

The Witness



Winter 2015/2016 Edition
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Pastor's Reflections

In a report prepared for First Congregational UCC in Waterville, the Rev. Dr. David Anderman describes changes in that church's context that are likely familiar to members and friends of Winthrop Congregational Church, UCC. For much of the history of the United States, most people identified, at least nominally, as Christians. Dr. Anderman shares that, when he moved to Waterville, he was told that new executives of Scott Paper were once specifically directed to participate in a local church as part of the required community involvement. Dr. Anderman also described the shift he's observed where community sports leagues once presumed that kids would be involved in church and organized their games to accommodate church schedules. That is no longer the guiding presumption. American culture has changed. As Dr. Anderman puts it, "We no longer live in a society with the informal and often unstated expectations that most people will be involved in a church." While I am glad that most employers no longer feel like they can dictate the religiosity of their employees, this change in culture does mean that in order to share the gift of faith as our church understands it, we must change how we engage with our neighbors.

We can no longer presume that people will just show up at our doors, looking for a church, nor can we presume that people will find something inherently valuable in being a member of a religious institution. For those of us nurtured by the ways of being church that developed in a different era and culture, we can feel like we are losing more than we are gaining. It can feel like it is all death with no resurrection in sight.



In his report, Dr. Anderman reminds us that, though things are changing, and even dying, we are not without hope. Resurrection is possible, but only if we are able to respond to the world in the language in which it is speaking. That means we need to re-orient our churches towards cultivating relationships with God and with our neighbors in all aspects of worship, study, and service. According to Anderman, churches that will thrive will be known for their love as demonstrated in the conversations, friendships, and hospitality that they deploy in service to God and neighbor.

In this season of Lent, perhaps we can begin to meditate more intentionally on what it would take for our church to cultivate new kinds of relationships and friendships that help us learn something new about God and also have a thriving mission in this new cultural reality. How can we build our already rich tradition of hospitality out into the world so that our neighbors who need to hear that there is a church where all God's people are loved and where questions are welcome and where service is joyfully engaged will actually know that such a church exists?



A colleague recently reminded me that the word Lent actually comes from the Word "lengthen." In this hemisphere, it's the time of the year when the days are getting longer. Plants that appear to be dead are quietly preparing, beneath sleepy exteriors, to lengthen their roots and spring to life again soon after Easter. May this Lent be a time of about stretching our own roots more deeply into our faith to allow time and space for new ideas and new commitments, and even new ways of being church to grow. May the God of new growth be with us all as we seek to stretch and lengthen our connections to God and to one another in this Lenten season.



Pastor Chrissy

To read Dr. Anderman's full report, which I highly recommend, please go to:

<http://wtvlucc.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/ReflectionsRecommendtions.pdf>.

SPRING EVENTS

- † Sunday, February 21st – **Lenten Study** *New Place To Be: Spiritual Rebirth and Renewal*- after worship service
- † Tuesday, February 23rd- **Church Council Meeting** – 6:30 pm
- † Wednesday February 24th – **Crafty Ladies** 10am – 2 pm
- † Sunday, February 28th – **Lenten Study** *New Place To Be: 8 Films for Spiritual Rebirth and Renewal*- after worship service
- † Sunday, February 28th – **"Souper" Sunday** –purchase some soup to go
- † Sunday, February 28th – **Joint Meeting of Kennebec Valley and Franklin Associations** – Matthew Room at Old South Church in Farmington at 2:30 pm
- † Sunday, March 6th – **One Great Hour of Sharing Offering**
- † Sunday, March 6th – **Lenten Study** *New Place To Be: Spiritual Rebirth and Renewal*
- † Wednesday March 9th - **Crafty Ladies** 10am – 2 pm
- † Friday, March 11th – **Fish Chowder** 11:30 am-12:30 pm
- † Sunday, March 13th – **Lenten Study** *New Place To Be: Spiritual Rebirth and Renewal*- after worship service
- † Tuesday, March 15th – **Church Council Meeting** – 6:30 pm
- † Sunday, March 20th – **Palm Sunday**
- † Sunday, March 20th – **Lenten Study** *New Place To Be: Spiritual Rebirth and Renewal*-
- † Wednesday March 23rd - **Crafty Ladies** 10am – 2 pm
- † Thursday, March 24th – **Maundy Thursday Service** Fellowship Hall
- † Sunday, March 27th – **Easter Sunday**
- † Sunday, April 3rd – **Lenten Study** *New Place To Be: Spiritual Rebirth and Renewal*- after worship service
- † Wednesday April 6th - **Crafty Ladies** 10am – 2 pm
- † Friday, April 8th – **Fish Chowder** 11:30 am-12:30 pm
- † Tuesday, April 19th – **Church Council Meeting** – 6:30 pm
- † Wednesday, April 20th - **Crafty Ladies** 10am – 2 pm
- † Sunday May 8th – **Mother's Day – Blanket Sunday Offering**
- † Friday, May 13th– **Fish Chowder** – Friday, May 13th 11:30 am-12:30 pm
- † Tuesday, May 17th – **Church Council Meeting** – 6:30 pm



From the Board of Church and Community Concerns

The BCCC met this month to plan for One Great Hour of Sharing, a special offering which will take place during worship on March 6th. You should expect to get more information on Face Book or in newsy notes about the important services our donations help provide. We will also have some heart-warming stories to share during worship.



Please don't forget the Winthrop Area Food Pantry needs our support year round with monetary donations or nonperishable foods. Checks can be put in the offering plate, and there is a basket in the entry of the Sanctuary for all food donations. I think many of you know by now, that the Food Pantry is also supplying bags of food for many Winthrop school kids to take home with them on weekends.

There are two notes on the bulletin board from the Family Violence Project thanking us for our donations in December. Please read them!

The missions our church support, locally and worldwide, are so very important. Again, thank you for your generous donations!

Carol Whittier, Chair

CE Matters

We are so pleased to have a full Board this year.

We are currently using the Godly Play Sunday School Curriculum for lessons and the "older" students have taken turns leading a Sunday School Lesson. **Eric and Ruby** led a class on Noah's Ark and **Cadence** led a class on the Last Supper.



Corinna Coulton and **Linda Rollins** continue to serve in the nursery on alternating Sundays.

From the Treasurer

The Church's books for the year 2015 ended up with total income of **\$81,668** and total expenses of **\$75,146** (including Sanctuary Improvements from Memorial Funds) for a surplus of **\$6,622**.

Highlights of the Annual Meeting

Members in attendance at the annual Meeting on January 24th approved the annual reports of the Officers, Boards and Committees of the Church. A balanced budget for 2016 was presented and passed. The Congregation approved the Trustees and Council to pursue funding Capital Improvements including repairs of the Sanctuary Roof, repairs of the Bell Tower, replacing the rug in the Foyer, repairing and painting the walls of the Foyer, and purchase of a new copier for the Office. The funding is likely to be a combination of obtaining a loan, conducting a Capital Funds Drive, and pursuing grants.

Women's Guild

The Women's Guild met at the home of Shirley Foster for our January meeting. We had a very short business meeting and then adjourned so we could enjoy the delicious treats she had prepared for us!

As we do every spring, we will be collecting items for the school bags and health kits we put together for Church World Services. Cyndi Hall and Carol Whittier will be collecting items for the school bags, and Lee Gilman will be collecting health related items. We will be compiling lists of what we need in the near future.

The Guild hosted a reception for the family and friends of Irma Rice on Saturday, Feb. 13. About 60 people attended to share a meal and memories of Irma, a long time resident of Winthrop and member of our church. For those of you, who donated food and time helping at the reception, thank you!



Our next meeting will be on Thursday, Feb. 25th at Cyndi Hall's home, and our March 24th meeting will be held at Joan Edward's home. We always welcome new faces!

Carol Whittier, President

Hannaford Gift Cards Sales

An ongoing fundraiser, now into its 6th year, is bringing in approximately \$200 each month with church members purchasing cards for shopping at Hannaford's.

Members are buying \$2100 worth of gift cards every two weeks which brings in \$100, a 5% earning on \$2000. It may sound like an insignificant amount, but to date, \$11,525 has been added into the general fund.

Cards can be purchased in \$200, \$100 and \$50 increments and available on Sundays. This is an easy way to shop without needing a checkbook, credit or debit card and collecting charge slips.

Carol Ellingwood.



Happy Birthday, Pat Culp!

I received word from Pat Culp's niece Karen Powell that Pat's surprise 90th birthday was a success. Pat had a great time. She loved the video and said that she enjoyed getting all the cards even more than getting presents. Thank you so much for taking good care of her, even though she lives far away now.

Pastor Chrissy



Fish Chowder

February's chowder luncheon was a successful day bringing in \$588. Thirty seven patrons were served at church, there were 19 take-outs and Cyndi and Dana braved the chilly day to deliver 19 lunches about town.

Two full pots of chowder were made by Alan and served up by he and Eric P. Peter deWolfe, filling in for Debbie, kept busy filling the take-out and delivery orders. Marlene, Carol W., Shirley F. and Ann waited on tables. Lee sliced pies and Jean greeted and made sure everything was running smoothly in the dining area. Carol E. and Joan kept up with the dishes with Cyndi and Ann pitching in. Shirley R. and Ginger are the cashiers and kept a count of all the meals sold. Once lunch hour was over and with just enough chowder left, 11 workers were able to sit and enjoy a meal.

Besides all the time these members put in, they are also the ones who provide most of the home made pies, biscuits and ingredients for the chowder. Through monetary donations, coffee, punch, crackers and paper products are purchased, leaving just the fish as the only expense. With the closing of Ballard's, our source of chowder fish for many years, The Red Barn is our new supplier, providing us with 100% haddock that makes a quality chowder.

It takes a good crew to have a successful fundraiser. After enjoying lunch, some fellowship and a successful sale, we all go home happy! We welcome anyone to join us, even if just for one luncheon.

Carol Ellingwood

"Souper" Sunday



A second "Souper Sunday" soup sale is being planned for February 28 right after worship service for members wishing to buy a take-out meal of homemade soup. It was a sell out last year as a first time event so we're hoping to offer more selections this year. We welcome anyone who would like to help support this fundraiser by contributing a pot of their favorite soup. Surely it will warm the hearts and souls of anyone enduring this cold season! Carol Ellingwood

5 Ways to Support Our Pastor in 2016 (submitted by Mike Davenport)

1. Recognize the Pastor is a gift from God

Jeremiah 3:15: Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.

Ephesians 4:11-12: So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

We can see from these Scriptures that God provides Pastors to teach us, and to enable us to do the work of the ministry. When a church calls a pastor, they are not hiring someone to do the ministry but are recognizing that the person has been called by God and has a relationship with God that enables them to lead people to strengthen their own relationship with God.

2. Pray for our Pastor.

I Peter 5:2-3 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.



The above Scripture is one of the job descriptions of the pastor. As the flock, we are to realize that the pastor has a huge role to fill, watching over us (which has many implications) and being an example to us, our pastor needs our prayers in support of this enormous responsibility.

3. Working with the Pastor

I Corinthians 11:1: Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

I Corinthians 12:8-13: To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body--whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

We are not to limit our support of the pastor to prayer alone. We are to be involved in the work alongside our pastor. I Corinthians 12 tells us that we all have spiritual gifts and even though each member has a different function our gifts are to be used for the benefit of the whole body.



4. Promote unity

Psalms 133:1: How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!

I Cor. 13:1-3: If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

One of the greatest gifts we can give our pastor is the gift of unity. What is unity?

One definition I use is an environment where each member uses their gift(s) for the benefit of the community. You can't have unity without love. Spiritual gifts are necessary for the healthy functioning of the body but love is necessary for the body to exist.

5. Financially

Phil. 4:18 I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

1 Cor. 9:10-11 Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? (NASB)

We see that the church should meet the financial needs of the pastor.



Occupational Hymns (Submitted by Joan Edwards)

The Dentist's Hymn: Crown Him With Many Crowns
The Weatherman's Hymn: There Shall Be Showers of Blessings
The Contractor's Hymn: The Church's One Foundation
The Tailor's Hymn: Holy, Holy, Holy
The Golfer's Hymn: There is a Green Hill Far Away
The Politician's Hymn: Standing On The Promises
The Optometrist's Hymn: Open My Eyes That I May See
The IRS Agent's Hymn: I Surrender All
The Gossip's Hymn: Pass It On
The Electrician's Hymn: Send Out Thy Light
The Shopper's Hymn: Sweet By And By
The Realtor's Hymn: I've Got a Mansion, Just Over the Hill
The Massage Therapist's Hymn: He Touched Me
The Doctor's Hymn: The Great Physician
The Surfer's Hymn: Come to the Water
The Decorator's Hymn: How Lovely is Your Dwelling Place
AND a few more for those who speed
45 mph God Will Take Care of You
65 mph Nearer My God to Thee
85 mph This World IS Not My Home
95 mph Lord, I'm Coming Home
100 mph Precious Memories
Give me a sense of humor Lord,
Give me the grace to see a joke,
To get some humor out of life,
And pass it on to other folk



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BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

March Birthdays		March Anniversaries	
3	Peter deWolfe	3/5/88	Peter & Lisa deWolfe Dina Blodgett & Sandra Smith
10	Kris Hatfield	3/20/92	
15	Mike Burns		
25	Kristin Brown		
28	Carol Ellingwood		
April Birthdays		April Anniversaries	
1	Eric Conrad	4/28/79	Alice & David Anderman
7	Matthew Dennis		
8	Corinna Coulton		
9	Julia LaCrone		
13	Peter Hatfield		
15	Nick Burns Carol Whittier Jeff Brown		
17	Sharon Coulton		
19	Mike Mayette		
May Birthdays		May Anniversaries	
3	Alice Darlington	5/17/80	Jeff & Wendy Dennis
4	Jean Doughty		
5	Connie Mayette Rebecca Lazure		
7	Barbara Pray		
9	Becky Gillespie Shirley Rollins		
10	Linda Rollins		
20	Emma Conrad		
21	Kelly Dooling		
22	Jeff Dennis		
31	William Maxim		



Wi-Fi available at WCC- contact the church office for details



Next Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday, May 17, 2016

We are an Open and Affirming Church

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