



The newsletter of The First Congregational Church
Canton Center, Connecticut

The CHURCHMOUSE

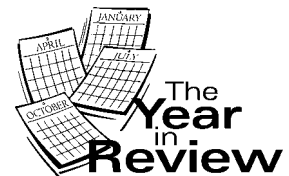
February 2009

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTOR / JANUARY - SEPTEMBER

Dear members and friends:

Warmest of greetings to all of you! I am pleased to submit this report for the Annual Meeting that follows the 2008 calendar year.

When I turned back the pages of my desk calendar and plan book to glance over the first half of 2008, I noticed that in many ways my schedule was quite similar to previous years. Certain days and time slots had been set aside for confirmation class sessions or adult study or various committee meetings. I noted a wedding scheduled here and a baptism there. March 16 indicated our Palm Sunday services and potluck dinner. The second Wednesday of each month reminded me about lunch with our Prime Timers. June 15 was our annual Strawberry Festival. There were pastoral visits to make and of course Sunday services for which to prepare. There was, however, one significant difference from previous years – our Capital Fund Campaign. That certainly dominated the attention of so many in our church family. It was an all-out effort and a most successful one at that. We of course, were wonderfully guided by outside consultant, Maryann Doyle, but the response of members and friends was overwhelming. So many individuals should be thanked, but our highest appreciation goes to Jim Magennis, Chair of the Campaign.



Another difference from previous years was that from the middle of June onward into the first two weeks of September, all my usual activities that had become very familiar, were not quite the same because of a decision I made on June 22, to accept the call of the members of the Congregational Church of Hollis, New Hampshire, to be their pastor. From that point on I had the odd sensation of doing certain things for the last time, at least in Canton Center.

On Sunday afternoon, September 7, the church held a wonderful and moving farewell gathering and ice-cream social for Laurie and me. And then, the next week, September 14, brought my final Sunday at the pulpit in Canton Center.

A little over twelve years as pastor of the First Congregational Church, Canton Center, will always have a high and special meaning for me. I truly believe that over the course of that time our church family grew, not only in size but in the depth of our care for one another and our outreach to others as we endeavored to be a church of Jesus Christ.

You are a very dedicated, supportive, warm and welcoming church family. I am sure you will be no less in the years to come. I thank God for all my fond remembrances of you and will always hold you dearly in my heart.

May God's finest gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love ever abide among you and through you.

Respectfully submitted with true affection,

Larry William Smith

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTOR / OCTOBER – DECEMBER

It seems like only last week that I came to Canton Center as your Interim Minister. But it's been over three months. It has been a busy and rewarding three months however.

Much of the time, I've been getting out to meet members and friends of the congregation in their homes. Getting out to visit with people, away from the church, helps me to really get to know people better. Sunday mornings just doesn't afford enough time for quality socializing. I have also gotten to meet others at the hospitals and nursing care facilities. I'm also on the schedule for nursing home worship services at both Cherry Brook and McLean's.



Here at the church, I've been meeting regularly with boards and committees. Meeting with the Prime Timers has been an enjoyable experience. It was fun to see people working at the Fair and Chicken Pie Supper. I'm enjoying all the potluck suppers—this church definitely eats!

There are 19 young people in the Confirmation class. With the help of Sarah LeGeyt and parents, we have been able to go on a field trip to Plymouth Plantation, work at the Chicken Pie Supper and Slice of Broadway, participate in the Christmas Eve service, sell Christmas wreaths, usher, work in the nursery and have twice monthly classes. Trying to schedule times with students in five different schools and with sporting, band and other school activities, has been difficult.

So far, we've been able to fit in one five-week Bible Study series on the Old Testament and life in ancient Israel. About 15 people dropped by for one or more of these energetic discussions. We will be having another one during Lent.

I'm looking forward to working with the Search Committee, which should be up and running in a few weeks. Putting the committee together as well as doing a good church profile are important steps in acquiring a great new pastor for this church.

In the weeks and months ahead, we will be learning more about each other as well as sharing in our faith journeys together. 2009 will be a great year!

Keep the faith,

Sue Prichard

CALENDAR OF CHURCH EVENTS

Feb.	1	Sunday	8:30 AM	Christian Education Committee
		Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School (begin in class)
		Sunday	11:00 AM	JYF Grinder pick-up at coffee hour
		Sunday	11:15 AM	Junior Choir
Feb.	2	Monday	7:00 PM	Senior Choir
Feb.	3	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Diaconate
Feb.	5	Thursday	7:00 PM	Bell Choir
Feb.	8	Sunday	9:00 AM	Missions Committee
		Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School (<i>begin in church</i>)
		Sunday	11:15 AM	Junior Choir
		Sunday	11:15 AM	SYF Bake Sale at coffee hour
		Sunday	11:45 AM	Confirmation Class
		Sunday	11:30 AM	JYF Sledding/Snowshoeing at the church
Feb.	9	Monday	10:00 AM	Prayer Shawl Ministry
		Monday	6:30 PM	Board of Trustees
		Monday	6:40 PM	Music Committee
		Monday	7:00 PM	Senior Choir
Feb.	11	Wednesday	Noon	Prime Timers Show & Tell in the Parish Hall
		Wednesday	7:00 PM	Church Council
Feb.	12	Thursday	7:00 PM	Bell Choir
Feb.	14	Saturday	5:00-9:30 PM	SYF Babysitting in the Parish Hall
Feb.	15	Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School (begin in class); Laity Sunday ; Deacon Matt Solomon preaching
		Sunday	11:15 AM	Junior Choir
		Sunday	11:00 AM	SYF Candy Sale orders taken at coffee hour
Feb.	16	Monday		Church Office closed for President's Day
		Monday	7:00 PM	Senior Choir
Feb.	19	Thursday	7:00 PM	Bell Choir
Feb.	22	Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School (<i>begin in church</i>)
		Sunday	11:15 AM	Cherub Choir begins weekly rehearsals
		Sunday	11:30 AM	Junior Choir
		Sunday	11:00 AM	SYF Candy Sale orders take at coffee hour
Feb.	23	Monday	7:00 PM	Senior Choir
Feb.	25	Wednesday	6:45 PM	ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION , includes refreshments; Ash Wednesday worship
Feb.	26	Thursday	7:00 PM	Bell Choir

February 2009						
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