



The Messenger



Volume 58 No. 1

First Congregational Church

Fairhaven, Massachusetts

February 2009

The First Congregational Church

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Pastor

Rev. Bette McClure
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Administrator

Sharon M. Dorian

Music Director

Mr. David Touchette

Organist

Ms. Jackie Maillet

Office Hours

Mon thru Fri
8:30am - Noon



God is Still Speaking,

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church Financial Outlook

For the nine months ending December 31, 2008

	<u>Year to Date</u>		<u>Remaining FY Forecast</u>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>3 months</u>	<u>Total Year</u>
Total Income	\$89,314	\$104,804	\$27,086	\$116,400
Total Expenses	\$97,603	\$107,039	\$35,679	\$142,718

As the Church's fiscal year nears its end, the forecast shows an estimated shortfall of \$23,318. This may be tempered by a donation from the concert committee depending on how well they do on their upcoming concerts.



A LOOK at the BUDGET

As individual church members, we can focus on some income items which are below budget. We are \$1,200 short on Old Colony Association dues for 2008. Please be sure to pay your \$16/member dues if you have not yet done so. Be as generous as you can in the Coffee Can Club. We are \$1,200 short of budget there. We are also \$500 short on Shaw's receipts. This item does not require your cash but diligence in saving all your receipts. Ask your family, friends and neighbors to help us with this task.

This story is not new. We have done well in keeping expenses below budget and Sunday revenues continue to come in above budget. What we have failed to do is to come up with a great idea on how to raise the \$26,000 needed in the miscellaneous income category to meet the budget. We have not given up on that and we will get there or close to it by next year. We will focus on this and other ideas in the next few months.

All is not bleak and we are still without any overdue bills and have cash on hand. Money is still coming in on cash pledges for the capital campaign. We have no construction costs left on the building. It is true that Capital Campaign funds should be used to repay the loan to ourselves taken out of invested funds, but we may have to postpone that yet again. We do have to face reality and get out of this bind next year or we will be in trouble. The safety net is almost gone. Do I sound like our new President? We do have work to do, but I believe we can do it. Do you?

-Al Jones on behalf of the Finance Committee



A Service of Transition into the time of Lent

**February 25th
7:00 p.m.**

**Led by the Confirmation
Class and Rev. Bette**

Join us for our annual Ash Wednesday Service marking the beginning of the Lenten Season.

This year's service will begin with a rowdy celebration of Mardi Gras in the New Orleans tradition. Traditionally, Mardi Gras (literally Fat Tuesday) is the last day of indulgence before the serious fasting of Lent begins. While Lent is a bit different for us than in times past, it can be helpful to acknowledge the transition as we move into Lent. The service will proceed on a more somber note as we begin a time of reflection and prayer. We will close by sharing Holy Communion. Please join us.



-Rev. Bette McClure-

Dear Friends,

In his letters to the Thessalonians and the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul urged the people to "pray without ceasing." That seems like a mighty tall order to most of us, something that is just about impossible. And, if truth be told, some of us might roll our eyes a bit, thinking that his request is a silly one, especially in this day and age when so many demands consume so much of our time.

I understand all those reactions to Paul's words - I've thought most of them myself at one time or another. But lately I've been thinking about prayer a lot, and exploring how my life might be more prayer-full on a daily basis. As I mentioned in a recent sermon, Martha Grace Reese, in her book **Unbinding the Gospel**, defines prayer as "the way to stay in love with God." Given that definition we might have a different attitude toward prayer. After all, who among us doesn't want to remain in love with God?

Those of us who have been reading and reflecting on Reese's book almost weekly since the spring have been working at being more intentional about prayer. And now we'd like to invite you to join us. In addition to lifting up our joys and concerns during Sunday worship, and praying for the folks on our prayer list, we are asking you to focus on a particular area of prayer each week. When you pray, personalize it by praying for someone you personally know who fits in the category. Pray for yourself if you fit in the category. Whatever you do, pray! Maybe you will fall in love with God all over again!

Areas of Focus for our Prayers in February
 Week of 2/1 People who are facing unemployment
 Week of 2/8 People in strained relationships
 Week of 2/15 People who are in the role of caregivers
 Week of 2/22 Families where there is abuse occurring

Blessings & Prayers,

Bette

"Our mission is to provide opportunities to experience God's presence and in humble and caring ways to use all of our resources to welcome, love, challenge, and equip each other for Christ's ministry in our community and the world."

Capital Campaign Wrap Up

- Arthur Mills, Jr., Treasurer

The Capital Campaign is now coming to an end. I want to thank everyone who has contributed to the campaign with their time or dollars. The three years have just seemed to fly by. The results have been very good and you should all be proud of what we have accomplished. We now have a LULA elevator for handicap access and a roof that should last us a long time. The church looks great and we have a state of the art fire protection system. Give yourselves a big pat on the back.

More than three years ago we started this process with faith and hope and a lot of enthusiasm. You told us you would pledge \$180,000 in cash contributions and today we have collected \$178,500. There is still more money due in so I believe we will exceed the \$180,000 that was pledged. The grant committee hoped to raise some money to help with the project and successfully found another \$57,000 in grants. There is another \$350,000 in planed giving that will be realized at some future date.

All the bills for construction have been paid and there is over \$13,000 in the campaign savings account. **We also promised a 10% mission tithe which we will discuss at the next Annual meeting.** Truly the news on the Capital Campaign is very good. We should celebrate what we have accomplished. Please remember that as good as the campaign went the church is in a very tight cash flow situation and we need to stay focused on keeping the church strong and vibrant. You will be hearing soon about a very different stewardship campaign that we believe will help the church continue to grow in many different ways. God bless you all and many thanks for a great Capital Campaign!!!



Holiday Fair Wrap-Up

Our holiday fair was a resounding success because of the dedicated members of our church. John, Bill and Donna would like to thank everyone who helped make this day a fun time for all. The Lobster Luncheon, which again was a sell out, put our profits at **\$4,075**. More than forty members helped in one capacity or another and we'd like to thank everyone who helped set-up, decorate, made phone calls, baked, cooked, served, advertised, donated, sewed, crafted, greeted, filled-in and cleaned-up. A special thanks to the Henriques for the beautiful bird house and the Jones' for the Bed and Breakfast weekend. Our hats off to you!



Heat Conservation Policy

Keeping our members and friends comfortable in the sanctuary during the winter heating season has resulted in the policy below. Any comments or questions should be directed to the Church Council.

From November 1 through March 31, worshippers will be asked to enter the church via the Williams Street door. A sign will be posted out front to inform people where to enter. Also the center inside doors to the sanctuary will remain closed and entry into the sanctuary from the south end should be through the inside left and right aisle doors. The outside sanctuary door will not be opened but will be unlocked for safe egress in case of emergency.

Pulpit Flowers

On December 7th -- In celebration of the 16th birthday of **Kaitlyn Arbec** by Jean, Ray & Bethany. Flowers were also given on the 7th in loving memory of **Joseph Filipek** by his family.

On December 14th -- In birthday remembrance of **Bill Perry** by Nancy, Meg, Tim, Brody & Hadley.

On December 24th -- In loving memory of **Paul Desorcy** by Doreen and family.



Congratulations

To **Will & Laura Gardner** and **Nancy Wood** who formally joined our membership on January 25th.

Our Deepest Sympathies

To the family & friends of Frank Motta, Jr. -- Frank, the father of seven including: Frankie Motta, Cathy Wuncshel, Michael Motta and Linda Branco of Fairhaven, died unexpectedly on New Year's Eve. Frank was also the father-in-law of Ginny Motta and grandfather of Nick & Taylor Motta.

The family & friends of Don James – Don, the uncle of Bev Johansen died on January 27th.

Our Prayers are with...

Jean Campbell, Matt Desimas, Karen Elliott, Bob Heskett, Ron Dawson, Karen Elliott, Suzanne Gonsalves, Jean Condon, Grace Battistelli, Lois Goulart, Alma Johnson, Elsie Jacobsen, Ruth Rebello, Dot Holmes, Pete Braley, Ron Simonsen.



The Women's Fellowship does not have a meeting in February, however they hope that all are staying well and the Snow Birds are

having a great winter. Get ready for Annie at FHS on Friday March 20th. Several of our youth are participating this year.

Announcements

■ Giving Statements for 2008 have been mailed. If you did not receive yours, please call the church office. Filing your taxes before receiving this statement may make some of your deductions invalid.

■ Ronnie Simonsen wishes for us to know that he is doing well. He continues to receive phone calls from his friend Chad Everett. Ronnie will be featured on MTV's "How's Your News" to be broadcast Sunday, February 8th at 10:30 p.m.

■ Don't forget to pay for your poinsettia. If you ordered a flower for Christmas, please make sure your payment has been received by the church office. Poinsettias are \$8.50 each.





Fairhaven Community Concert Series Celebrates Mardi Gras Sunday, February 22nd

Special guest artists **Bill Fanning**
and **Genevieve Rose** will join local jazz



musicians **Rick Britto, Greg
Conroy, and Matt Richard**

for the sixth annual Mardi
Gras concert and dinner
sponsored by the Fairhaven Community Concert Series. The dinner will
begin at 5:30 p.m. and the concert will follow at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are
available at the door.

This jazz quintet will be led by pianist Matt Richard of Fairhaven
and the program will include a mix of standard and original jazz composi-
tions.

On trumpet and flugal horn, Bill Fanning is one of New England's
most in demand musicians. Fanning has performed with Chester Thomp-
son, Bela Fleck, Bernard Purdie, Victor Wooten, Glenn Frey, Bruce
Springstein, Sheryl Crowe, John Fogerty, Bruce Hornsby and Max Carl.
A graduate of the New England Conservatory with a Masters of Music
degree, Fanning studied improvisation with Jon McNeil, Jerry Bergonzi,
George Garzone, and Bob Brookmeyer.

Highly accomplished acoustic bass player, Genevieve Rose keeps a
very ambitious performing and recording schedule with numerous groups
and also directs the Smith College Jazz Ensemble in Northampton, MA.
She teaches at Orchard Hill School in South Windsor, CT, and is a member
of the faculty at the nationally recognized Jazz in July Workshops in
Amherst, MA. A great evening will be had by all. Come join us!

Mardi Gras Dinner Menu



Black bean Soup
Jambalaya
Gumbo

Chicken Marsala (for a milder entree)
Corn Bread

King Cake and assorted desserts
MAKE YOUR RESERVATION TODAY!



Fairhaven Community Concert Series

<http://fhnccs.googlepages.com/>

2008-2009 Season

February 22, 2009 7:00

Matt Richard Quintet
Mardi Gras Dinner 5:30

March 8, 2009 2:00

Fumito Nunoya - Marimbas

April 26, 2009 7:00

David Langevin, Organ Recital
Spring Dinner 5:30

Concert tickets are \$10.
Children are FREE with an
adult.

Dinner tickets are \$10 for adults
and \$5 for children.

**Help us make
communications faster/
easier. Receive
announcements,
reminders and the
Messenger via e-mail by
sending your
e-mail
address to
fccof@juno.com.**





All Youth Groups in February will take place on Sunday, February 8th

We are asking you to sign up ahead of time – by Friday Feb. 6 – if your child intends to

take part in these programs so that we can have the right amount of supplies on hand. Children and youth are **always** welcome to bring friends with them. Rev. Bette also needs one adult to be present with each group to help out and maintain Safe Church guidelines.

Jesus and Me	2:00-3:30	grades 1-3
Kids Supper Klub	4:00-6:00	grades 4&5
Youth Night Out	6:30-8:00	grades 6-8



Sunday School Curriculum Gets Green

Currently our church offers a Sunday School program for Pre-K through Grade 7. Youth in Grades 8 & 9 take part in a two year Confirmation Class and are expected to either remain in the service on Sunday morning or volunteer to help out with classes for the younger children.

Our focus this winter and spring is on our environment and ways that we, as Christians, can help care for the wonderful creation that God has entrusted to us. This “green” curriculum will include Bible stories, games and projects to make the entire church aware of the ways we can improve our world.

We are always seeking volunteers to help teach these classes. We would also welcome anyone who has a special interest in working on a Sunday morning education/discussion program for our older youth. Please speak with any member of the Christian Education Committee if you can help: Sue Burr, Linda Ferland, Bill Fields, Janet Desrochers.



Take Our Survey

Youth Group Survey

A survey regarding our youth groups is available on-line. You can link to it directly from the homepage of our website at www.firstcongregationfairhaven.com. We ask anyone with school aged children or grandchildren or anyone interested in helping to fill one out. If you don't have internet access, paper surveys are available from the office.

Old Colony Association host Three Ministry Workshops

The Old Colony Association will host 3 ministry workshops in the coming months. Anyone who is interested in attending should notify the church office for registration. Our contribution to fellowship dues will pay for these workshops. For more information visit <http://www.macucc.org/southeast/index.htm>

Church Organization Workshop Sunday, March 1, 2009 -(snow date March 8) Mattapoisett Congregational Church

How do we organize ourselves for mission and ministry? Boards, Committees or Ministry Teams? Does membership matter?

Stewardship & Finance Workshop Saturday, March 28, 2009 9:00-12:30 Location TBD

How do we understand our financial reports? How do we budget creatively? What should be a part of a church audit?

Creative Worship Workshop Sunday, May 3, 2009 2:00 p.m. Location TBD

How can we enliven our worship? How can we attract worshippers of all ages? What new songs are available?