

The Spire

Congregational Church of Somersville
United Church of Christ

February, 2011



From the Moderator (submitted by Ray Foster)

Our next Cabinet meeting is coming up on Sunday, February 20. As usual, the Cabinet meets on the third Sunday of the month. Any individual or Board having business to bring up should speak with me, or Graham, by Thursday, February 10. In addition to other agenda items, this month we will be voting on the idea of having two annual meetings each year rather than one.

To get a better idea of what this is all about, please review the January 16 Cabinet meeting minutes. For those of you who have not seen them, our thoughts are that we could hold an after church meeting in December to approve the budget – thereby Finance would have the money in place (set/established) for the beginning of the new year. A second meeting could be held in January – or other date/time to be set – to hear other reports and celebrate our ministry.



Or, we could leave things the way they are and just have one annual meeting.

All voices and votes are important; won't you plan to attend church and the Cabinet meeting on

February 20??

From the Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

Being natives of the Steel City, our neighbors are huge Pittsburgh Steelers fans. They are thrilled that their team will play in Arlington, Texas at Super Bowl XLV.

I can't say that I am rooting for either Pittsburgh or Green Bay; it doesn't matter to me too much which one wins. But I am looking forward to enjoying the game with my family. Jeff really likes watching the game while Eric is looking forward to the snacks and the half-time show featuring the Black-Eyed Peas musical group. I plan to enjoy it all, as long as we're together.

On the same day as Super Bowl XLV (2/6/11), our Missions Outreach Board (with the assistance of a Sunday school class) will collect money for the Souper Bowl of Caring. Just twenty years old, the Souper Bowl of Caring has grown into a nationwide program that engages young people to help raise money to combat hunger and food insecurity. On a day when Americans will spend more than a billion dollars on football-themed parties, the Souper Bowl of Caring seeks to leverage our national sports enthusiasm to help the neediest among us.



You can contribute to the Souper Bowl of Caring immediately after worship on Sunday, February 6th by making your generous contribution to a Sunday school youth who will be collecting money in Wood Chapel. This Souper Bowl collection on February 6th, combined with the food and household goods collected for the extra-mile mission offering in January, will really help mitigate the problem of hunger for many in our local area. Thank you for your generosity!

Yours in Christ,

Graham Van Kearen

p.s. You will likely have received this edition of *The Spire* after our Annual Meeting of the congregation. Please join with me in giving thanks to God for those who have agreed to serve God through elective office in the church and praying that the Spirit would guide them and all of us in 2011.

Thanks to ..

- .. all who volunteered to take on “service opportunities” during January.
- .. those who gave to the 2nd Mile Missions collections to benefit Enfield Food Shelf.
- .. those who helped serve the meal at Cornerstone on the 18th.
- .. all who served on Boards and Committees this past year.
- .. Jack B. for constructing new mail boxes.

Christian Education (submitted by Graham Van Keuren)

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesday morning Bible study meets weekly in the social room from 9:30-11:15 AM. All are invited.

Adult Bible Study (submitted by Kate Carlisle)

Jesus said, one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4). Still, we need food to live, and eating is a surprisingly common activity in the Bible. Every single chapter of the Gospel of Luke mentions food in some way. You are invited to join a three-week series, led by student pastor Kate, entitled "Food in the Bible." We will share a meal together, and then explore some of the stories in Scripture about God's people gathering together to share meals.

When?? ~ Thursday nights, February 10, 17, and 24 from 6:30 PM-8:30 PM in the social room.
Light supper will be followed by study and discussion. Everyone is welcome!

Opportunities in February

	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Fellowship Hosts</u>
02/06		Patrick Forbes Marge Morgan	Linda McEwen	Art Lachance Dan Dunn
02/13	Rich Carey Ardie Carey	Joan Lange Tina Spagnolo	Ulysses Orduz	Tom & Elaine Hancock
02/20	Scully family	Patrick Forbes Elaine Hancock	Art Lachance	Renee & Karen Blondin
2/27	George Liberty Elaine Hancock	Dan Dunn Art Lachance	Dan Scully	Rich & Ardie Carey

Report of the Treasurer (submitted by Sydney Cohen)

LEARN FROM OTHER'S MISTAKES RATHER THAN MAKING THEM ALL YOURSELF.

Stupid people always think they are right. Wise people listen to advice. Proverbs 12:15.

	December 2010	YTD 2010	Budget 2010
Pledges	\$ 7,044.50	\$ 78,619.50	\$ 77,000.00
Income	\$ 11,691.80	\$ 113,175.58	\$ 118,210.00
Expenses	\$ 10,592.60	\$ 116,089.00	\$ 128,441.00

Collections for December

Missions

December Missions Supper- 1,296.00- After expenses, 998.00 went to the Somers Church Food Pantry.

Christmas Fund 788.13

Parking Lot Update

Total Collected- 25,707.50

YTD Total disbursed- 23,370.55- Through December 31, 2010
Total Net from Fund Raiser Dinners- 21,437.00

The total income was well below what we had budgeted, however not due to our pledges. We more than passed our budget goal! Some of the donations we have received in the past have dropped off, and our budget reflects that. On the expense side, our church has operated within the budget guidelines very well. Neither income nor expense reflects what was collected and disbursed for our parking lot. In fact all flow through items such as restricted donations are not reflected in our year end totals. This gives us a clearer picture of what our actual operating income and expense are for this church. The income from our fund raisers also plays a big part in our total church income.

We indeed have a generous church, not only in giving but also in our time and talent. Let us trust God for a blessed 2011.



From the Board of Deacons

Membership Status Resolution

As we travel the journey of life there are times when we find ourselves unable to do all the things that we would like to... due to our health, taking care of a loved one, young family commitments, school, or our work schedule-to name a few. Therefore the Deacons have passed a resolution creating an inactive member list. Each October we will review the active member list and anyone who has not participated in the life of the Congregational Church of Somersville during the preceding 12 months will be moved to the inactive list. When they again start to participate they will immediately be put back on the active list. This will be transparent to the member.



There are essentially two reasons for this change:

1. To aid nominating in choosing people to serve on Boards.
2. There is an \$8.00 per capita assessment from UCC and this would more accurately reflect the number of active members.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding this resolution please speak to one of the Deacons or Graham. There will be a copy of the resolution posted on the bulletin board in the social hall.

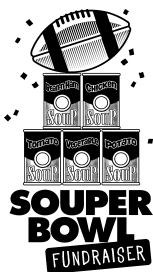
Missions Outreach (submitted by Gen Farnham)

Super Bowl Sunday is a great day on the February calendar in the whole country. It's also a great day in the life of this church.

February 6 will be Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday.

Following church service, young people from our Sunday school will be standing reveille, holding large soup pots, eagerly awaiting your contributions which will benefit the Enfield Food Shelf.

Your generous support for this great cause is greatly appreciated. God Bless each and every one.



Historical Corner

Who Are We?

We were not married in the Congregational Church of Somersville. Instead, we were married in the East Longmeadow Congregation church September 25, 1954. (57 years ago) She was 17 and he was 20 years old. They joined the church in 1965. The reason for leaving another church and coming to the Congregational Church of Somersville was their daughter wanted to belong to the choir. She was not accepted at their present church, but was welcomed with words of praise and hugs by the organist and choir director Lura Morhbacher to join the children's choir at this church. It has been a match in heaven for this couple. "The church is everything to us – since we walked into its door. It's so much a part of our lives that we can't imagine anything else. When we come back from a trip, we are not really at home until we have returned to our church. "

Through the years, this couple has been the cornerstone of this church. They have been in every committee and are life deacons. Some of their fondest memories are their daughter being accepted by our organist/choir director Lura, Graham receiving his two new robes, and the Mayes' receiving their garden swing - after retiring as interim minister.

There is nothing they would like changed at this time and there is not one single person that they would honor or admire outside of J. Francis and Gertrude Wood. The reason for not choosing one single person is because they believe that everyone makes a contribution to the church in their own way and to the best of their ability.

They are both a big part of our church history. They are the reason Johanna Karbonic, Ginny Longueuil, and perhaps others have joined this church.

If you can't guess who they are, the answer is on the last page of the Spire.



Ladies Aide Society (Submitted by Barbara Baugnet)

Note from our Outgoing President

I would like to thank all the ladies of the church for their support during the past two years as I served as president of the Ladies Aide Society. You are all so special to me and I will cherish the memories and work we have accomplished.



Because of some health issues, I am stepping down from my position, but still hope to actively participate in our meetings and activities. I welcome the new leaders coming on board this month: Mavis Collins who graciously

accepted the position of president; Linda Longueuil who is serving as vice president and Johanna Karbonic who will serve as assistant secretary. It's great seeing some new faces at our meetings and I pray this group can continue to support and serve our church and the wider community in peace and love. God bless you all. ~ Barbara

Meeting w/Pot Luck Luncheon

On Tuesday, January 8, all women of the church are invited to the Ladies Aide luncheon and meeting beginning at 12 PM in the church social room. Those attending should bring a place setting, eating utensils and a dish to share. Following the luncheon, new officers and committees for the year will be installed and a short business meeting will be held. Hostesses will be Gen Farnham and Linda Longueuil.



Hygiene Kits

The Ladies Aide Society and Board of Missions are teaming up again this year to collect supplies to fill Hygiene/Health Kits for distribution through Church World Service. These kits go to those hit by devastation of earthquakes, floods, etc. Each kit includes:

Health Kits

- 1 16x28 hand towel
- 1 wash cloth
- 1 wide tooth comb
- 1 nail clipper **NO FILES OR EMERY BOARDS**
- 1 wrapped, bath size bar of soap
- 1 toothbrush in original package
- 6 3/4" bandaids

If you put together complete kits, please put them in a zip locked gallon size baggie. Donations of individual items are certainly welcome and accepted. If you prefer, a monetary donation may be given and supplies will be purchased.

Boxes for your donations are in the social room and Wood Chapel.

Prayer Shawl Ministry (submitted by Lois Sharpless)

The "Congregational Knitters" will gather to knit/crochet in the social room for about thirty minutes following worship on February 6. Please join us.

Fundraising Suppers (submitted by Ruth Bruch)

Recap of January Supper

Although the roast pork supper was not a sell out (there was one empty table), the snow did not keep folks from attending; there was only one cancellation of a party of 3. The pork was tender and scrumptious and I thank Nick Wood for seasoning and cooking that. Few contributed to the bake sale but it did bring in \$61. We took in \$1908 for the evening and spent \$181.72 on the pork. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the event.

February 12 Supper and Bake Sale

Our February 12 dinner will feature baked stuffed shrimp with baked potato, mixed vegetables, tossed salad, homemade rolls/breads, beverage and chocolate torte. A sign up sheet is posted in the social room for help and donations. Some items still needed include:

- 4 loaves homemade bread (any kind)
- 20 lbs. butter
- 30 lbs. frozen mixed vegetables
- 12 boxes Ritz crackers
- 6 9x13 pans of Chocolate Torte (recipe is on page 97 of the Church cookbook or available upon request)
- 1 large or 2 small cans d-caf coffee



A **bake sale** will also be held during the supper; please bake, if able (cookies, bars, candy, pies, cakes, bread, etc.)

Reservations are now being accepted for this supper; call the office at 860-749-7741 or email somcong@aol.com. Sittings are at 5 & 6:15 PM. Take out orders will be available from 5:30-6 and 6:45-7. cost of this dinner is \$15 for adults and \$8 for children ages 5-10. Because of the cost of the shrimp, those working the super will be asked to pay \$5 for their dinners.

Coming in March

Next up is our annual Corned Beef Supper on March 12. Reservations for this supper will be accepted beginning February 26.

This & That

- ***Fellowship hosts*** are needed. Anyone willing to provide a light snack following worship on any given Sunday is encouraged to sign up in the social room
- Board chairmen whose terms ended are reminded (per our Key Policy) to ***turn in their church key*** to Ruth in the office so that keys can be reassigned.

Pakistani churches criticize government's refusal to amend blasphemy law

January 13, 2011 by Anto Akarra Ecumenical News International
BANGALORE, India

Churches in Pakistan have expressed frustration over the government's refusal to amend a controversial blasphemy law, as urged by the Pope and protesting civil rights activists.

"We are disappointed by the stand taken by the Prime Minister," said Joseph Francis, director of CLAAS (Centre for Legal Aid Assistance & Settlement), which has defended dozens of Christians and Muslims charged under the law.

"With the protests growing from both sides, we were expecting the government to take a strong stand on this (blasphemy law)," Francis told ENInews on Jan. 13. "Unfortunately, the government response has been negative," he said.

On Jan. 11, Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani responded to questions from journalists that "it is our law and we will work according to our law." He was being asked about Pope Benedict XVI's call to repeal the law, which makes insulting Islam a crime punishable by death. The Pope has said the law "serves as a pretext for acts of injustice and violence against religious minorities."

The papal remark came on the heels of the Jan. 4 assassination of Salman Taseer, governor of Punjab province, by his security guard. Taseer had called the law a "black law." The 64-year old governor had drawn the ire of Islamic fundamentalists after he met Aasia Bibi, a Christian mother of five sentenced to death in early November on blasphemy charges, in prison to initiate a presidential pardon for her.

Besides rejecting the papal demand, Gilani also urged the media to be "responsible" and stop the controversy on the blasphemy law even as Islamist protesters took to the streets against the demand of the head of the Catholic church.

The organization representing Pakistan's four mainline Protestant churches also expressed displeasure with Gilani. "We are certainly frustrated by the response of the Prime Minister," Victor Azariah, general secretary of the National Council of Churches in Pakistan (NCCP) — a partner of the United Church of Christ — told ENInews from his office in Lahore. He also pointed out that "the negative government response was no surprise in the present political situation."

"When the government survival itself is dependent on (political) parties that support the blasphemy law, what can we expect from the government?" asked Azariah.

The Pakistan People's Party that heads the coalition government under Gilani has just 125 seats in the 342-member National Assembly. The fragile coalition government relies on the support of independent legislators and Islamic parties that insist on upholding the blasphemy law for their support for the government.

"It is a very difficult situation for the government," admitted Mehboob Ahmed Khan, a civil rights activist and member of independent Pakistan Human Rights Commission, when contacted by ENInews.

Khan has been part of coalition of civil rights groups under the banner of "Citizens of Democracy" that had campaigned against the abuse of the blasphemy law and organized candlelight vigils with church groups to protest Taseer's assassination.

About our Members & Friends

Anniversary Celebrations

Friends, Ralph & Phyllis Lumb are celebrating *70 years* of wedded bliss this year; they were married on February 11, 1941. Congratulations!

Nick and Carlese Wood are celebrating their 54th anniversary on the 10th.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Donna & Richard Pendleton are celebrating their 3rd anniversary this month.

Birthdays

Happy birthday greetings this month go to: Ruth Bruch, Andy Cornish, Carlese Wood, Jeanne MacDonald, Jen Hare, David Cohen, Jason Robidoux, Joe Libby, Shelby Farnham, Phyllis Lumb, Dave Pinney, Brett Cleaver, Marilyn Hare, Bobby Bourque, Marge Harmon, Lori Arnone, Vic Netten, Amber Peters, Faye Gately, Dan Dunn, Tyler Eldridge

To others having a special day in February, we wish you the best. Anyone wanting to share a celebration should contact Ruth in the office.

Answer to "Who Are We?"

We are George & Judy
Liberty



Congregational Church of Somersville

Vision Statement

We will be a faith-based church welcoming diversity, empowering the individual, growing in faith and doing God's work in the global community in unity and love.

Behavioral Covenant

- We will follow a process that includes unconditional listening and time to collect thought, enabling all individuals to comfortably express their opinions.
- Our actions and demeanor will support and empower all participants
- All opinions will be welcomed, reflectively considered and respected.
- Opinions will be expressed with humility, self-control, gentleness, and kindness.
- We will look for common ground as we search for consensus, and we will respect that consensus.
- We will affirm by our works and actions our common goal to serve God.

Worship 10 AM

February 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
Congregational Church of Somersville 22 Maple St., PO Box 1 Somersville, CT 06072 860-749-7741 860-749-5132 (fax) somcong@aol.com (email) www.somersvilleucc.org (web site)		1 Evergreen Worship 11 AM AA 6:15-8:30 PM Deacons 7 PM	2 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Choir 7 PM	3	4	5	
6 Communion Souper Bowl of Caring Prayer Shawl Ministry	7	8 Ladies Aide Luncheon & Meeting 12 PM AA 6:15-8:30	9 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Choir 7 PM	10 Cabinet Agenda Requests Due	11 Supper Prep 9 AM	12 Valentine Supper & Bake Sale 5 & 6:15	
13	14	15 AA 6:15-8:30	16 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Choir 7 PM	17 Bd. of Trustees 12 PM	18	19	
20 Cabinet Spire Deadline	21	22 Blair Manor Worship 10:30 AM AA 6:15-8:30	23 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Choir 7 PM	24	25	26	
27	28	Board/Committee meeting times are to be determined by the new Boards and Committees.				the Rev. Graham Van Keuren, Pastor Catherine Carlisle, Intern Ray Foster, Moderator Sydney Cohen, Treasurer Ruth Bruch, Clerk/Office Administrator Jason Stefanik, Organist/Choir Director Tom & Elaine Hancock, Webmasters	

For the Young at Heart - Hidden Pictures

