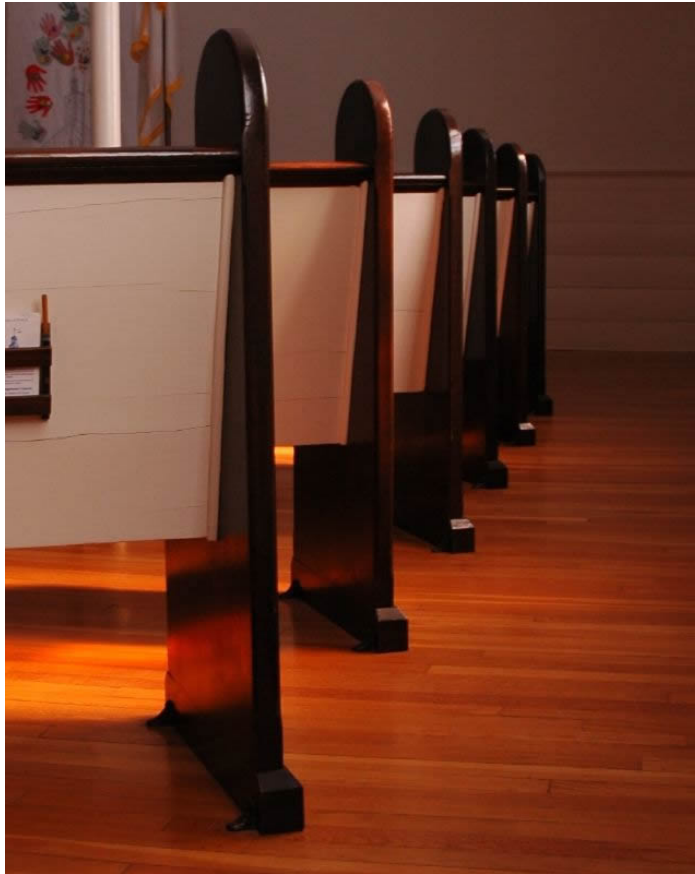
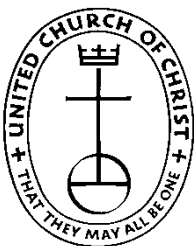


THE ANNUAL REPORT 2009



Building a loving, living church since 1807



**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF SOUTH DARTMOUTH, MA**
(United Church of Christ)

**IN ITS
202nd ANNIVERSARY YEAR**

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May 4, 2008 to May 3, 2009 * ANNUAL MEETING: May 3, 2009

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Church Officers (2008-2009)

Moderator: Kevern Joyce

Clerk: Lee Murray

Treasurer: Harry Schoening

Assistant Treasurer: Gale Litchfield

Church Staff (2008-2009)

Pastor: Rev. Dr. S. William Sencabaugh (September 2008 – Present)

Interim Minister: Rev. Elizabeth Ann King (September 2006-September 2008)

Director of Christian Education: Wendy Reardon

Director of Youth Fellowship: Daphne Fogg Siegal

Music Director: Dr. William Haffner-Jones

Building Custodian: Al DeMello

Office Administrator: Linda Keith

Children's Circle Nursery School Director/ Lead Teacher: Scarlett Lintner

Children's Circle Nursery School Assistant Teacher: Betsy Johnson

I began serving as the pastor of our church in September, 2008. I was relieved and excited about being called as the next settled pastor of the South Dartmouth church. There were things I needed to learn right away (like the correct pronunciation of Padanaram), and things that would take some time to understand. There are so many faces and names that are new to me. Also, I purchased a GPS system and that has helped a great deal. Most importantly, I have tried to become more comfortable with the members and friends of our church.

I had hoped that the agenda of my first year would be take the time to get to know many of you, through personal home visits and house meetings. Certainly, I have had the opportunity to get to know members through committee work, or working side by side at mission projects, but I haven't been as good about home visits as I would really like to be. But I have attended many committee meetings, even meetings about meetings after meetings. But I am not complaining! I am so grateful to those of you who are so dedicated to our church and willing to give up your time.

I was surprised to learn very early in my ministry that there was a feeling which was growing among a number of members of the congregation that some structural change might be helpful in how our board structure is organized. Folks, when the Executive Committee of any church gives you the green light on structural change, you have to move on it, and move fast. When that door closes, it may not open again for a long time. So, I began to engage our members in deeper conversations. Soon, it was decided that a smaller restructure team might prove to be fruitful in facilitating a program of change.

Here are some of the basic ideas of that restructure. In some ways, they are so simple and familiar that they might not even seem like a change.

Permission Giving: I would like to stress the idea of giving our committees permission to make decisions that the committees are informed to make. We give committees permission to carry out the ministry of the church. As long as what the committee wants fits with the vision of the church, then it could happen. When a committee or officer of the church goes outside of lines, then there should be accountability!

Streamline Committees: Currently, our structure indicates that boards have 12 members. The reality is that most of our boards are functioning with less than 12 people on any given meeting night. I would like to see the committees pare down the numbers to 5 or 6. Fewer members can actually do more work, if they are passionate about the work that they do. Which leads to...

Minister with Passion: Shrinking committees is not a way of having fewer people be decision makers, but the idea is to take the members who have now been released from serving a board to grant them the opportunity to serve a small group ministry that feeds their own passion. Every one of has a passion for something! Why not use that passion in some healthy way for the church. It may be gardening, photography, computers, or music—why not form a small group for ministry around a particular affinity. This would actually increase and diversify our ministry to the community, creating opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth, and this will help...

Create new and exciting ministry: Again, there are things that our church is either not doing/ or could be doing better. I would like to see our church create a Growth Team, a Communications Committee, and we sure could use a Hospitality Committee. It is becoming and will continue to be increasingly difficult for any one member to be involved in every aspect of church life. Even the pastor can't attend every event—and that is a good thing—it means that this church is really busy. I like that. This church is very busy. Surf our web, read our newsletter, bulletin or blog and know that this is an incredibly active church.

Pastor's Report (continued)

This past year has been a difficult year for everyone as the economic crisis that affects our world has hit home. Our church was not passed over from very real financial setbacks. But this has affected every church. It has caused us to reexamine ministry, and asked us to personally reflect on our theology of stewardship and giving.

I pray that things will get better real soon, but I can certainly see hope on the horizon. I really do want to believe that this very difficult time will make our country and our church stronger. There are some glimmers of hope for our church...

Here are some things that I am really looking forward to:

- On Easter, April 12th, 21 New Members will join the church. That's right 21! That is a great sign of life for our church.
- There are 6 Confirmands who will participate in the rite of Confirmation on May 17
- I will be installed as the pastor of our congregation on May 31, Pentecost Sunday
- The idea of creating a new structure for our church is wonderful
- Celebrating Holy Humor Sunday, on April 19
- Sharing worship services in the month of July with Smith Mills Congregational Church
- Preparations for a Mission trip in 2010

I have been given great hope for the future of our church, by the example that has been set in the first months since my arrival. The pages of this Annual Report contain so much of the exciting and awesome ministry that we do every day. For those who have contributed of their time, talent and/or treasure to this church, I am grateful.

Here are some highlights of my first months (in random order): PAACA workday, Souper Bowl Sunday, pew bibles, Lenten devotionals, a successful stewardship campaign, moving Christmas Eve services, the Open House at the parsonage, Rally Day, Ski trip, Pasta Dinner, Lee's Dinner, house meetings, Market Ministry, and all the connections that I have been able to make with the staff as well as all members of the church.

My transition to a new church was done with great ease thanks to the generosity of so many members who welcomed my family into their hearts. Thank you! Also, the Search Committee- my first contacts with the church family—was exceptional. I was particularly grateful for their care and the sweet gifts for my family upon our arrival, both for our June meeting, and when we moved into our home.

It would be a tremendous oversight if I failed to mention the dedication and devotion of your church staff. They are all brilliant and possess skills that reach far beyond any job description. We are truly blessed to have them working with us. You are blessed by their gifts—thank them!

In conclusion; yes, there are growing edges. Yes, there are things that our members can do to improve the ministry that reaches out into our church and the community. And we will move forward in the coming year. I am really looking forward to the next year, when everything won't be so new. The phrase that you will hear me using quite a bit is "Ministry that Matters." That is what I think our church, or any church should be about—ministry that matters.

I am looking forward to another year (and many more beyond) of Ministry that Matters!

In Christian Love, ***Rev. Will Sencabaugh***

MODERATOR'S REPORT

Last year I said the pace will only accelerate when the new minister comes and that has certainly been true! Surely our biggest accomplishment of the last year was the calling of Rev. Will Sencabaugh as our new settled Minister. The Search Committee did a wonderful job of searching through the candidates and introducing Will as their recommended candidate as our Minister. Will was officially called by the Congregation in June and began serving our Church in September.

Since that time:

- Will conducted several small group meetings in the homes of several members. Will used this first several months to assess our needs and resources and now we are beginning to change the way we do some things.
- At our January meeting, Will challenged us to rethink the way we are organized. A restructuring group was formed, and an initial plan titled "Restructure- Recommit" was presented at our March meeting. While many details need to be worked out, the general structure was enthusiastically supported. I expect a vote to adopt the new structure will be taken at our May meeting.
- We conducted another successful stewardship campaign. While we are not yet covering our expenses through pledges, and are still financially viable, the market meltdown has impacted that viability. A special presentation was made at the March meeting concerning the issue. While short term reductions in expense can help, our program costs will need to be reduced unless:
 - Annual giving is increased
 - We conduct a strong capital campaign within two years
 - Bequests to increase invested funds are made over the years ahead
- We had over 45 people volunteer on a very productive work day at a community service organization and conducted several other outreach efforts.
- Our wonderful religious education program continues to be well received and attended. We also have two active and well attended youth programs and in many ways served the needs of our community.
- While we have not recently welcomed any new members, Will expects 21 new members to join on Easter Sunday.

Our Church is alive and growing! It serves the needs of our members and our community well. All this happens through the efforts our boards, committees, individuals and staff. I especially want to thank our staff, Will, Linda, Al, Scarlett, Betsy, Bill, Wendy, and Daphne, for all they do for us each week.

Nothing would ever get done by our Church unless the members and supporters of our Church gave their time and resources to help with the good works we do. Our Church has challenges ahead, but working together we can continue to have a vibrant, growing Church, that reflects our faith and commitment.

Kevern Joyce, Moderator

CLERK'S REPORT (Record of Statistics for the Year)

IN MEMORIAM – 2 members and 2 friends

Members

Mary Nicholson
Olive White

Friends

Gary Scheller
Daniel Strohmeier

NEW MEMBERTS RECEIVED INTO OUR FELLOWSHIP – 31

1 Received – May 11, 2008

Claire Olivier

9 Received – May 18, 2008 (Confirmation)

Rachel Arruda	Marina Paradise
Sophie Bermudez	Mackenzie Reimer
Caitlyn Kenney	Stephanie Roberts
Haley Nisbet	Connor Schoening
Andrew O'Neil	

21 Received – April 12, 2009 (Easter Sunday)

Christine Baldwin	Stephen Mackler
Christopher Baldwin	Linda Mackler
David Charest	Andy Paradise
Kristy Charest	Jeanne Paradise
Jennifer DaPonte	Al Peters
Kevin DaPonte	Jen Peters
Kristy Ellis	Rev. Will Sencabaugh
David J. Ferreira	Julie Sencabaugh
Carol Flack	Hillary Sylvia
Greg Holt	Jonathan Sylvia
Kelly Holt	

Note: Confirmation this year will be May 17th and will be included in next year's report.

BAPTIZED INTO OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH – 5

Isabella Roderick Bradshaw	Aidan Frazier Sylvia
Sophie Yuliana Dias-Saverine	Coen Anthony Sylvia
	Tabor William Sylvia

NAMING CEREMONY – 1

Callie Barrett Peters

CLERK'S REPORT (Record of Statistics for the Year) continued

MARRIAGES IN OUR SANCTUARY – 5

Henry James McGinness & Macy Houghton Allatt
Timothy J. Schilling & Kathryn Simmons
John Cary Shuster & Whitney Enid Hannan
Joshua M. Simonin & Andrea L. Pickup
Eugene Arthur Goulet, III & Brinlyn Ashley Harsch

Total Membership as of May 4, 2008 **452**

New Members:

Affirmation of Faith 27

Letter of Transfer 4

Sub-totals: 31 483

Removals:

Deaths 3

Transfers 0

Other (asked to be removed) 1

Move to Inactive List 0

Sub-totals: 4 479

Total Membership as of May 3, 2009 **479**

Annual Meeting Notes - May 4, 2008

The annual meeting was integrated into the Sunday service with a nautical theme. A quorum was present. These are the notes of the “business” portion of the service.

Rev. Elizabeth King asked Wendy Reardon, RE director, to come forward and the congregation sang Happy Birthday to her. She then explained a little of her philosophy – stating that she feels that all people, not just children learn by doing and they remember them by making memories and that’s what we do in Sunday School. She challenged the children this year to become fishers of men. But she didn’t just read the story from the Bible; they went down to the bottom of the hill and actually fished to learn about fishing. And she then challenged the children again to become fishers of men and that’s exactly what they did. They have worked all year long with the help of many mentors and the congregation, the children have worked, baked, created. Over \$1,000 was raised and with that money we helped children around the world – School supplies for children, helped Navajo Indians, we helped children in this area also helped children in Mozambique and Honduras, Zambia. The kids decided what they wanted to do. We sent jump ropes, balls, books, an irrigation pumps, orchards in seeds, animals. Whatever our kids thought was important for other kids, that’s what we did this year. The reward was the feeling of helping others. At the beginning of the year we said we were going to take the kids fishing and make our own boat. And we did make a 15 foot wooden sailboat. She thanked all who helped throughout the year. Our Sunday School program encompasses children and youth of all ages. This year we had people from the age of 3 to 85. It has been a great year. Children’s Sunday will be June 1st; all are welcome.

Elizabeth introduced our skipper and moderator Kevern Joyce. He stated that the minutes had been published in the Annual Report. There was a motion to approve them, it was seconded and the minutes were approved. Officers need to be elected for next year and he called on Bob Lytle of the Nominating Committee to present the slate. Bob said the slate of officers and list of committee positions could be found in the annual report (pages 50-53). The officers are: Moderator -- Kevern Joyce, Clerk – Lee Murray, Treasurer – Harry Schoening, and Assistant Treasurer – Gale Litchfield. Bob said that it takes over 75 people to handle all the committee work of this church. He asked the congregation to approve the slate of officers and committee members. The motion was seconded and they were approved.

Kevern introduced Paul Durland and Rich Brosky, Co-chairs of the Search Committee. Paul introduced all the members of the committee and stated that they had been meeting for a year. Formed in February 2007 this committee’s goal was to have a new minister by the fall of 2008. In order to accomplish this, first a survey was done of the church membership, then a report from each board was submitted. This information was used to develop a profile of what our church is – its positives and negatives. Then our church’s information was posted at the UCC. This resulted in 70 applications and out of these, we requested 23 tapes of sermons and DVD’s. These were then narrowed down to 9 first interviews. The committee observed 4 neutral pulpits which resulted in 3 second interviews. On May 18th they will be attending hopefully their last neutral pulpit and then their final voting. They are now in the most sensitive and delicate time of this process. He introduced the contract team who will work out all the details that will be in their offer to the new minister. The other subcommittee is the negotiation team who will close the deal and finalize everything and he introduced them. This has been a good crew to work with. After these steps are all done, there will be a service with the candidate and then the congregation will vote yes or no.

Kevern called on Betsy Johnson for an update on the Nursery School. She said that Children’s Circle Nursery School was started by the Yellow Circle in 1971 and it continues to be a successful program. The school was nationally accredited in 2001. They were the very first nursery school in the area to be nationally accredited and they are proud of the program. Children’s literacy is the basis of the program. They have a yearly theme and this year it was reflections.

Congregational Annual Meeting (continued)

That theme intertwines with everything they do. They have everything ready to go for the next year, but ask that people spread the word about the school, because their enrollment is a little low for the upcoming year. Elizabeth said wanted to the congregation to learn more about this vital school that is going on at the church during weekdays.

Jim Forbush, Chair of the Stewardship Committee was introduced. He said he was fairly new to the church and maybe that's why he volunteered for this position. He thinks the church is great; he believes in stewardship and thinks that more stewardship is better than less stewardship and that it needs a group effort. In the fall when we have a settled minister, we will hold conversations about the church, about the benefits of the church, about the direction of the church and about the need to support the church. He hopes all will be a part of the conversations.

Jeff Stone spoke for the Deacons. It was described to him that the Deacons were responsible for the spiritual life of the church. What they plan to focus on 3 things for next year are: They will be working with the search committee and transition team on how they can help the new minister become a part of our community. The second thing will be to look at how we bring new members into the congregation. They want to concentrate on helping new members weave into the fabric of the church. And the third thing is placing Bibles in the sanctuary. They have collected some information on that and want to get congregational input on that today. It was suggested that there be one version of the Bible, but another suggest of actually having multiple versions around the sanctuary. The second question was where to place the bibles on the pews or on the back of the pews, or located in the Narthex and people can pick them up as they come in, the fourth choice is to put them in a little rack underneath the pews. They are also looking for people who would like to be part of the subcommittee who will be making these decisions. You can sign up on the papers at the back of the church.

The next topic is the proposed by-law changes. The proposed changes are as follows:

Our bylaws currently have the various paid staff of the church being supervised by the committees that they report to. The Executive Committee, with the support and input of the Search Committee and the Trustees, recommends the following bylaw changes so that our new minister will, with input from the appropriate Board, supervise the paid staff:

ARTICLE VI B Section A. Minister [insert as item 4]:

4. The minister shall direct the on-going administrative matters of the congregation, and, with input from the appropriate board, supervise all church staff. He/she shall have the right and duty to make recommendations to the appropriate board regarding the employment, termination, and salary reviews of all church staff.

Section B. Other Staff

1. Other employed staff shall be procured or terminated by ~~and responsible to~~ the Executive Committee through the appropriate boards with input from the minister.
2. Other paid staff will be supervised by the minister with input from the appropriate board.
3. ~~2.~~ Such positions shall be established by vote of the Church.

ARTICLE XI. BOARD OF DEACONS Section A. 9. Music Committee

b. This committee will be responsible for ~~the supervising and directing of~~ the music programs and music personnel in our church. The music committee will assist the minister in evaluating ~~evaluate~~ music personnel and report who will report their recommendations to the Board of Deacons, who will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee.

Congregational Annual Meeting (continued)

ARTICLE XII. BOARD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Section A.

2. This Board shall be responsible ~~for supervising and~~ directing the educational work of the Church for all age groups. It will have the responsibility of recruiting and training the necessary staff from the Church membership or nonmembers who are individually approved by the Board. The board will assist the minister in evaluating personnel. The minister will report their recommendation to the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE XIV. BOARD OF TRUSTEES Section A.

4. This Board shall recommend, hire, supervise and review annually with input from the minister, those persons who solicit, receive, disburse, and account for church funds as well as those persons performing secretarial, custodial, Nursery School and maintenance duties for Church operations.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the by-law changes. The by-law changes were passed with no opposition.

Kevern mentioned that Outreach had done a lot this past year. Their report is in the Annual Report. They spend over \$30,000 for their projects with input from the congregation. Anne Sedgwick spoke for the committee saying that they worked hard on where the money would be distributed and with your input and also tried to have some hands-on activities. Last fall they had a work day at PAACA and Harmony House. They had hoped to have another work day this spring but things were too busy so they are planning another one next fall. Everyone who participated had a great time. Many members of the church said they would like more hands on giving in the local community. Sixty-five people attended that work day in 2 locations.

Kevern stated that Ways and Means put on a wonderful play that was well attended and called on Debbie Durland. Ways and means this year has had sort of a small committee and wanted to include some fellowship which was the play. We are not doing the Garden Market, but plan to do it next year. There are still 3 unfilled positions; so if anyone is interested please join us.

Debbie announced that the all church garden clean up was postponed due to rain and would take place next Saturday, May 10th. She said the all church clean up was for everybody but the garden group which is to begin this week needs new blood. They meet on Tuesday evenings from May to September. She stated that gardening in a group is a totally different experience and is a lot of fun.

Kevern mentioned another ongoing project that started several years ago. That is painting chairs. They have recently finished 20 chairs. The most important part is cleaning the chairs. Anyone interested in helping should contact Kevern.

He then called on Karen McArthur to report for the Trustees. The Trustees have 2 responsibilities: one is stewardship of our overall financial resources and the other is care of our building and grounds. She stepped the congregation through the financial report noting that the church's unrestricted assets increased by \$9,000 so we are in generally stable shape. Pledges and contributions are 50% of our income. If we want to stretch and grow as a church that is the piece where the sky is the limit. It is up to all of you; that's where Jim will be working for us to strengthen the contributions. We started the year with about a million in our account; we got some income; we transferred substantial money out for operating expenses; transferred out money for capital projects and the ending balance came out higher. We can't count on investment returns in the short run because it can be very volatile.

Congregational Annual Meeting (continued)

Karen wanted to compliment our sexton, Al DeMello, saying that he was talented and motivated. His initiative and skill have been able to save the church on repairs. And for a church this size to have repair bills as low as they are is a compliment to his talents.

Kevern stated that our church has vitality. There is an active Sunday School and an active youth program. Daphne Fogg Siegel reported on the Youth fellowship groups. There are 2 groups: The Junior fellowship for kids in 6th, 7th and 8th grades and the Senior fellowship for grades 9 through 12. The programs are alive and serve not children from the church but also the community. There are about 30 in the senior program and 70 in the junior. The groups focus on fellowship, community service, a spiritual component and fun. The Junior fellowship held a pasta supper and made \$900; all that money was given away to worthy causes. The Senior fellowship makes cookies every year and they enjoy taking them to many of elderly church members. Both groups participate in fun activities as well as service related projects. She said she enjoys the kids and thanked the congregation for their support throughout the year.

Back at our October meeting last fall we talked about by-law changes relating to the capital budget; then we had a proposed by-law change that we were considering for the January meeting. Throughout this we have had discussions on whether this should be a by-law change or a policy. The executive committee has come to the conclusion that it should be a policy of the Trustees. We have drafted a policy that says: The operating budget and the capital budget will be presented and voted on separately at the October Quarterly meeting. At that time all planned capital projects will be presented to the congregation for approval. Subsequent to that meeting all non-emergency capital projects in excess of \$10,000 will be presented for approval at a meeting of the congregation. Herb Howe put together a collection of things that were policies and procedures. Kevern plans to scan these so that we will have a book of policies.

The Trustees and Executive support the previously stated policy. If the congregation feels it should be a by-law, we can do that. Is there any discussion on this? A motion was made to accept this as policy and seconded. It was passed.

Kevern was thanked for a job well done and for being moderator.

The Goodwin Award was presented to Debbie Durland

Kevern asked the congregation what they would like to see in the church. The following was the list:

- More active way to incorporate youth into boards and participation
- Energy audit – become a greener church
- Increase & diversify adult education
- Get more people involved to share their talents
- Hole in bucket called membership. Embrace them and become more welcoming community.
- More fellowship events.
- Contact people – visitation and reaching out to members no longer attending church.
- Look at church calendar – how presented.
- Look at church contracts and the budget.
- Recognize and encourage volunteers. Celebrate them.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Lee Murray, Clerk

Special Congregational Meeting – June 14, 2008

Kevern Joyce, moderator, called this special meeting to order to vote to extend a call to Rev. William Sencabaugh to be the next minister of our church.

One of the things about the Congregational Church – we do things by committee and we choose our own minister. But we are here for a very special purpose in the life of the church that doesn't happen that often in the 3 years that a moderator usually serves. Kevern said he asked someone when was the last time a minister with children lived in the parsonage and the reply was when Bob Boynton was a young man.

He called on the chairs of the Search Committee, Rich Brosky and Paul Durland, for their report. After welcoming all, they stated that we are here at the call for a new minister. They noted that all should have read about Rev. Sencabaugh's background in the letters that were sent out and in the e-flash. One thing not mentioned in those letters was that Rev. Sencabaugh was both a Red Sox and a Patriot fan. The search committee was formed just over a year ago at the end of February and the process of looking for a new minister began. This involved developing a profile of who we are as a church; this was then posted on the UCC website and as a result, responses from 70 candidates were received. Then the process of selection began based on what our congregation desired based on that profile. There were a lot of criteria: one being able to deliver an intellectual stimulating sermon, being able to give a strong pastoral response to the needs of the congregation, a strong background with youth programs, a strong sense of outreach. Yesterday, Will began participating in the life of Dartmouth; he and his family joined in the walk for our schools.

The candidates came from all across the United States; we even had several from Europe and as far away as Australia. The committee listened to sermons after sermons and then began interviewing, visits to neutral pulpits and then second interviews. Our church is the only church Will was interested in as this church was exactly what he was looking for. Will rose to the top of our candidates and it turns out that he was exactly what we were looking for. It's a good match. We feel that he and his family will provide us with a vitality and growth as we move into this new era of our congregation. And the Search Committee unanimously agreed that the Rev. Dr. Will Sencabaugh would be their choice for the call. And they strongly urged the congregation to approve their selection.

Kevern recognized the other members of the search committee: Kate Dabney, Rich Madsen, Lou Cabot, Sally Lemelin, Larry Kemper, Kathy Chase, Stephanie Roberts, Kathy Pappas, Katherine Duff, and Dick Purdy. They put in an amazing amount of work; read a lot, listened to a lot, and got it done giving us a candidate. Thank you.

There are only four issues that the congregation reserves for itself to decide – one of those is the call of the minister. Another is salaries. A year ago, we as a congregation voted to pay our minister in accordance within the guidelines of the United Church of Christ. Kevern called upon the chair of the Board of Trustees, Phil Guymont, who confirmed that the package they were offering Rev. Sencabaugh was within the UCC guidelines.

It was moved and seconded to call Will Sencabaugh as our settled minister.

A member of the congregation asked for a Review of the contract:

- \$50,000 base salary
- Family would live in the parsonage; therefore the church does not pay housing allowance
- The church pays utilities

Special Congregational Meeting (continued)

- Equity development allowance paid to a UCC managed fund of \$5,000/ year initially to allow minister to build up some equity
- Vacation – 1 month
- Qualifies for a sabbatical after 6 years
- Educational development \$1200
- Pension and disability is a percentage of base salary.
- 4 weeks vacation and 2 weeks for education but other than that no additional Sundays off. He will have a day and a half off per week; Will said he generally works it in and takes the time as it fits, because he knows in the life of the church things happen and he wants to be available.

The package is commensurate with someone who has a doctorate of divinity and the length of experience that he has. This is a median salary range.

A vote was called for and it was unanimous.

The moderator and others needed then signed contract.

Rev. Sencabaugh and his family returned to the Sanctuary. He announced that he had a wonderful, most blessed gift this Father's day – he got a job-- which had been weighing on his mind. He then thanked the congregation for the opportunity to serve as their pastor and stated that he was looking forward to starting in September. He introduced this family. Then he asked the Search Committee to stand.

Rev Sencabaugh will officially start Sept. 1st. Sept. 7 will be the 1st Sunday he will preach.

Lee Murray, Clerk

Quarterly Meeting Notes – October 26, 2008

The meeting was held after the 10 a.m. service in the sanctuary. Kevern Joyce, moderator called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m. and introduced Jim Forbush, chair of the Stewardship Committee.

Jim said he joined the church and then volunteered to be on the stewardship committee and Ridley Rhind agreed to assist. He stated that the first thing you need to know is your goal -- how much needs to be raised. In 2009 the budget is \$346,000. The church has other sources of income besides pledges – loose collection, gifts, funds from Ways and Means and other activities (\$22,000), facilities rental from the nursery school and other functions (\$14,500), a couple bequests (income about \$22,000), and for the last several years we have taken \$50,000 out of the endowment. That was a little over 4.5%; this year it is about 6.5%. What is left is covered by pledges -- \$237,500. At one point the endowment was about 1.2 million, but recently it has dropped below \$800,000. Jim showed a chart that tracked the endowment funds in several scenarios. If you withdraw at the rate of only 4% the fund will last almost forever; not only will it last, but it will grow. If you take 5% out, it will last for 25 years. But once you take out more than 5% the endowment starts to disappear pretty quickly. Taking out \$50,000 was 6.5% but actually we will be asking for more than that. Our endowment at the current rate will last 10-15 years. He is not concerned with \$50,000 but he is concerned amounts over that. What should we do? In 2008 there were 158 pledges for \$171,000; a couple years ago we had over 170 pledges. One hopes that with a settled minister, we see the number of pledges increase.

He put a plan together and suggests that we change our way of thinking of our pledge. Jim feels that it is empowering the mission of the church not just a financial transaction. He reminds us of the value we find in church. In order to meet the needs of the church we need to increase our pledges. He has a goal of 100 increases or new pledges and asks us to reflect what we can do to be part of the team -- part of the 100. Pledge cards will be mailed at the end of this week and dedication Sunday is November 23rd.

Questions were asked about how many members and pledges the church has and what is the current average amount being given. There are 350 members roughly twice the pledge units, but that includes husband and wife – one pledge unit but 2 members. A pledge unit is a household. There are only a few who attend who do not pledge; some give gifts instead of pledging and we are grateful. Kevern said that last year the deacons went through the membership list and reduced the membership rolls by about 100.

Kevern then introduced Phil Guymont to talk about the budget other than the Nursery School. Phil passed out papers with budget information for 2009. He stated that the budget is the estimate of what it costs to maintain current church programs next year. Looking at expenses salaries and benefits make up 68% of the budget, building and office expenses another 20%. There is 88% of our budget right there, leaving 12% for all our other programs.

Phil said that the projected deficit for 2008 will be smaller than anticipated due to lower expenses in all categories, especially pastoral where we have much lower expenses in housing and travel now that we have a full time minister. The 2009 budget will also have a deficit and that is after we have taken \$50,000 from investments to help fund operations. Any additional expenses will draw down from endowment funds. They are projecting a 6% increase in pledges. For Ways & Means income in 2009 we are budgeting \$5,000 in income because the Padanaram Garden Market returns next year.

In facilities income, we are reducing it by \$4800 this year and \$7,200 in 2009 and that is due to the Nursery School's difficulty in attracting sufficient enrollment. Enrollment from September 2008 to

Quarterly Meeting Notes for October 26, 2008 (Continued)

June 2009 is short by 14 children (4 in the 2 day and 10 in the 3 day program). This has created \$19,000 deficit in church operations. There are efforts to increase the enrollment which will allow the nursery school to pay for the facility and pay the church back over time for the funding of the 08-09 school year deficit. The school's financial goal is to break even or produce a small profit. Until recently it has broken even. Churches with a similar morning only program are having problems; churches with full day program options don't seem to be having this problem. A committee has been formed to evaluate various ways to expand the program to attract more students.

Investment income is projected to be the same in 2009 as this year. There is a \$10,000 transfer item for next year. That is for capital projects and will be used only if necessary for repairs. Given the state of the endowment, it is not the time to make major improvements and we aren't aware of any that need to be done. The \$12,003 item was the capital expenses this year for a new phone system that was approved by the congregation in January and repairs to the kitchen drainage system, new water heater and some paint for the parsonage.

For personnel there is budgeted a 3% cost of living raise for staff. The rest of the budget has not increased other than an increase in parsonage utilities which will be offset by lower expenses elsewhere.

There were a lot of questions and discussion on the deficit and what we can do to stop the increase in withdrawals from the endowment and decrease our expenses. Kevern stated that this meeting sets the budget. If there are any major issues it can be brought up at the Quarterly meeting in January. We do have a balanced portfolio with 55% fixed income and 45% equity. But the endowment dropped greatly in the past few months not due to withdrawals but due to the market. Cost control might mean which program is it that we don't want to do. We hope that new membership will increase pledges. We can re-look at things in January if that is what the congregation wants. We have never spent the original gift but only the accumulated interest and dividends on the original gifts.

Karen mentioned that we think about planned giving – people should think about including gifts to the church in their estate planning.

R.E.: Wendy reported on the Sunday school – This year is mission green for the kids and it has 3 components – helping people, helping animals and the environment. The first part is people. We have collected and donated 150 pairs of socks to Market Ministries and collected cell phones and the money from that has been donated to the Women's Fund. The children are planning an event next Saturday called Mission Green to celebrate the earth and natural resources. The older children will be manning all the booths that day. Sunday School families, Nursery School families and the youth fellowship are all helping. That evening also planned is a program called Kids Rock. The money earned will be divided between the youth fellowship, the Children's Circle Nursery School and the Sunday School. Mrs. White had a great idea for making sleeping bags for homeless. So Sr. Rose will be coming from Market Ministries.

We are planning a Destination unknown trip. Then there will be a New England Aquarium overnight. Since the group has doubled since last year, only the older children -- 3rd grade and up will go.

In the spring the environment portion begins. We are going to be learning about the eco-system, the ocean, taking nature walks and taking trips to the Lloyd Center and Allen's Pond. We will be setting up a greenhouse which has been donated. On November 9th we will start putting it up. It will be located behind the driveway. It will be 14 feet wide and 8 feet tall and it will be a hoop type.

Quarterly Meeting Notes for October 26, 2008 (Continued)

It is being located there because it is the only sunny location plus there is access to water. Everything will be grown organically. The food that will be harvested will be donated with the Y, to food pantries and shelters. She wants the kids to know that children can make a difference. Hopes it will be intergenerational and that; kids and adults get a lot out of it. Anyone interested is welcome to join us on the 9th to watch or participate in putting up the greenhouse.

November 23rd will be Thanksgiving Sunday and the children will share what they have been working on for the past few weeks.

Kevern introduced Karen McArthur to speak about the Nursery School. The Nursery School program is now accredited, which is a rigorous process. It is an honor to have that kind of program. It has always been nearly full. Why change something when there isn't a need for it. Enrollment is way down this year. One of the things we have done is to talk to other programs to find out what different programs there are. Churches with just morning programs are having difficulties this year and those who have an option to go from say 9 to 3 are full. What we hope to do in the next 2 months is put together a proposal for September of 09 through June 10. There was talk about the possibility of having a summer camp for a week. Lara Stone, Gale Litchfield, Jenny Lynch and Karen and Scarlet and Betsy are the members of the committee. They will be looking at the questionnaire that was sent out.

There is a February Homecoming dinner which is a fundraiser being planned. They will be looking at every option, keeping age groups separate. The committee will report at the January meeting.

It was moved and seconded to accept the budget. The budget was passed.

Deacons: Jeff Stone reported on House Meetings saying that 7 were planned but the sign up was going slowly. The first ones will take place this week and they will be finished by the end of the second week in November. Those who have not already signed up, please do so.

An updated version of the pictorial directory is being planned. Members can have their photos taken after church on the 2nd and 9th or they can send in their own picture. The directory will be published online.

They are close to a decision on bibles for the Sanctuary and hope to have that decision within the next month.

Outreach: Lara Stone spoke about the hands-on-work day at PAACA. At least 50-60 people came out and participated, working both inside and outdoors; they landscaped and transformed the space. There was also participation from the youth group. Outreach looks to nominated projects from the congregation to fund with their budget – either international or local projects. If you would like the committee to donate to a project, please submit it for consideration. Outreach funds several special offerings such as Neighbors in Need or One Great Hour of Sharing and some seasonal projects and holiday projects are planned. The Turkey project is going on now for Thanksgiving and they will be adopting families at Christmas time. She thanked the congregation for their generosity. Kevern mentioned that the Outreach budget is the amount pledged for outreach on the pledge cards.

Ways & Means: Debbie Durland reported that the committee decided to focus more on fellowship this year as well as a few fundraising events. We have scheduled the entire year with events that don't make any money and are just for fellowship. The first event was the campfire-sing-along. Our next event is a family ice skating event at Hetland Rink in New Bedford on December 7th in the

Quarterly Meeting Notes for October 26, 2008 (Continued)

afternoon. In February we are planning a Chocolate Cook-off. We will have both amateur and professional categories; you pay a small admission fee and get to eat all the chocolate you want. On Friday, March 6th Lee's Dinner at the Grange with Bring Your Own Beverage; and also at the end of March following church there will be a kite making day with a kite flying day the next week. And in May we will have the Padanaram Garden Market which is a fundraiser.

Nominating: Kevern reported that there were 2 openings on the Trustees. Anyone interested should contact Bob Lytle or Paul Durland.

The **Youth Groups** have met and they had a great turn out.

Women's Guild: Sonja White reported that they will meet with Rev. Will to discuss how to organize and revitalize the women of the church into groups, not necessarily circles and they will be moving forward with that. The 1st Saturday in May (May 2) they will hold a rummage sale. It was stated that some of the women that they were disappointed that we didn't have one this fall. She said that the rummage sales serve an important purpose and do provide a need, especially now that the local Salvation Army Thrift Store closed. She felt that this is one way to reach to the community and that the rummage sales should continue.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

Lee Murray, Clerk

Quarterly Meeting Notes – January 25, 2009

The meeting was held in the sanctuary following the church service. Kevern Joyce, moderator, called the meeting to order. He said the meeting would start off with a couple budget related items and a review of last year's budget and topics discussed at the last quarterly meeting.

Kevern called on Jim Forbush to speak about **stewardship**. He said that the goal of the stewardship was 100 new or increased pledges. There were 90 to date and he thought that was a pretty good number. A flyer was passed out with comparison figures for last year and this year to date. Jim reported that this year's pledges actually exceeded last year's number; our average pledge is up this year – 5 ½% over last year. This year there is a little more toward operating and slightly less for mission. He thanked the congregation for responding positively and making his job easier than he expected. Kevern then thanked Jim for a very well done job on stewardship.

Kevern introduced Phil Guymont of the **Trustees** to give an update on the Nursery School. The study committee has not met and their report has been delayed to the annual meeting in May. The committee's focus has been expanded and they will look into a few other issues in addition to program enhancements.

- First they are going to consider the financial side of things and do a budget on each of the ideas they come up with for program enhancements.
- They will take a look at the nursery school organizationally. There has been a suggestion that instead of running our own school we simply rent out space to a company that wants to have its program there. That company can make money or lose money; it won't affect the church as long as they pay their rent.
- Another option is on the management side of things should the nursery school remain part of church, it has been suggested that they no longer report to trustees. The idea is to try to form a committee staffed by people who have expertise in early childhood education rather than the trustees who just look at things financially.

The goal of the committee has not changed; they will try to come up with a plan to make the school financially self sufficient and link its programs to our church community.

Some good news—since October 3 more students have joined the school, bringing the deficit down by \$3,000. Hopefully some fundraising activities will bring it down even more. The key is enrollment and an Open House is planned for February 9th and registration will start then. Between now and then there will be 3 meetings with parents. There are indications that 16 are interested in the 2-day program (with only space for 21) and 15 for 3-day program. People can enroll during the summer also. Enrollment doesn't appear to be as big an issue as last year, but time will tell.

Phil then reported that the 2008 budget deficit of \$23,000 was down about \$800; and in the budget for next year the projected deficit remains at \$23,000 also.

A question was asked about the enrollment for the Nursery School as to whether they were enrolling as the program currently is now or with an all-day program? At this time they are enrolling as it now exists. A survey was done asking parents what they thought of an all day and 2 said they were not interested; 6 or 7 said maybe; and about 8 said yes and the 3 day survey was about the same.

Reports of Boards

Kevern introduced Margaret Forbush who reported for **Outreach** (chaired by Laura Stone & Pam Joyce). She thanked the congregation for their generous donations and stated that Outreach tries to be good stewards of the money entrusted to them. In the fall there were 2 major efforts. For the Turkey sale you gave \$1,200, which was used to purchase gift cards that were given to Market Ministries who uses them to augment holiday meals and for emergency assistance throughout the year. We sponsored the Holiday Hope Drive and you provided Christmas for 14 families and 30 individuals. These efforts were augmented by Lee Murray who made fleece hats and scarves and the youth group who decorated the stockings for children. We thank them for helping.

At our December meeting, we get together to disburse the remaining funds that have not already been allocated. We use a list of recommendation given to the committee by the congregation. This year we had about \$12,000 and our focus was giving to local organizations to address basic needs – food, quality of living, and education. We gave to the following organizations:

- Hunger Commission of Southeastern Mass. – it is the only local program that coordinates food distribution to sites where it is most needed at a particular time.
- PACE – an income based fuel assistance program which enables low income families to remain in their homes during the cold months when they might not be able to do so.
- Dennison Memorial – a local community center which provides services to young people.
- Nativity Prep – a tuition free middle school for low income boys in New Bedford and also to their sister school which is a recently founded tuition free all girls middle school in New Bedford. Like Nativity Prep its demands are rigorous, family involvement is required and students receive a top notch education.
- Boys & Girls Club, New Bedford, specifically to the America Reads program that addresses literacy and enhances high school graduation rates.
- YWCA
- Share – a local foundation whose charter is to empower physically challenged individuals to achieve practical independence. The foundation supports the U Mass. Dartmouth Center for Rehabilitative Engineering.
- We also voted that any monies that came in after our board meeting should be given to Market Ministries and this did happen to a tune of about \$2,200

Currently Outreach is sponsoring a Coat Drive. A large load has been taken to New Bedford. There is still have a week to go and we welcome coats, jackets, hats, scarves and outerwear for the cold weather.

On Super Bowl Sunday Outreach will be involved in tallying up what the donations of food are worth. After a little research we also decided that all the non perishable items would go to the Dartmouth Council on Aging food pantry and the monetary donations will be split between the Council on Aging and the Hunger Commission. Then a Blood drive is planned for May 31st. It will be here at the church and will benefit New Bedford area but will also benefit congregants, families, friends and our community.

Deacons: Jane Rioux reported that 82 bibles had been donated with 12 for personal use. They would like to have 26 more donated to take care of the sanctuary, balcony and have a few for the choir and the library. Currently there are 70 for the sanctuary. Jane suggested donating some bibles in honor of grand children. It was asked which version was being used and it is the New Revised Standard version.

- They have figured out how to put the bibles in pews although they have not voted on it. They will be looking for wood working volunteers to help.
- The Deacons had a meaningful retreat this month.

Quarterly Meeting Notes for January 25, 2009 (Continued)

Ways & Means Debbie Durland said that the committee was focusing on fellowship this year as well as some fundraisers. Coming up is the Chocolate Cook Off February 7th at the Waterfront Grille. If you want to be a contestant, you can go to the blog and download the forms; the Lees Dinner, with the food generously donated by Al Lees, will take place on March 6th at the Grange in Russells Mills. Tickets are \$40 and it will be bring your own beverage. After that we will be making Kites at the end of March and fly them the next Sunday. We will wrap up the year with the Padanaram Garden Market in May. The committee is open for ideas for next year.

Religious Education. Wendy reported that they are very busy. The next thing coming up is the New England Aquarium trip on February 28th. So far 46 people are scheduled to go. It seems that a number of the parents also wanted to go. The plan is to all go up together late in the afternoon; have dinner, there is a night filled with events, including a couple of science experiments and then go to bed. On the 22nd there will be an information meeting to talk about the logistics. Since we are in the middle of Mission Green, we will be carpooling.

The next thing through January is our Biblical focus. The children decided what it would be. Today with the help of Will and the internet we found some stories that were left out of the Bible.

As part of Mission Green we plan to make sleeping bags for the homeless. Sister Rose of Market Ministries will join in the project. These are beautiful bags that we will make as a group. Any one interested or who has sewing as a hobby is welcome to join in – just e-mail or see Wendy. It is hoped that the kids will think about the people who don't have homes, but this way they will have a roll out bed that they can take with them.

Mission Green has 3 groups – working with people, then with animals and finally with the environment. We are moving into animals and that will start with the aquarium. Then we have guests coming in with animals to learn how the choices we make, the things we buy and what we do affect the animals around us.

The Roots & Shoots Club with the Jane Goodall Institute has published 3 of our missions already. If you look up that roots and shoots website you will find Congo Kids – that's us. They have paired us with a sister school for us to work with from Ugala in Tanzania. It is a primary school with grades K through 8. Our focus is the environment, people and animals; their focus is getting fresh water and raising chickens. We are from very different worlds. We will make CD's to show what we look like, how we dress, how we spend our time, the things we worry about and they are going to get back to us with their information.

We will be moving into Lent and hope to get the congregation involved. We will be discussing giving up and giving for Lent. We will be making our pretzels again and selling them to you

There are a lot of things coming up and we are very busy. About 50 kids attend Sunday School each week. The Senior & Junior fellowship groups are really strong. The Senior fellowship is sleeping over next weekend to help with the super bowl – to get things all ready in the sanctuary. All the Junior fellowship kids did a service project – either by themselves or in a group – that they designed. Several girls got together and with Sonja White baked cookies and delivered them to Sunrise

The Confirmation class is going strong; they attended board meetings to learn about the working process of the church.

Quarterly Meeting Notes for January 25, 2009 (Continued)

A Mission trip is being planned for 2010.

Sonja White reported that the **Guild** was alive and well. Because we do not have the top officers, we met with Rev. Will and talked about the situation here with the women in our church which is typical of many churches in the area. We have special programs starting in March—a garden program, a tea with the high school orchestra—things that anyone from the church is welcome to attend. We are working on keeping the kitchen clean and have set up a basket in the kitchen for members to donate supplies such as saran wrap, tin foil --to help keep church costs down.

The Rummage sale will be May 2nd and will be only one day. We hope that you will help out any way that you can.

Nominating: Bob Lytle mentioned that this year they need to replace the moderator and a list is being developed. They will meet with Rev. Sencabaugh to get his input. The Trustees need 3 members. Otherwise we will be waiting for the discussion of new structure for the church before we move on. The moderator is where the focus is now.

Kevern remarked that Bob had spoken about organizational structure and at our last annual meeting we spoke about some goals for 2008. This was before Will was on board. He gave a quick review of the items: one was welcome a new settled minister which we are doing. Develop a new sense of stewardship and explaining and defining responsibilities of membership was another goal. It is still in process, although he thinks there has been a revitalization of stewardship. Developing a new set of by-laws and a policy manual was one of the goals. Kevern took papers collected by Herb Howe and scanned those that are still pertinent and the Executive Committee is looking over them. Those along with our current by-laws will become part of the New Policy Manual. As other policies are formulated, they will go into the manual. This will help us keep track of policies and changes that are made. The welcoming committee we talked about has not been done yet. Alternative music and alternative services—maybe the super bowl service will cover that. We have established a human resources committee and they will be meeting soon; there are job descriptions for some of the employees other than the minister. So there is something to start with.

Other things brought up at the annual meeting were: -- active ways to get better participation; more heat in church, we continue to work on that. We have put in insulation, new insulated windows, and new dual control thermostats. We will look back to see how these measures have helped our energy usage. We have changed the ballast in the lights, put different bulbs in the exit lights, and done some things that help with a green church. More things that we brought up at the annual meeting were: diversify adult education, get more people involved, again more welcoming, fellowship opportunities, reaching out to missing members, recognizing volunteers and a look at the church year. We elect the board at the annual meeting, which will be May 3rd, then the boards have a meeting, and they don't meet through the summer. Maybe we ought to do that in the fall.

Since Rev. Sencabaugh has been here he has talked to people, attended and participated in meetings. He has correlated all our thoughts on our structure, our organization and maybe things we ought to look at. Will then presented his thoughts on reorganization of the committee structure of the church. He mentioned that change is something that doesn't happen easily in church -- some people embrace it right away, some have to absorb it for a while and some are never going to come around. The world is changing so fast and things are changing all around us, that the church is the one place where things don't change. Some think that is comforting. But if we don't change some things along the way, we will be ill fitted to handle what is coming our way. He talked with analogies of black & white TV to high definition color TV and the big differences in today's technological world. A lot of churches are black and white in a high definition world and it is time they be introduced to a

Quarterly Meeting Notes for January 25, 2009 (Continued)

plasma 42 inch screen. What we have right now is working; it functions -- but maybe we can tweak it so that it is a color TV. Will introduced the basic structure of our church the way it is now and he then gave some ideas about changes that incorporate suggestions from the conversations he has had with members from the house meetings to other conversations. With 12 people on each of the committees that run the church (72 total), it is hard to find people to fill all the positions that are not already on a committee. He said that what our congregation needs more than anything else is connection. A lot of people feel disconnected. His new agenda is to make connections within the congregation. People want connection, they want community, fellowship and they want relationships. They want to feel connected to God, to be connected with other people in the church and they want the church to be connected with the community. How do we get there? He directs us to think outside the box and presented his thoughts on how to do this via charts. Will suggested 4 committees: A Deacons committee, a Fellowship committee, an Outreach Committee and a Trustees Committee. These committees could have subcommittees that accomplish different tasks. For example the Deacons could have 2 teams – a worship team and a religious education team. Fellowship could incorporate what is now the current ways & means; and a membership committee, etc. Outreach – now missions committee and a communications committee. Trustees – would still have 12 members but 3 could be property, 3 finance, 3 stewardship, and 3 human resources. Will suggests that the committees could get a lot accomplished with fewer numbers. The deacons at their retreat went over all sorts of different options. This is just one idea. He charged all the committees to think about how they can do things differently. The nominating committee is going to have a tough job. He stated that we can decide to change and never do it or we can decide to make changes and actually follow through. We need decide how to proceed from here.

Kevern said that we need 4 or 5 people who will take this, outline it, work with will and come back to the congregation possibly to the March meeting and present it. This is not Will's organization, it is not his organization, nor the Trustees organization, it is yours. We can craft this to be what we, the congregation, wanted. Later on we can figure out what kind of by-laws to go with it. Having looked at other churches by-laws and he says ours are the longest. Anyone interested send Will an e-mail.

A member of the congregation stated that what is needed is communication and trust. We have to be committed to communication.

Will invited the congregation to an open house at the parsonage following the service. It will be a good chance for those who have never seen the inside of the parsonage.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Lee Murray, Clerk

Quarterly Meeting Notes – March 29, 2009

Kevern Joyce, moderator, called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m. He stated that there would be a report on the church finances. We will talk about reorganization, recommitment, and restructuring of the by-laws. But we are not voting on anything today. And we will learn what the restructure team has done so far, get some feedback and hopefully have something to vote on at the May meeting.

Financial Information:

- We are spending more money that we are taking in.
- Our investments are down due to the market. This is not unique to our church; we are not alone.

There are several things that should give us faith that we will get through this

- Our church has survived and served for 200 years
- Hard times have come before
- We are beginning a new and exciting ministry with Will.
- We still have some money although not as much as before and now have a shorter time to find answers

Revenues & Expenses -- What our finances are looking like

- Our collections have not exceeded our expenses for some time – probably not since 1996.
- We had a gap when Jeff's ministry began the gap began to close and then it widened again. We went through the interim period and now Will's ministry is here.
- Collections are all income except investments .It includes facilities income including parsonage rent. Our level of giving has been off or at least flat

Comparison between 2002 and 2009 – What changed?

During that period there was inflation. Inflation ate up about \$55,000. If we had done nothing as a church, made no additional programs, made no decisions about what to pay people things would have gone up that much. There are certain things that have exceeded inflation over this time period – fuel costs and health insurance. With our growth in revenues, we had about kept up with that. But the congregation made decisions

- We voted to pay minister according to UCC guidelines
- Voted to pay music director a professional salary
- Voted to pay RE director and youth director professional salaries
- Voted to pay administrator a professional salary
- And we brought the janitor salary up to market rate

We made those decisions. What we didn't do when we decided to do these things was come up with an increase in revenues to fund them. So we have a deficit which is somewhat covered now because we have been lucky enough to get a gift that's \$50,000 for 3 years. That disappears in 2011 and then the deficit will be about \$90,000. That's the nature of the problem.

What has happened to our investment? Over the last decade we have used over \$500,000 to help fund operations with that We've done some capital improvements – the parking lot, windows and some other things. The market decline this last year was \$375,000 and we have had no significant additions to the investment fund. The last one was maybe \$5,000 maybe 10 years ago. The major gift of \$350,000 was given in 1992 with only small gifts since then.

Kevern called on Phil Guymont of the Trustees to speak about we can do in the short term. Phil stated that the 2009 budget not frivolous. While that is good news, it also makes cutting the budget any further a difficult task unless we eliminate programs—something we don't think we need to do that at this time. Some ways to cut costs in the short term are:

Quarterly Meeting Notes for March 29, 2009 (Continued)

To save on mailing, Ask members to pick up mail at the church. When Linda prepares a bulk mailing, something that would go out to most members, she will leave it on a table down here and we're asking people to pick their mail up. After a week or two, she will mail it to folks. We haven't worked out all the details, so please pay attention to the blog.

We are going to ask the church staff to reevaluate where they spend money and try to come up with ways to spend less money.

Right now the UCC charge is about \$18 per member and when you follow their guidelines we come up with about 400 members. What we are going to do is to start basing the charge on active members—people who come to church, people who pledge, people who volunteer and people who are known. That number is probably less than 400, so we should probably save money there.

Remove water coolers which cost \$80 per month. We will go back to drinking tap water. Hopefully by doing things like this we cut the 2009 budget deficit in half. We approved the deficit of \$23,000 in October and hope these steps will cut the deficit in half as long as people honor their pledges. These dollars are not large and we do not have a lot of room to play with. We are leaving salaries, benefits and the building alone at this time.

The nursery school committee is working hard to finalize a plan to get the nursery school back to profitability and pay us back for this year's deficit. They have been given the OK to offer an afternoon program. The hope is that by offering an afternoon program, the morning will have more appeal.

Jim Forbush, Stewardship chair, wants us to keep in mind how our position becomes more tenuous each year. This year our financial shortfall is \$58,000; \$50,000 needs to come out of the endowment and the following year. Then we lose part of this major gift; then we lose the balance of the gift. So then our deficit grows in 2012 to over \$100,000. That's what we are looking at. Our endowment is now down from about 1.2 million to about 600,000 that is going to run out at the rate we are going by about 2018.

What does that mean? When Kevern talked about the things the congregation had decided to do over the last 15 years, what we did was put in professional people in RE, administration, music. These are the things we think are important to us as a church. I think we enjoy them immensely today; this is a well run church. You could cut expenses by sharing a pastor with another church and eliminate paid positions.

There is a different way to look at things is to get more money coming in. If you think about how money comes in – it comes in 3 ways. One is pledges and collections and we get that every year; the second is bequests, which is what has built our endowment; the third is a capital campaign which has been used for specific things. Jim said that this year's pledge campaign was successful – there were more than 90 increased or new pledges. He does not see a very large increase there in the future. There are less people pledging now (151) than there were 3 years ago (175). There is always room for more members. Our endowment came from 2 fairly large bequests and we haven't had much since then. Planned giving – putting the church in your will -- is something for people to think about and it would help the church's endowment. Then there is always a capital campaign. We would not plan on a capital campaign in a poor economy but we would consider it for the future. We could do it and earmark certain funds for say a building fund, the music program, or just the general endowment.

Quarterly Meeting Notes for March 29, 2009 (Continued)

Will summarized. He stated that he has served in a lot of churches, but this is the first one that actually mentioned wills in a meeting. He found it refreshing to hear planned giving talked about. He talked about the decisions the congregation has made which were good ones, but in this day and age it makes us think about how we are going to do church from this point on.

He mentioned that on Easter Sunday 19 new members will join the church. He said that we should not look at new members with dollar signs or as slot fillers on committees. People join the church for community and spiritual fulfillment. Sometime down the road they may serve. He apologized for increasing the number for the UCC payment, but said that it was great to add to our membership. He said that planning his installation was very difficult because there was something happening almost every weekend. He thought that was a great thing.

Kevern said that Will talked with the Smith Mills Congregational minister and for 2 weeks during July their minister will come here and for 2 weeks Will will go there. So we won't have to pay for a call minister and they won't either. And that will save both churches some money.

Someone mentioned thinking of other creative ideas for ways of saving money—regionalizing services or fees for participation. Something to think about.

Another member of the congregation said that if he was to donate money say for the music program, he would want to be sure that it would be used for that and not the general funds. Kevern stated that there are various memorial funds and restricted funds. He thinks the amount in them is \$17,000 - \$20,000. They are there for specific purposes and used for those. The idea that any money given for a specific purpose has been used for something else is false. A person would have to specify a purpose if that is wanted. In answer to questions, it was stated that some funds are invested in CD's; but most of the money that the church has ends up in the investment fund.

One of the things being talked about is some evening having a lawyer come and talk about wills and estate planning and someone talk about annuities and trusts.

Restructure – Recommit

Members of this team are Bob Lytle, Dick Purdy, Kate Dabney, Ridley Rhind, Kevern Joyce, Ann Whitney, Linda Gouveia and Will.

All groups and committee names will be changed. The names we are working with now are cumbersome so we need to figure them out or let the groups come up with their own names – keeping in mind that they cannot keep the same name they had. All names are changed even the minister who will be the pastor because as Will sees it we are all ministers.

This is where we are as we talked about at the January meeting. The restructure groups got together several times separately, then came together and put it into one piece. If it looks like it is workable, we will figure out what we have to do. We may suspend the organization part of the by-laws so we can work with it and then think about updating the by-laws later once we know it works well. When Kevern was doing research, he found that we have the longest by-laws of any he looked into.

The Congregation is still the main decision making body for the church. It calls the pastor, approves budget and salaries, sells property, etc.

We have replaced the Executive Committee with the Church Council. It runs the church organization between the congregational meetings. We will have a chair and a vice-chair instead of moderator, the chairs of the various Ministries (committees), the pastor and 2 at large members

Quarterly Meeting Notes for March 29, 2009 (Continued)

elected by the congregation. The Chair would serve for 2 years with the Vice-chair working with the chair then the Vice-chair would move up to be the chair. You would have continuity in the position of the chair.

The Pastor would have the same role as the current minister and would supervise the staff. The staff would be selected by the Pastor with input from the various ministries and council approval.

That is the core working group within the church. Our structure as it exists now came from pre-colonial municipalities.

What we want to get for these ministries (formerly committees) are 5 or 6 people who are passionate about that area, who will commit to working, who are going to show up. The following are the new ministry (committee) organizations:

What was Religious Education – now the **Ministry of Spiritual Formation**
Sunday School, Youth Programs, Young Adults, Adult Education, Mentoring Youth

Ministry of Fellowship—this is sort of Ways and Means and the direction it was heading—a fun focus and we have brought in some other things: Involvement – Prayer chain, Home Visitation, Home Visits, Specific Interest Programs, Guild; Membership including Hospitality, Fellowship events, New Fellowship Ministry

Financial Stewards -- primarily 2 focuses of asset management but separating building and grounds from investments and financial reporting: Asset Management of Buildings and Grounds, Investments, Budget development, Financial reports; Human resources, Fund raising – Annual appeal and Planned giving

Worship Ministry-- picks up the rest of what Deacons do: Music, Liturgy, Flowers, Ushers/greeters, Sacrament; Rites, Special Services

Ministry of Opportunity-- Deals with things that come up and need to be resolved – may have limited duration Long range Initiatives, Nursery School, Reflection/Assessment and Future planning, Green Initiatives, Nominating

Missions Ministry was Outreach but added some other things that we have not done much with: Community Service, Worldwide missions, Interchurch Council, Old Colony Council, Mass. UCC

Communications Ministry – whenever we have a problem it seems to come back to communications or lack of communications: Growth – attract outsiders, Public Relations, Internal Communications – Website, Spire, and Blog.
Overlying all of this is Trust. Trust is what makes it possible for organizations to work.

Bob Lytle commented that it was a good presentation. He had some comments to make. He said think in terms of ad hoc, smaller groups Right now we need 75 people to staff our boards; we probably don't need that many. So think smaller committees, empowered that can form and be disbanded. Think in terms of what is appropriate today

Karen McArthur stated that Massachusetts law requires a Treasurer, Clerk and President

Meeting adjourned
Lee Murray, Clerk

TREASURER'S REPORT (Financial Reports)

The Congregational Church of South Dartmouth
Statement of Financial Position
 As of December 31, 2007 and 2008

unaudited
 04/13/2009

		Dec 31, 07		Dec 31, 08
1	ASSETS			
2	Current Assets			
3	Checking/Savings			
4	Citizens Bank	34,630		55,547
5	Children's Circle Checking	5,522		2,707
6	Money Market	10,019		1,600
7	Parsonage Security Deposit	1,600		0
8	Petty Cash	43		50
9	Total Checking/Savings	51,814		59,905
10	Accounts Receivable	(637)		400
11	Other Current Assets			
12	Due from employees	39		39
13	Due from others	796		371
14	Gulbranson Account	10,362		10,384
15	MA Cong'l Fund Account	18,439		13,491
16	Prepaid Expenses	16,175		6,973
17	Sherman Account	5,001		5,001
18	US Trust Investment Account	1,220,987		766,208
19	Total Other Current Assets	1,271,799		802,467
20	Total Current Assets	1,322,976		862,772
21	TOTAL ASSETS	1,322,976		862,772
22	LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS			
23	Liabilities			
24	Current Liabilities			
25	Accounts Payable	11,610		7,258
26	Due to employees			1,667
27	Due to others	1,600		
28	Deferred Revenue	1,900		100
29	Prepaid Nursery School Tuition	5,430		7,135
30	Payroll Liabilities	4,149		3,338
31	Total Current Liabilities	24,690		19,498
32	Total Liabilities	24,690		19,498
33	Net Assets			
34	Unrestricted Funds			
35	Operating Fund	46,814		25,329
36	Non-Operational Funds	1,015,778		641,087
37	Children's Circle Funds	(1,442)		(11,682)
38	Temporarily Restricted Funds			

TREASURER'S REPORT (Financial Reports) continued

Statement of Financial Position (continued)

39	Prepaid Pledges Fund	163,640	110,814
40	Other Temporarily Restricted Funds	36,647	40,876
41	Permanently Restricted Net Assets	36,850	36,850
42	Total Net Assets	1,298,287	843,273
43	TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	1,322,976	862,772

TREASURER'S REPORT (Financial Reports) continued

The Congregational Church of South Dartmouth, UCC

unaudited
04/13/2009

Statement of Activities - All Funds

January through December 2008

	OPERATIONA L	c	CHILDREN' S CIRCLE	NON- OPERATIONA L	RESTRICTE D	c	TOTAL
BEGINNING FUND BALANCES	46,814		(1,442)	1,015,778	237,137		1,298,287
INCOME							
CONTRIBUTION RECEIPTS	195,882			725	(20,155)		176,452
FACILITIES INCOME	23,821	e	(12,000)			e	11,821
GRANT INCOME					1,200		1,200
INVESTMENT INCOME	81,845		5	4,433	406		86,689
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	340			1,627			1,967
CHILDREN'S CIRCLE INCOME			65,987				65,987
NON-OPERATIONAL INCOME				100	21,658		21,758
TOTAL INCOME	301,887		53,992	6,886	3,109		365,874
EXPENSE							
CHRISTIAN OUTREACH					30,256		30,256
PASTORAL	111,302						111,302
ADMINISTRATION CHILDREN'S CIRCLE PROGRAM	76,918		3,509	511	1		80,939
			60,067			e	60,067
CHURCH OPERATION	76,266		656		213		77,135
PARSONAGE OPERATION	5,188						5,188
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	31,673				211		31,884
WORSHIP AND DEVOTIONAL	22,026			1,976	171		24,174
NON-OPERATIONAL ITEMS				100	20,853		20,953
TOTAL EXPENSES	323,372		64,232	2,587	51,705		441,897
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES				(16,053)			(16,053)
NET INVESTMENT GAINS / (LOSSES)				(362,937)			(362,937)
ENDING NET ASSETS	25,329		(11,682)	641,087	188,540		843,273

NOTES

- c Missions and Outreach activity is included in the Restricted column
- d Includes Restricted Contributions of \$33,074, less prepaid pledges of 53,229
- e Operational facilities income includes \$12,000 from Children's Circle: \$7200 received and \$4800 receivable

TREASURER'S REPORT (Financial Reports) continued

The Congregational Church of South Dartmouth
Statement of Fund Balances
As of December 31, 2007 and 2008

unaudited

04/13/2009

**CHANGE IN
NET
ASSETS**

	<u>Dec 31, 07</u>	<u>Dec 31, 08</u>	
1	Unrestricted Funds		
2	46,814	25,329	(21,485)
3	9,137	7,537	(1,600)
4		123	123
5	Investment Fund		
6	2,554	(1,497)	(4,051)
7	(2,175)	2,258	4,433
8	52,551	52,551	0
9	590,881	219,169	a (371,712)
10	362,780	360,896	(1,884)
11	1,006,591	633,377	(373,214)
12	50	50	0
13	(1,442)	(11,682)	b (10,240)
14	1,061,150	654,733	(406,417)
15	Temporarily Restricted Funds		
16	163,640	110,814	(52,826)
17		579	579
18	1,230	1,580	350
19	556	343	(213)
20	Library Fund		
21	4,849	4,693	(156)
22	1,128	1,411	284
23	5,977	6,104	128
24	Memorial Funds		
25	11,943	14,163	2,220
26	2,954	3,454	500
27	14,897	17,617	2,720
28	3,891	4,750	859
29	(2,540)	(2,515)	25
30	Outreach Fund		
31	188	87	(101)
32	120	50	(70)
33	308	137	(171)
34	440	(656)	(1,095)
35		268	268
36	Youth Fellowship Fund		
37	9,354	10,329	974
38	1,420	1,176	(244)
39	10,775	11,505	730
40	863	863	0
41	251	301	50
42	200,287	151,690	(48,597)

TREASURER'S REPORT (Financial Reports) continued
Statement of Fund Balances Continued

43	Permanently Restricted Funds				
44	Bailey Davis Fund	5,750	5,750		0
45	Beauvais Fund	15,885	15,885	a	0
46	Sarah's Scholarship Fund	10,213	10,213	a	0
47	Sherman Fund	5,001	5,001		0
48	Total Permanently Restricted Funds	36,850	36,850		0
49	TOTAL	1,298,287	843,273		(455,013)

NOTES

- a Value as of 12/31/02 included in Permanently Restricted Funds; original bequest amount tbd
- b Children's Circle Fund as of 12/31/08 does not include prepaid 2009 tuition, which is listed as a liability

The Congregational Church of South Dartmouth, UCC
Investment Income
January through December 2008

unaudited
04/13/2009

	Unrestricted	Restricted	TOTAL
Citizens Bank			
Checking Account	\$18		\$18
Children's Circle Account	5		5
Money Market Account	71		71
Sovereign Bank			
Scholarship Income Accounts		406	406
Sherman Accounts	185		185
US Trust			
Investment Accounts	54,433		54,433
Massachusetts Congregational Fund			
Beauvais Account	1,266		1,266
UCC Maturing Memorial Account			0
Bank of America			
Stetson Trust	30,305		30,305
Subtotal	\$86,283	\$406	\$86,689
Net Investment Gains / (Losses), less fees			
Beauvais Account	-\$4,051		-4,051
US Trust	-358,886		-358,886
TOTAL	-\$276,654	\$406	-\$276,248

TREASURER'S REPORT (Financial Reports) continued

Reconciliation of US Trust Balances

Balance 1/1/08	\$1,220,987
Prepaid stock gifts paid to 2008 operating fund	(50,000)
Investment Interest & Dividends	54,433
Transfers for Operational Expenses as budgeted	(50,000)
Transfer of Temporarily Restricted Funds to Money Market	(37,500)
Transfers for Capital Projects	(12,826)
Net Investment Gains / (losses), less fees	(358,886)
Note: US Trust balance includes \$14,100 Temporarily Restricted funds	
Ending Balance 12/31/08	\$766,208

Capital Activities

	2008 Budget	2008 Actual	2009 Budget
CAPITAL SOURCES			
Insurance reimbursement		1,627	
Withdrawal from Investments	5,338	14,426	
Total CAPITAL SOURCES	5,338	16,053	0
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES			
Telephone system	2,731	2,731	
Water Heater	2,607	2,607	
Parsonage Painting		1,864	
Sewer Pump		4,851	
Soffit Repair		2,400	
Kitchen Roof		1,600	
Total CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	5,338	16,053	0

TREASURER'S REPORT (Reports) continued

The Congregational Church of South Dartmouth
Statement of Operational Activities vs. Budget
 (includes Outreach Funds)

unaudited
 04/13/2009

	2008 Budget	Actual Jan - Dec 08	2009 Budget
1 Beginning Operating & Outreach Fund Balances	47,122	47,122	25,465
2 Income			
3 CONTRIBUTION RECEIPTS			
4 Pledges - Current Year	178,893	162,134	190,000
5 Mission Pledges - Current Year	30,088	32,877	25,000
6 Previous Year Pledges	5,000	2,073	2,000
7 Previous Year Mission Pledges	500	97	100
8 Loose Collection			
9 Non-pledged Contributions	10,000	16,857	12,000
10 Loose Collection - Other	5,000	4,589	5,000
11 Total Loose Collection	15,000	21,446	17,000
12 Special Mission Donations		4,614	
13 Ways & Means Income	5,000	2,061	5,000
14 Bequest income	1,884	1,884	
15 Total CONTRIBUTION RECEIPTS	236,365	227,186	239,100
16 FACILITIES INCOME			
17 Nursery School	12,000	12,000	4,800
18 Parsonage Rental	8,000	9,600	
19 FACILITIES INCOME - Other	2,500	2,221	2,500
20 Total FACILITIES INCOME	22,500	23,821	7,300
21 INVESTMENT INCOME			
22 Bank Interest		89	75
23 Beauvais Fund Income	1,500	1,266	1,500
24 Sherman Fund Income		185	150
25 Stetson Bequest Income	20,000	30,305	25,000
26 Transfer from Investment Income	50,000	50,000	50,000
27 Total INVESTMENT INCOME	71,500	81,845	76,725
28 MISCELLANEOUS INCOME		340	
29 Total Income	330,365	333,192	323,125

TREASURER'S REPORT (Reports) continued
Statement of Operating Activities vs. Budget continued

	2008 Budget	Actual Jan - Dec 08	2009 Budget
30	Expense		
31	WORSHIP AND DEVOTIONAL		
32	18,184	18,184	18,893
33	250		
34	700	675	700
35	2,500	1,067	2,500
36	500		
37	1,050	1,096	1,050
38	600		600
39	1,650	850	1,650
40	300	153	300
41			750
42	Total WORSHIP AND DEVOTIONAL	22,026	26,443
43	PASTORAL		
44	52,250	51,500	50,000
45	25,000	16,667	
46	1,000	955	1,250
47		1,667	5,000
48	5,910	5,725	5,355
49	7,863	9,677	16,500
50	1,159	1,123	1,050
51	10,815	10,478	9,800
52	5,000	6,730	
53	950		
54	12,000	6,782	6,000
55	Total PASTORAL	111,302	94,955
56	PARSONAGE OPERATION		
57	2,500	558	1,500
58	3,000	2,896	7,000
59	1,750	1,734	
60	Total PARSONAGE OPERATION	5,188	8,500
61	RELIGIOUS EDUCATION		
62	18,184	18,184	18,893
63	7,694	7,694	7,994
64	325		325
65	500	463	500
66	800	950	800
67	700	1,240	700
68	300	133	300
69	1,000	1,987	1,000
70	2,000	1,021	2,000
71	Total RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	31,673	32,512

TREASURER'S REPORT (Reports) continued
Statement of Operating Activities vs. Budget continued

	2008 Budget	Actual Jan - Dec 08	2009 Budget
72	CHRISTIAN OUTREACH		
73		4,768	
74		2,000	
75		21,920	
76		2,787	
77	30,588		25,100
78	Total CHRISTIAN OUTREACH	31,475	25,100
79	ADMINISTRATION		
80	47,552	47,900	49,407
81	500	1,173	500
82	1,200	780	1,200
83	3,040	2,292	3,040
84	8,241	7,762	8,269
85	1,329	1,247	1,329
86	600	316	600
87	2,400	2,811	2,400
88	9,265	7,871	8,103
89	540	525	600
90	3,400	3,073	3,400
91		548	
92	800	570	800
93	750		500
94		50	
95	Total ADMINISTRATION	76,918	80,148
96	CHURCH OPERATION		
97	25,750	25,750	26,754
98	7,500	9,982	8,500
99	300	300	300
100	500	975	500
101	4,000	4,350	4,000
102	4,500	4,724	4,500
103	1,100		1,100
104	480	1,460	480
105	12,000	8,617	9,500
106	13,878	13,583	11,796
107	1,825	2,347	1,962
108	1,500	1,934	1,875
109	1,250	1,340	1,250
110	700	903	700
111	Total CHURCH OPERATION	76,266	73,217
112	Total Expense	354,848	340,875
113	Ending Operating & Outreach Fund Balances	25,465	7,715

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH REPORT

The purpose of the Outreach Board is to lead our church in specific and concrete programs of witness and outreach, in order that the love of God experienced in our midst may be shared with the community—locally, nationally and worldwide.

As in years past we continue outreach to individuals, organizations and communities in need. Our work can be divided into three broad areas:

1. Identifying organizations meaningful to members of the congregation and distributing monies dedicated as “mission” in the annual appeal. This is done both seasonally and at our annual year-end award period.
2. Coordinating financial support to organizations or individuals on an emergency basis.
3. Coordinating non-monetary giving and acts of service to those in need.

Our goals for the year included the following:

- Host a hands-on service project at the request of those who participated in previous work days at HarbOUR House and PAACA in 2007 and invite more of the congregation to get involved.
- Encourage the congregation to help those in need through Turkey Sales for Thanksgiving and Holiday Hope at Christmas.
- Showcase the importance of and commitment to mission outreach through UCC related special giving opportunities such as Neighbors in Need and One Great Hour of Sharing.
- Seek ways to naturally weave service/mission work into the life of our church including how we interface with Youth Groups and with Sunday School projects.
- Fund projects recommended by the congregation, focusing on locally-based mission.
- Choosing international mission projects that correspond to the church-wide program themes of water and fishing (2007-2008) and Mission-Green (2008-2009).

A summary of our activities and what we are most proud of is listed below.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

PAACA/NB Prevention Partnership - This organization is dedicated to improving the quality of South coast neighborhoods by promoting prevention and treatment initiatives related to substance abuse, violence and crime (both adult and youth services). Over 1000 people are served weekly with transportation for treatment and employment and training services, and the building’s food and clothing pantry is open daily. Various 12-step programs meet there weekly.

The focus of our Legacy project on October 18th was to enhance the exterior of the building by doing general clean-up, weeding, mulching and planting hostas and spring bulbs. We also did extensive interior painting including the main hall, front and back entrances, and assisted New Bedford community artist,

M-C Lamarre, with the painting of a colorful mural in the main hall. Congregation volunteers (approximately 39 adult and 9 youth) can tell you that the spiritual benefits of teamwork, camaraderie, and our interaction with the people at PAACA were at least equal to the visible transformation of the building itself. This very special work day also served as a fitting introduction for our new minister!

Please note that the reports of the **Youth Group, Sunday School, and Women’s Guild** all reference donations and service projects. The Outreach Board is very proud and pleased that other groups and individuals within the church take the initiative to perform these acts of mission and outreach. The commitment of our religious education and youth group staff and volunteers has

been to weave mission work into their year-long curriculum. Natural connections between young and old are made possible with this type of partnership.

Financially Funded Organizations:

Regional/Local Funding

***The Inter-Church Council of Greater New Bedford:* 2008 Mission Donation \$2,000**

The purpose of the Inter-Church Council is to foster cooperative Christian service and fellowship among the churches and other interested organizations of the Greater New Bedford area and to promote in the community such projects, educational, moral, social and spiritual as will attain that end. The organization maintains a focus on ecumenical cooperation and social, economic and racial justice. Our church is a member of the Inter-Church Council. Three housing ministries, the Representative Payee Ministry, the Health and Faith Ministry, and the Counseling Center are among the signature efforts of the ICC.

***Market Ministries Shelter:* 2008 Mission Donation \$4,232**

Sister Rose Gallogly directs one of the most effective and valuable meals and shelter programs in the region. Market Ministries holds an association with Pilgrim United (our sister Congregational Church in downtown New Bedford) and serves thousands of people in need each year. The organization provides 24-hour shelter and referral services 7 days a week, serves meals 5 days a week, provides transportation when needed, and distributes food as requested. We would like to thank Betsey Johnson for her many years of organizing volunteers from our congregation who help prepare and serve meals here once per month.

The amount of our donation includes the congregation's Christmas Eve offering.

"Paper Turkeys"

Total contributions to Market Ministries were boosted by an additional \$1,120 not reflected above, by your purchases of our paper turkeys at Thanksgiving time.

***Minister's Discretionary Fund* 2008 Mission Donation \$1,500**

These monies are appropriated to the Minister who distributes them to those within our local community with special needs (fuel assistance, groceries, etc.) The recipients of these funds are held in confidence.

***Nativity Preparatory School* 2008 Mission Donation \$2,500**

Nativity Prep is an independent tuition-free middle school for boys from low-income families in the New Bedford area. The school provides a challenging and supportive learning environment, where motivated students of all faiths are offered an intellectual, cultural, physical and moral education. The goal is to graduate young men who are academically prepared for further education, inspired to lead their lives with humility and dedicated to serving others. Our donation this year provides half of the tuition for one student.

***Sharing the Harvest Community Farm Project* 2008 Mission Donation \$1,000**

Sharing the Harvest is a program that works to alleviate hunger for children and families from Fall River to Wareham by farming land at the Dartmouth YMCA. The program depends on volunteer support during the growing season to grow fresh produce which is distributed to area food pantries, soup kitchens and other feeding programs by the Hunger Commission of Southeastern Massachusetts.

Christian Outreach Report continued

The Hunger Commission

2008 Mission Donation \$2,500

The mission of the Hunger Commission is to feed families in the Greater New Bedford region who are food-insecure and to ensure the on-going well-being of these families through advocacy. Staff of the commission are advocates at the State level and provide emergency food and shelter services at the local level. Trucks in the region pick up donated food and make deliveries to soup kitchens and food pantries from Fall River to Wareham. 750,000 meals are provided annually.

Dennison Memorial Community Center

2008 Mission Donation \$500

The Dennison Memorial Community Center is funded by United Way since 1868. It serves as an academic, artistic, and physical education center for children. They offer different programs such as the Drop-In program for children and teens aged 6-16 and the School Day Care Program (since 1986) for 65 children.

Y.W.C.A.

2008 Mission Donation \$1,500

The "Y" was chosen as a mission work because of its commitment to helping women attain self-sufficiency. Our funding was directed to help furnish and supply their two shelter residences.

PACE

2008 Mission Donation \$2,000

The PACE Fuel Assistance Program assists moderate and low income households with their heating needs. The Program helps pay heating bills from November 1st through April 30th every year. Fuel Assistance is an income-based program, and it does not matter what source of heat the client uses.

Our Sisters School

2008 Mission Donation \$1,000

The mission of this newly-opened school is to educate and inspire middle-school girls of diverse faiths, races and cultures from the Greater New Bedford area to reach their full potential in a safe, supportive and challenging environment.

Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater New Bedford

2008 Mission Donation \$1,000

Our donation was directed toward their America Reads Program, which is instrumental in addressing and reversing illiteracy among youngsters in the greater New Bedford area.

SHARE

2008 Mission Donation \$1,000

The mission of the Society for Human Advancement through Rehabilitation Engineering, based at UMass Dartmouth, is to empower physically challenged, non-speaking children and adults to express their basic wants and needs, communicate with others, control their immediate environments and achieve the greatest practical level of independence. SHARE succeeds in its mission by directing resources that enable the design, adaptation and fabrication of high technology equipment tailored specifically to the unique abilities of every individual who seeks help.

International Funding

Our Church's Wider Mission

2008 Mission Donation \$2,000

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) is the name used to describe the work done as the United Church of Christ beyond the local church – through Conferences, national ministries, and international relief work.

UCC Water for Life

2008 Mission Donation \$1,000

Our donation provides a water pump, as well as the training to use it, wherever in the world that it is needed. This project is administered by Church World Service.

Christian Outreach Report continued

Hands Across the Sea

2008 Mission Donation \$500

Hands Across the Sea works to solicit in-kind donations of educational materials and to deliver them where they are needed. The catamaran *Hands Across the Sea* is currently sailing in the Caribbean and as such is focused on helping local island schools.

The African Garden Relocation Project

2008 Mission Donation \$500

A Peace Corps volunteer from Westport, Massachusetts led an initiative in Wompou, Mauritania, to substantially enhance the quality of life in his village by increasing vegetable production and improving the diet of the local population. Our donation went toward the purchase of an irrigation pump that was critically needed to successfully grow vegetables in a harsh environment.

Special Offerings through OCWM

One Great Hour of Sharing

Our Congregation's Donation \$1,667

The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water and food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, emergency relief, and advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

Neighbors in Need

Our Congregation's Donation \$768

NIN is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

Event Organizing and Fundraising

Each year the Board of Christian Outreach considers various organizations raising monies through specific sponsorship events (such as walks and relays). A church team is formed and participation/fundraising is coordinated by Board members. This year two such event efforts were sponsored.

Holiday Hope Holiday Hope is a Christmas program of Child and Family Services. Church families agree to provide holiday gifts and food to regional families in need. This year the Church contributed to the Christmas celebration of 30 individuals and 14 families. Mission funds cover the cost of transportation vouchers for families, as well.

Relay for Life The American Cancer Society's Relay for Life has become one of the nation's signature events bringing people together to support cancer survivorship. The New Bedford Relay is one of the largest and most successful of the thousands of Relays worldwide. Last year Team Congo finished in a very close 3rd place out of 70+ teams. We were one of only three Diamond teams and raised \$22,500.

Links for a Cure This event, which includes a golf tournament and silent auction at Allendale Country Club, raises funds for two organizations: Relay for Life and Louie's Run, which is a fundraiser for MIND (Mass General Institute for Neurodegenerative Diseases). In 2008 Links raised about \$5500 for Relay for Life due in large part to great support from the congregation.

Christian Outreach Report continued

Non-Monetary Giving

Friends in Need Food Drive Every week two shopping carts welcome people to deposit food for those who have less. Catholic Social Services receives regular contributions of non-perishable food items from a generous congregation. While we do not detail the overall monetary value of our food drive, it clearly is measured in the thousands of dollars each year.

Winter Clothing/Coat Drive Responding to a call by the New Bedford Public Schools, the Board offered to coordinate the collection and delivery of various forms of winter warming wear – coats, gloves, scarves and blankets. The school nurses identified those children in greatest need. Outreach volunteers delivered several very large wagon loads of warmth donated by the congregation in 2008.

Even the smallest gift makes a difference... The Outreach Board has an ongoing collection of small toiletries, such as those provided by hotels. If you have any unused handy complimentary soaps & lotions, etc. please consider adding to our collection for Donovan House, a homeless shelter for women and children in New Bedford.

Apprenticeship Teachers Through our relationship with PAACA, some members of our congregation have gotten involved with a nationally renowned Middle School afterschool program, Citizen Schools, with a site in New Bedford. This after school enrichment program for Middle School children (6th to 8th grades), is staffed largely by volunteers. 70 students participate 2 days a week. Volunteers teach all sorts of different things in the way of hobbies and skills. Knitting, cooking, theater, mock trials are some examples. The volunteers teach for 10 weeks, one day a week from 4:00 to 5:15, and there is back up from the staff. At the end of that period there is demonstration of skills learned – a big WOW.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lara Stone

For this year much of the Deacon's focus has been in support of the arrival and assimilation of our new pastor, Reverend Will Sencabaugh. In August we met with Will for the first time and began discussing how we could best support his transition. Out of this meeting and others that followed the Deacon's defined our purpose for the year as "Creating Sacred Space" and our theme as "Connections".

In support of the above we subsequently engaged in the following activities throughout the year:

- Working with Will, we arranged a series of house meetings, inviting church members to gather in people's homes and have the opportunity to meet Will, learn more about his vision for his ministry here and ask questions to generally get to know him better. The meetings were a great success with over 80 church members having the chance to meet and get to know Will in this more intimate setting.
- We selected, purchased and placed new Bibles in the sanctuary. Every bible was purchased by a member of the congregation in honor/memory of a loved one with a plaque placed in the bible. New pew racks were also built and installed to accommodate the Bibles (thanks to all who helped in this effort!).
- We began utilizing lay scripture readers at most 10A services in an effort to engage more members directly in worship.
- Singing of "Our Father's God To Thee" is being re-introduced to the order of worship 1-2 times per month in order to accommodate a request by many members who noted its' absence over the transition period.
- In addition, "Go In Love" is being added back in at the end of the service, also in an intermittent fashion.
- To make it easier for those who wish to, Linda created a master sign-up book for all members interested in donating flowers, hosting coffee hour, serving as a greeter or reading scripture during the service.
- As a board we introduced a spiritual practice into our own meetings – beginning several meetings with a scripture reading and discussion before conducting other business.
- We worked with RE to coordinate the Maundy Thursday service with the Stations of the Cross, encouraging members to arrive early in time to walk the stations prior to attending this special service conducted by the Deacons. The result was a wonderful experience for all, with attendance significantly greater than in recent years.
- We look forward to sharing a special experience with this year's confirmation class, always a highlight of our year.
- We continued to perform all of our regular responsibilities, including: serving communion, assisting in new member and baptismal services, decorating the sanctuary for the holidays, participating in new member classes, and generally ensuring that the sanctuary is properly maintained, coordinating all activities that take place there with the pastor.

Starting in December, the Deacons also began discussing our overall structure and role in church governance. With guidance from Will, we began exploring reorganizing our responsibilities into two categories: Worship – encompassing all aspects of worship, including Music; and, Hospitality – encompassing all aspects of our responsibilities related new members, coffee hour, greeters, Lay Shepherds ...etc. As a part of this effort the Deacons met jointly with the Music Committee to discuss how these two groups could work more closely together and even merge entirely to form a new Worship Committee. A "pilot" of this Worship Committee was assigned responsibility for

Deacons' Report continued

working with Will to coordinate all Holy Week services this year. The results have been quite positive. Subsequent to the Deacon's exploration of our functioning, Will and the Executive Committee have taken on an examination of the overall church board structure, out of which is a likely restructuring of our responsibilities into something approximating that described above. We consider this to be a very positive change.

The Board wishes to thank Susan Blatchford and Scott Whiting, who will be stepping down this year. Their service and valuable contributions over the past six years will be greatly missed. Also, we continue to be grateful for all that Linda Keith does to support us as a board and the church in general. We would truly be lost without her great skills and effort. We thank Bill Jones for providing our music program and the choir for their good effort and voices. A special thanks also goes to David Schell whose tireless service and devotion to the church and ongoing support of the Deacons can never be matched. Finally, we are thrilled by and grateful for the arrival of Reverend Will. Having had the opportunity to work closely with him during this transition period has been an incredible blessing and only confirms the wisdom of the Search Committee in their selection of him to lead us into what will surely be a bright future.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Stone, Chairman – Board of Deacons

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REPORT

Board of Religious Education, Directors of the Religious Education and Youth Fellowship

The Religious Education Board was very excited to welcome our new minister, Reverend Will Sencabaugh to our ministry. His excitement, support and guidance has contributed to a very successful year. Together, we have enacted a program that truly spread the word of God and put our faith's lessons into action for church members and friends of all ages. Detailed reports will follow from Wendy Reardon and Daphne Fogg Siegal.

Our board consisted of Diane Medeiros, Rich Rende, Cheryl Slomkowski, Heather Pacine, Catherine Theodore, Pam Paynton, Karen Ostebo, Laurie O'Neil, chair, and ex-officio members, Wendy Reardon, Religious Education Director and Daphne Fogg Siegal, Director of Youth Fellowship. Members we said goodbye to included Betsy Johnson, Maureen Jones and Diana Nichols.

After serving the children and youth of our church for the past 11 years, it was with mixed emotions we accepted Daphne Fogg Siegal's letter of resignation effective May 31st, 2009, as Director of Youth Fellowship. Fortunately, she has decided to continue in her role as Senior Youth Fellowship Leader. Our gratitude, and that of all the children she has touched, is enormous, and we express our very best wishes to Daphne as she explores this new phase in her life.

Laurie O'Neil will also be leaving as a board member as she has served two consecutive terms.

Looking forward, our Board has begun discussions of how to continue our excellent programming while being mindful of the financial challenges ahead. We foresee two areas we hope to save money in the coming year- Crib Room Attendant and the splitting of the Youth Fellowship Positions. An area we plan to increase revenues will be in registration fees for Youth Fellowship.

Finally, our board is looking forward to working together with our newly developed church structure as we continue to make a difference in the lives of our church family, our local community and the world around us.

Laurie O'Neil, Chairperson Religious Education Board

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Financially speaking, 2008 was one of the most difficult years that many of us have ever seen. Individuals and institutions throughout the world suffered significant financial losses. Virtually all types of investments – stocks, bonds, real estate and commodities – lost value. Our church is not immune from the financial distress caused by falling home values, high unemployment and collapsed credit markets. Our investments declined in value along with those of other endowments, pension plans, and individuals throughout the world. We are, however, indeed fortunate to have a sufficient endowment to carry us through difficult times and financial crises.

At the end of 2008, our endowment or invested funds totaled \$766,208. This represents a decline of \$454,779 from our 2007 balance. Of this decline, \$358,886 or 79% resulted from the decrease in market value of our investments. The other 21% went to cover operating expenses, capital improvements and the 2008 deficit. As of December 31, 2008, the church's investments were comprised of:

Cash	\$ 73,852	9.6%
Equities	389,780	50.9%
Fixed Income	238,265	31.1%
Real Estate Trusts	30,677	4.0%
Commodities	<u>33,634</u>	<u>4.4%</u>
Total	\$766,208	100.0 %

Our investments yielded \$45,790 in dividends, \$36,224 in capital gains, and \$6,765 in interest. Our portfolio continues to be well-diversified. Equity investments in large, mid and small cap U.S. companies total \$271,997. Foreign investments in developed and emerging markets total \$117,787. Fixed income investments include \$154,799 of U.S. bonds and \$83,467 of foreign bonds. We also have \$64,311 in alternative investments. Our investments have been professionally managed for 16 years with the last 6 years by US Trust, where Diane Salamone is currently our investment advisor.

Turning to 2008 operations, income from contributions, facilities and investments totaled \$333,192 versus a budget of \$330,365. Notable variances from budget include: \$16,759 shortfall in pledges, \$6,446 increase over budget in non-pledged and loose collections, and an additional \$10,000 over what was budgeted from the Stetson Bequest.

Expenses for staff, property, programs and mission outreach were \$354,666. There was a deficit (income less expense) of \$21,474. Although it was large, the deficit was only about half of what was originally anticipated and included in the budget. This reduced deficit resulted from lower spending in almost every area, especially in the pastoral category, where the arrival of a full-time minister saved us \$10,645 as compared to the budget for an interim minister. Credit must also be given to our staff for once again operating below the budgeted levels for their areas.

2008 was also a difficult year for our Nursery School. A shortfall in enrollment caused a deficit of \$10,240. A report from the study group that volunteered to help the school with its enrollment will present their findings and recommendations at the annual meeting.

In closing, the Trustees would like to recognize and thank all who contributed their time, treasure and talents to make our church what it is. We also thank our gifted and hard-working staff for all they do behind the scenes for our programs, buildings and property. And finally, our thanks to Ridley Rhind whose term on Trustees is expiring, for the many contributions he made over the past six years. Respectfully submitted, **Philip Guymont, Chairman**

“FELLOWSHIP” aka WAYS AND MEANS REPORT

Members: Debbie Durland Co-chair, Cyn Spence Co-chair, Gene Antonell, Susan Gabert, Larry Kemper, Sally Lemlin, John Lewis, Carolyn Lytle, Rich Madsen, Lee Murray, Sue Sullivan, Wendy Weidenfeller

The Ways and Means Committee changed it's focus and tested out a new name "Fellowship". With the emphasis on fellowship we hosted several more activities this year. Many were no cost or very low cost in addition to the traditional fundraisers. Activities that include the entire family were also part of the fellowship focus.

The fall started off with a campfire sing along held at the council ring of the Dartmouth YMCA. We had a good evening with stars in the sky, plenty of marshmallows for toasting, good fellowship and voice. Ice skating at the Hetland rink was the activity for early December. Next was the Chocolate Cook off at the Waterfront Grille. The amateur winners were Sally Lemlin with her Lava Cake topped with ice cream in the desert category and Jane Rioux with her Chocolate Creams for confections. Along with the cook off there was a silent auction that included chocolates donated by Nantucket Chocolates. This fun activity raised about \$500.

Lee's Market dinner, held each fall for several years, was given a new time and venue. The Grange in Russells Mills was the setting for a wonderful meal in early March. This fundraiser added approximately \$1,400 to the general fund.

Palm Sunday kites were made during coffee hour and then flown that afternoon at Fort Taber. The weather cooperated and it was sunny and windy. Almost too windy for the fragile kites but there was plenty of tape to the rescue.

At the time of this writing we are working hard to bring back the Padanaram Garden Market May 16. This is the biggest fundraiser. Traditionally, the market is a success due to the support of many volunteers from our entire church family. The market is also supported through donations to the auction, baked goods for the bake table and hundreds of perennials donated by Fred Dabney. The committee thanks you all in advance for your continued support. Lets make it the best ever.

Respectfully submitted
Debbie Durland, Co-chair
Cyn Spence, Co-chair

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

In the spring of 2008 the Search Committee unanimously narrowed its long list of ministerial candidates down to one. Our congregation approved that candidate in June, voting to accept the Rev. Dr. S. William Sencabaugh as our new settled pastor. Rev. Sencabaugh served previously in Carmel, Maine, Halifax, Mass. and South Deerfield, Mass. His wife and two children settled into the parsonage in August. Soon thereafter Rev. Sencabaugh commenced his tenure at The Congregational Church of South Dartmouth in September, beginning what we hope to be many great years of service and leadership. Welcome Rev. Will!!

Respectfully submitted,
Rich Brosky, Co-Chair

Pastoral Search Committee Members:

Kathy Pappas
Kathy Chase
Lou Cabot
Rich Madsen
Larry Kemper
Sally Lemelin
Molly Little
Dick Purdy
Katherine Duff
Rich Brosky
Jeff Lunn
Paul Durland
Kate Dabney
Stephanie Roberts

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Pledge collection for 2008 fell short of budget in 2008. Total pledges received were \$195,011 versus a budget of \$208,981. The entire shortfall came in operations with actual collections of \$162,134 versus budget of \$178,893. Mission collections slightly exceeded budget by \$2,789. The shortfall can be attributed to a combination of a poor economy putting stress on budgets, as well as a loss of members to relocation and death.

2008 was a transition year, with the departure of interim pastor, Reverend Elizabeth King in August and the arrival of our new minister, Reverend Will Sencabaugh. As well, the autumn of 2008 marked the beginning of the worst economic crisis this country has faced since the great depression. A change in ministers combined with a poor economy caused some concern for our 2009 stewardship campaign. I am very pleased to report that our congregation fully embraced our efforts for 2009.

Our pledge total for 2009 totaled \$211,032. We did witness a shift in pledge priorities with \$189,589 pledged for operations and \$21,443 for outreach. Our total pledge amount exceeded prior year collections by 8.2% despite the economy and transition in ministers. We received 150 pledges, with an average pledge amount of \$1,393. There were eight fewer pledges than prior year, but our average pledge increased by five percent versus prior year pledges. Our campaign goal was “100 More Than Before”, that is one hundred increased or new pledges. We didn’t make our goal but we did receive 90 new or increased pledges—a huge accomplishment.

I would personally like to thank all of our congregation for their commitment to our church in this challenging time. I would also like to thank the congregation for the warm welcome I received as stewardship chairman.

Jim Forbush, Stewardship Chairman

LIBRARY COMMITTEE REPORT

The library remains a popular meeting spot for many of our numerous church groups. We invite you, too, to visit us, and while you are here, feel free to browse our “healthy” collection of books and videos, and borrow those that suit your liking!

Circulation has continued its downward trend, unfortunately. Total circulation was 86 books and of those, 26 were taken out by children. Three videos were borrowed.

Fifty-nine books were added to the library this year.

Gifts	18
Book Sale	40
Budget	1

We thank you all for your generosity. As ever, we would also like to give special thanks to Linda Keith and Al DeMello who are unfailingly available to assist us whenever we are in need.

Respectfully submitted,

Mariana Harkins
Carolyn Michaud
Martha Schoening

CHILDREN'S CIRCLE NURSERY SCHOOL REPORT

Children's Circle yearly theme for the 2008-2009 school year is "Safari". The classes began the school year in Africa and have traveled to China, Lapland, India and Australia. In each country we visit the children have made habitats and learned music, songs and customs from far-away lands.

The program includes journeys through movement and sound (story based) and visits from Ms. Rhonda from Singing Circles.

In October we head off to Tiverton, Rhode Island to Patchet Tree Farm for a hayride and a run through the pumpkin patch. The children have been working on a paper mache giraffe to be used for our end of the year program.

Our Mission Green event was held the beginning of November showcasing our school and environmental artist, Michael Higgins. Thanksgiving brings our Thanksgiving Feast where both classes join in song and share a sit down feast.

Every December, for the past ten years, our holiday culmination before the New Year is a reading of the Polar Express for all the children. The families from the school gather in a momentous annual event that leads to rides on the Old Fire Engine (Polar Express) through the village. The event makes it a point to instill the magic of childhood in each student.

In January we journey to Arctic and Antarctic ice drifts. The children made a classroom yurt. We were in China for the Year of the Ox and made lanterns and a dragon. February we celebrated with our Valentine Teas with song. Registration for the upcoming school year began with the launching of an extended day option (9:00-3:00 pm).

Spring curriculum brings growth, plantings and metamorphosis. Our plans are underway for the annual Mother's Day Brunch and Art Show, which takes place on May 8th. The moms, grand moms, sisters, aunts, and girlfriends sit down, relax and share stories, quiche and salad. The children will sing around the peace pole as they release our hatched butterflies.

We wish to thank our Advisory Board members for their positive input and support throughout the school year. The children will end the school year putting children's literature to a play on graduation day. We call them the "I am..." Kids Theatre. Our play will be based on Graeme Base book titled, "Jungle Drums".

Betsy and I continue to inspire children to question, to seek to learn, experience and connect with the joy of play!

Respectfully submitted,

Scarlett Lintner, Director
Betsy Johnson, Preschool Teacher

Garden Group

The Garden Group is a self selected, unofficial group of volunteers. We are off the radar in the church's official organizational structure. The gardeners accomplish a great deal each year maintaining, sometimes expanding, the many church gardens and making many friends along the way.

Gardening is one of the best ways to serve the church. It is so much fun that it really one place where you get back a lot more than you give. There is no stress, in fact it is a stress reliever and also a way to achieve greater fitness. Who could ask for more while also saving the church thousands of dollars each year.

This past year we spent several weeks cleaning up around the parsonage. After a couple of years with the parsonage rented, the beds were in a very sorry a state. We did not want to scare off the Sencabaughs with all the weeds.

We are always looking for new people to join our group. Last season we gardened on Tuesday nights from May to September. Occasionally when we finish our chores we head out for dinner, usually at Friendly Pizza. Phil Guymont and Susan McLaren hosted a potluck dinner this past March where we planned to add more social activities to our calendar this year in addition to our gardening chores.

This year we will be gardening on Thursday nights at 6:30 starting May 7. You are invited to join us.

Respectfully submitted
Debbie Durland

This group was formed some ten years ago by Jeff Larsen our minister, to urge men to take the time to discuss the fundamental reasons for life and our part in it. After all they are focused on providing money and security for the family's needs and do not think they have the time for such discussions. Men did not evolve doing daily tasks in groups that encouraged conversation as women did. Instead, they kept silent while on the hunt for game and stood silently by the cave opening to protect the family.

This Group has discussed such things as:

1. Finding our Fathers
2. Discussing and then writing down their Beliefs
3. Learning to be happy and productive in retirement.
4. How to talk with a father who has never seem to want to.
5. We have searched for the meaning of life.
6. Discussed the various religions and their goals
7. Dialoged with Moslems from a nearby Mosque
8. We have come to feel that we would listen to any man and his searchings for the true religion and the meaning of life, but are not much interested in listening to anyone who claims to have all the answers.

Like our church membership, we each have a slightly different grasp on the meaningful and fundamental truths in life.

We tried under my leadership to include women in our group. While attendance increased, we lost the ability to talk about the intimacies in a heterogenous relationship. We did vote to stay a Mens discussion group.

What most of us think we need, is for younger men to participate. If anyone under 50 would show up we all would be delighted, to have some new subjects to discuss and new men would bring the problems they have in today's world. We have in our group 100's of years of collective experience for a younger person to bounce his ideas or problems off of.

Reverend Will has become an active participant and maybe some of the new members might like to give us a try. You may be surprised.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Bedell, Chairman

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry began in 1998 by two women graduates of the 1997 Women's Leadership Institute at the Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. Their compassion and their love for knitting/crocheting have become a nationwide prayerful ministry, which reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace as well as in celebration and joy. For several years now, our church has offered this wonderful opportunity to share our talent, love and prayers for others.

The ladies in the Prayer Shawl Ministry come together the last Sunday of the month in the church library at seven in the evening. It is a time to work together on the shawls, to appreciate the diversity and beauty of each piece, and to enjoy the fellowship of church family. All are welcome to join at any time!

In the process of knitting each shawl, the shawl maker offers her own prayers and blessings for the unknown recipient. On December 14, 2008, during the morning service, Rev. Sencabaugh made a final blessing for 16 shawls before they will be lovingly donated.

During the year, five shawls were taken to New Orleans. Recently, five shawls have been given to church members and five to church friends and family of church members.

"Shawls... made for centuries universal and embracing, symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving God. They wrap, enfold, comfort, cover, give solace, mother, hug, shelter and beautify. Those who have received these shawls have been uplifted and affirmed, as if given wings to fly above their troubles..."

Written in 1998 by Janet Bristow, founder of the Prayer Shawl Ministry

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Rioux

SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT

Rally Day was September 7th. Over the summer the Sunday School was featured in The Standard Times newspaper, headline read; "Children build a boat, embark on a spiritual journey". Our "message-in-a-bottle" bottles started turning up on shore lines! The message inside told of our year long mission of following in Jesus' footsteps, caring about and helping others, and challenged the "finder" to do the same. People sent emails sharing their joy and excitement of finding a bottle and also how they took-up our challenge! We spread the message of Jesus. What an awesome year! Where do we go from here? This year's challenge...Save Our Planet! This year's theme, "Mission-Green; Our Faith, Our Planet". In Sunday School this year we learned about our planet and our environment. We learned how every decision we make for ourselves affects not only us...but the people, animals, and environment around us. The very planet itself! We focused on how our faith plays a role in how we see the world and there for should play a role in our decision making.

Sunday School enrollment this year was 76 , as compared to 55 a year ago. There were 6 Confirmation students lead by Reverend Will Sencabaugh and Director of Religious Education, Wendy Reardon. Our average weekly attendance was 79% , an outstanding core group of enthusiastic, energetic youths! The Sunday School registered as an official Roots&Shoots group, Congo Kids! Roots&Shoots is an international group of kids between the ages of 3 and 21 who dedicate themselves to; helping other people, animals both domestic and wild, and the environment. Roots&Shoots was begun by Jane Goodall.

This year's curriculum was once again researched, designed and implemented by the Director of Religious Education, Wendy Reardon. The year was comprised of 5 units, People, Advent, Animals, Lent and the Environment. Bible studies were chosen to coincide with unit focus, each lesson had a Biblical passage. Students learned about how the Bible is "read", where to find weekly scripture and how to apply that scripture to their daily lives...faith in action!

The year began with a study of the sacrament of Communion. The youth of all ages participated in communion and baked Challah for the congregation to share on World Communion Sunday. This began our unit on "People". Youths in grades 5th-highschool joined together for a "Homelessness Experience". 18 Youths and 3 adults took on the challenge! We began the evening with a guest visitor from Market Ministries of New Bedford, she shared with us what life is like living on the streets. It was an eye-opening, and somewhat scary, discussion! After our talk we went outside to brave the elements. The participants had there belongings stripped from them, including their shoes and heavy jackets! Each participant received 2 plastic shopping bags and a large cardboard box. We had to "find" our food from garbage barrels and heat it up over a fire in an old oil drum! It was a LONG night, especially when the fog rolled in over the harbor around 2am! We had a night filled with discussion. We realized we were just experiencing a glimpse of what being homeless would be like. We rose at 5:45am and began cleaning up and making a breakfast of pancakes& bacon for our congregation. The price for breakfast was a new pair of socks the breakfast was called, "Being Homeless Socks!" The congregation donated over 250 pairs of socks! The youths donated the socks to Market Ministries.

In October, the youths built a Sukkah. Sukkot is the Festival of Booths, the children built a booth following the rules given in the Old Testament. The Sukkah celebrates the harvest. We also went on a "Destination Unknown" that took us to the Dartmouth YMCA. There we donated our time by helping to finish the harvesting and ready the beds for the winter months. We also helped with their composting and storage of pots for the winter. The YMCA's farm helps to supply our neediest families with fresh, healthy food. We also had a "Mission-Green Day" to celebrate the Earth's most valuable resource...kids! We had a full day of fun with food, activities and rides. Our teens from

SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT continued

Sunday School and Youth Fellowship man-ed the booths! The day ended with a guitar hero and karaoke contest. All proceeds were donated to the Children's Circle Nursery School.

In November we built the foundation for our Sunday School Green House. The Green House was donated by Lea and Jim McBratney, Kate and Fred Dabney donated the supplies needed for the kids to build potting benches and help us with our plant needs! Al DeMello and Michael Gouveia took up the challenge of building with the youths!

This month we also had "The Great Pie Challenge!" I challenge the Sunday School to make, from scratch, 200 pies! ...they did it! (Actually 215) It took 50lbs of flour, a crazy amount of apples, butter, sugar and the list goes on! Almost everything was DONATED! We raised over \$1200.00 and we donated 45 pies to Market Ministries, along with whipped-cream, for a home-made dessert for the Thanksgiving meals that they served to the needy on Thanksgiving Day.

During Advent, we learned all about Jesus and his parents. The Sunday School joined the choir in a "Carol Sing" where even Santa joined in the fun! The confirmation class greeted the carolers with a live Nativity on the church lawn. Our littlest Sunday Schoolers were joined by teen-mentors to share with the congregation their own version of, "The Little Drummer Boy" playing on drums that they made in Sunday School! The Sunday School once again performed a Christmas Eve pageant for an audience bursting at the seams! The youths preformed, "A Charlie Brown Christmas". It was perfect for our year's theme, the children and youths reminded us all to stop...and remember what Christmas is truly celebrating. They did a fantastic job!

In January, our focus was Jesus. We researched to find all that we could about his life. We used the Bible, several different versions, other historical books and the web. Our goal was to find out what was he like? How did he live? What did he believe? We had discussions, music and projects. We dabbled in oils, latex, and clay.

February was the beginning of Lent, we began our project "My Brother's Keeper". We began making "Ugly Quilts" or sleeping bags, for the homeless. Once again our awesome congregation came through with incredible amounts of fabric and foam padding. We had sewing machines donated and more importantly "sewers" donate their time. The kids and I were given a crash course in sewing! The Starretts donated water-proof materials, we remembered from our "Homeless Experience" how important that is! The youths made incredible, and really nice looking too, sleeping bags. All of the sleeping bags were donated to Market Ministries to distribute on behalf of the Sunday School children. Thank you to Sonja White for bringing the project to our attention.

The month of February also brought us to the New England Aquarium for an over-nite adventure! 47 of us went to Boston for an unforgettable night! In keeping with our year long theme, we went to learn about the ocean and the animals that live there. We listened to marine biologists and participated in hands-on activities which included, dissecting squid and touching marine animals up close and personal! We got to "sleep with the fishes!" ...well, the jelly fishes in the jelly fish exhibit. The next morning we had the whole aquarium to ourselves before it opened to the public for the day!

In March Dr Lemelin came to share with us his passion for domestic animals. We learned many interesting facts and discovered how much animals do for us in our lives! We learned how we can make a difference in theirs. Along with Dr Lemelin and some friendly dogs, we visited local elderly residents.

Holy Week brought us the excitement of the Palm Sunday Parade lead by the Confirmands and a donkey! The youths in 4th –high school participated in the Maundy Thursday Service and the

SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT continued

Sunday School children and youths once again created works of art for the Good Friday Reflection. This year The Stations of the Cross could be viewed before the Maundy Thursday service or on Good Friday. The Confirmands lead Easter Sunrise Service, the children sang 2 songs at the family service and we had our annual Easter Egg Hunt during coffee hour.

In April we had another "Destination Unknown" to Fred Dabney's nursery where we learned about growing organically! During this time the Sunday School youths finished the green house while our youngest began seedlings indoors. The RE office was a jungle! The Dartmouth YMCA contacted US about joining with them in their efforts to feed the needy and homeless! We joined forces providing the YMCA with plants for their beds.

We finished the year by participating in the Garden Market event. The Sunday School sold their herbs and had an "Alex's Lemonade Stand". The money raised from the plant sale was donated to the mission trip fund. The Confirmands had their Deacon's Dinner and interviews.

This year "The Breakfast Club" was added to the Sunday School Program. This is a high school class that met once month from 8:30-9:30am, in the church kitchen! We discussed relevant topics from peer pressure and body image to music and party-ing. We averaged 10 kids per class. It was implemented as a way to keep high school kids in touch with the church. It was well received by the participants and adult mentors.

The Sunday School was honored by being chosen by Roots & Shoots to be their featured group for this spring! The Jane Goodall Institute was amazed and impressed by our enthusiasm and energy, and our ability to do so much in such a short amount of time! For a group to be considered you had to have completed projects that helped people, animals and the environment. The Sunday School and this year's "mission" projects will be featured in their printed newsletter and on the web, internationally!

Once again, much of the success of the Sunday School Program is do to our never ending, enthusiastic, awesome mentors! This year we had mentors from aged 14 to retirement. Thank you to everyone who donates their time, talents and materials to the program and our children, we could not do what we do without you! Thank you to everyone in the congregation who buys our pies (and plants!) and supports us so fully whether or not you have children in the program! Finally, thank you to Reverend Will. Now there's one minister who is not afraid to jump into the deep end (with no PFD, no less!)

Anticipated activities:

Confirmation

Children's Sunday

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Reardon

Director of Religious Education

WOMEN'S GUILD REPORT

Officers: Molly Little, Second Vice President; Pam Joyce, Recording Secretary; Sonja White, Corresponding Secretary; Phyllis Pettengill, Treasurer; Molly Little and Pam Joyce, Publicity; Nancy DeWolf Historian; Debbie Czorny and Eleanor Beanland, Nominating Committee; Elise Gela and Linda Paradise, Rummage Sale Chairs.

Thirty women organized the Women's Guild in 1929. When the membership grew to 180-200 members in 1940, Circles were formed. Each Circle had an annual project. The money was used for special projects in the community and specific church needs, refurbishing the kitchen, banquet tables, carpeting, etc. The Yellow Circle established "The Children's Circle Nursery School" for pre-school age children in 1972. The Nursery School will be expanding their program in 2009-2010 to meet the needs of the community.

Reverend Dr. Will Sencabaugh met with the Guild Officers and Circle Representatives to discuss the future of this group. He assured us that many churches are having the same difficulties with the vitality of their women's groups due to their jobs and working with other volunteer groups. He encouraged us to move forward with programs and to continue our support of the church.

In that light, the ladies continue to keep the new kitchen functioning with the help of our outstanding custodian, Al DeMello. The Guild hosted receptions after the Memorial Services for Olive White and Mary Nicholson. They are grateful for the support and warm sense of caring they receive from the women of the church during these collations. We are looking forward to our Rummage/Recycling Sale being held from 8 am to 3 pm on Saturday, May 2, at our church. Elise Gela and Linda Paradise will be heading up this popular community event.

During the Christmas Season we reached out to organizations and special people in our lives. Donations were given from the Guild to the following: Dartmouth Youth Commission, Neediest Family Fund, Salvation Army, and Friends of the Elderly. We also recognized those people who are very special to our group: Reverend Dr. Will Sencabaugh, Linda Keith and Al DeMello. The Guild truly appreciates their assistance in all of our endeavors. We also gave a sizable donation to the Scholarship Fund. This Fund provides scholarships to youth who participate in the activities of our Church and community.

The Women's Guild is open to all women of the community and will continue to reach out to those families who need help in times of illness, accident and bereavement. We are looking forward to working with Reverend Will as he leads us in the reorganization of our church. We will continue to give strength to each other in our fellowship, and we will continue to go forward with strong hearts.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonja White
Corresponding Secretary

JUNIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP REPORT

The Junior Youth Fellowship had a great year (2008– 2009) with a very active and enthusiastic group. Our youth group is non-denominational, open to all youth of our church and community in grades 6-8. Our program includes fellowship, community service, a spiritual component and of course, fun. Our fellowship consists of about 65 members. Almost half of our members come from church families.

One of the focuses of our group is to be kind and respectful to each other and to be inclusive to all who attend our meetings. We work towards this goal throughout the year trying to increase awareness of how we can make new friends and include others.

We had regular meetings with games, discussions, and time to get to know each other. The fellowship was active in church events. We sponsored the Mission Green day at the church with the Sunday school students and Children's Circle Nursery School. We made Christmas stockings for the Holiday Hope project, hosted a Christmas coffee after church services and provided the clean up after the rummage sale. Other activities included a Halloween party, the winter retreat, and an evening at Healthtrax to swim and play games. Once again our pasta dinner was very successful. It was great to see all our church and fellowship families enjoy the delicious food and great fellowship. We raised \$935.00 which was used to supplement our programs. In April, we went to UMass Dartmouth to take part in a world music performance hosted by professor Royal Hartigan, guest artist, Kwabena Boateng, and some of the music students. As the year comes to a close, we look forward to our annual cookout in May which will be held out in the church yard complete with field games.

As always, one of the highlights of the year was our annual winter retreat up to Brookwoods, in New Hampshire. Our program included discussions and games. We made valentines to send to a nearby Veterans Hospital. We had different services over the weekend: a candlelight service and a worship service led by Reverend Will on Sunday morning. We had a great time skiing at Gunstock! Both kids and parents enjoyed a wonderful weekend.

Our Youth Fellowship this year was an enthusiastic and committed group of kids. They are always eager to help out and they are great workers. Through the community service we do as a group and the community service required of each member individually, the kids are learning that each one of them can make a difference.

Our parent leaders consist of the following individuals who work with the kids at every meeting and activity: Justine Clarke, Carlin Moroney, Jackie Moniz, and Maura Reimer. Jackie is a former youth group member herself (having spent 8 years in our youth groups) and has been a welcome addition to our leadership team. These parents volunteer their time all year long, giving freely of their time, laughter and goodness.

We also have many wonderful parents who help out through the year in so many different ways. Thank you for all you do, we could not do it without you! We are so grateful to our church for supporting this group. The youth are appreciative and their parents especially so. Our church is making a difference in these young peoples' lives.

I have had the privilege of working with the youth of our church and community for many years. What began as volunteering with a committee of parents to oversee the youth fellowship became an official position as director of youth group for our church in January of 2005. I have enjoyed working with the youth and have learned so much along the way. Although I will continue to work with the high school youth group, it is with mixed feelings that I offer my resignation as the director of the junior youth fellowship program effective May 31, 2009. I thank you for this opportunity given to me by the church. It has been a joy to be able to "work" at something that I truly love.

Respectfully submitted, ***Daphne Fogg Siegal, Youth Director, April 2, 2009***

SENIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Our senior youth fellowship, consisting of high school aged students, is made up of youth from our church and community. Our fellowship meetings consist of social gatherings and community service. It is a great group of kids who are always willing to help out and get involved. One of the group's favorite things to do is to meet at the church on Sunday evenings for game nights, ice cream sundaes and candy.

We started off the year in September by helping at the OCEAN Road Race, an annual fundraiser for ovarian cancer awareness. In October, the group joined the church in their outreach mission project at PAACA in New Bedford. In November, we went to Boston to see Blue Man Group. In December, the youth made Christmas cookies and then delivered them to many of our elderly church members. In March, the youth group had an afternoon of bowling followed by the annual pasta dinner held by the junior youth fellowship. It was great to have the older kids there to support our junior group. The youth also helped with the New Bedford Half-Marathon working at the finish line. We will have a couple more get togethers before the end of the year.

This year we had our first annual Souper Bowl sleepover at the church. We played games, had a communion service in the early hours of the morning led by Reverend Will, ate a lot of good junk and stayed up as late as we could. Sunday morning, we joined Reverend Will in leading the morning worship service with a packed congregation who gave generously to support our "souper bowl of caring". Along with the congregation, all of our youth brought in canned goods to contribute to the local food pantry.

There are many people to thank for making this year a success. Our youth group is very fortunate to have the support of our church and is very appreciative of the opportunities provided for them. We would like to thank all the parents who have helped in one way or another over the year - your volunteering with our group makes it possible to keep our program strong. Special thanks to Janne Armstrong for her leadership and help throughout the year.

Our high school youth group values being a part of our church family. They like to come into the church, spend time with their friends and church members and go forth to serve in the community. What an accomplishment for our youth and church!

Respectfully submitted,
Daphne Fogg Siegal, Youth Director
April 2, 2009