of our committee meetings. As we explore the possibilities for enriching our own spiritual lives through the community that is offered in monthly Saturday morning meetings we have also worked to continue the work we offer towards the greater mission of the church. Some of the contributions of the Music/Arts Committee in the past year have included:

- Support for the McQuade concert on November 7th with Chelsea Chen. Support for McQuade has been a staple of the Music/Arts Committee through the years and the tradition continues.
- The Church Gallery in the Mezzanine continues to rotate shows on a four-month basis including works from church members as well as talent within the broader community.
- The Music/Arts Committee now hosts an open house and poetry reading to accompany each show presented in the Gallery.
- Summer Music in July for Sunday worship service was largely coordinated by the Music/Arts Committee.

The Music/Arts committee continues to seek ways to provide support to artists within our community as well as seeking out advocates for the arts. Should you feel a call to offer your artistic gifts to the church, or would like to see more art happening within this community we would welcome your support and membership. Please contact Leslie Coates, [lesliecoates@gmail.com](mailto:lesliecoates@gmail.com) or 603.659.3118, if you feel you are interested in supporting any or all of these expanded missions.

Leslie Coates, Chair

Members of the Music/Arts Committee:

|                 |                             |                |               |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Leslie Coates   | David Ervin, Music Director | Nancy Hubbe    | Trisha Coates |
| Dennis Drogseth | Vohnny Weyrick              | Carolyn Puffer | Lisa Taylor   |

## REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

The Visiting Committee has been busy this year coordinating the distribution of Christmas cookies and Easter lilies to those who are ill, those who reside in assisted living facilities and those who are unable or find it difficult to get out of their homes for various reasons. We have a small core of committee members who meet on the second Tuesday of each month to discuss any problems that may come up and to make sure that our mission is running smoothly. We also have a larger group of volunteers who help us visit those who would appreciate the company of a member of our church family. Our goal is to let all our church members know that even though they can not make it to church or the many church related functions, we have not forgotten them. Every Sunday we have a committee member stationed at the piano

during the Fellowship Hour. At that time cards are available for signing by all, be they get well, sympathy or whatever is appropriate for specific individuals for that particular week. We urge all of you to come to the piano and add a quick note to a card or just sign your name. The recipient will really appreciate the fact that we are all thinking of them and we often receive notes telling us as much.

Jane Grota, Chair

Committee Members

Jane Grota (Co-Chair)  
Nancy Hubbe  
Brigitte Hein  
Jim and Shirley Ramsay  
Jane Weiland  
Jane McDonough  
Lynn DeKraker (Guild Rep.)  
Sooty Tanguay (Diaconate Rep.)  
Mary Westfall (Ex-officio)

Visitation Team

John and Mary Beth Gillespie  
Sheryl Horton  
Helen Mason  
Maura Milner  
Jim Pirie  
Jane Pollard  
Barbara Smallidge  
Sara Norberg  
Sara Urban  
Bev Dingle  
Bob Wear  
Pri Phenix  
Ruth McQuade

As one of the four ministries of the Church, the Christian Education Cabinet's principal mission is to, with the Minister, educate the congregation in the ways and teachings of the Christian faith, enabling all members of the Church family to grow toward their fullest potential as Christians. Other responsibilities and duties are enumerated in the Church's Constitution. This year's report follows.

**REPORT OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CABINET**

Please see report on pages 9-11.

Christian Education Cabinet members:

|               |               |                   |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Ellen Ervin   | Rob Cinq-Mars | Kristin Forselius |
| Dick Weyrick  | Ernie Downs   | Melissa Gianino   |
| Heather Smith | Helen Mason   | Tracy Demers      |

## REPORT OF THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Church Library experienced another abundant year in donations of books and other materials which have filled the shelves to near capacity! The Library Committee has been working to keep the resources current by replacing older publications with these updated acquisitions along with purchased materials. A great boost to our task of updating the library resources was the receipt of a new computer and printer, generously donated to the Church Library by Anne Kalter. The computer is now internet connected, and has already been in use. Our wish to provide an online catalog of the library collection is a reality and is underway as well!

In the fall, the Library Committee reluctantly said goodbye to member Audrey Drogseth. We were pleased to soon welcome Mandy Armstrong to our group. Mandy has an eye for a good book and lends an additional perspective in our decision making as a committee.

The Library Committee,

Mandy Armstrong, Barbara Baldwin, Trish Belcher, Bill Mason and Monika Parker

As one of the four ministries of the Church, the Home and World Mission Board's principal mission is to develop a program whereby every individual, and the congregation as a whole, can witness to the power, love and purpose of God in the community of humankind. Further duties and responsibilities are enumerated in the Church's Constitution.

## REPORT OF THE HOME AND WORLD MISSION BOARD

Providing service to others is a critical mission of the Community Church of Durham, and is particularly important given the current economic situation. The Home and World Mission Board works very hard to facilitate a variety of opportunities so that each individual can participate in service. It is gratifying to be part of a congregation who so generously and actively responds.

In order to give the congregation an idea of the impact of the programs the Mission Board sponsors, we decided to try to give estimates of how many people were affected by our efforts in the past year.

The Community Church of Durham provides dinner on the first Monday of the month for about 30 adults and over 30 children who take part in Families First programs. Through Families First alone, we supplied dinner for over 600 people last year.

In a new initiative started last December, we now provide the United Campus Ministry with soup for 30 to 35 people twice a month when UNH is in session. The soup is used for programs as diverse as students who meet to train to work with immigrants and refugees, to students who meet to explore issues of spirituality, to a Buddhist prayer group, to a drum circle, to being available as a snack to those who come to use the Cornucopia food pantry. We made soup for an estimated 550 people last year.

We also provide canned food to the Cornucopia food pantry. The Cornucopia, located in the United Campus Ministry, is staffed by students and is wholly dependent on public donations. We don't keep track of how much food we collect, so it is hard to estimate with any precision, but it would be reasonable to think the number of people affected was in the hundreds. Also in conjunction with Cornucopia, we collected food for Thanksgiving baskets which went to UNH students, staff and faculty, and their families. From the food donated, 14 brimming baskets were put together. With each basket estimated to supply Thanksgiving dinner for 5 to 6 people, we provided Thanksgiving dinner for about 75 people last year.

We also provide, as well as serve, dinner at the Dover Friendly Kitchen each month when there is a fifth Thursday in the month. In the past year we made dinner five times. The number of people coming for dinners has definitely increased, with recent numbers running from 70 to 90 people, with noticeably more families. In the past year, we supplied about 400 people with dinner through the Dover Friendly Kitchen.

If these numbers give the impression that a significant part of what we do is the coordination of providing food for the hungry, that's correct. We read somewhere that the words 'food' and 'love' can be used interchangeably. That is a bit of a stretch, but there is something about making food for someone who is hungry that is a powerful, tangible way to show caring and yes, love for someone else.

A significant initiative of the Mission Board is to provide the congregation the opportunity to support those in developing countries as well as to provide education regarding the issues. In the past year this has included three projects. First, the second Sunday of each month during the church school year, Equal Exchange Products such as coffee, tea, cocoa and chocolate are offered for sale. The sale of these products helps small scale farmers by allowing them to earn a fair price for their products as well as to have access to affordable credit. In addition, the profit the Mission Board earns is given to the Honduran Mission at San Francisco de la Paz.

Second, a Fair Trade Products sale was held in November with vendors representing craftspeople from Niger, Guatemala, Syria, Afghanistan, Uganda, Honduras and Kenya: the proceeds go back to the craftspeople and provide a critical means of support for them and their families. In addition, vendors mentioned how pleased they were to not only sell the craft items but that many people asked questions to educate themselves.

Third, the Mission Board sponsored, along with the Christian Education Board and the children in our church school, four Honduran children. Monetary sponsorship of these children helps provide them with shelter, clothing, food, medical care and school supplies, helping them to stay in school.

It is difficult to estimate the effect of these three projects, and in many of these countries people live on less than \$2 day, so a little goes a very long way. We asked RAIN, a participant in the Fair Trade Product sale, to give us some idea of the impact. RAIN sold \$751 of products. There are approximately 100 women in the RAIN leather and embroidery cooperatives: with an average of 5 people per household, these sales would affect about 500 people. But the impact is still larger because while 40% goes to the craftswomen and 20% goes to purchasing materials for the co-op, the remaining 40% goes to the school fund which supplies approximately 500 students with food, clothes, and books. It is likely the impact of the three projects in developing countries impacts thousands of people worldwide.

The annual Christmas-time Giving Tree affects people in local shelters. This year the congregation responded very generously to the request for gifts with over 200 presents! These gifts went to My Friend's Place, A Safe Place and Cross Roads House: it is estimated about 150 people in one of these three shelters would have received one or two gifts from our congregation.

The Mission Board coordinated Mother's Day gift bags, and women from the church assembled these gift bags. We delivered 33 gift bags which contained a selection of grooming and personal care products as well as jewelry and accessories to mothers at Cross Roads House, My Friend's Place and A Safe Place. It is easy to estimate that 33 women were delighted to receive such bags, but the impact was likely greater given that their children were also undoubtedly positively affected.

Diana Marzinik, the Coordinator of Volunteers, spearheaded a clothing drive for winter clothes and the Mission Board helped. As a result of generous donations from our church as well as neighbors, we supplied a large quantity (about 5 to 6 car loads) of clothing to the Strafford County Homeless Shelter, Farmington Community Center and the Community Closet. In addition, a large delivery was taken to the Dover Friendly Kitchen for those coming for dinner. It is difficult to estimate how many different people benefited from this initiative, but it was likely in the hundreds.

Another Mission Board project that had a different impact was the church's first ever 'Green Bingo, Potluck Dinner and Food Drive for A Safe Place' Event in January. About 50 people brought food for A Safe Place and then gathered in Fellowship Hall for a potluck dinner. Afterwards, we played 'Green Bingo', essentially bingo with a sustainability theme. Most people came away with some new ideas about how

they could reduce their carbon footprint. Given that those of us in the developed world have the most power to reduce our carbon emissions but are the least impacted by climate change, while those with the least opportunity (i.e. mostly those in developing countries) are the most affected, decreasing carbon consumption is an important effort for all of us. It is impossible to estimate both the number of people at A Safe Place who benefited from the food drive (again, we didn't count the number of items collected, it was in the hundreds!) but also the impact of any carbon reduction.

In addition, the board provided monetary support to Avis Goodwin Community Health Center, My Friend's Place, Cross Roads House, A Safe Place, Seacoast Hospice, United Campus Ministry and RAIN. The late Christmas Eve offering was split between A Safe Place and Dover Friendly Kitchen, two organizations which have had particularly large increases in people seeking help from them. The annual giving by the congregation to Neighbors in Need, the Christmas Fund and One Great Hour of Sharing supports the work of the national UCC conference and global outreach.

We did not attempt to estimate the impact of these monetary donations which provide critical support to organizations working with challenging budgets in the face of increased need.

There was another important group who benefited tremendously from our congregation's generosity, and that is the staff at the organizations we support. These dedicated individuals are working with increased if not unprecedented need, often decreasing funds and have expressed to us how grateful they are for our support.

Although we cannot give a very precise estimate as to the total number of people who were impacted by Mission Board programs, we are delighted to say with confidence that thousands of people in the U.S. and additionally thousands of people outside of the U.S. were positively affected. Wow!

The Mission Board would like to acknowledge and thank Pastor Mary for her support and commitment to our mission work. In addition, we are so grateful to George and Sandra Estes for all their work with us on Families First. We would also like to recognize Stephanie Ackerman who has been invaluable in organizing the volunteers for the Dover Friendly Kitchen.

The Mission Board would like to thank each and every member of our congregation for the generous support and kindness.

The Home and World Mission Board:

Ti Crossman, Vice Chair  
Brenda Sargent  
Carla Wilson

Ruth Kane  
Maura Milner  
Cynthia Watkins, Chair

Darien Lauten  
Margo Pennock  
Dave Smack

As one of the four ministries of the Church, the Board of Stewards' principal mission is to assume responsibility for the financial operation and business affairs of the Church, and have custody of and care for Church property as a sacred trust. Other duties and responsibilities are enumerated in the Church's Constitution. The Board's report follows.

## REPORT OF THE BOARD OF STEWARDS

It is amazing to think that in a year with such economic turmoil, our church's budget might end the fiscal 2008/2009 fiscal year in the black. The same hard times that caused loose plate offerings to be down and stewardship to fall behind also caused the price of heating oil to plummet. And, as a church, we still managed to give over \$42,000 to charities locally and afar.

The stewards forecast a price of \$3.30 per gallon for heating oil for this fiscal year. We were very concerned when the price went to about \$4.50 per gallon. Our business manager, Tom Murphy, advised us to lock in a price for the previous fiscal year and saved us a considerable amount of money. This year, he advised us not to lock in a price. Again he was right. The big decrease in the price of heating oil is the largest factor in keeping the budget in the black.

The efficiency projects at church also made a considerable difference in oil consumption. The furnace had its most thorough cleaning in a while. Money from the Capital Campaign of 2007 paid for installation of programmable thermostats and insulation in the sanctuary attic and basement. The controls of the blower in Fellowship Hall were adjusted to better suit building usage. In a heating season that was 4% colder than last year, we used about 1000 gallons less of heating oil.

A prioritized list of building maintenance projects was developed. The first big project was the painting of the steeple. The company that did the work did an excellent job. We plan to hire a contractor to paint the exterior of Fellowship Hall and the CE building during the Summer of 2009. This painting will be paid for from the Capital Campaign of 2007.

Diana Marzinik did an excellent job organizing the Church Yard Sale. The net was over \$11,000 - \$3500 above the projection. Projections for parking space and rooms rentals should turn out to have been fairly accurate. More groups are looking to use our space, which should lead to more income and also putting more emphasis on the community part of our church's name. These groups include the rental of an unused Sunday School room to the wonderful group, RAIN. Unfortunately, loose offering and stewardship will be less than projected.

On the expense side, we had more maintenance issues than expected, especially with the elevator, and the projection for the cost of electricity was too low. Fortunately, changing insurance carriers saved us a considerable amount. And, there was the wildly fluctuating price of heating oil that should help us end the year in the black. The final good news on the state of the budget will be delivered by Tom Murphy.

As of April 2, 2009 we have had 150 pledges to the 2009/2010 Aspire Anew stewardship campaign for a total of \$230,608. We are expecting a decrease in total pledging, but not as severe as many nonprofit groups are expecting. We may still have some tough decisions on our way to a balanced projected budget for 2009/2010.

I would like to thank my fellow stewards for their support. I also really appreciate those who made the installation of insulation so much fun for me. And, I give thanks to those who helped get the room ready for RAIN for the Sahel and Sahara. We have received help from too many people to list, but our business manager, Tom Murphy, our administrative assistant, Audrey Drogseth, and our Warden, Jon Pennock do deserve mention. They are amazing.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Chutter

Board of Stewards:

George York, Vice Chair  
Bob Simpson  
John Belcher

Mark Chutter, Chair  
Bob Eckerson  
Tim Horton

Andrea Fenn  
Frank Pilar  
Bill Tanguay

The Church's Constitution calls for the Board of Stewards to appoint standing and/or ad hoc committees as deemed necessary to carry out its responsibilities. There currently are two such committees, Building and Stewardship. Also responsible to the Board are the Warden, Auditor, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Available reports follow.

## **REPORT OF THE AUDITOR**

**COMMUNITY CHURCH OF DURHAM TREASURER'S REPORT**

**May 1, 2008 - April 30, 2009**

**To Be Appended after April 30, 2009**

Our ministry includes groups that afford opportunity for fellowship and service. The groups invite all who are interested to participate in their activities. The groups include the Women's Guild and Men's Fellowship. These reports follow.

### **REPORT OF THE WOMEN'S GUILD**

The word "guild" is a noun but the women of the Guild at the Community Church of Durham are all about "verbs". We are the action words personified! When something needs to be done, cleaned, cooked, knit, studied, grown, quilted, wreathed, or crafted, the Guild women take action. When someone needs to be loved, consoled, congratulated, befriended, or supported, this is the Guild at its very best.

With help from friends and families our one fundraising event, The Christmas Fair, made it possible for the Guild to donate to the Remembrance Committee, Youth activities, Minister's discretionary fund, the Mission Board, as well as the United Campus Ministry, School Nurses Fund, N.H. Women's Fellowship, Havenwood Ministries, the Church World Services, the Seafarer's Friend and others. The Guild is grateful to John and Linda Mengers for their leadership of the 2008 Fair and for the support of all who worked and shopped so these disbursements could be made. We are the only group within the church which does not receive money from the annual budget – in fact we give money to the church and consider it our first priority. Our annual budget meeting is always a joyful highlight of the year.

All women in our church are considered members of the Guild. We hold a monthly Bible study meeting in the Parlor where all are welcome whether one time or every time. This year we have been studying stories from the book of Luke. This is not passive reading. It's a circle of active discussion, dissection and discovery led by Pastor Mary. If we were Yiddish we would declare "lekhayim" and dance like Tevye, for acting together we experience much "life" and rejuvenate each other. It is a pleasure to work and be active in the Guild. What can we do for you?

Emily Cook, for The Women's Guild

### **REPORT OF THE HISTORIAN**

As is now traditional, yet again our Church made history this year. Yet do I suspect that many members know little of the Church's storied past. This report of necessity is brief this year. A few requests for historical information were received but there were no major projects.

I have two concerns for the immediate future: one that the new members, including younger families, do not know much of the fascinating History of our Church and that learning at least some highlights would benefit all. And two, that a current inventory of records in the Office and in storage closets still needs to be completed. The filing system in the office, and indications of where things are, is quite good, but there needs to be a catalogue-inventory of exactly where records are and what is in those records. Following an outside request from a former member for information on Christening records, I discovered that though such records are available they are by no means complete and their whereabouts can be mysterious. Having such a complete, accurate inventory/catalogue would help not only the Pastor and staff but the office personnel as well as members. Would any volunteer archivist like to step forward?

Douglas L. Wheeler, Historian

## REPORT OF THE WARDEN

I'm pleased to report that the buildings, mechanical infrastructure, safety systems and grounds of our church continue to be in good working order thanks to the efforts of many in the congregation to volunteer their skills and/or support, particularly support provided through the 2008 Capital Campaign.

The most notable and visible maintenance was the re-painting of the steeple as part of the Capital Campaign. In addition to the cleaning, scraping and painting, we replaced rotten 'fencing' around the outside of the belfry. Fortunately, the rest of the steeple was pronounced to be in excellent condition. Many volunteers contributed also to the painting of other more easily accessible exterior trim and the front doors of the Sanctuary. We look forward to a contractor addressing painting needs on the higher and more difficult sections of the Christian Education Building this coming year.

The heating system also received significant attention this past year, with a major cleaning and the addition of 8 programmable thermostats in the most heavily used areas. These improvements and the addition of approximately 80 bags of insulation in the attic of the Sanctuary appear to have contributed significantly to the savings of nearly 1000 gallons of oil as compared to last year! For the longer term, we are continuing to explore potential options to replace the existing boiler with a unit that would provide even more significant savings as compared with the current oversized boiler. Particular savings would be achieved by allowing us to shut the boiler down in the summer, something that we are unable to do with the existing unit.

I continue to be amazed by the number of integrated safety systems that our church has. Fire alarms, dry and wet sprinkler systems, emergency return systems on the elevator, flow detectors in the heating system, and several others make up the safety systems. This year, in addition to the normally required annual and semi-annual inspections, we were required to perform a detailed (and expensive) 'visual inspection' of the pipes of the sprinkler system (taking pipes apart to insure that they are not clogged with rust). Fortunately, all systems were pronounced sound and ready to go with only minor maintenance.

Many hundreds of additional volunteer hours were spent on all of the 'normal' tasks, including our successful spring and fall clean-ups, repair of fluorescent light ballasts, screen repairs, interior painting, preparation of the space for RAIN, repair and maintenance of exterior safety lights, replacing ceiling tiles and the myriad of other items that need to be taken care of on a regular basis. Despite a few costly and unbudgeted expenses this year (e.g. removal of the large maple tree along the rear driveway and costly elevator repairs), the Institutional Services portion of the annual budget remained in the black for the year as a result of significant savings that were realized as the price of oil dropped from early fall highs.

It is important to acknowledge the dedicated efforts of our Sexton, Michael Mengers, as well as a number of our stalwart volunteers, including: Frank Pilar (our Assistant Warden), Tom Merrick, Tom Richardson, George Estes, Mark Chutter, Tim Horton, John Belcher, Les Coates, John Marzinzik, Dwight Baldwin, Nat Balch, Bob Eckerson, Ti Crossman, Fred Hochgraf, Jim Helen, and Tom Murphy (apologies to those of you I missed) for their support, encouragement and leadership on projects throughout the year.

Respectfully Submitted, Jonathan Pennock, Warden

**RECORDS**  
**May 2008 through April 2009**

**BAPTISMS**

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|                        |                     |                      |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Ian Anderson Weir      | Tatum Hurley Weir   | Abigail Jane Schmitt |
| Katherine Anne Schmitt | Rory Jane Fairbairn | Margaret Jane Lilly  |
| Tyler Bland            | Tanner Bland        | Cole Emanuel         |
| Kennedy Phoenix Miller | Samuel Hawk Miller  |                      |

**WEDDINGS**

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Maribeth Quinn and Daniel Brown  
Amy Roeder and Eric Norris  
Suzanne Marie Hurd and Judith Nelson  
Deborah Lynn Archambeault and George Benedict Jabre  
Kiley M. Johns and Kenneth W. Macie

**MEMBERSHIP**

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**Dismissals: Death**

|                     |              |                 |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Eugene Allmendinger | Karen Stasko | Dolores Bowers  |
| Eileen Keeseey      | Eleanor Ford | Rosamond Leland |

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Community Church of Durham

June 1, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 am by Bob Houston presiding in the absence of Katie Wheeler, Moderator.

**MINISTER'S REPORT:** Pastor Mary Westfall referred to her written report located in the comprehensive Annual Report. She gave a recap of the many and varied programs and opportunities available to friends and members that contribute to the atmosphere of hope and vitality in our Church. Although the Stewardship Pledge Drive went well, it was still necessary to make cuts in our expenses to achieve a balanced budget. Change is inevitable and our Church will make adjustments so we can continue to be a place of welcome for all and a community resource.

**MOTION:** A motion to accept the minutes of the May 6, 2007 Annual Congregational Meeting was made by Charlie Clark and seconded by Al Frost. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**CHAIR OF COUNCIL'S REMARKS:** Lue Pirie, Council Chair, had been unable to actively complete her term due to her husband's illness. Joanne Sasner, Council Vice Chair, ably led the remaining Council meetings. Joanne referred the members to the written report in the Annual Report.

## REPORTS OF THE BOARDS

**DIACONATE:** Maggie Morrison, Co-Chair, expressed thanks to Paula Norbert, Director of Educational Ministries, for her help in filling in for Pastor Mary Westfall last summer. Pastor Mary was seriously injured when lightning struck near the Church office and the shock spread through the electrical system to her computer. The Stewards worked from June until March to repair the damage, and after a period of rest and light duties, Pastor Mary fully recovered.

**HOME AND WORLD MISSION BOARD:** Beryl Harper reported that it had been a wonderful year filled with programs such as the Green Bag Lunch Series and the Pot Luck Suppers. Both practical and spiritual approaches for supporting the environment were discussed. Special thanks were expressed to Dick Weyrick for his assistance in the environmental topics, and to the Men's Fellowship Group for their help in coordinating and participating in the Pot Luck Suppers whose proceeds went to support various mission causes.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CABINET:** Dick Weyrick, Chair, expressed thanks on behalf of Paula Norbert, Director of Christian Ministries, to all of the volunteers who made this year a success. The various programs included Godly Play in Sunday School, monthly chapel services for the children, the middle school Pathfinders, the High Schoolers, an all inclusive Christmas pageant, and adult discussion groups. Superintendents of the Sunday School, Bill and Gloria Mason, received special recognition for their dedication and professional services provided on Sunday mornings and during the week.

**BOARD OF STEWARDS:** Mark Chutter reported that the money raised in the capital campaign for building maintenance will be used this summer to paint the steeple. The Stewards are seeking an interested Church member with investment expertise to consult with the Board on ways to more effectively manage our portfolio. An Energy Committee has been formed to explore ways to maximize our energy use in the buildings. They will meet with the Warden and volunteers to implement their suggestions. The results of the Stewardship campaign showed an increase in the number of pledges however, the amount pledged is not enough to maintain level funding for the coming year.

**Treasurer's Report:** Tom Murphy, Business Administrator, reported for Jean Robbins. He answered questions concerning expenses during the past year. We changed our phone service to a more expensive plan due to the inability of the former plan to meet our needs. We were unable to rent all of parking spaces and this created a shortfall in income. The rental fee for the spaces will be lowered in the fall and kept in line with other parking lots in town. Our availability for parking will be advertised to incoming UNH students and some discounts will be offered. There will be no change in room rentals for non-profit organizations. The income shortfall for the 2007-2008 fiscal year is about \$15,000.

Mark then presented the budget proposal for the coming year for the member's consideration. In order to present a balanced budget within the pledged amount, \$40,000 was trimmed by the Leadership Team at an open meeting. The positions of Administrative Assistant and Christian Education Professional Services Assistant were eliminated. The cost of living increase was lowered, there will be no merit raises, and the Board's budgets were level funded. There is no money for substitute ministers during vacations. Any money not being used is earning interest. There will be some painting parties to deal with smaller projects. There does not seem to be any interest by cell phone companies in putting a transmitter in the steeple.

**MOTION:** Donna Simpson moved that the proposed budget be accepted. Nancy Hubbe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Lorna Ellis submitted the slate of candidates for the Leadership Team. Pastor Mary Westfall led the installation of the new officers and board members.

**MOTION:** A motion made by Maggie Morrison to accept all of the reports was seconded by Barbara Houston. The motion passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS:** After discussion a motion was made to cover the shortfall of \$14,809.03 from the 2007-2008 fiscal year using money from another fund.

**MOTION:** Russell Mason moved that the sum of \$14,809.03 be transferred from the Ministerial Housing Fund to the General Operating Account to cover the operating deficit for the 2007-2008 fiscal year. The motion was seconded by Chuck Hotchkiss. The motion passed unanimously.

**Remarks of the new Council Chair:** Joanne Sasner declined to make any remarks.

**Motion:** Jim Hellen moved to adjourn the Annual Congregational Meeting at 12:45 pm. Bob Wear seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Pastor Mary concluded with a benediction.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Newick, Clerk