



The Messenger

Volume 21, Issue 5

February 2012

First Congregational
Church of Falmouth

Sunday, February 5 Annual Meeting Sunday

Yes, we know it's also Super Bowl Sunday, but our Annual Meeting is a VERY important aspect of our life together as a church community.

Be sure to attend and we promise to have you out so that you only miss a LITTLE of the hype! (Go Pats!)

Sunday, February 12

We will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion

Wednesday, February 22 Ash Wednesday Service and Supper

6:00 p.m.

See page 3 for details

Sunday, February 26 First Sunday in Lent

Tuesday, February 28

Lenten Bible Study begins

See page 2 for details!

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Lent



God expects but one thing of you: that you should come out of yourself insofar as you are a created being and let God be God in you.

Meister Eckhart



A Moment with Pastor Steve

Dear Friends,

February is the month we associate with hearts, but for us January also had that association. On January we celebrated and gave thanks for the life of Linda Ryan, whose life was one of “great heart”. She was deeply committed to God, her family, her friends, and to the church, and she shared her many gifts and talents with us freely. We will always think of her as a “heart quilt” of blessing in our lives. Our prayers and support will continue to be with Tom and his family.

February is also the month we associate with our **Annual Meeting** on the first Sunday of the month, after Worship on February 5th . Part of our preparation for Annual Meeting began last Sunday when we celebrated **Recognition Sunday**. We are very grateful for each person who has completed their time of serving God in our congregation. I believe that the core purpose of Annual Meetings is to reflect on how we have fulfilled our mission (rooted in our covenant) during the past year, and to set direction for the upcoming year. Since the Profile Committee completed its work on the Church Profile in September, we have been trying out a new version of our mission, along with a vision, which comes from the Executive Summary.

The short version of the Vision is **“Becoming a Beacon of Faith to our community and beyond”**

The three components of the Mission are:

To know God more fully through worship, prayer, and discernment

To strengthen our faith and love of Jesus Christ. ..building a sense of community that is truly a living body of Christ... listening to God’s will for our church.

To take that knowledge, faith, and love into the world through mission, outreach and Christian education

As you review the Annual Report in preparation for the meeting, consider how we have progressed in fulfilling this vision and mission, what our goals are for next year, and how our budget reflects our progress and these goals.



AND DON'T MISS THE LENTEN STUDY

Last year we got “In Rhythm with God”

This year we will be

“Living God’s Melody”

So there will definitely be some good music to “set the tone!” And since the melody of God comes to us through the Bible - we will be studying New Testament themes using the

“Discovering the Bible” materials from *Kerygma* (explore@kerygma.com)

There is no book to buy, handouts will be given out each week (small donation)

There will be an **Introduction to the Study at the Ash Wednesday Supper** (see p. 3)

The Study starts the following week with the option of two different times on Tuesdays, beginning February 28:
10:30 – 12:00 or 7:00 – 8:30

Please sign-up outside the church office

You can “mix and match” which groups you attend - but please sign-up for a primary group

Choir Notes

I was recently reading a devotional book called *Singing in the Spirit*. It is written by Mary Kay Beall, a musician, composer, and conductor friend of mine from Ohio. She is now an ordained minister and writes church choir anthems and has, in the past, provided lyrics for her husband's many choral works. She poses the following questions in a chapter on "Professing Our Faith:" Do you think about the text of the music that you sing as a choir?; Do you think about the text of the hymn in the worship service and what it has to do with the message?; Do you think about the message of the anthem?; Do you believe what you sing? She goes on to say "Every time you gather for worship, every time you sing the hymns of the faith, every time you sing an anthem or a response, you are professing your faith..."

I love the benediction response "God Be With You" because it sends us out of the service with the hope that we will see each other again. I'm sure there are hymns that you each enjoy singing which are a part of your own faith journey. Whether a hymn or an anthem, our songs are an honest expression of what we believe. It could be a Bach chorale or a new anthem. God is glorified and God's word for each of us is revealed in text. It is a profession of faith, a credo in song.

You can be a part of the Music Ministry of our church. Our growing Children's Choir, grades 1-4, meets after church on Sundays from 11:15 to about 11:45 a.m. The Bell Choir, which has added two new members since Christmas, meets on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. and the Senior Choir meets at 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays. We are here to welcome you if you want to join.

See ya in church, Howard



The Deacons would like to extend an invitation to join us in celebrating Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent.

What: Ash Wednesday Service to include a soup and bread meal, an anointing with oil for those who wish, it and a short Bible Study to begin Lent.

When: Wednesday, February 22, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

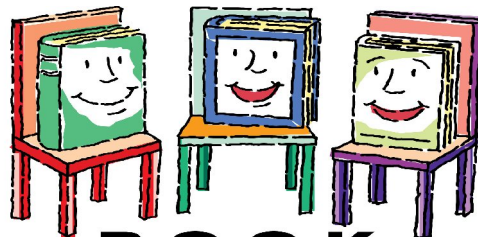
What you can do: Sign up at the Opportunity Table if you can bring soup. A crockpot would be preferable, and please indicate what type of soup you wish to make. It is a known fact that there are many of you out there with recipes for your favorite soup. Please also sign up if you would be willing to supply bread. Last, but NOT least, please sign up if you are planning to attend, so we will have an idea of how much food we need, and make plans for setting up. Hope to see you there!

Nancy Hussey for the Deacons



Couples' Club Theater party

All couples in the church are invited to a theater party on Friday evening, February 10, 7:00 p.m. at Highfield Theater. We will see the award-winning musical *The Fantastiks*. Sign up by giving a check for \$14 per person, payable to the Falmouth Theatre Guild, to Joanne Blum-Carnevale by January 29. Seats are reserved and the tickets will be distributed at the theater. Sign-up sheet is on the Opportunity Table.



BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

We have a very lively group enjoying book discussions on the second Tuesday of each month from 7:00-9:00 p.m. The group meets in members' homes and would welcome some new attendees at one or more meetings. On February 14 the group will discuss *Brave Companions* by David McCullough at the home of Ann Stone. Sign up on the Opportunity Table. On March 13 the book will be *The Alchemist's Daughter* by Katherine McMahon.



Sunday School Crier

The Board of Christian Education joins everyone in mourning the loss of the beloved Linda Ryan. Mrs. Ryan gave of her time generously in teach Sunday School and lending support to the program as a whole. May God welcome Linda into His Kingdom.

Happy New Year!

Of course there are very few things better than looking forward when working with children as great as those in our church community, but I would be remiss in not at least acknowledging some of the wonderful things that took place at the end of 2011.

The Youth Group held a very fun “Yankee Swap” during its December meeting and seeing the way in which they interacted with one another would have brought much joy to your hearts. With all of the excitement of the Christmas season building in them, the kids were more interested in seeing that their friends enjoyed the gifts and, far more importantly, each other’s company.

The Christmas pageant at the early service on December 24 was just terrific. Thanks to the MANY young people who took part in making the pageant such a huge success, including those who served as ushers and in roles behind the scenes.

On a Mission from God

Thanks to Lisa McGillicuddy, the Sunday school children will lead the entire First Congregational Church in a fund-raising effort directed at helping other kids around the world and locally. The United Church of Christ promotes a program called “Kids-to-Kids,” which offers a tremendous number of ideas on how to help children raise money and partake in acts of charity in ways that are meaningful and age-appropriate.

To that end, please brace yourselves for the first-ever and **First Annual Ginormous Game of Music Chairs**, which will take place in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, March 25. There will plenty of details to follow, but please save the date in the meantime!

The Teen Program will also be rolling out a new fund-raiser in the very near future with the goal of giving money back directly to the church. While church members are welcomed to participate, one of our goals is to make sales to the community-at-large. Details to come in the near future.

More Fun to Come!

There are some many fun and spiritually-enriching events coming up this calendar year and we are truly open to new members joining us. Please feel free to get the word out to the neighborhood kids that we offer numerous activities whereby any and all children of any age are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Faith & Science

Congratulations to Lisa and the fine teachers of our Sunday School who have expanded our study of how faith and science are anything but mutually exclusive from a one-day program to a full month’s rotation. It has become a beacon of sorts for our Sunday School.

Who’s Hungry?

The Youth Group will be running bake sales on most Sunday for the next several months. Be sure to look for us in Fellowship Hall during coffee hour right after our service!



On behalf of my whole family, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the wonderful support we received from our entire congregation during Linda's long struggle with CJD and her passing into God's hands. Your many cards, email

messages, visits, conversations, food donations, etc. provided a much-appreciated lifeline to us during an extremely difficult time and we will be eternally thankful. We truly have what can only be described as an incredible church family.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Pastor Steve, Martha, and the Women's Union for a poignant and wonderful celebration of Linda's life at her memorial service and reception. Everyone in our "extended family," as well as many other friends who attended, remarked on "what a wonderful church you have" — we couldn't agree more!

Tom Ryan

Women's Union

The **Wednesday Morning Circle** will meet on February 8, 11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. The business meeting will be followed by a brown bag lunch with dessert provided. This year, please purchase two boxes of Valentines, sign them (The Women's Union, First Congregational Church), and bring them to the meeting. These are then delivered to patients in area nursing homes and Falmouth Hospital.



Our program will be a presentation by artist Salley Mavor, who grew up in Woods Hole. She learned to sew as a child and has been playing with needle and thread ever since. She creates elaborate, three-dimensional "sets" out of fabric. Her newest children's book, *Pocketful of Posies: A Treasury of Nursery Rhymes* won the 2011 Boston Globe-Horn Book Award and the 2011 Golden Kite Award. The original fabric relief artwork from the book is touring the country and will be on display at Falmouth's Highfield Hall in the fall of 2013. A recent review reads: "In astonishing detail, Mavor's work above all conveys an artist who is entirely present. Beyond merely illustrating a story or poem, she brings us into it. Surely her thread is gossamer, her fingers unimaginably nimble."

Church Women's United of Cape Cod will hold "our Human Rights Celebration" on Thursday, February 2, at Our Lady of Victory Church in Centerville. Make reservations by January 30 by calling Bev Hammel at 508-833-8942; cost is \$10. World Day of Prayer will be held on Friday, March 2, 2012, in Falmouth at the John Wesley United Methodist Church—time to be announced. The women of Malaysia have written this year's service—the theme: "Let Justice Prevail!"

Friendly Circle meets every Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This group makes items for the December Christmas Fair. Bring a sandwich—dessert, beverages and great conversation are provided. New members are always welcome.

The Prayer Group meets on Tuesday mornings at 8:30 a.m. at Heritage of Falmouth.

Welcome to our new Sexton!

Louis G. Cataldo (Lou) was born and raised on Cape Cod. He now lives in Mashpee with his wife, Nancy, and two loving daughters, Celia and Talia. Louis is a very well-known musician world-wide as well as an actor appearing in many local plays as well as TV and the silver screen. Louis leaves the Unity Church in Hyannis where he was in the music ministry for seven years.



A Contribution Recognized...

It will be remembered that Linda Ryan was one of those instrumental in bringing to fruition the Women's Union plan for providing scholarships for qualified seniors in memory of Rev. Nan Geertz. Linda's interest, guidance, and enthusiasm resulted in the first Rev. Nanette E. Geertz Memorial Scholarship being awarded to Ivan Abrams in June 2011.

Plans by the Scholarship Committee go forward to select other qualified seniors to receive this award in June 2012.

Our church family thanks Linda Ryan for her insight and dedication. Her good works in this area, as in many others, live on.



Church Council

Our interim minister, Pastor Steve, opened the January Council meeting with some thought relating to the "I am..." sayings of Jesus found in the Gospel of John. At the close of his opening prayer, he presented his report as a road map of the way in which he is seeking to lead our congregation through the steps needed to be taken to fulfill the goals and aspirations set forth in our church profile. At the close of his report, Marilou Whitmore raised a question as to what was to be understood by the wording "Assistant to the Minister" as it appears in the by-laws. She had raised the question with our parliamentarian, Don Abt, who had emailed her a detailed explanation. Since there were no copies available to the Council members, the question was put off to a later meeting. An order of business for the February Annual meeting of the church was agreed to.

Moving on to committee reports, the Search Committee reported that they had received 32 profiles of which 15 were from men and 17 were from women. They have listened to sermons sent to them on CD's and begun to schedule interviews. The Council was reminded by the Music Committee chair of the concert by the Occidental College Choir in May 22. The Choir is on tour from their home base in California. Speaking for the Board of Christian Education, Lisa McGillicuddy spoke of plans for our young people who will be undertaking a variety of activities to raise funds for a "kids-to-kids" program for refugees. Presently, Sunday School classes are dealing with the subject of the compatibility of faith and science.

Bob Johnson, commenting on the Stewardship drive, reported that 29 pledges totaling about \$19,000 were not renewed this year and 59 pledges were increased. The Trustees put forth a suggestion, adopted by the Council, inviting members to make special contribution of \$20 each to meet the annual dues which the church pays each year to finance the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ programs and activities. Rather than summarizing the Deacons' report, you are referred to their report elsewhere in the *Messenger*. In their report, the Outreach Committee informed the Council that the church's commitment to the MACUCC's "Our Church's Wider Mission" for the past year have been paid-in-full. However, given that the amount pledged to the committee for its work is less for the coming year than it had been, the committee is reassessing the need of each of the groups to whom they have customarily made contributions. The final report of the evening was that of Dan Silver, the Director of Youth Programs, who reported that the group is going slowly and hopes to undertake some activities to raise some funds in the community which they might then contribute to the church.

Rev. H. Alfred Allenby, Editor

Board of Trustees

As you may know, our church is having a financial problem. Anticipated pledges for 2012 are now what were anticipated. UCC Conference dues are paid on each member of our church. In the past, we have not asked our members to pay these dues of nearly \$20 per person. Because of the constraints of this year, we are asking those of you who are able to pitch in an extra \$20 to help defray this expense. There will be a box at the annual meeting for these funds. We hope you will help!

Board of Deacons

The new year has started off on a sad note with the death of Linda Ryan. Please keep Tom and his family in your prayers as we all adjust to life without Linda.

We are planning another Lenten Bible Study this year. Last year, Pastor Steve led a very successful study and we look forward to the same this year. We will start the study with a simple dinner of soup and bread in Fellowship Hall on Ash Wednesday.

Pastoral Care is an important part of church life. In an effort to improve Pastoral Care for the congregation, we are working to establish neighborhood groups to provide a prayerful, caring relationship among our members. A subgroup of the Board of Deacons has been working to divide the town into four sectors with several neighborhoods in each sector. Pastor Steve has been very helpful in this effort. We have met with the Council to present our plan and will be meeting with the Trustees next month. We envision utilizing a Pastoral Care Coordinator to identify pastoral care needs from the neighborhood and develop a strategy for dealing with those needs. We also see this as a grass-roots effort to expand our faith and build visibility for our church in the community.

In December we participated in a Blue Christmas service at St. Barnabas along with members of the Waquoit church. It was a moving service dedicated to those who grieve the loss of loved ones at this time of the year.

We had a wonderful Christmas season. The pageants at each service were very moving with both young and old participating. The early service was a sellout for the first time in several years. It was wonderful to see a full sanctuary.

John Honey



Stewardship

It is hard to believe that we are in January and ending our 2012 campaign!

Your Stewardship Committee's campaign activities actually started last February and the committee has met every month right through this January. As we began, we adopted a campaign theme, developed a logo

and letterhead, and established a timetable for critical action items that would take place throughout the year, particularly from September forward.

We adopted a theme of "Church Life." The committee felt that during the current interim period, with Doug's leaving and Steve Alspach as our interim pastor, the campaign should focus on the many blessings we have as members of First Congregational Church of Falmouth, and how they are reflected in our church life.

Levi Adams wrote: *Christ said that he came that we might have "life" and that we might have it more abundantly. Our Savior would smile, knowing that our church abounds with life, and that the congregation takes pride in supporting the wide range of activities that comprise the First Congregational Church of Falmouth experience. Church life activities are as varied, the achievements are as vibrant, and the results are as vital as the membership itself.*

From February through August, the Stewardship Committee made plans for Rally Day, a Stewardship Sunday Moment, a Pledge Sunday luncheon, items for the Sunday bulletins, *Messenger* articles, "Sunday posters" illustrating the theme, and mailings to the congregation. Again this year we created a comprehensive brochure through which we hoped to communicate many church life activities, along with appropriate pictures and details of our financial situation.

On Stewardship Sunday, Levi Adams formally introduced "Church Life" as this year's campaign theme. He described those key elements which help a church grow, including a congregation that is Vital, Vibrant, and Varied. His message became even more powerful as he opened and closed his message in song.

The Pledge Sunday luncheon was a success with more than 80 members turning in their pledges and enjoying a delicious lunch. A slideshow of the children participating in Church School activities was shown during the luncheon.

In the weeks following Pledge Sunday, pledge materials were available for pickup in Fellowship Hall, and later,

the materials were mailed to remaining members and friends. Reminder letters and phone calls, as needed, completed the Committee's formal campaign activities.

2012 Pledge Campaign Statistics The formal pledge campaign for the 2012 calendar year ended on December 30, 2011, although some pledges are often received even later. Preliminary budget goals were \$234,000 for Operating Expenses and \$33,146 for Outreach. As of the close of the formal campaign, pledges received for Operating Expenses were \$219,055.61 and pledges received for Outreach were \$30,554.90. Our hope is that members who hadn't pledged by the close of the formal campaign will have done so by mid-January.

The Stewardship Committee looks forward to new opportunities for service in 2012, and would like to especially thank Hal Petersen for agreeing to stay on the Stewardship Committee as an ad-hoc member. Hal's creative writing and design skills were responsible for this year's Stewardship Campaign brochure along with the contribution of many other meaningful ideas. Thanks also to Bob Heller who continues to lend his talents during special occasions.

We especially want to thank all the members and friends of our church who have faithfully given their financial support along with other gifts of time and talent.

The Stewardship Committee: Robert L. Johnson, Chairman, Levi Adams, Matt Keeling, Clark Neill, Hal Petersen, and John Simchock.

2011 Pledge Collection

100.0% of the year completed			
	Pledged	Received	Percent
Operating	\$235,049.00	\$223,255.24	95.47%
Outreach	\$ 33,247.00	\$ 32,568.75	98.40%

In Memoriam

Deane W. Robbins
 Barbara Bone
 Linda F. Ryan
 Sandra Richardson

Online Messenger Supplement

Church Calendar:

Our Church Calendar, for our online readers, is now on our website where it is always up-to-date. [Click here](#) to access the calendar.

First Congregational Church of Falmouth
68 Main Street
Falmouth, MA 02540
Address correction requested

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February

Everyone is Welcome!

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Sunday Schedule

10:00 a.m.
Worship Service
and Church School

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Organist

Pat Crews
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Sexton

Lou Cataldo

Elected Officials of the Church

Moderator—Tom Ryan
Clerk—Marilou Whitmore
Treasurer—John Caspole

Board/Committee

Chairmen...

Trustees—Walter Slaboden

Deacons—John Honey

Christian Education—

Joe Jarjoura

Christian Outreach—

Sue Anttila/Carol Lyons

Music—Gail Petersen

Stewardship—Bob Johnson

Nominating—Tom Haynes

Reception—Marge Rugen

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.FIRSTCONGFALMOUTH.ORG