



First Congregational Church
of
Spencer, U.C.C.
207 Main Street
PO Box 187
Spencer, Massachusetts 01562
www.spencerchurch.org

Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

Rev. William R. Wildman, Jr.
Pastor

wwildmanjr@verizon.net
Direct 508-885-5098

For emergencies after office hours
please call 508-885-5863

The Tie
January 2010

Church Office
8:00 a.m. to noon
fccspencer@verizon.net
508-885-2149

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Happy New Year everyone! It's hard to believe that it is the year 2010! I'm really amazed that we are through the first 1/10th of the 21st Century. The year 2010 sounds so futuristic and fantastic. It makes one wonder what will happen this year: what will be discovered, or invented, or what memorable events will happen that will help the year 2010 live up to all of the hype. Nothing in particular may happen... something or some things incredible may happen... there is no way for us to know in this world what the future will hold until it arrives, one day at a time. I know there has been a lot of hype about the year 2012 approaching in just 2 years time, and if that will be it for all of us. A major motion picture, with that year as its title, has lead to a lot of discussion about when the end of things will be. So what should we expect? What is in store for us this year or next year, or in the year 2012, or in the years to follow for that matter?

We can find some guidance and comfort from the words of Jesus. When asked about the end times by his disciples, Jesus talks of many signs that will be seen at the end of time. Some of them are very hard and will mean much suffering for those who love him. Jesus also, however, tells us to be very vigilant about what we hear, and not to believe every prediction about then end of things. *"And he said, 'Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them. When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately.'"* (Luke 21:8-9 NRSV) Jesus also never offers any date or time for the end, stating only that his Father alone knows, *"but about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."* (Matthew 24:36 NRSV)

It's only natural to wonder about when the end of anything, including time, will be. Whenever it happens, what is important to remember is that, no matter what, God will still be God and Jesus

Christ will still be our Savior. So why worry about then? We have so much to do in Christ's service now. *"So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today."* (Matthew 6:34 NRSV) But whatever we face, we will not face it alone, for we have Jesus by our side.

As we begin the New Year, please know that I am here for you. If you would like a visit, or to get together for a cup of coffee, or have some other way that I can be of help to you, please let me know. Feel free to call me at 508-885-2149, stop by the office, or e-mail me at revwilliamwildman@yahoo.com to set up a time to get together. Again, I hope you all have a happy and healthy new year and God's blessings throughout. May God bless you this year and always!

In Christ,

Pastor Bill

Bible Trivia Contest for January 2010!!!

Congratulations to our November 2009 Bible Trivia Contest winner: Brenda Coutier, who correctly answered the question *"Which Gospels in the Bible offer an account of the birth of Jesus Christ?"* The answer is the Gospels of Matthew & Luke. This correct answer has won her free coffee and pastry with Pastor Bill at Five Loaves Bakery.

Would you like to win free coffee and pastry with Pastor Bill? It's easy, just answer the following question:

"According to the Gospel of Luke, how many Magi came to visit Jesus?"

The first person to get the answer to Pastor Bill (either in person, by e-mail or phone) will win the contest for January 2010! So get your thinking caps on and let this month's contest begin... Good Luck!

Hot Topics Bible Study is now underway...

Join us on Tuesdays at 10 AM for Bible Study. Like last year, we will meet weekly, with breaks built in to the schedule for holidays, vacations and other busy times of the church year. This year's program will be based on the **Hot Topics** program that we are using with the confirmation class. It explores the various topics of Christian faith found in the United Church of Christ's Statement of Faith. Each week's lesson is self-contained, so new people can join the study anytime with out worry of having to catch up. Please see Pastor Bill with any questions or to sign up. Hope to see you there!

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

REMINDER to all who use the church building, whether it be the sanctuary, the hall or the classrooms please make sure the lights are off and the heat is turned down in your area before you leave the building.

Please remember to donate for oil in the collection cans in the upper Narthex.

The next meeting of the Administration Committee will be on January 20, 2010

TREASURER-The Administration Committee is pleased to announce the selection of Patricia Anderson to be nominated for the position of Treasurer at the Annual Meeting. Pat, having served as treasurer previously, brings the experience and knowledge to the job and will be able to continue the great work that Ellie has done for the past four years. The Committee would like to thank all of those people who applied for the position.

TIE-Due to the annual meeting being switched to the first Sunday in February the Administration Committee has requested the Tie not be published for February. If anyone has strong objections please contact Claire in the office.

ADMINISTRATION/FROM YOUR TREASURER

With my four year tenure as your Church Treasurer coming to a close in five weeks, I find myself with mixed emotions. I feel blessed to have shared my talents with you and I am confident that I am leaving my position with many accomplishments. The financial books have been kept current, receipts are filed in an orderly manner, and our updated accounting program, QuickBooks, has proven to be productive with reports that work with one another without the necessity of manual ones. Most importantly, the Administration Committee has been given accurate financial reports to help make their jobs run smoother. However, with the closing out of one year and starting a new one (a busy time of year), I have had little time to dwell on the sadness of having to give up my position.

As some of you know, within a few days before starting my position in January 2006, I became afflicted with a rare disorder to one of my feet called Erythromelalgia (EM - burning feet). It causes chronic inflammation and pain to the extremities, with no medication for relief and no cure. Since that time, after coming to terms with my disorder, all while performing my job as your Treasurer; I had the same affliction occur to my other foot, a year ago this month. This last year has been a challenge for me to do every day chores, let alone performing my Treasurer's duties. It was with a heavy heart that I felt I needed to give up my position.

Administration has informed me that Patty Anderson will be on the nominations to fill my vacant position on February 7th. Patty not only is a neighbor and friend but she has held this position in the past and with her many years of accounting experience; I feel the transition will be a smooth one. I am confident she will be a terrific asset to our church.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your confidence and support during my four years as your Church Treasurer. To those who have called, sent notes or cards, thank you so much for keeping me in your thoughts and prayers. Please note my new mailing address is 177 Charlton Road, Spencer, MA 01562-2806 (no longer have a PO Box) and my e-mail address is ejlatham@charter.net

In hope & faith,
Eleanor J. Latham, Treasurer 2009
(Ellie)

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

The sale of felt Christmas Ornaments was very successful again this year. The proceeds will go to Pastor Bill's Benevolence Fund to help families from our church and the Spencer area who are in need of some help to buy groceries or purchase gas for the vehicles, etc. The hats and mittens that were placed on tree in the front of the sanctuary were sent to Abby House in Worcester to be given to those who need them.

The following is a list of names in memory and in honor of:

Miriam & Carl Ahlquist	Ida Fiset	Lionel & Dorothy O'Coin
Helmer Anderson	Friends	Lynn Perreault
Ruth & Leon Blodgett	Nanna G.	Al & Bob Perron
Joshua Burdett	Dad G.	David Provo
Bill Chicoine	Edward Griffith	Albert & Dorothy Provencher
Barbara Coutu	Sid & Hilda Harding	Sara Russell
Jaime Coutu	Bea Houston	Lillian Snow
Jody Coutu	Theresa Hill	Jane Stone
Vern Coutu	Donna Ingalls	Oscar & Louise Stevens
Daughter Lynda	Betty & Bob Landine	Victor Tolis
Kenny Dwelly	Leona & John Larson	Nadine Wackus
Harriet Durant	Herb & Aili MacMillan	Lyle Wentworth
Stan Durant	Robert Meacham, Jr.	

CHURCH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Church and Education Committee met on Sunday December 13th. Church School is going great with an average of about 15 children each week. The Christmas Pageant was postponed on December 20th due to the weather and may be rescheduled. We are looking forward to 2010 with new Godly Play lessons and Creative days. Our next meeting will be Sunday January 10, 2010.

LouAnn Bean, Chairperson

DIACONATE

Diaconate meeting for January is January 10th following the Worship Service.

Deacon of the month for January is David Ingalls

Pastor Bill is on vacation the week of Jan 17th, 2010. Ken Landine will lead the worship service on Jan 17th with LouAnn Bean and Lisa Brown doing the children's sermon.

If anyone requires Pastoral care during Pastor Bill's vacation please contact the church office or call Ken Landine 508-867-6979 or Pat Stark 508-885-5131.

By the time you read this Christmas and New Years will have been celebrated. For the entire Diaconate we wish everyone a Joyous new year filled with love and good health. May the spirit of the meaning of Christmas be with us always.

Looking forward to greeting and meeting you on Sunday mornings.

Ken Landine
Chairperson

ECONOMY SHOP

The shop has extra flower vases available. The vases are free, if you would like one to use, when you purchase flowers for the Sanctuary on your appointed Sunday, please see Mary Ingalls.

FLOWER COMMITTEE

A very special thank, you to all those who purchased flower for the Christmas season. The sanctuary looked wonderful. Happy New Year!!!

Hazel Ahlquist, Claire Harding & Joyce Landine

MEN'S LEAGUE

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas, the Men's League and I wish each and everyone of you a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

We had our annual Beef Stew Dinner on December 15th and 41 people were served. Many thanks to, Ken Landine and Bob Vandale and to all the servers they did an excellent job. Thanks again.

The next meeting of the Men's League will be on January 19, 2010. Then in February on the 9th we will have our annual Father and Son Banquet. I believe the entertainment will be a showing of some animals from the Southwick Animal Farm.

Once more, thank you to all our helpers for a job well done.

Sincerely,
Al Orne

MILITARY WHIST PARTY & PENNY SALE

Will be held on
Friday, January 8, 2010
Time: 7:00 p.m.

Refreshments will be served
Donation \$3.00

Come and enjoy the fun and fellowship. If you have items for the penny table or would like to bake for the refreshments, please call Mary Ingalls at the church 508-885-2149.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

Many thanks, to all who helped with our Jazz Christmas Concert on December 13th. From cleaning to baking, setup and dismantling, and of course your attendance..., it was a special day. We are blessed to have a wonderful Sanctuary and exquisite instruments that truly make our church a great place for a concert. If you missed it...check out the church website at www.spencerchurch.org to hear a clip! Stay tuned for future events! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

SHEPHER'S STAFF

We are still available for short term help or our member. Meals, transportation and respite care (staying with a member in need while the family does an errand.) Feel free to call if a situations arises, there is always someone in the congregation that will be happy to help. Rides to church can also be arranged.. The contact person is Pat Stark at 508-885-5131

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The initial pledge results have been tallied and are very encouraging. As of mid-December, 97 of you have pledged a total of \$80,494 for 2010. We expect a few to more pledges to come in by the end of the year. A more complete financial picture for 2010 will be available at the annual meeting.

This year's numbers compare with favorably with the past three years. Frankly, we had anticipated a sharp decrease in pledges due to the economy, but you continue to hang in there.

If you haven't filled out a pledge card for 2010, please do. It's never too late to pledge. Also, please let us know how you feel about the Family Album delivered by Route Drivers this year. We're interested in your feedback and plan to adjust next year's Stewardship Campaign accordingly.

Thank you for keeping the church part of your financial planning. Also, we'd like to thank our Church Collector, Louise Perreira, for her many years of volunteering to track your contributions. Thank you, Louise.

STRATEGIC PLANNING & CHURCH GROWTH PROJECT TEAM

The committee is busy at work on the next leg of the project. We are compiling the inventory information from all the groups of the church. The next meeting will be held on January 13th at 6:30 P.M.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Executive Board: meeting Monday, January 4 2010 at 9 A.M.

Sunlighters – No meeting in January

At the December meeting of the Women's Fellowship it was voted to give \$300.00 to Spencer's Food Pantry, which is located at Mary Queen of the Rosary Church. There has recently been an increased need for assistance.

Many thanks, to all who provided food at Thanksgiving, who brought in gifts for Lincoln Hill Manor residents and who baked cookies for shut-ins.

A letter from the Administration Committee was read reminding us that the Economy Shop can no longer accept toys.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Vandale

WOMEN'S EVENING FELLOWSHIP

Thank you to all the ladies who participated to make the Christmas Stroll successful again this year. Mary Ingalls' "Corn Chowder" was a big hit. We sold jewelry, holiday knick knacks, quilted items, and Christmas ornaments.

We also had a raffle table. The winners are:

Christmas Stocking	Janice Hill	Fragranced Warmer Set	Lori Basilli
Golfing Snowman	Peter Rock	Adult Baskets #1 & #2	Mary Ingalls
Necklace, Bracelet & Earring Set	Norma Gregory	Child's Basket	Sue Provo
15 Piece Cutlery Set	Janine Goldberg	Christmas Candle & Coffee Grinder	Marie Snow

No meeting this month. We will meet in February. A date and time has not be set.

Know Somebody in the Hospital? Please let us know...

Do you know of someone from the church who is in the hospital or some other health care facility? Please let us know at the church office so Pastor Bill can pay them a visit. Due to the Federal Health Insurance Privacy Protection Act (HIPPA), hospitals and health care facilities can no longer tell us if anyone from the church is there, even if they have made their church membership known to them. In other words, we have no other way of knowing if someone is in the hospital other than word of mouth. Please let us know the full name that they were admitted by, what the facility name is, and if possible, what their room number is. Thank you so much for your help with the visitation ministry of the church!

ATTENTION ALL CHURCH MEMBERS!!!

This is the time of year when some of our church members go south for the winter months, **PLEASE** notify the office of any **changes** to your **mailing information and phone numbers**. It is important for us to keep an accurate mailing list. So please make an effort to contact the office with any **changes**, either **temporary** or **permanent**.

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group will be meeting on Sunday, **January 24, 2010** from **2 PM to 4 PM**. The meeting will be in the Youth Lounge at the church. We will be holding our **Christmas Party** that was rescheduled from last month. Please see Christilynn Wildman or Pastor Bill with any questions. Hope to see you there!

ATTENTION COMMITTEES

If you have a meeting or event that will take place in February please let the office know before Wednesday, January 6th.

CALENDAR

- Jan.1st – 31 Office hours are 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M., Monday through Friday.
- Jan. 4th **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP EXECUTIVE BOARD** meeting 9 A.M.
- Jan. 7th **ECONOMY SHOP re-opens** after Christmas break 8 AM – 2 PM & 6 -8 PM
- Jan. 8th **MILITARY WHIST PARTY & PENNY SALE** 7:00 P.M.
- Jan. 10th **CHURCH AND EDUCATION** meeting following worship service
DIACONATE will meet following worship service.
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE meeting following worship service.

- Jan. 13th **STRATEGIC PLANNING & CHURCH GROWTH COMMITTEE** meeting 6:30 P.M.
- Jan. 17th **VACATION** – Pastor Bill on vacation the week of January 17th .
- Jan. 18th **OFFICE CLOSED** – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Jan. 19th **MEN'S LEAGUE** supper meeting 6:30 P.M.
- Jan 20th **ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE** meeting 7:00 P.M.
- Jan. 21st **NO TIE NOTICES** due for February. A calendar of upcoming meeting and events for the month of February will be sent with the Annual Report.
- Jan. 24th **YOUTH GROUP** 2 PM to 4 PM.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Feb. 7th **ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING** – Luncheon and meeting following church worship service.
- Feb. 9th **FATHER AND SON BANQUET** tickets will go on sale January 17, 2010. You may purchase them on Sunday, before or after the worship service or contact Ray Lammi at 508-885-2002.

HELD AT THE CHURCH

Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon and Al-A-Teen meeting every Monday at 6:30 p.m.

Deacon of the month for January is David Ingalls