

**First Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
Cheshire, Connecticut**

**2010 Annual Report**



“Change ...”

*Annual Meeting – January 23, 2011*

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT  
203-272-5323**

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Director of Youth Ministry	Todd Skrzyniarz
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## **A PREFACE TO THE 2010 CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE REPORT**

This year, the Connecticut Conference staff of the United Church of Christ (the denomination to which our church belongs) has asked every member church to include in its annual report a special Conference report.

Both to honor our ties to our Connecticut Conference staff and our fellow Conference churches, and in the spirit of open communication, we have included this special report as our lead report. As you will see, the Conference submission echoes some of the key themes noted throughout our internal Annual Report.

Thank you for reading it, and for your ongoing support of our congregation and, by extension, our Conference and denomination.

God's Peace,

Pastor Jeff,  
Senior Minister

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF THE UCC**

The Connecticut Conference, the members of its churches, and its neighbors around the state and around the nation were ready for changes as 2009 drew to a close. Some things, unfortunately, remained stubbornly the same. Though some major economic indicators looked promising — including a significant recovery in the value of the Conference's and many Connecticut UCC churches' endowment funds — others remained bleak. In particular, the state's unemployment rate was 9.1% in October 2010, nearly half a point higher than it had been the year before. The state's capital city had the mournful privilege of the highest unemployment rate in Connecticut, 15.2%, and rates in excess of 10% remained common in the state's cities. Small towns suffered with cities: both Plymouth and Plainfield, for example, had unemployment over 10% in October.

Rigorous cost-cutting, including staff furloughs, and significant end-of-year generosity permitted the Connecticut Conference to end 2009 with a surprising budget surplus. As a result, the staff returned to a full year of ministry and the Regional Minister positions for Fairfield County and the Eastern Region were increased to three-quarter time.

The Board and the Conference received the report of the Special Commission on Conference Sustainability, which had been tasked with reviewing the financial support of the Conference. Presented in September, the Commission offered fourteen recommendations for the near and long term. They noted the presence of three underlying themes: the needs to improve communication, deepen connection, and reinforce the covenant between local churches and Conference. As the year closed, the Board was considering specific ways to implement some of the short-term recommendations, and had appointed a Staffing Configuration Task Force to consider Conference personnel job descriptions and costs.

The major change of the year came in May, with the retirement of Conference Minister the Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree. Hundreds turned out at the Old State House in Hartford to celebrate her fourteen years of ministry with the Conference, and her coast-to-coast service as pastor and leader in the United Church of Christ. Sadly, the Conference soon mourned the loss of her beloved husband, David Hindinger, who died peacefully in November after a courageous struggle with stomach cancer.

The Rev. Carole Carlson took the helm over the summer while the Board searched for an interim Conference Minister, and in August the Rev. Charles L. Wildman arrived, bringing a wealth of pastoral sensitivity and local church experience, along with years of conference and national setting board experience. "With the entire United Church of Christ, the Spirit is leading us on a new journey," he told

the Conference in September. “The world has changed dramatically from the one most of us knew in our youth. Every setting of the Church must change as well. We do not know the shape of our future, but we can trust that it is good — because it is God’s future! God is still speaking!”

Conference churches responded generously when new trouble quite literally rocked the Caribbean island nation of Haiti in January, sending just under \$300,000 for the people’s relief. They gave generously again when another earthquake struck Chile, when floods devastated a great swath of Pakistan, and when Indonesia suffered both volcanic eruptions and a tsunami. In March, Connecticut residents — including UCC churches — learned first hand about disaster, when high winds swept the southwestern corner and high waters flooded the southeast. In June they lifted prayers when oil stained the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Regional Ministry of the Connecticut Conference helped local church pastors and lay leaders understand that they were not alone in crisis and in celebration. Michael Ciba, Ineke Mitchell, Mike Penn--Strah, Susan Tarolli, and Sarah Verasco supported search committees and association church and ministry committees, worked with clergy and churches in crisis, led worship services, and offered referral suggestions when a question arose that they couldn’t answer. They also led programs and workshops both in local churches and at larger gatherings throughout the year.

The Threshold Initiative, a pilot project directed at helping healthy churches strengthen their ministries, had its formal launch in 2010. At year’s end five churches had signed on to participate, and each had identified a unique set of areas in which to focus their work. In the fall, the Conference announced the Crossroads Project, offering support for congregations struggling with significant decisions about their future. The first informational sessions are scheduled for January 8th.

The Conference closed the Now, for the Future Campaign for Silver Lake Conference Center in June with a successful anonymous \$50,000 matching gift. Now, for the Future gifts have been put to work at the outdoor ministry facility in Sharon through infrastructure improvements and in the rebuilt amphitheater. Along with it, the new Circle Commons and new basketball court were dedicated in October with laughter, song, and prayer. Co--directors Anne and Tim Hughes reported that 1,064 conferees from 159 churches attended summer sessions, and another 3,497 retreat participants in 125 groups enjoyed Silver Lake’s hospitality in the winter, spring, and fall. Supporting it all: \$38,500 in direct aid from churches for camperships, and 289 summer staff, and volunteer deans and counselors. Jenn McBurney joined the staff in the spring as the Silver Lake Registrar.

In Youth and Young Adult Ministries, “Thinking About Working for God for a Living” began its work supporting young people considering church vocations and ordained ministry. Three chapters of “Give2” (pronounced Give--Squared), a youth in service program bringing together young people from several churches, had been formed by year’s end, with two more “in the wings.” Two hundred participated in July’s Regional Youth Event in Boston, and the first YAYAM Signature Partner, the “In Our Shoes” anti--bullying project at King Street UCC in Danbury, was announced in December.

Presenters Steve Sterner and Cameron Trimble challenged the Spring Session of the 2010 Annual Meeting to a real commitment to found new UCC churches and reverse the trend of decline. In the fall, Conference delegates honored the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the nation’s first overseas mission society, and heard a compelling address from United Nations official Dr. Robert Orr on the global challenges ahead.

Associate Conference Minister for Clergy Concerns, Ron Brown, accepted a call to the pulpit of First Congregational Church in Southington as the year drew to a close, and Barbara Libby assumed those responsibilities on the staff as the Interim ACMCC.

The UCC's Stillspeaking Initiative introduced the "Stillspeaking Voices" project in 2010, summoning individual church members to pledge themselves to be spokespeople for their beloved Church. Supporting that effort, the UCC released the Language of God and Uniquely UCC video spots. The Connecticut Conference broadened its communication efforts, publishing four print issues of *ConnTact*, adding a new weekly web and email news service called *CTUCC This Week*, and launching a weekly audio podcast called *CTUCC ConferenceCast*, all of which may be found at [ctucc.org](http://ctucc.org).

As 2011 begins, there will be much to do. The Conference Minister Search Committee will begin its work, and Board, staff, and leadership will conscientiously consider what the Conference's ministry will be in the years that lie ahead. In partnership with the local churches of this state, and in prayerful fellowship with UCC congregations across the nation, the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ will strive to faithfully serve God's people, by equipping the saints to proclaim the Gospel, to teach the Good News of Jesus Christ, to do the work of reconciliation and justice, and to live faithfully in daily life.

### **SENIOR MINISTER**

The preamble to our denomination's constitution reminds us of our privilege, joy, and sacred duty: to put Christ first, to ground ourselves in scripture and prayer (as we discern and work both individually and collectively), and to continuously evolve — in a word, to change.

Change is hard. Not always. But usually. And usually, it's hardest in the beginning, when we're likely still resisting it, before we've gained momentum, and before we begin to see (perhaps to our surprise!) that the change to which Christ (and our mutual covenant) calls us is actually to our benefit and, even more important, to the benefit of the world we serve in His name.

Merely the word "change," let alone the act of changing, inspires a simultaneous, often animated, even visceral response. It repels us. Yet, at the same time, it attracts us. It concerns, even scares, us. Yet, it also enlivens us. Through the mystical power of the "What if...?", change can make us leery even as it lures us.

A great Christian thinker once observed that, as humans and, what's more, as children of God, our greatest fear and our greatest hope are one and the same: to be known. We want nothing more than to be known. Fully. Wholly. Transparently. Yet, this is also our deepest fear. Perhaps this is because of all the doubting voices both outside us and inside us that try to convince us, contrary to what Christ says, that once we are fully known, we will be deemed unworthy.

Christ, of course, tells us that we *are* worthy. He knows our fears about measuring up. He knows we can cling to sameness and routine when His ministry would prosper best from something age-old, made new; something rote, re-interpreted; something closed down, opened up again. Christ knows our fear of change. Yet He also knows that love, not fear, is our deepest truth. And so, He sends the Holy Spirit: to inspire us to step out of the shackles of our greatest fear and into fertile soil of our greatest hope; to encourage us to embrace the change that will ensure our congregation and denomination will not only subsist, but thrive; not only live, but shine.

In 2010, our congregation began, with a new vigor, to embrace the change that will allow our church to thrive. In our public events and worship, and in the more behind-the-scenes work of our boards and committees and small groups and staff, our congregation tried new things. We displayed a growing willingness to look freshly at what we do and how we do it; a growing willingness to ask what things we no longer need to do, and what things it would prosper Christ's church to begin. This willingness is more developed in some areas, more nascent in others; but it is all for the good.

I thank our lay leaders (both those who continue their terms and those whose terms are done), our overall congregation, and our staff who have worked so diligently and tirelessly to lean into the change to which Christ calls us. For all that the Spirit inspired us to accomplish in 2010: thanks to each of you, and our thanks to God.

In that same Spirit, I encourage us, in 2011, to continue asking, with all the more energy, questions such as: What will enable our church to best embody Christ's holistic, healing, and joyous hospitality; how can we help Christ's love come alive? How can we encourage ourselves and others to seek the transformation that comes when we lay our very hands upon the world's greatest needs (such as through our outreach projects and mission trips)? What is it we need to do to reach out and minister to those who seek a spiritual home but have not found it, knowing that Christ's church is as much about those not yet with us as it is about those who are already here? What will allow God's broadening love to shine so brightly from our Church on the Green that others will stop, take notice, and say, "I want to be part of that"? In the spirit of Christ's parable of the ten talents, what are the new and creative ways that we can multiply the power of our ministry by multiplying the yield from our various fund-raising efforts — knowing that Christ, Himself, exhorts us to do so? How can we better coordinate our various efforts and best allocate our sacred resources (our time, treasure, and talent), so they build our faith and so that we are left still-more inspired (not overly spent) when our yearly journey concludes?

Change is hard. On deep levels, and in myriad ways, we resist it. Yet change is also life-giving. It excites and re-energizes us. And the greatest, the wisest, the most reassuring, the most creative champion of change and spiritual renewal the world has ever known — Christ Jesus — invites us to lean into that change. With deep gratitude for all that the Spirit helped us to accomplish in the year newly ended, let us follow Christ's lead in the year newly begun!

Thanks be to God, again, for the staff and the amazing members of this church; and for the privilege, joy, and sacred duty to continue making the age-old truth of God's love in Christ, ever new, ever new, ever new!

God's Peace,  
Jeffrey Braun, M.Div.  
Senior Minister

## **ASSOCIATE MINISTER**

Friends in Christ,

2010 was a year of much intentional ministry, mutually accomplished. Several highlights stand out:

### Intentionally Meeting More Worship Needs:

In addition to our weekly worship, Holy Days, and special season services, our worship planning this year included two services designed to meet particular needs. For the first time, we offered a Blessing of the Animals service, which, while new to us, is a service that dates back hundreds of years, and which recognizes the deep and primal bonds we feel to our pets. In the tradition of our ecumenical sisters and brothers, we held our service on the first Saturday in October, the day nearest the Feast of St. Francis, the patron saint of animals. Under the shady embrace of the trees on our green, dogs and cats and their humans gathered in a circle of praise to our Creator who made us all, and received a blessing for the love that binds us.

Mid-December's Quiet Christmas Service offered solace in community to those who grieve and find the usual holiday celebrations difficult. It is especially into these darkest nights of our spirits that the light of God's love shines its hope.

### Intentionally Serving Others:

In March our Adult Mission Team returned to the Gulf Coast, to Mission on the Bay, Bay St. Louis, MS. Seventeen church members and friends joined with eight members of the North Guilford Congregational Church, to rebuild homes and hope, in the now fifth year aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. After a tumultuous plane ride home, we returned safely and shared in worship leadership the next day. Those for whom this was a first trip were especially moved by their experience, and many in the congregation are looking forward to future trips to a variety of locations.

### Intentionally Growing in Knowledge and Faith:

Intentional faith-deepening opportunities were offered this year. In Lent, “Sacred Conversations” allowed pairs of people to connect and share their faith journeys and life experiences. In late February, Peggy Allen led a day-long immersive and interactive Bible Study on the Gospel of Mark.

Our Palm Sunday tradition of telling the Passion story “by heart” continued. Scripture by Heart is a spiritual practice in the ancient oral biblical tradition. Fourteen members began in mid-January working with the Gospel of Luke to get to know the texts, thereby understanding them, thereby embodying them so that when they are offered in worship, they truly come from the heart. We welcome anyone who wishes to take part in this annual practice.

In May, many of us drove or took the chartered bus to Middletown for the performance of Elijah, Mendelssohn’s oratorio of the life and prophetic work of the great prophet. Conducted by our own Joe D’Eugenio, the 200-person chorus included many members of our Senior Choir.

After two years of planning, fourteen members and friends set off in late June, for Oberammergau, Germany, to see a performance of the Passion Play. Only offered every ten years, the play involves 2000 residents of this little Bavarian town, who spend three years preparing for their roles. We also visited Italy, Switzerland, and Austria before our trip culminated with the play. Arriving home, we shared our reflections in worship.

This fall, the Adult Education Sub-Committee of the Board of Christian Education developed a 3 part series: *Stepping into World Religions*. Part 1 had a small group travel to Asylum Hill Congregational Church to hear the respected, “Interfaith Amigos.” For Part 2, we hosted a well attended and very informative evening program, “In the Name of Allah: What a Billion Muslims Really Believe.” The 3<sup>rd</sup> and last part of this series was the Cheshire Interfaith Thanksgiving Eve Worship service, where we joined our neighbors in worship with new understanding.

### Intentionally Nurturing our Young People in the Ways of Being Church

The Acolyte Ministry continues to grow in scope and number. This year, 24 youth in grades 5-12 serve as acolytes, bringing the light of Christ into our worship service, then at the end of the service, while extinguishing the candles, taking the flame back onto the candle lighter and symbolically bringing it back out into the world, leading the way for the charge that is upon us all. From where I sit, I see many eyes watching with pride as the acolytes make their way up and down the aisle during the opening hymn. There is a collective “ahhh” when the candles get lit –and hearts are warmed by their reverent demeanors. Many thanks to the ushers at both services who help the acolytes: Mark Hostage, Hugh Larson, Glenn Thompson, Barbara Voegeli, and Charles Jones.

### Intentionally Welcoming and Offering Hospitality:

All year long, our Greeters stand at the entry points of our church eagerly welcoming all to worship, sharing words of blessing on the way out. In such quiet but important ways, we have become an intentional locus of Christ’s hospitality. To thank the many, many people who serve faithfully and well in the ministry, the Welcoming Team hosted the first annual Greeter Thank You Luncheon in April where we enjoyed a fine lunch, warm fellowship, and recast the vision of extravagant welcome and hospitality. And- we instituted the Golden Umbrella Award, given to the Greeter extraordinaire, Jane Montgomery.

The Pew Pals is an important ministry that continues to intentionally welcome our younger members and visitors. At the end of each pew sits a small stuffed animal with a welcome tag that says: “Hi, I’m a Pew Pal. I’m here to keep you company in worship. If you take me home, please love me the way God loves you.” Sometimes, Pew Pals go to Church School Classes, and many times they go home with a child. Often, bags full of Pew Pals are returned back into circulation (washed, dried, and retagged). In the four years since we began this ministry, we have never run out of these small stuffed animals! I am very appreciative of the ongoing donations I receive every week and this ministry that repurposes them for a tangible (and huggable) expression of welcome to our youngest ones.

#### Intentionally Building Connections

Our Church Life Communities, the geographically designed program of building connection within our congregation, has begun to be used by our Deacons, in an effort called, Intentional Deaconing. Each deacon is now paired with a particular CLC as a point of contact and connection for their members within. In the coming year, more ways of focused connecting and reaching out will take place.

Fellowship is an important aspect of our life together. The 7 @ 7 Fellowship Dinners are offered three times a year in each CLC where small groups enjoy one another’s company over a meal.

Additionally, members and friends continue to meet —sometimes weekly, — sometimes monthly, in a variety of groups that meet for fellowship, for study, for hands-on work. If there is an interest for a group not yet offered, we want to help make that happen as an expression of the reality that God meets us right where we are.

#### Intentional Connection to the Wider Church and Community

I continue to serve our wider church as Chair of our New Haven Association’s Committee on Ministry, the committee that oversees our Association’s authorized ministers and members in the discernment process towards ordination. In this role, I prepare for and lead the monthly meetings; attend Ecclesiastical Councils, Ordination and Installation services; and I also attend meetings of the statewide gathering of COM chairs. Thank you for your encouragement and support of my time and work in these settings of our United Church of Christ. And in recent months, both Jeff and I have been excited about the newly reenergized Cheshire Clergy Association, and we look forward to what may yet come from our interfaith connections.

Finally, as I begin my tenth year of ministry among you, I give thanks to be able to serve with such gifted and dedicated staff of our church: Jeff Braun, Joe D’Eugenio, Todd Skrzyniarz, Donna Mead, Leslie Holmes Meyer, Michael Lombardi, Fred and Pat Turner.

May we continue to faithfully serve the God whose abundant love and grace is at work within us and through us.

In faith,  
Alison McCaffrey

#### **DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

The 2010 year saw the youth group involved in some new events, activities, and meetings as well as continuing some of the year-to-year programs. Regular Sunday evening meetings continue to be a combination of fellowship, discussion, and a worship time.

We had our second annual 30 hour famine in the spring. This year we focused on homelessness which led us to constructing cardboard shelters to sleep in. This event continues to be a favorite among the youth and provides a great opportunity for awareness and spiritual growth for all those that participate.

The youth group had two other lock-ins during the year with one coinciding with the church-wide fall cleanup.

We have been able to create a group for our middle school youth filled with service, fellowship, and faith-building program elements. The Midnight Run group meets on the last Monday of each month. Our congregation has been very generous each month donating all the food we need to make 55 bag meals to help feed the hungry and homeless in New Haven. We continue to give thanks to all those that donate, to the drivers that deliver the meals each month, to Peggy Allen and the Board of Outreach for their continued support for this new great ministry. We have some great volunteers that come each month and help. Thank you Steve and Joyce Mulholland and Mark Sprankel!

We continue to thank those generous individuals and groups that help support our group financially including the Board of Outreach, Strawberry Festival committee, and Christmas Fair committee. We would have a difficult time financially supporting our ministry without their support.

There are a number of volunteers that lend their support week in and week out to our ministry. The YUTES would like to thank Joellyn Jason, Cameron McDonald, Kevin Ross, Don Lee, Mark Hall, Chris Cowles, and Holly Skrzyniarz for their support. THANK YOU!!!

Finally, a big thank you to all of those in the congregation that support our group with love, encouragement, and prayer! Also, without the support of the church staff and lay leaders we wouldn't be able to have a group that feels like they are an important part of the church.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Todd Skrzyniarz

## **DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**

The music program continues to thrive and provide music for worship services, special recitals, and musical events for both our congregation and the larger Cheshire community. The Senior Choir maintained its schedule of singing bi-monthly at both the 9:00 and 11:00 services. During the seasons of Lent and Advent, the choir sang for both services every Sunday enhancing the worship experience for our congregants on a weekly basis. The members of the choir continue to be incredibly dedicated, and participation in the choir has grown considerably this year due to the addition of new members from both the congregation and the Cheshire community. All singers on our roster are kept well-informed about when the choir sings, and members are invited to sing as regularly as possible. The choir continues to be the crux of the music program, singing a diverse range of liturgical repertoire to enhance and inspire the worship experience for our congregation.

Two of the most prominent church services in 2010 were our annual Memorial Music Sunday service and Candlelight Lessons & Carols. Memorial Music Sunday was presented at one 10:00 service on Sunday, November 1 where the choir presented a program entitled "Songs of the Spirit." The choir sang several arrangements of well-known spirituals, as well as music with spiritually-comforting overtones and ecumenical texts.

Candlelight Lessons & Carols, presented on December 19 at 4:00, featured a newly composed work "Alpha and Omega" by American composer, Gwyneth Walker. The latest version of the work, composed for brass quintet, organ, and percussion, was given its premiere during the actual service to a full church of attendees. Traditional carols for brass quintet, organ, choir, and congregation were sung by all.

The Senior Choir joined forces with the Greater Middletown Chorale in singing Mendelssohn's massive choral oratorio, "Elijah," to a sold-out audience at the new Middletown High School Theater in Middletown. The production was conducted by Joseph D'Eugenio, and included a choir of 200 singers and full symphony orchestra.

The music board once again raised approximately \$4,000 over and above its \$5,300 budget provided by the central budget of the church, by hosting concerts, recitals and special worship services outside of the usual Sunday morning hours. We have been pleased to see that a significant number of non-church members have continued to attend and enjoy musical offerings at First Church thereby increasing our church's visibility in the area. We hope that music continues to be a source of outreach for First Church by more of our church family.

Our summer "Music on the Green" concert was held on the green in August. The "Heartbeat Dixieland Jazz Band" played to a crowd of about 125 concert-goers on the church green.

Patricia Barbano continues at First Church as our soprano section leader. She offers an exceptional soprano voice and fine musical leadership to the choir. Patricia participates as an ensemble singer, with warm-ups, special solo work, and coaching. She has been with First Church for five years, and contributes enormously to the program and choir.

The Youth Choirs continue to learn and enjoy weekly rehearsals as well as participating in worship singing once a month. This opportunity provides our youngest choristers a chance to learn about the music they sing and to begin to develop their voices and musical understanding. Both youth choirs participated in the annual Christmas pageant.

Our church is fortunate to have such talent in the congregation that there is either a choir or a soloist every Sunday of the calendar year. We are grateful for everyone who helps sustain our music offerings throughout the year.

Outreach through music remains a central vision and purpose to the music board as we continue to shape the program for the future. Through our music, we hope others in the community who are looking for a spiritual home might feel more welcomed at First Church and discover how much our church offers as a whole.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joseph D'Eugenio  
Music Director

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

As I write this report as your President, I am also remembering Sunday's Congregational meeting where we discussed several topics, and called Caroll Cyr as our new Director of Christian Education. What a time of energy and joy! I remember looking on the faces of many caring and dedicated members, and listening to the voices of people who love this church. Members voiced different thoughts and opinions, but everyone listened attentively, and I sensed a strong but gentle spirit within the room. We moved as a church. And I thought about what other wonderful things are happening at our church in these times.

As you read through the many sections of this annual report, you will see an incredibly alive church that is moving forward, growing in so many ways, and seemingly responding to God's calling. But are we really listening and responding as best we can? We must always be asking ourselves that question. Are we able to listen and respond better to God's call?

We are truly blessed with an incredible staff, which is the greatest single resource that this church has (not to mention our strong congregation). Every member of our staff brings God's life and love vibrantly into our congregation, and outward into many parts of the community and the world, and in so many different ways. Without them, we would be wandering in the wilderness.

Then let us take a short minute to review what we, as a church, have brought forth to our church, community, and the wider church this year. How about:

"Kelly Sings" in February, The Field of Flags" on Memorial Day, Strawberry Festival, The wonderful Lenten Program, The YUTES' 30 Hour Famine, The Youth Mission Trip, The Adult Mission Trip, Music on the Green, Vacation Bible School, The Oberammergau experience, Homecoming Sunday, Cheshire's Lights of Hope, Thanksgiving Dinners to DCF, Thanksgiving Dinner at the Church, Memorial Music Sunday, Midnight Run, Malawi Ministry, YUTES' Crosses on the Green, Columbus House Cooks, and The Christmas Fair! And these are but a FEW of what this church brings to our community!

Look at that list! It is incredible! And there are so many more (not listed) instances where our committed congregation reaches out to each other and the greater community. Wow! To quote Jeff and Alison in a recent Children's Moment during worship... "Yea God!!"

While working to coordinate and communicate the many activities of our church family, the Executive Board also assesses our progress, and plans for the future. Unlike many churches in the UCC, we have not cut any programs, or staff, but rather increased our activity. And we continue to hold our own in the numbers game. We just recently welcomed over twenty new members to our congregation.

But as Bob Mead expressed in his report last year, we seem to continue to "be stagnant when God calls us to grow and spread the good news." I believe that the greatest task before this congregation now is to learn how to grow in faith as a church, become more spiritually mature... how do we seek and learn what God's plan is for us... and how do we respond to that plan?

Through my year as President, it seems obvious to me that God has a very challenging, but wonderful plan for this church, as we continue to grow in many ways. I have seen just a little of what we, as people of God, are capable of accomplishing. But we can be so much more! We can do so much more!

If we are willing to truly step out in faith, this church can be a real light unto the nations. But are we ready, and prepared, to truly listen, hear and accept this plan? But more importantly... are we willing to listen, and then fearlessly follow our Lord, however and wherever He leads us?

If we are not, then let us go along our present path with some other churches in the UCC... stagnation... then shrinking.

How, as the body of Christ, do we learn to move in unison with Jesus, our Head? Your Executive Board will continue to focus on these questions, and how we can grow as a church in faith to become more spiritually alive. We will continue to listen to the voices of the entire congregation, ask questions, and seek ways to grow, improve, and serve. We will also continue to seek God's guidance, and endeavor to follow His leading.

This church stands in the doorway of a very daunting, but amazingly wondrous opportunity. Do we really, truly, deeply, and humbly listen to God's call, and then step through that doorway to where He is leading us? It is scary, and we don't know where He will lead us... but if we boldly step out in faith, God will surely take us under His wing, and He has promised that, if we truly follow Him, He will not let us fail.

As my term as President comes to an end, I am so thankful to the staff, boards, committees, and all of my brothers and sisters who make up this wonderful body of Christ. Thank you for allowing me to serve you... I have been so incredibly blessed.

God bless and God's Peace,  
Ford Cole  
President

## **BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

2010 was a very busy year for the Board of Christian Education.

The CE Board oversees the Church School (at 9 and 11), the YUTES program including Midnight Run (Grades 7/8 through 12), Adult Education, Confirmation, the Safe Church program and the Stepping Stones program (Grade 5/6). The Board started the year with a retreat facilitated by Bob Mead to discuss issues and establish goals. We divided into four subcommittees each with a specific focus and interest. Each member received a book (suggested by Jeff and Alison) called Faith Formation in Adult Congregations. Our goals for the 2010 year required active participation by the entire Board.

The largest task, surpassing all others, was the Board's focus on maintaining the Church School program while the search continued for a replacement Director of Christian Education for the retired Debbie Gravell. The second was managing the budget and personnel in these difficult economic times. We had to ask some tough questions and prepare to respond to cuts, analyzing all expenses for merit and need. The CE Director hours were cut almost in half. Of the candidates who applied, all carried other jobs and tried to balance or fit in the CE Director position. Following the church bylaw processes, we hired an interim who was replaced by a CE Director who resigned relatively quickly. So the search resumed, and the CE Board members kept focused on their goals.

Caroll Cyr joined the First Church family on December 28, 2010 with 10+ years as the CE Director of the Berlin UCC church and as part-time Church Secretary at a UCC Church in Plantsville. Caroll will be in the office for 30 hours a week on Tuesday through Friday (8:30-2:30) and on Sunday from 8:00-2:00. This will give the Church School the consistency and leadership that is needed. Caroll is meeting with the Senior Minister and staff, and with our families, volunteers and students to organize and vitalize our Church School program. Special thanks to the Search Committee who so diligently reviewed and interviewed over 15 candidates during both searches and developed an objective interview and selection criteria to bring forth a great candidate.

One of the CE Board's Subcommittees focused on creating and executing our very successful Vacation Bible School program using Group Publications High Seas Adventure, which was led by Mya Cyr. VBS attracted 42 children in grades K through rising grade 7. We had a wonderful group of volunteer teachers/helpers and a cameo dramatic role for the Senior Minister. The songs from the VBS can be heard in the corridors, and their song, "The Journey Begins", was offered on Homecoming Sunday by VBS alumni. The Board held a Pancake Breakfast coordinated by Barb Lyke with Top Chef Jim Parys cooking for the crowd to help break even on the unbudgeted line items and Deacons and other Board/Committees helped with creative ideas to fundraise or donations to help fund the program.

A second subcommittee focused on the Adult Education program. That subcommittee offered "Dinner and A Movie" and Family night (Special thanks to Beth Ross) as well as a special program on Muslim (part of Steppin' into World Religions - Kate Hall's idea) and tried to map out a broad Adult Education program with something for everyone. The goal was to offer some "series" classes in a variety of topics both daytime and evening - as well as programs for families, single day events and some seasonal programs. That Subcommittee is still working on options with the Senior Staff.

The third group studied the Church School Curriculum. That subcommittee looked at the plethora of programs that are “in a box” and will continue to work with the New CE Director to determine the beset curriculum for our students. Ask Ted Bloschichak about “Buzz.”

The last subcommittee was looking at ways to “market “the church school to increase attendance and outreach to both the community as a whole and the church community. While there were some wonderful ideas on the table, the hiring of the CE Director was critical to the success of the marketing.

An audit of the Safe Church Program uncovered some gaps in our process and Beth Ross worked with Bob Mead to organize and update the Safe Church recordkeeping. Caroll is working on finalizing the reviews in progress and making sure the program recordkeeping is at the accustomed level.

The CE Board supported the Third Grade First Communion Potluck and Program, the Fourth Grade Bible Potluck and Program, hosted the Christmas Pageant reception , the Children’s Day reception and a reception for the interim CE Director and the temporary CE Director, managed the games at the Strawberry Festival (as a fundraiser) , managed the games at the Homecoming, held a fundraiser Pancake Breakfast, completed performance appraisals and continued to remember to bring in cereal for the FISH offering. We mastered teleconference meetings with more than 10 people to accommodate the various schedules and meeting nights.

At the end of the year, with the transitions and life changes, the CE Board had diminished to 9 (losing three members- Tom Reid, Carol Cummings, Carol Ploch) so we look forward to the additional members coming on board in January. Special thanks to our student member, Patrick Hackett, who contributed both at the meetings and in supporting all the events. We wish him the best as he pursues his Eagle Scout certification. And extra special thanks to Beth Rojas (CE Board Secretary) and Suzanne Lawson (CE Board Treasurer) who are staying on in those roles into 2011. Welcome to Jackie Hissick who joined the Board as Chair Elect.

Linda Milton

## **BOARD OF DEACONS**

To serve this congregation as a Deacon is a humbling privilege. Carrying on in the spirit of prior boards, the 2010 Board of Deacons engaged our charge with a deep sense of its importance in the life of our congregation and, more broadly, the community.

In the first quarter, Jim Parys was elected Senior Deacon when the position became vacant. Kirsten Sullivan served as Secretary. Matt Childs continued as the Deacons' Treasurer. Diane Visconti coordinated Communion. Joyce Mulholland organized flower distribution, and Anne Giddings served as Corresponding Secretary.

Guided by a spirit of renewal, an overarching Deacons’ objective was to seek ways to make our church as welcoming and spiritually enriching as possible. (This work was in concert with, and in support of, the work of other boards and committees against this same objective.) The Deacons will continue to work on this vital front in 2011, and made notable headway in 2010.

Case in point was the launch of Intentional Deaconing, the overall goal of which was to enhance the quality and continuity of care that Deacons provide to church members, as well as to friends of the church (some of whom are usually considering membership). A central facet of Intentional Deaconing involved coordinating Deacons' care across, and aligning Deacons' care with, the Church Life Communities (which are the geographic districts in which church members and friends of the church live). In this same spirit of welcome, faith growth, and community development, the board also encouraged the revitalization/re-launch of the Confirmation program, which begins Thursday, January 6.

Wonderful and well attended events, from worship to public gatherings, punctuated the year, with Deacons playing key roles in many of them, such as baptisms and memorials (for which the involved families consistently expressed appreciation). In fulfillment of the Deacons' charge to oversee and nurture the spiritual growth and faith life of the congregation, the board dialogued regularly with senior and associate ministers about weekly and special worship services, providing both support, input, and crucial feedback (from the board and from the larger congregation). The creative energy from our clergy, music director, other staff members, and event leaders is a boundless and constant manifestation of God's gifts to us as a parish.

The Deacons adapted to various challenges, including significant health issues that caused several Deacons to be unable to serve and to require support and care from the board. Despite their absence, they have continued to pray for and support the board in the Spirit, for which every Deacon is grateful.

In September, Deacons spearheaded another enjoyable Homecoming Sunday, kicking off the 2010-2011 program year to great effect. In November, another successful — and even larger — congregational Thanksgiving dinner was held for members who needed or wanted a place to share this holiday meal. After only two years, this feels like a tradition in the making. In both 2009 and 2010, leftovers were personally delivered to the Wallingford Congregational Church, which feeds (among others) the needy, which added another layer of outreach to this First Church event.

The Deacons received, processed, and extended thank-you notes for a significant number of contributions made in memory of long-time members. Through the generosity of members and friends, a record number of poinsettias (approximately 80) were donated for Christmas services, then later delivered personally by the Board to members of the congregation, many of whom are unable to attend services regularly, if at all. In keeping with tradition, the board coordinated the congregation's extremely generous contributions to the staff Christmas gift (which was all the more remarkable in a tight economic time). Throughout the year, Deacons continued to deliver flowers to, and to visit with, members of the congregation after Sunday services (except the first Sunday of the month, when Stephen Ministers handled deliveries).

Deep thanks to the members of the Board who served in 2010. For those who will continue to serve next year, we look forward to the continued journey. For those who will join the board in 2011, we welcome you. And to those whose terms have ended — Matt Childs, Joyce Mulholland, and Diane Visconti — we will miss you!

**Deacons Treasurer's Report for 2010**

<b>Fund Name</b>	<b>1/1/2010 Begin Balance</b>	<b>Contributions Received</b>	<b>Interest Earned</b>	<b>Disperse</b>	<b>12/31/2010 End Balance</b>
<i>Memorial</i>	\$2,790.94	\$3,803.00	\$0.00	\$1,545.00	\$5,048.94
<i>S.B. France</i>	\$1,130.73	\$0.00	\$71.84	\$0.00	\$1,202.57
<i>All Saints Scholarship</i>	\$441.69	\$1,080.00	\$813.68	\$0.00	\$2,335.37
<i>T. Clark Fund</i>	\$470.39	\$0.00	\$69.34	\$0.00	\$539.73
<i>Mary Hotchkiss</i>	\$5,168.03	\$0.00	\$397.94	\$1,000.00	\$4,565.97
<i>Emerson</i>	\$1,158.61	\$0.00	\$347.37	\$0.00	\$1,505.98
<i>Stephen Ministry</i>	\$135.60	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$135.60
<i>Salt &amp; Light Fund</i>	\$2,630.00	\$1,010.00	\$0.00	\$2,800.00	\$840.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$13,925.99</b>	<b>\$5,893.00</b>	<b>\$1,700.17</b>	<b>\$5,345.00</b>	<b>\$16,174.16</b>

**Income Received**

**Memorial Gifts:** \$3,703.00

*Given in memory of:* Charles Adams  
Mae Csuthy  
Aidamae Fowler  
George Jones  
Doris Mullaney  
Steve Pritchard  
Marvin Rapp  
Jessie Waszmer

**Scholarship Gifts:** \$1,080.00

**Other Income:** \$1,010.00

**Trust Fund Income:** \$1,700.17

**Significant Allocations:**

Mission Trip:	\$1,000.00
Salt & Light Grants:	\$1,050.00
Haiti:	\$1,000.00
Unite for Sight:	\$750.00
Staff Gift:	\$45.00
Sound system	<u>\$1,500.00</u>
	\$5,345.00

Respectfully submitted,  
James R. Parys,  
Senior Deacon

## **BOARD OF MUSIC**

This has been another wonderful year as the Board of Music has continued to support and expand the music ministry at First Church. Members of the Board included Joan Benedetto, Susan Bishop, Ramin Hakim, Andrew Hostage, Arthur Hostage, and Audrey Finkenstadt. The BOM also had support this year from an ad-hoc committee that included David Hostage, Hope Reinhard, and Lisa and Richard Daly.

Under the excellent leadership of Joe D'Eugenio, the Senior Choir of First Church is a dedicated group of talented singers and instrumentalists who devote their time and talents to learning and performing sacred music as a regular part of worship. Through discussions and reflections, the Board has offered input and feedback regarding the incorporation of music as a means of expression, sharing, and contemplation within worship and fellowship activities. Through fundraising efforts, the Board has supported the work of Patricia Barbano, soprano, as a section leader and assistant to Joe.

The Board supported several musical services as an expansion of traditional Sunday morning worship. One such program was the traditional Memorial Music Sunday which featured a program entitled "Songs for the Spirit" on Sunday, November 1 at 10:00. This musically innovative program featured an eclectic variety of music that included arrangements of well-known spirituals. This emotionally powerful service provided members of the congregation with a meaningful opportunity to honor and remember those who have been important in their lives and who have passed on before them.

During the Advent Season, the Board assisted with plans for our traditional Candlelight Lessons and Carols Service. This was planned with the assistance of the ministers of the church, and provided an expanded worship opportunity for the congregation to participate in the Lessons and Carols, a celebration dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Our annual L&C service was well attended and one of the year's most anticipated services. This year's service featured the music of composer, Gwyneth Walker. Her newest version of her composition, "Alpha and Omega," was premiered to a full church of congregants and members of the community. All enjoyed hearing Gwyneth's music sung by a choir of 50 voices, brass quintet, organ, and percussion.

The Board continues to promote the power of music as a means of providing outreach to the entire community, and seeks to offer First Church as a gathering place for recitals and performances beyond worship. In October, the Board sponsored an afternoon recital by one of the areas finest chamber ensembles, "The Guastavino Trio," with pianist Sara Kohane, flutist Jane Shelly, and cellist, Tom Hudson. They were joined by soprano, Tobe Malewista. This recital, like those in the past, provided an excellent afternoon of quality music which was very well received. A reception followed the recital for attendees which was comprised by church members as well as members of the larger community.

A major event sponsored by the Board was the fourth annual Summer Music on the Green event in August. This family event gathered people of all ages from the greater Cheshire area for fellowship and an enjoyable listening experience. The Board extends special thanks to the Heartland Dixieland Jazz Band for their wonderful performance.

All of these events would not have been possible without the active contributions of those Board members and ad-hoc committee members mentioned above. In addition to adding meaning to our worship and fellowship activities, these events have enabled the Board to raise approximately \$4,000 over and above our budget. These additional funds will be utilized to further the development of the music program, purchase new music, and support the section leader's salary, an absolutely vital part of our choral music program. It has been our pleasure to sponsor these events for the church family and to foster the continued development of a strong music program.

Joan Benedetto and Joseph D'Eugenio

## **BOARD OF OUTREACH**

For 2010, the members of the Board of Outreach were Peggy Allen, Will Arpaia, Ryan Black (youth member), Pam Cappiello, Patti Dickinson, Chris Eisbach, Sandy Harmer, Susan Harris, Amanda Massa (youth member), Cindy Mazzaferro, Associate Minister Alison McCaffrey, Toni Moldenhauer, Pete Ploch (chairperson), Amy Webb and Martha Wylie. The Board of Outreach's budget for 2010 was \$20,000. This was significantly lower than just a few years ago. Despite this, the board was able to undertake a wide variety of activities, impacting numerous people. In addition, members of the congregation participated in other outreach activities, some of which will be highlighted in this report.

**United Church of Christ Missions** - \$11,000 was allocated for UCC Missions.

**Midnight Run** - First Church began participating in this program in January. On the last Monday of each month, bag suppers, clothes and toiletries are delivered to people at the New Haven Green and a homeless shelter on Grand Avenue. Although this started as an Outreach initiative, it rapidly grew to include many members of the congregation. Members donate most of the ingredients for the 50 plus meals that are made every month, as well as the clothes and other items that are distributed. Our seventh and eighth graders, now known as The Midnight Runners, make the meals. They do a great job every month! New people have signed up as drivers and riders, and two new coordinators have been recruited. Almost everyone who has participated in a Midnight Run has commented on what a great experience it was.

**Food-For-All Lenten Program** - Members of the congregation were asked to simplify their eating for a week during Lent and to donate the money saved. \$632 was raised. Some of the money was used to help fund the Midnight Run program and \$450 was donated to FISH, a food pantry in New Haven, for their matching grants program.

**Soles4Souls** - In the fall, members of the congregation were asked to donate shoes in good condition, which would then be sent to people in other countries. The response was overwhelming!! 728 pairs of shoes were collected, as well as \$40 (which should allow another 40 pairs to be shipped).

**Baby Bottle Project** - Starting on Mother's Day, baby bottles were left in the pews. Members of the congregation were asked to fill the bottles with change, bills, checks or coupons, and then return them. This project raised \$750 (distribution of funds is discussed below).

**Baby Basket Ministry** - There is a bassinet in the church parlor where people can drop off baby-related items. Donations are delivered to the Waterbury Church of Christ. Baskets are made up and brought to Waterbury Hospital and Bristol Hospital to be donated to families in need. The baskets that are given to the families are laundry baskets filled with baby clothing for a year, blankets, diapers, toiletries and books. They are wrapped in cellophane and topped with a bow. This ministry began in April and is ongoing. The tally since April is as follows: 33 bedding items, such as blankets; 20 bath items, such as towels; 1001 clothing items including dresses, shirts, pants and onesies; 28 feeding items including bottles, bibs and formula; approximately 25 miscellaneous items. The Waterbury Church of Christ has reported that the families who receive the baskets are very appreciative.

**School Backpacks** - Ten backpacks loaded with school supplies were delivered to Cheshire Human Services before the start of the new school year.

**Plant Sale** - The sale of plants and decorative garden rocks during the Strawberry Festival raised \$519. This money will be used to help pay for the 2011 adult mission trip.

**Chrysalis Shelter for Abused Women, Meriden** - In the fall, two “welcome packs” were delivered to Chrysalis. Each pack contained a set of sheets for a twin bed, along with a washcloth, hand towel and bath towel. In addition, Chrysalis received \$414 worth of baby formula, diapers and wipes. This \$414 came from money raised through the Baby Bottle Project.

**Fuel Banks** - \$350 was sent to both the Cheshire Fuel Bank and Operation Fuel (which is state-wide).

**Food Banks** - \$500 was sent to the Connecticut Food Bank (one check was sent early in the year and another in November/December). For the year, the first-Sunday-of-the-month collections brought in 1,257 food items and 165 boxes of cereal. Food items are picked up by GWIM (the Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries). Cereal is brought to FISH of Greater New Haven. \$250 was allocated for the Cheshire Food Pantry.

**Malawi** - The Malawi Mission Project has been growing since it was started by Amy Webb several years ago. Currently, there are about half a dozen people working with Amy on the Malawi Mission Team. It has now been incorporated as a subcommittee of the Board of Outreach. Efforts are ongoing to better spread the word about the good work being done by the Malawi Mission Team. Last year, the Board of Outreach used money raised through the Baby Bottle Project to sponsor an orphan in Malawi. This year, in addition to continuing that sponsorship, the Board was able to start sponsoring an additional child. In addition, \$2,200 was allocated to purchase fertilizer in Malawi. Several members of the Board of Outreach helped with the Malawi Benefit Concert and Silent Auction in early December. Many members of the congregation are involved in the Malawi Mission Project in various “unofficial” capacities. Several people now sponsor orphans in Malawi. On the first Sunday of the month, Kevin Ross brings his truck to the church parking and collects recyclable cans and bottles, with the money going to the Malawi Mission Project. The Hall girls have been involved in various projects to help raise money to help the Malawi orphans. This is truly a church-wide effort.

**Cheshire Interfaith Housing** - A \$100 gift card is being sent to the occupants of the latest house built by Cheshire Interfaith Housing.

**Back Bay Mission** - \$100 was sent to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi. First Church has helped support Back Bay Mission for many years.

**Lights of Hope** - After not doing so last year, First Church participated in the Lights of Hope this year. The Board of Outreach made the initial outlay for luminaries. However, contributions by members of the congregation significantly reduced the cost of the luminaries. Money raised through the Lights of Hope went to four local beneficiaries.

**Salt & Light Grants** - These grants give financial support to members of the church to help them carry out their calling or passion in our community and around the world in ways they could not accomplish on their own. In 2010, the Board of Outreach gave out three Salt & Light Grants. In March, the Board approved a grant of \$750 for Dan Mazzaferro so he could participate in the Unite for Sight program in Ghana. Dan, a student in the MBA program at Auburn University, spent a couple of weeks in Ghana at the end of May. His grant was used to help pay for eye surgery and glasses for people who would not otherwise receive eye care. This fall, the year’s second grant was given to Parker Arai, a Cub Scout with Pack 92 out of Norton School. Parker’s \$50 grant was used to buy popcorn for the local food pantry. Finally, in mid-December, the Board approved a \$1,000 grant for Chad Groshart. In January, Chad will be going to the community of Gran Sous on the island of La Gonave in Haiti. He has designed a solar-powered lighting and battery system for the village’s community center. In Port Au Prince, Chad will be purchasing the materials he needs, which will be delivered by boat to Gran Sous. He will then work on

the system installation, which will include solar panels, a battery bank, lighting and outlets. The power generated will be used for lights, with spare power used to run a small incubator for water samples and provide power for cell phone and laptop use. There may also be enough power generated to run a small refrigerator for storing vaccines.

**The Rezamond Family** - About ten years ago, First Church assisted in the relocation of the Rezamond family from Iran to the United States. The family is currently living in Waterbury. Mr. Rezamond is having medical problems, which his insurance does not fully cover. \$500 was allocated to help with Mr. Rezamond's medical expenses.

**Cromwell Children's Home** - The Board spent \$100 to sponsor a tee-sign during the Children's Home's Golf for Kids fundraiser this past summer.

**Playing For Change** - \$100 was sent to Playing for Change, a group trying to promote peace through music education.

**Use of the Parsonage** - Members from the Board of Outreach and the Trustees have had some discussions about possible use of the parsonage to house a refugee family.

**Haiti** - For many years, First Church has helped support the Taeria Foundation/Helping Hands School in Haiti. Our contact in Connecticut has been Etienne Alexander, who lives in Hartford. The school was destroyed during the Haitian earthquake in January. The people involved with the school are still evaluating whether to rebuild the school or relocate it. Etienne made a trip to Haiti after the earthquake and is planning another trip in January. \$200 was sent to Etienne to help him continue his work in Haiti.

**Improved Communications** - The church's website was updated to provide an e-mail link so members of the congregation can more easily contact the Board of Outreach. The Board's webpage was also updated and improved.

**KIVA Loans** - In 2009, the Board of Outreach made two loans of \$200 each through KIVA, which is an organization involved in microfinance. This basically involves making loans in smaller amounts than commercial banks would normally lend. Microfinance loans are helpful to people involved in small businesses in developing countries. One loan was made to a lady in Ghana who sells fish and the other was to a lady in Peru involved in retailing. Both loans have been repaid in full. The Board of Outreach has made three new loans, to women in Sierra Leone, Togo and Honduras.

**Coffee** - Since September 2007, the Board of Outreach has been responsible for obtaining the coffee for coffee hour from Equal Exchange - Fairly Traded Coffee. Through this program, farmers receive a fair price for their coffee. Profits go back to the farmers, rather than to a corporate conglomerate.

Members of the Board of Outreach are not the only ones involved in reaching out to the less fortunate, either around the corner or around the world.

**YUTES Mission Trip** - Todd Skrzyniarz, two other adults and twelve youth participated in a Group Workcamp in Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania between July 11 and July 17, 2010. They worked on fifteen different homes in Mifflinburg and the surrounding communities. Each home worked on had a different project based on the needs of the residents and their home. The projects included installing wheelchair ramps, working on porches, painting, doing drywall repair and working on weatherization projects. This was the first mission trip for six of the youth and the third for three of the youth. The theme of this year's camp was "Undeserved", focusing on the story of the prodigal son. The Mifflinburg community welcomed all the campers into their town with open arms and hearts.

**Columbus House Meals** - In the most recent edition of the *Parish Post*, it was reported that First Church has begun our 11<sup>th</sup> year of serving meals at Columbus House, a homeless shelter in New Haven. First Church provides meals whenever there is a fifth Wednesday in the month. It has been estimated that we have served over 3,000 meals. More than 150 people have been involved in this effort. Another true church-wide effort!!

**Adult Mission Trip** - In March, Associate Minister Alison McCaffrey led a contingent of seventeen people from First Church (fourteen members and three friends or relatives) and seven people from the Congregational Church in North Guilford on a mission trip to Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. Several people completed electrical, plumbing and finish work on a house so a man could move out of a FEMA trailer. Others spent most of the week working at a church, putting down tile and baseboard, painting and refurbishing classrooms. Everything that was done was greatly appreciated. During the week, there was a trip to New Orleans which included a drive through the Ninth Ward. Five years after Hurricane Katrina, the devastating effects are still evident.

**Covenant For Caring** - This outreach effort works with the Waterbury Department of Children and Families (“DCF”). Beth Ross and Chris Fitzmaurice have been coordinating collections associated with the major holidays. This past year, through the generosity of the members of the congregation, 50 Easter baskets and 52 Thanksgiving turkey dinners, with all the trimmings, were delivered to DCF for distribution. In December, there was a collection seeking 50 Christmas gifts for children, which were to be delivered to DCF. Covenant for Caring has also been involved in the collection of clothing and household goods. Lori Mann has been coordinating this. She is currently trying to refocus her efforts on dealing more with people in Cheshire.

**Church School Activities** - Church school children typically collect for UNICEF when they go out on Halloween. Another activity is Operation Shoe Box, which runs between Halloween and Christmas. The children fill shoe boxes with school supplies, treats and other small items. The shoe boxes are then shipped to children in other countries. This year, 16 shoe boxes were collected. In the past, the church school has also participated in The Heifer Project, and hopes to do so again in the spring.

This list probably does not cover all the outreach activities in which members of First Church participate. No one does everything, but there are many people doing something!!

Peter Ploch, Chair

## **BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP**

The Stewardship Boards goal for 2010 was to enlighten and educate the members on the value of a successful campaign and how this benefits our greater church and a personal faith journey. We continue to utilize the concept of “Ask, Thank, Tell” in our strategy with a stronger emphasis this year on the “Tell” portion.

This focus created the first annual Stewardship newsletter highlighting the spirit in action as a result of the sharing of our treasure. The Board continued to encourage spiritual reflection, as opposed to solely budget driven needs.

The pledge campaign as of 12/31/2010 was short of expectation for 2010. Reviewing the data and member feedback indicated some positive and negative results. The negative aspect of our observations was the number of pledge units in the church has decreased. The positive component was an increase in the average pledge received.

As representing Chair in 2010, I highly encourage our Executive Board, staff and lay leaders to continue and increase communication with the greater membership in any way possible. We have a sizable number of members with no pledge participation and we should be continually asking if our church is meeting their desire to pursue a faithful life. As the data revealed, this non-pledging segment reflects that church life is not currently valued in their lives. That being said, we have a great opportunity to reach out and invite them to consider a spiritual relationship with God.

Bill Mann, 2010 Stewardship Chair

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

2010 began with the replacement of the Whiting House front porch (everything but the roof!) with approval from the Cheshire Historic District Commission for our planned replacement.

For the second year our “Adopt-a-Flower Bed” program was a success with many parishioners signing up to take care of a specific flower bed or landscaped area from April to November. Our spring and fall grounds cleanups were almost like an Amish barn-raising with parishioners, YUTES, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Cub Scouts and their parents coming out to help.

New this year was a closet-cleaning day. “God’s closet”, the stage, the barn, and part of the Whiting House garage received a thorough cleaning, with much “stuff” being discarded and the remaining reorganized. Thanks to Bob Giddings, we received over \$100 from the metal he was able to sell.

Seeing the need for more spaces for those who use wheelchairs, the Board took on the project of shortening two pews to create spaces on the north and south sides of the sanctuary. Our thanks to Larry Pivrotto and members of his crew who cut and refastened the existing pews. Thanks also to John Bates, who patched the holes in the floor. Cushions will soon be made to fit these two pews.

In January we began the sale of plots in the church’s Columbarium. Construction would not begin until the funds to cover the construction were in hand. With a \$10,000 donation from the Ladies Aid, it was determined mid-summer that construction could begin. The Columbarium was completed in November with the exception of stone benches that will be added later. Beautiful in its simplicity, it will be dedicated in the spring. To date, twelve plots have been sold, each with space for two urns.

We have upgraded the sanctuary sound system to digital, added handheld and condenser microphones, and some new recording equipment for the DVD’s that are made to broadcast our Sunday service on both of the local cable networks. Next year we hope to upgrade the video cameras.

First Church Preschool and Day Care asked to use Room 7 downstairs for an additional class. When the lead inspection was done, we were cited for lead dust on both sets of steps that give access to the rooms under the parish hall and to the CE office. The resolution was that we had to carpet these steps.

These are the major projects undertaken this year, there are also the day-to-day operating and maintenance items that occur – things that get taken care of before you notice there is a problem.

Our sincere thanks to Larry Pivrotto and Jack Burton, who are leaving the Board, to our Treasurers: Walt Ryan, Sara Buell, and Betsy Barber and to our staff: Leslie Holmes Meyer, Michael Lombardi, Fred and Pat Turner for all they do for First Church. To all of you and to all those who will continue to serve on the Board (Brian Castler, Betsy DePaolo, Ken Euerle, Brad Fuller, Bob Giddings, Judd Moore, Alison Perrin, Kevin Ross, Jack Sellati) -- it has been a pleasure to work with such a dedicated group of people. We know that we leave the Board in good hands.

Martha Lape and Alan Skiparis, Co-chairs

## **FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT**

The financial secretaries processed \$622,413.39 during 2010. Significant contributions were:

Pledge Payments	\$525,037.04
Plate and Church School	49,986.01
Prepaid for 2011	11,320.00
Memorial Music and Music Activities	6,624.00
Adult Mission Trip	5,261.60
Disaster Funds	3,160.00
Aids Orphans	6,744.24

We have a great team which shares the necessary duties each week. Ann Madden and Dennis Lape are the backbone for us. They have each participated for a minimum of 16 years. We function best when Marianne Eagleson and Shirley Albanese are in attendance.

I applaud you, Fred Turner, and Charles Jones for your thoughtful support,

My sincere appreciation to all,  
Emma Norback

## **FLOWER COMMITTEE**

The 2010 Flower Committee consisted of Tracy Bloschichak (resigned 11/2010 for health reasons), Sharon Brenneman, Patti Dickinson, Suzanne Fackler, Jill Gibbs, Bob Giddings (replacing K. Nenninger), Lynn Hackett, Dawn Klinner-Albright, Anne McNulty, and Susan Pappas.

The purpose of the Flower Committee is to coordinate the donation of the flowers that are given in honor of and in memory of family and friends and to arrange for the presence of flowers for weekly services and special events. A meeting was held on February 28, 2010 to set up a schedule for the callers/runners and plan special events. A description of the positions was handed out and explained. The flower committee also hosted the coffee hour with flower donation sign up for 2011 during the October 10 coffee hour.

At Easter and Christmas we had people sign up for purchasing lilies and poinsettias to decorate the altar. Most of these are then delivered to sick/shut-ins. There were 80 lilies ordered for Easter and 80 poinsettias for Christmas.

Palms were arranged and hung from the balcony for Palm Sunday. Palms were prepared for the congregation to receive on Palm Sunday morning.

New this year: white bows were hung from the greens on the balcony for the first Sunday of Advent, followed by the greens with white bows on the sconces downstairs for the second Sunday, and then the greens with white bows on the sconces upstairs for the third Sunday. On December 19, after services and before Lessons and Carols, the poinsettias were put into place on the altar along with changing all of the white bows to red bows for Christmas.

## **HISTORY COMMITTEE**

The committee has continued the digitizing of our permanent records. So far we have 5 CD's with the following records:

1. Minutes of church meetings and other official actions 1900-1951.
2. Minutes of church meetings and other official actions 1951-1979.
3. Annual reports from the beginning in 1946 through 1959.
4. Annual reports 1960 through 1977.
5. Minutes of The First Ecclesiastical Society 1864-1950 (Note: instead of a separate Ecclesiastical Society and First Congregational Church the two were merged in 1950 as The First Congregational Church of Cheshire).

These CD's are readable on any computer having Adobe software.

The committee will continue the digitizing process in the coming year. Our limitation on the rate of digitizing is the cost of the process. Thus, the committee has developed a plan to finance the conversion of the rest of our records by creating a Memory book of member's recollections concerning the church. We have obtained approval from the Executive Board, and are now beginning work to create it.

As funds become available, we need to continue digitizing the records from the ones produced so far, up to the present time. Then we can go back to the older records that were archived on microfilm - a less useful method, but the best available in 1939 when they were done.

Here are some of the activities that we want to record for those who will look back at what happened at the First Congregational Church of Cheshire in 2010:

1. At the end of the year we called Ms. Caroll Cyr to be our Christian Education Director, a position which has been vacant for almost a year.
2. Rev. Alison McCaffrey led the Scripture by Heart group in a presentation of the Luke passion story on Palm Sunday.
3. We continue to have an outstanding music program led by Joseph D'Eugenio. For the Lessons and Carols service on Sunday, December 19, the Senior Choir, with the assistance of additional singers from the Middletown Chorale, plus a brass quintet and percussion presented the initial performance of "Alpha and Omega" by Gwyneth Walker.
4. Over Memorial Day weekend there was on the church lawn a display of flags remembering the soldiers who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan.
5. Our December new member class was the largest in several years. The hard work of the Ministers and the Membership Committee is beginning to achieve positive results.
6. Our annual Strawberry Festival in June, and our Homecoming in September, were both well attended.
7. The church's Columbarium, near the Whiting House, was constructed and several plots sold.

Richard A. Eppler  
Historian

## **LIBRARY COMMITTEE**

**Members:** Audrey Finkenstadt, Joy Hostage, Marilyn Gordon, Shirley Albanese.

The Library committee met on the First Monday of the month throughout the year. I met with a different member of the committee during the summer months to continue the processing of all the donated books. New books were purchased with Prentice Memorial Funds.

**Objectives:** To establish a collection of books and audio/visual materials meeting the religious needs of the church family, adults and children alike.

**Responsibilities:** Additions and deletions to the collection are the responsibility of the library committee. Recommendations from staff and the congregation are welcomed and considered, but are not binding. We now assist the Board of Music at Coffee Hour since all but two of their members are in the choir.

**Collection Criteria:** Materials in various media will be included if the Committee deems them appropriate for the church library. Books not signed out in at least 15 years will be discarded as we continue to weed out books. This does not apply to religious classics and reference books. The Senior Minister now approves all discarded books before their cards are removed from the card file. They are then made available to the congregation on the Free Book cart.

**Monthly Meetings:** We meet to process new books and the typing of cards for the card files, categorizing, and recording of the books. Hardbacks are covered. Returned books are also processed and returned to their proper shelves. New cards are filed and new books are placed on their proper shelves. Overdue notices are sent out when necessary.

**Budget:** Our budget is limited so we welcome donations and memorial gifts to purchase new books.

We sincerely hope that church members take advantage of our quite extensive collection. The various classifications are indicated on the shelves. Junior High & Senior High books and fiction are located in the parlor. Also in the parlor is our video/DVD corner. The A-P classifications are in the Library. Classification lists are in both sites. The Children's Library is located downstairs. Simply sign the book card and leave it in the appropriate box and return it to the same location.

Audrey Finkenstadt  
Chairperson

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

The 2010 Membership Committee included Jane Brown, Marianne Eagleson, Stacey Groshart, Grace Knipe, Melanie Pivrotto, Bobbie Porter, Arleen Reid, Ernie Swartz, and Ken Stevens. Also in regular attendance at our meetings were Alison McCaffrey, our Staff representative; Mark Hostage, the representative from Deacons; and Jim Louys, our Members-At-Large representative from the Executive Board. Their participation in our meetings is significant as it creates an effective communication link between the Membership Committee, the Deacons, the Executive Board and the Staff.

There were two opportunities for new members to join our congregation in 2010 – in April and November. Though the April orientation was successful and we did welcome 19 new members into our church family, we recognized a need to offer some flexibility in our orientation scheduling to accommodate those who had conflicts and were unable to attend the 5-hour Saturday session. To meet this challenge, a new plan offered by The Membership Committee was put into place for the November induction of new members. This plan divides the orientation into two parts that are described below:

- **Part 1 – Information Session** – provides information about our church and the UCC using a PowerPoint Presentation. This session is offered on Sunday mornings between services, lasts about 45 minutes and is hosted by the Membership Committee. It gives a brief history of the church, introduces the covenant, and the responsibility of membership. A packet of information is provided to each potential new member to take home to review. Also included is an invitation to the Part 2 Orientation Session with the ministers. Church members, as well as potential new members, are encouraged to attend these presentations.
- **Part 2 – Faith Journeys, the Covenant, Communion** is hosted by our ministers. It is held on a Saturday morning with the intent of not lasting more than 3 hours. The ministers create an atmosphere for spiritual sharing and fellowship. There is follow-up to information provided in the Part 1 session.

In the fall, three Part 1 orientations were held and one Part 2. On November 21, 23 people joined our church.

**Other Accomplishments:**

1. **Church Directory Page** - On the New Member Sundays in April and November, Don Lee took pictures of our new member families. A page similar to a church directory page was created with these pictures and has been made available to the congregation as an update to the church directory information.
2. **Welcoming New Families to the Community** – Families that have moved in Cheshire are identified through Town Hall records. A letter from Jeff and Alison is sent to them welcoming them to Cheshire and to our church and its activities. The Membership Committee members address these letters by hand to add a personal touch.
3. **A Church Brochure** – has been designed and will be available soon.

Those who joined our church family this year are Richard Abbate, Brent Albright, Peter and Melissa Bowman, Philip and Lilja Bradford, Dwight and Darby Bronson, Tom and Michele Cahill, Jason and Kelly DeChello, Hannelore (Lorie) Dunne, Bill and Millie Farrell, Dave and Sunshine Fiore, Lindsay Heyer, Chris and Diane Lamb, Gary and Barbara Logsdon, Lauren Minichino-Fisher, Judd and Janet Moore, Adam and Meredith Napolitano, Joe Norcross, Norman and Kathleen O’Shaughnessy, Doreen Paul, Megan Perez, Jeff and Karen Purslow, Jim and Nancy Redeker, David and Mary Schumacher, Mark and Marianne Sprankel, Jeanne Stanton, and Sylvia Van Heerden

It has been a pleasure to be part of this hardworking committee where everyone attends meetings, shares ideas and follows through with assignments. Much has been accomplished because of the commitment each person brings to the group.

Bobbie Porter and Marianne Eagleson, Co-Chairs

## **PARISH CARE COMMITTEE**

### **Members of the Parish Care Committee:**

Donna Mead – Parish Care Coordinator

#### **Members:**

John Bates, Sue Chatfield, Jackie Cole, Marianne Eagleson, Dick Eppler, Ken and Pam Euerle, Jan Garthwait, Charles Jones, Martha Lape, Bobbie Porter, and Kevin and Beth Ross.

As always, the Parish Care Committee has been very busy taking care of the needs of our congregation. In addition, the committee hosted a coffee hour and continued to recruit volunteers at the Parish Life Expo in the fall. A committee was formed this year to reassess the format of the Parish Care Committee and it was rewritten to have 3 coordinators and a data entry person to maintain records of all that the ministries do. The people who volunteered to step up and take on this responsibility are: Jan Cowles, Pam Euerle and Jane Montgomery as the coordinators and Marianne Eagleson as the data entry person. The committee sees wonderful caring coming to our congregation under their capable leadership.

A summary of our active ministries in 2010 follows:

**Baptism Ministry:** Ken and Pam Euerle head this ministry and provide the parents of baptized children with a hand printed picture of the praying hands in a frame for the baby, a knitted baby blanket for members of the congregation, and follow-up a year later with a card. They have done 19 baptisms in 2010.

**Bereavement Group:** Jan Garthwait and Jan Cowles are the leads for this ministry. Two 6 week sessions were held during the past year both ending with a quiet Remembrance Service. This is a very special and meaningful ministry to all who attended.

**Cards Ministry:** Martha Lape coordinates this activity with 4-6 women sending cards to members of the congregation. The cards are thank you, thinking of you, sympathy, get well, encouragement, anniversary of church membership, birthday, weddings, or other significant events. Approximately 237 cards were sent in 2010.

**Caring Crafts Ministry:** About 15 women made items that included 91 prayer shawls, 3 baby blankets, 16 Teddy Bears (for the Christmas Boxes), hats and mittens for Midnight Run, and 68 squares for the Warm Up America project. The items have been given to those in need of comfort and blessing. The Parish Care Committee, on behalf of the congregation, would like to thank all the women who selflessly worked on these items of God's love. The group has decided to meet every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. in the church parlor. They always welcome new members.

**Caring Visitors:** There are 7 Caring Visitors visiting 9 members of the church on a regular basis.

**Meal Ministry:** Leadership is handled by 3 people: Jackie Cole, Bobbie Porter, and Marianne Eagleson. They rotate leadership, every two months. Approximately 78 meals were prepared and delivered to 25.

**Pager Ministry:** Donna coordinates the distribution and return of the 7 prayer pagers. On an average, 3 of them are held at any given time. This year, 10 people found comfort in the 1,992 calls made to the 7 pagers. A call to the pager sets the pager off and the person who has the pager knows that someone is praying for their healing.

**Phone Ministry:** Martha Lape is coordinator for this ministry. Calls are made to members of the congregation on their significant birthdays or anniversaries. Martha has a team of 12 people who made the calls to 150 people this year.

**Ride Share Ministry:** Kevin and Beth Ross coordinated this ministry. It was decided by the committee that this ministry will be placed on hold. Local rides are available to doctor's appointments for the elderly and the committee felt we were duplicating local efforts.

**Small Chores Ministry:** John Bates heads this ministry. About 5 chores were done. We thank John for his willingness to help people.

**Stephen Ministry:** This specialized ministry continues to expand under the leadership of Sue Chatfield. She is the lead trainer for continuing education. She also keeps track of ordering the "Care Notes" on display in the hallway, which has been very helpful to many. A complete report of this very beneficial ministry can be found elsewhere in the Annual Report.

Donna Mead - Chair

#### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Members: Charlene Black, Jeff Braun (Ex-Officio), Nancy Brunetti, Bill Gordon, Dennis Lape, Roy Pritchard (Chair), June Webster

Highlights of the Personnel Committee's activities for the year 2010 follow:

The Personnel Committee worked with supervisory boards and committees to ensure that all employees completed the Employment Eligibility Verification form in accordance with federal law.

A considerable amount of discussion took place regarding the clarification and modification of policies in the Employee Handbook and Personnel Policies Manual including the performance review process and performance appraisal forms. Personnel Committee members met with each board to discuss and review the performance appraisal process. All employee reviews have been successfully completed.

Committee members continued one-on-one visits with each member of our Church staff. The primary purpose was to simply discuss how things were going from the employee's point of view. Emphasis was placed on any problems the employee might be encountering, and what might be done to help the employee in fulfilling job responsibilities.

During the course of the year the Committee prepared, assembled and reviewed a variety of salary and benefit data with particular applicability to the Church's status in this area. Based on these data a salary increase recommendation was made for the 2011 Budget. An ad hoc committee to conduct medical benefits surveys and explore alternatives with a view to containing costs will be established in 2011.

At the end of the year the Personnel Committee initiated meetings with each of the supervising Board or Committee Chairs who have supervisory responsibility for our Church staff. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the performance appraisals of each employee as well as the Board or Committee's salary increase recommendations. After these meetings the Personnel Committee determined salary increases based upon Church Budget dollars available, each employee's current rate of pay, the results of the supervisory Board's performance appraisal and increase recommendations, and salary survey information. The Personnel Committee arrived at its decisions after careful and impartial consideration of these various factors.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Personnel Committee members for their conscientious efforts in handling difficult tasks. Our employees are the Church's most valuable resource.

Roy Pritchard  
Chair

### **STEPHEN MINISTRY**

The Stephen Ministry has successfully completed its seventh year. To date twenty-one people have had the required 50 hours of training. Presently there are thirteen active Stephen Ministers and one on leave of absence. Many of the Stephen Ministers have extended their commitment beyond the two year minimum.

The following is specific data about the Stephen Ministry program for 2010:

-Number of care receivers assigned to Stephen Ministers	-	17
-Number of personal contacts made with care receivers	-	414
-Number of hours spent with care receivers	-	308

The types of issues care receivers are or were struggling with include: chronic illness, terminal illness, grieving the loss of loved ones, recovery from surgery, loneliness, depression, adjustment to long term care, relationship issues, and job related stresses.

Peer supervision takes place on the first and third Wednesday of each month. The purpose of supervision is to give support to Stephen Ministers working with those dealing with difficult times as well as to provide accountability for the Stephen Ministry Program.

Continuing Education is provided on the first Wednesday each month before supervision. Topics from the training classes are sometimes chosen for continuing education to review or expand on. This year we had the CEO of Wellpath, Gary Steck, present what this organization does for youth and families in the greater Waterbury area, including Cheshire. It was very informative as well as helpful information to have as a resource if it were needed. Other times Stephen Leaders or Stephen Ministers with expertise in various areas may present topics for the group. This fall we decided to study the book Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart, by Dr. Kenneth Haugk, the founder of Stephen Ministry. Each month we read and discuss one or two chapters that deal with people who are grieving.

This year Stephen Ministers have participated in other areas in the life of the church. They assist the Deacons with flower delivery on the first Sunday of each month. Three Stephen Ministers have participated in the leadership team of a bereavement group.

In the Sunday Bulletin you may have read "One of the Ten Top Reasons for Becoming a Stephen Minister" that was printed each week this fall. If these bulletin announcements and the recruitment posters in the halls have piqued your interest in finding out more about the Stephen Ministry please contact me, one of the other Stephen Leaders, or the church office. If you know of someone who is struggling with challenges in their life and would benefit from having a Christian friend walk alongside him/her until the difficulty has lessened, please contact one of the above people

This continues to be a very rewarding spirit-filled ministry and I am so thankful to those answering God's call to reach out and help others in our church and community through the Stephen Ministry.

Sue Chatfield  
Stephen Ministry Coordinator

## **STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL**

The Strawberry Festival is an event that is totally dependent on the weather. Unfortunately, the rains came before the event ended on Saturday June 12, 2010! There were some really hardy souls who came despite the rain – some to enjoy the music, some with children to enjoy the activities. Leftover strawberry shortcake was served at coffee hour the next day.

Over one-hundred church volunteers of all ages, working a two-hour shift or working for two full days, put in extraordinary effort to make this event possible. Because the lunch time crowds were good, we were able to cover our expenses for the day with a small profit. Donations were made to the YUTES mission trip (\$1,500), to Vacation Bible School (\$500), and to the upgrade of the sanctuary audio system (\$1,326).

The festival committee would like to thank all of those who helped and looks forward to seeing everyone (and many new faces) at the next festival to be held on Saturday June 11, 2011. It's a good opportunity to get to know your fellow church members as you work together on this great event!

The Strawberry Festival Committee: Brad Fuller, Martha Lape, Jim Louys, Addie Marx, Beth Ross, Carol Warner, Gary Warner

## **MEN'S BREAKFAST**

The Men's Breakfast Fellowship met, as it has over the past 20 years, about 18 times on the first and third Wednesday of October through May. All Men are invited. Note these changes. We now meet at 7:00 AM in the Parish Hall, still with a light breakfast available. Programs mix fellowship, bible study, topical discussions and occasional speakers. All men are invited, but if you wish for a meeting reminder, we have a calling list to remind people a couple of days in advance. We invite all men to join us for fellowship in a church setting, with an emphasis on the spiritual side of life.

Bill Gordon - Coordinator

## **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

The Women's Fellowship consists of only two groups now: Colonizers and Ladies Aid. This past year Tuesday Circle merged with Ladies Aid. Colonizers meets the second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. and Ladies Aid meets the fourth Monday at 10 a.m. for coffee, conversation, and program. Each group has its own special outreach projects.

Women from both groups help out at the church rummage sales. Colonizers has a craft table at the church Christmas Fair and women who were Tuesday Circle members provide a table of antique jewelry for the Fair.

All the women of the church are invited to join one of these groups. It's great fellowship and a chance to get to know some other church members.

Martha Lape

## **CHURCH CLERK**

Summaries of the minutes of Church Meetings held during 2010 are listed below. The complete minutes may be found in the church permanent record book and are available to interested parties.

**Annual Meeting January 24, 2010**, for the following purposes:

1. Electing Officers, Board and Committee Members
2. Accepting the Annual Report for 2009
3. Hearing an Update on the status of the Columbarium
4. Accepting the Budget for 2010
5. Conducting any other business that may properly be brought before the Church.

### **Resolutions:**

#### **Item**

1. The Nominating Committee Report, as contained in the Annual Report and as posted in the Church Connector was approved as printed.
2. The 2009 Annual Report, as published in two volumes (the 2009 Annual Report and the 2009 Financial Annual Report) was accepted.
3. This was an informational item. No vote was taken.
4. The 2010 Budget was accepted.
5. The Other Business Items:
  - a. Treasurer's use of up to \$10,000 from the 2009 surplus to pay for an outside audit was approved
  - b. Moving the balance of \$17,083 from the 2009 surplus into the Capital Maintenance and Repair Fund was approved
  - c. Treasurer's use of some of the prior years' surplus funds, if needed during calendar year 2010, was approved.

**Congregational Meeting April 18, 2010**, for the following purpose:

1. Calling Lindsay Heyer to serve as the new Director of Christian Education

### **Resolution:**

#### **Item**

1. The call of Lindsay Heyer to serve as the Christian Education Director was approved.

**Preliminary Budget Meeting September 19, 2010**, for the following purposes:

1. Reviewing the proposed 2011 budget;
2. Ratifying the Executive Board's acceptance of Lindsay Heyer's resignation.

### **Resolutions:**

#### **Item**

1. This was an informational item. No vote was taken.
2. No vote was taken as we did not follow the By-Laws in reading the call more than 24 hours prior to the church service. This item was tabled for the December meeting.

**Congregational Meeting, December 12, 2010**, for the following purposes:

1. Ratifying the Executive Board's acceptance of Lindsay Heyer's resignation;
2. Initial presentation of the Proposed Revisions to the Church By-Laws, to include:
  - a. changing the use of the term "call" to "hire" for the Director of Christian Education and removing the need to call a church meeting for the purpose of hiring/accepting the resignation of a CE Director; and
  - b. adding a statement regarding the posting of the proposed budget five days prior to a church meeting;
3. A reading of the Nominating Committee's Report for 2011;
4. Approving the Budget for 2011; and
5. Calling Carroll Cyr to serve as the new Director of Christian Education

**Resolutions:**

**Item**

1. The resignation of the Director of Christian Education was accepted.
2. This was an informational item. No vote was taken.
3. This was an informational item. No vote was taken.
4. The Budget for 2011 was accepted.
5. The call of Carroll Cyr to serve as the Christian Education Director was approved.

**CHURCH STATISTICS:**

Total Membership as of December 31, 2009:	827	
Adjustment for Membership Audit:		-1

**Admissions:**

Confession of Faith:	5	
Reaffirmation of Faith:	29	
Letter of Transfer:	8	
Membership Reactivated:	2	
<b>Total Admissions:</b>		+44

**Dismissions:**

Letter of Transfer:	7	
Removed By Request:	9	
Deaths:	6	
<b>Total Dismissions:</b>		-22

<b>Total Membership as of December 31, 2010:</b>	<b>848</b>	
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**Membership Audit:**

Frank Swezey – Membership record corrected

**Admissions:**

**Confession of Faith**

Richard Abbate	Brent Albright
Melissa Bowman	Adam Napolitano
Megan Perez	

**Reaffirmation of Faith**

Peter Bowman	Lilja Bradford
Philip Bradford	Darby Bronson
Dwight Bronson	Kelly DeChello
Jason DeChello	William Farrell
Millie Farrell	David Fiore
Sunshine Fiore	Lindsay Heyer
Barbara Logsdon	Gary Logsdon
Lauren Minichino-Fisher	Janet Moore
Judd Moore	Meredith Napolitano
Joseph Norcross	Kathleen O'Shaughnessy
Norman O'Shaughnessy	Doreen Paul
Karen Purslow	Jeff Purslow
Mary Schumacher	Marianne Sprankel
Mark Sprankel	Jeanne Stanton
Sylvia Van Heerden	

**By Letter of Transfer**

Michele Cahill	Tom Cahill
Hannelore Dunne	Diane Lamb
Chris Lamb	Nancy Redeker
James Redeker	David Schumacher

**Membership Reactivated**

Lisa Murray	Peter Murray
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**Dismissions:**

**Removed by Letter of Transfer**

Elizabeth Adams	Paul Adams
Connor Murphy	Howard Murphy
Kelly Murphy	Stacy Murphy
Norman Thompson	

**Removed By Request**

Jane Guralnick	Richard Guralnick
Bruce Hunter	Leslie Hunter
Pat Musante	Tom Musante
Kathleen Saulnier	Ellen Wright
Theodore Wright	

**Deaths & Funerals**

**Members:**

Charles Adams	Helen Clark
Arthur Dayton*	Aidamae Fowler
Doris Mullaney	Jessie Waszmer

\*Associate Member

**Non-Members:**

Eleanor Brown	Mae Csuthy
Perry Cumming	Jenny Gardiner
George Jones	Edith Leonard
Carl Lombardi	James Norback
Douglas Prince	Stephen Roy Pritchard
Joyce Reynolds	Maryann Robustelli
Charles Smith	Donna Tenney
Mark Whitlock	Thelma Wilcox
Virginia Williams	

**Baptisms:**

Caleb Booth	Mason Fitzgerald
Molly Anne Gromala	Madeleine Elaine Kingsland
Olivia Petrie Kingsland	Julia Lauren Kurtz
Wyatt Kurtz	Madison Napolitano
Brennan Nuzzo	Ethan Thomas O'Shaughnessy
Dylan John Paul	Camryn Alexis Rivera
Devon Sampietro	Addison Seely
Bryce Robert Upson-Hiney	Miranda Ziolkowski

**Weddings:**

Carlee Moldenhauer & Eric Brandom  
Paige Symington & Jay Callahan  
Katherine Duffendack (M) & Brian Castler (M)  
Nicole Griffin (M) & Kory Kevorkian

**CHURCH OFFICERS AND BOARDS/COMMITTEES FOR 2010**

Office / Board / Committee Those Currently Serving	Term Expires	Nominee (To be voted on)  <i>** Completing someone's term; eligible to be elected to a full 3 year term.</i>
PRESIDENT-ELECT	2012	David Hostage
CLERK	2012	Jacqueline Cole
TREASURER	2012	Walt Ryan
ASSOCIATE TREAS.	2012	Betsy Barber
ASSISTANT TREASURER	2012	Jay Knipe
MODERATOR	2012	Robert Giddings
ASSISTANT MODERATOR	2012	Elizabeth Esty
FINANCIAL SECRETARIES	2014	Dennis Lape
Ann Madden	2012	
Shirley Albanese	2013	
Charles Jones	2013	
Marianne Eagleson	2013	
	2013	Kathy Duffendack
	2014	Anne Tait (Alternate)
AUDITORS (2)	2012	Harry Black
	2012	Robert Giddings
HISTORIAN	2012	Richard Eppler
EXECUTIVE BOARD—Members-at-Large		
Jim Louys	2012	
Mark Sullivan	2013	
	2014	Regan Huntley
BOARD OF DEACONS		
Peter Gadsby	2012	
Mark Hostage	2012	
James Parys	2012	
	2012	Don Lee**

Office / Board / Committee Those Currently Serving	Term Expires	Nominee (To be voted on)  ** <i>Completing someone's term; eligible to be elected to a full 3 year term.</i>
BOARD OF DEACONS (continued)		
Joellyn Jason	2013	
Anne Giddings	2013	
Kirsten Sullivan	2013	
	2013	Nora Adams**
	2014	(1) Karen Gravino
	2014	(2) Cindy Mazzaferro
	2014	(3) Larry Pivirotto
	2014	(4) Bobbie Porter
YOUTH DEACON (1 year)	2012	Ryan Black
BOARD OF TRUSTEES		
Betsy DePaolo	2012	
Ken Euerle**	2012	
Robert Giddings**	2012	
	2012	Brad Fuller**
L. Brian Castler	2013	
Alison Perrin	2013	
Kevin Ross	2013	
Jack Sellati	2013	
	2014	(1) Sue Branzell
	2014	(2) Judd Moore
	2014	(3) Norman O'Shaughnessy
	2014	(4) Leah Sanders
BOARD OF OUTREACH		
Peggy Allen	2012	
Will Arpaia	2012	
Sandy Harmer	2012	
Amy Webb	2012	
Patti Dickinson	2013	
Susan Harris	2013	

Office / Board / Committee Those Currently Serving	Term Expires	Nominee (To be voted on)  <i>** Completing someone's term; eligible to be elected to a full 3 year term.</i>
BOARD OF OUTREACH (continued)		
Toni Moldenhauer	2013	
Martha Wylie	2013	
	2014	(1) Lorrie Canas
	2014	(2) Pam Cappiello
	2014	(3) Chris Eisbach
	2014	(4) Beth Barnes
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION		
Ted Bloschichak	2012	
Suzanne Lawson	2012	
Barbara Lyke	2012	
	2012	Jackie Hissick**
Adeline Arumainayagam	2013	
Beth Rojas	2013	
Beth Ross	2013	
	2013	Brendan Devine**
	2014	(1) Kate Hall
	2014	(2) Laurie Hart
	2014	(3) Betsy Mule
	2014	(4) Joe Norcross
BOARD OF MUSIC		
Joan Benedetto	2012	
David Wylie	2012	
	2012	Art Hostage**
Angela Michaels	2013	
Audrey Finkenstadt	2013	
	2013	Ann Izzo**
	2014	(1) Anthony DePaolo
	2014	(2) Nancy Redeker
	2014	(3) Diane Visconti

Office / Board / Committee Those Currently Serving	Term Expires	Nominee (To be voted on)  <i>** Completing someone's term; eligible to be elected to a full 3 year term.</i>
<b>BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP</b>		
Charles Jones	2012	
Glenn Thompson	2012	
	2012	Roy Pritchard**
Don Machado	2013	
Henry McNulty	2013	
Joe Petit	2013	
	2014	(1) Christine Albrecht
	2014	(2) William Gordon
	2014	(3) David Schumacher
<b>FLOWER COMMITTEE</b>		
Tracy Bloschichak	2012	
Lynn Hackett	2012	
	2012	Robert Giddings**
Sharon Brenneman	2013	
Suzanne Fackler	2013	
Jill Gibbs	2013	
Dawn Klinner-Albright	2013	
	2014	(1) Janet Hissy
	2014	(2) Holly Ruszczyk
	2014	(3) Heidi White
<b>FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE</b>		
Lisa Canas	2012	
Jane Richards	2012	
	2013	Sue Mancinelli**
	2013	Joyce Mulholland**
	2014	(1) Judi Ackerman
	2014	(2) Emily Ziolkowski

Office / Board / Committee Those Currently Serving	Term Expires	Nominee (To be voted on)  <i>** Completing someone's term; eligible to be elected to a full 3 year term.</i>
LIBRARY COMMITTEE		
Shirley Albanese	2012	
Audrey Finkenstadt	2012	
Marilyn Gordon	2013	
	2014	(1) Lori Dunne
	2014	(2) Ginny Humphrey
HISTORY COMMITTEE		
Marshall Tucker	2012	
Christine Pittsley	2013	
Perry Stevens	2013	
	2014	(1) Joy Deegan
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE		
Charlene Black	2012	
Dennis Lape	2012	
Nancy Brunetti	2013	
June Webster	2013	
	2014	(1) Betty Pritchard
	2014	(2) Tom Reid
MEMBERSHIP		
Stacey Groshart	2012	
Arleen Reid	2012	
Ernie Swartz	2012	
Jane Brown	2013	
Grace Knipe	2013	
Melanie Pivrotto	2013	
	2014	(1) Mark Hostage
	2014	(2) Bill Mann
	2014	(3) Anne McNulty

Office / Board / Committee Those Currently Serving	Term Expires	Nominee (To be voted on)  <i>** Completing someone's term; eligible to be elected to a full 3 year term.</i>
DELEGATES (for CT Conference and New Haven Assn.)		
Anne Giddings	2012	
Grace Knipe	2012	
Jay Knipe	2012	
L. Brian Castler	2013	
Kathy Duffendack	2013	
Karen Gravino	2013	
	2014	(1) Beth Ross
	2014	(2) Kevin Ross
	2014	(3) Carolyn Garthwait
DELEGATES (for Cheshire Interfaith Housing)	2012	Barbara Barlok
DELEGATES (for Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries)	2012	Farshid Hakim
	2012	Jan Garthwait - (Alternate)
USHERING COMMITTEE		
Jim Lyke	2012	
Barbara Voegeli	2012	
	2013	Hugh Larson
Youth Usher Chair for 9:00 - Hugh Larson		
9 a.m. Assistant Chair - Mark Hostage		
NOMINATING COMMITTEE		
	2012	(1) Ed Albrecht
	2012	(2) Patti Dickinson
	2012	(3) Susan Hostage
	2012	(4) Bobbie Porter
	2012	(5) Ken Stevens
	2012	(6) Anne Tait
	2012	(7) Regina Hackett
	2012	(8) Matt Child
	2012	(9) Chris Fitzmaurice
	2012	(10) David Hostage – Pres. Elect