

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Sitting and basking in the afterglow of Old Home day, my mind wanders...

-In spite of the raindrops, Old Home Day went on and if we measure it in terms of financial success, we may be a bit disappointed. But measured in terms of an event that touched the heart of our community, OHD continues to be an important event for our community. As I have mentioned, there were three particular encounters that I will carry in my heart as I remember OHD 2009.

The first will be the look of joy and passion on the face of some Special Olympians as they gathered to compete in the Road Race early in the morning. That look of joy and anticipation of competing to the best of their abilities alongside other athletes was truly inspiring and spoke of inclusion in the kingdom of God, the kingdom of peace, love and joy! I won't forget the smiles.

Secondly, as we stood in the rain watching our "Pelham's Got Talent" entertainment event, I was thrilled to see so many staying to watch 9 different acts as people shared their talents with us. In particular there were two acts that struck my heart. One was a 6-year-old girl singing "Over the Rainbow" dressed up as Dorothy. It was something about the rainbow on a rainy day that just seemed to speak of hope in finding what we are searching for even if we haven't found it yet. The second act was a 3 year old singing "If you want to bake a Cake" with unabashed enthusiasm! It was wonderful!

And finally, the everlasting remembrance I will have of OHD 2009 was sitting in the Fellowship Hall at the end of the day, when only church members still remained, finally sitting down after hours of volunteering to enjoy our chicken dinner, and seeing our church "family" members all gather round the table, sharing, laughing, and loving each other. It was a giant dinner table! And that is where families bond and share and grow stronger. The strength of our church is the satisfaction we find in service to others, and there was no better indicator of that satisfaction than sitting around, basking in contentment as "family members" relaxed and shared their experiences of the day.

As I start my third year as your Pastor, I marvel at how fast the time has gone past already. I also don't forget to lift my heart in thanksgiving to God for bringing us here together in Pelham to share of talents and gifts in service to others! We have started our regular church year, Rally Day has been celebrated and off we go with a busy calendar of activities! Invite someone who you may think needs a lift in spirit to some of our events! For this is what we have been called together to do, in the Spirit of the Lord!

RB

FIRST FOLKS

We send our congratulations and best wishes to **Ami Fuller**, daughter of **Michael & Cathleen Fuller**, and **Jordan Kowalski** who were married at the Harris Pelham Inn on August 9th by Rev. David Wilkerson. The newlyweds are now living at Cannon AFB, New Mexico.

Get well wishes go to: **Jon Whitworth**, who is recovering from shoulder surgery; **Carolyn Durgin** who is recovering from hernia surgery.

We send our condolences to **Sue Howard** and her family on the death of her brother, **Charles Johnson**, in Mississippi; the **Manners Family** on the recent death of **Tom's Godmother**,

Florence McEvoy; the **Oriole Family** on the death of **Tim's mother, Heather**.

THANK YOU

I would like to thank the many members of our church who were so kind with words and prayers for recovery, with cards and notes of encouragement following my knee replacement surgery in August. I am recovering well and am grateful for a caring church family who has watched over my recovery, ensuring I do only as much as I am able! To our Deacons for arranging Pastoral coverage, to Dave Wilkerson, Moria Guertin and Rev. Gary Schulte for sharing the pulpit in my absence, I thank you!

Rev. Bill

OLD HOME DAY WRAP-UP

Penny Sale

Old Home Day is over and the Penny Sale coffee cans have been packed away for another year! I just want to thank everyone who donated items/baskets to the sale. Some of the items were donated anonymously, so thank you for everything!! All the wonderful items/baskets donated helped to make the Penny Sale a great success. I also want to thank everyone who helped out at the Penny Sale table during the day. And a big thank you goes out to Peggy for all of her help in the office and her willingness to have the church office upside down for the last couple of weeks as winners came in to pick up their items.

Sandy Blanchard

All About Pies!

The winner of the Old Home Day Pretty Pie Contest are:

1 st Place	Fran Gilfoyle
2 nd Place	Polly Bennett
3 rd Place	Elaine Hornbeck
Honorable Mention	Pauline Wilson Quinn Diack

If you haven't picked up your prize yet, please call Jean Robarge at 635-3363.

Also to everyone who helped supply pies and cakes for our supper - a huge Thank You! We had all that we needed and did not have to run out and buy any more.

Great teamwork! Special thanks to Jane Coleman, Elaine Hornbeck and Mildred Leuteritz!

Jean Robarge

Baubles, Bangles & Beads

Who ever thought that giving away your old costume jewelry could make money for a good cause. But we did. This makes two years in a row that the jewelry section of the Country Store has been a big success. As I talked to our buyers, I discovered that crafters often buy such jewelry to enhance their products.

Thank you all for your gifts of jewelry!

FROM THE DIACONATE

As we launch into the new school year and our Church starts humming again, we are reminded of the time, talent, and treasures that are shared by our community to make our Church what it is. The number of hours dedicated to the missions of the Church and the encompassing activities is nothing short of staggering. If you'd like to be more involved and are not sure where to turn, please feel free to speak with a Deacon and we'll point you in the right direction.

Here are some highlights from the September Diaconate meeting:

- October 4th is Worldwide Communion Sunday. In a world where globalization has often undermined peace and justice and where fear divides the peoples of God's earth, may we all pray for and celebrate oneness in Christ;
- We continue to investigate options for helping the elderly get to church or assisting them with entering and leaving church. We will first be identifying individuals in need and then determining who will be able to help each particular individual. If you would like assistance, please contact the church office;
- The Welcome Books are working well. We have received numerous requests for assistance and/or a call which is one of the goals of introducing the book;

Prayer List

Please help us keep the prayer list current. You may contact Rev Bill or Peggy to let them know when someone needs to be added or removed from the list or needs a visit or call from Rev Bill.

Worship Coordinators & Greeters

The Worship Coordinators for October are Deb Schneider and Paul Knudsen (4th and 11th) and Jane Provencal and Paul Knudsen (18th and 25th).

Women's Fellowship will be managing the Sunday Worship Greeters schedule for October.

Our next Diaconate meeting is Tuesday, October 13th at 7PM. Please feel to drop by if you are interested in attending and would like to learn more about the Diaconate.

HANDBELL CHOIR RECRUITING!

Come join us! The handbell choir is still looking for some new ringers! The group meets Mondays from 6:30-8:30 pm from early September through June. The ability to read music is helpful but not essential. In order to plan for the coming church calendar, it would be helpful to know how many ringers we will have. If you are interested in joining this wonderful (and fun) group, please contact Sharon Hone at 603-635-2792 or via e-mail at shone80134@aol.com.

N H UCC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP FALL FIELD MEETING

The logo for the Handbell Choir, featuring the words "CHOIR" in a stylized, outlined font.

On Saturday, October 17, 2009, the First Congregational Church of Pelham will host the NH UCC Women's Fellowship meeting. Registration will begin at 9 AM, with worship beginning at 9:30. The Honorable Margaret Gilmour will be our featured speaker, talking to us about women's issues and concerns. Ms. Gilmour is a NH Senator from Hollis and would like us to bring our questions concerning health care, child care, elder care, abuse and violence, gender equality in the work force, jobs in today's economy, and education.

Connie Case of Pelham will give a demonstration of Tai Chi, which has been described as "meditation in motion." It is characterized by mainly vertical postures and relaxed movements, performed at a slow pace and complemented with calm, even breathing, helping to combat stress, fatigue and improve flexibility, muscle tone and general health.

All of this plus a scrumptious morning coffee with goodies and lunch for just \$9.00 per person. Registration needs to be mailed in by October 10 to Dorothy Pittman, 12 Maple Knoll Dr. Hollis NH. The day ends at 3 PM. Registration Forms are available on the side entrance bulletin board.

MISSION TRIP SUNDAY

On Sunday October 18, members of the High School Mission Team will be leading the Worship service and sharing their experiences in Washington with the congregation. Please make every effort to come and be filled with pride on their accomplishments and experiences.

BARNABUS' CORNER

Barnabus was a disciple who roamed the countryside honoring those who performed anonymous good needs for the benefit of others. In that spirit, we do likewise.

~ **Joe Calabro** for installing a new toilet in the bathroom off Fellowship Hall.

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Our church youth groups will be hosting our second totally free spaghetti supper on Friday, October 2. We are shifting the beginning of serving meals from 5 PM to 5:45 PM and will continue to serve meals until about 7 PM. We again want to emphasize that this event is meant for everyone and not just for those in need. We want you to enjoy this dinner regardless of your income. All should feel like they are part of a welcoming group and we know our church is well suited to accomplish this objective.

Your Mission Committee is well along in developing a presentation that we plan to share during the Mission Committee-sponsored church wide pot luck supper on October 17th. Besides making our presentation detailing the results of our research regarding missions that our church currently supports financially, we will answer questions regarding specific missions

to the best of our abilities, and seek input from the attendees regarding the charities to which we currently donate and whether we should consider shifting our charities in the future. Input received during this event will help to guide the Mission Committee in preparing the mission budget for 2010. This budget will be voted on as part of our overall church budget by the congregation during our Annual Meeting. **Look for a pot-luck supper sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall so we can get an idea of who will be attending and what they plan to bring to the supper.**

We also continue to work on establishing a calendar of hands-on mission projects that folks can participate in throughout the year. Our challenge is to coordinate our activities with the needs of the charity and our busy church calendar. This is not a bad thing, and we will keep you posted when we have defined some hands on mission work that our congregation can consider participating in. One opportunity that we plan to follow up on is sending a crew to help sort incoming goods at the Wish Project warehouse, based in Lowell. The warehouse is open from 6 to 8 PM on Monday nights for sorting, and if we can get a regular crew to attend on a monthly basis, this would be a great opportunity. We are also looking into trying to get a regular time to help out with the Pelham Food Pantry, the Merrimack Valley Food Bank, and others. We plan to make defining hands on opportunities, with an associated sign-up sheet, a priority once we finish preparing for the October pot-luck supper. Of course, all are welcome to share your ideas with anyone on the Mission Committee any time you see us.

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Hjorth

CHRISTIAN ED UPDATE

Welcome back to the new Sunday School year. It's great to see all the familiar faces and some new ones too! Interested in joining in on the fun? We need more co-teachers! Please contact any CE member if you'd like to assist in the classroom.

Thank you to all the returning and new Sunday school teachers!! We are very grateful for your commitment to our children's Christian Education – you are truly a special group!

As RB announced, our CE Superintendent, Cathy Miller, will be moving on to focus her efforts in other areas. Please join us in thanking Cathy for her years of dedicated service to our children's Christian education.

If anyone is interested in working with the CE board, Rev Bill, and our Sunday School students, and taking on the role of our CE Superintendent, providing support for our great Sunday School program, the children and the teachers, please contact the Nominating Committee, or any member of the CE committee. Your support is truly needed, and will be appreciated!

Sunday school Offering - The kids will still be collecting offerings during class, which will be donated to the Heifer Project. Throughout the year, we'll have updates on the donations the kids have been able to make to this worthy cause, which provides livestock for needy families in developing countries. Also, the children will be encouraged to donate canned goods for the Pelham Good Neighbor on the 1st Sunday of each month.

The bulletin board in Fellowship Hall features our Youth Group's Mission Trip over the summer – check it out!

Schedule for October:

October 4th: Communion Sunday and Sunday School. Food Pantry donations
October 11th: Sunday School
October 18th: Sunday School. Teacher meeting following church
October 25th: Sunday school followed by a Halloween Party!! Kids can wear non-violent/non-scary costumes to church. Adults too! (No weapons please!)
Lunch, games, arts and crafts!!

Blessings,
Karen Dorman - CE committee
STEWARDSHIP 2009

Looking forward!

There are parts of the church year that are very special. I always look forward to “Rally Sunday” and the beginning of the “church year.” When our church School children and families return from summer routines. I look forward to filled pews and the music of the choir. I look forward to the start of Youth Groups, and the Confirmation Class. I look forward to the activities planned by various committees for this fall and beyond. I look forward to working with the boards and committees of the church. First Congregational Church has such strong lay leadership. I’m truly thankful for that and for the many other blessings of our church.

This fall we once again put an emphasis on stewardship. ARE WE A FRUITFUL CONGREGATION? “Fruitful Congregations” a book by Robert Schnase, suggests that the five practices of “fruitful congregations” are: churches that practice Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, Risk-Taking Mission and Service.

I would like to suggest that at the First Congregational Church of Pelham, United Church of Christ, these fundamental practices are critical to the success of our church. Their presence and strength demonstrate congregational health, vitality, and fruitfulness. By repeating and improving these practices, churches fulfill their mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Does this mean that we’re going to be talking about money all the time? No! But our goal is to try to increase our understanding of stewardship with the goal of inspiring greater generosity within the church. If the church doesn’t talk about money, then people will assume that it’s not very important. Money does make possible the mission and ministry of the church.

One of the most important parts of a good stewardship campaign is telling our story—making people aware of what makes First Congregational Church unique. I’m wondering what you think our story is? What have we been called to do? I’m wondering what you think makes First Congregational Church unique? I’m wondering what you think our church does really well and what we could do better?

I think we are becoming a “fruitful congregation.” This fall some of our church members will be sharing their thoughts with you about what they believe makes this church unique and why they have chosen to worship God here. I encourage you to attend and be part of the discussions and conversations we will be sharing.

Stewardship Sunday is November 8, 2009. We will be asking our members to prayerfully consider their Pledge for 2010 as one that will “bear fruit of the spirit”.

“We are the church together!” May our congregation continue to feel the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit as we seek to respond to God’s call to be the church.

Blessings!
Rev. Bill

**Free Spaghetti Supper on
FRIDAY NIGHT
October 2, 2009
From
5:45 PM to 7:00 PM.**

Everyone is welcome!