

# The Messenger

February 2009

## Reflections

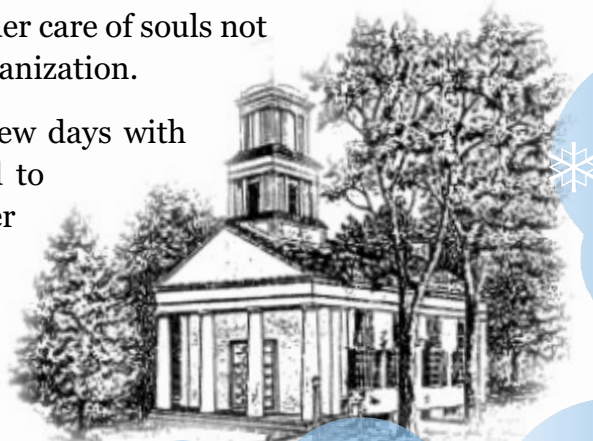


Our first January Annual Meeting was held on January 18. In spite of a somewhat snowy day, the attendance was very good. We said “Good-bye” to three leaders who have served us very well: Linda Farnham, Debi McKeon and Sheila Postlewait.

While it often seems difficult to change leaders and leadership styles, that is what makes our system strong. As Congregationalists we recognize that everyone has special gifts and talents and that these gifts need to be allowed to flourish and grow. It takes time and patience to understand what works and what doesn't, and to determine, using a team approach, what needs change and what does not. Often I have cautioned ministers, on taking new pulpits, that every church has a culture and that it takes careful listening to understand just what that is. While some may think that “This is now and that was then,” there is much in a church's life from the past that must be incorporated into the present and future. We must always remember that those who pay little heed to history are doomed to repeat it. In many ways, churches are not the same as any other organization and cannot be handled as such. We deal in the tender care of souls not in “the nuts and bolts” of an organization.

As we move forward into new days with new leadership, we all need to remember to cut one another some slack, be patient and move forward in love.

Peace & Grace, **Pastor Alice**



**Colebrook Congregational Church**

The Friendly Church on the Green

## Introducing JIM HOPKINS

**S**ome of you met Jim when he came to Colebrook for my installation, lo, those many years ago. He took part in the service giving the "Charge to the Pastor." Remember the broken baton? I do. Jim is a lifelong resident of Rhode Island. He graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a BS in Business Administration. He served in the Coast Guard immediately following graduation.

Jim has had diversity in his careers. He worked as an insurance agent for eight years, at A.T. Cross Company for 20 years in Production, Distribution and Customer Service Management. He recently concluded his career at Wardwell Braiding Machine Company where he served as VP Operations and most recently as Managing Director, Wardwell Europe GmbH. He retired on December 31, 2008.

Never one to be inactive, Jim serves on the Centreville Savings Bank Board of Trustees and on the Boards of Care New England, Kent Hospital, Kent Hospital Foundation, URI Foundation, The Congregational Foundation, and the Anthony Lyceum Library. Jim is a lifelong member of Riverpoint Congregational Church in West Warwick, RI, where he has served as Deacon, Moderator and Treasurer.

He presently serves the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches on the Strategic Planning Committee and on the Congregational Foundation Board. He has also served on the Executive Committee and Congregational Church Development Board and served as Chair of the AdHoc Congregational Foundation Committee. He served on the Executive Secretary Search Committee.

He notes the accomplishments that have given him the most satisfaction are:

- ✍ Leading diverse groups of people to successfully accomplish commonly agreed upon objectives  
"All of us is smarter than any of us"
- ✍ Strategic Planning, organizational design/development, and project management
- ✍ Overcoming difficult business circumstances by focused, determined effort
- ✍ Team focused action to achieve organizational objectives
- ✍ Adapting manufacturing organizations to current challenges (USA/Europe)
- ✍ Chairing the Ad-Hoc Committee that created the Congregational Foundation
- ✍ Chairing the Host Committee for the 2004 NACCC Annual Meeting in Providence.

2.

Through all of his experiences he has learned much about himself. In his own words: "I don't mind being alone, but not always. Solitude provides an opportunity for reflection, observation and learning at my own pace and energizes me for the fun of being with people I like and with whom I share common qualities.

- ✍ Trust is at the heart of all good relationships, personal and business.
- ✍ Caring and compassion make the world a better place.
- ✍ Travel and reading enrich my understanding of others and broaden my view of the world."

Jim will be here with us April 18 and May 9 to help us create a strategic plan for the next few years at CCC. He has worked with churches in Maine on similar projects. Input from as wide a range of those interested and concerned about the future of the church is invited. He has agreed to write articles for our March and April newsletters. Stay tuned and plan on being present for the planning sessions.

## SUB SANDWICH AND BAKE SALE



**78 sandwiches were ordered this year, 15 more than last year. Thanks to Linda Farnham and her crew, Sharnel Pilko, Abrah Carroll, Cindy Aiudi, Debi McKeon, Brittany McKeon, and all the people who so generously supported this effort through donating baked goods and making cash donations, \$600 was earned. We have had this event for three years and it gets better every year.**

On March 8, at 4p.m. we are invited to join Lynn Whelchel on a journey to Bhutan. Plan on taking some time to learn about this country and its people. Light refreshments will be served.

### COMMUNITY DINNER

The CCC Auxiliary will be sponsoring a Community Dinner on Saturday,

February 21, from 5-7p.m. This is a fund-raiser for the church

with a portion of our proceeds being donated to the Community Center. The dinner will be a good old-fashioned ham and scalloped potato dinner with a vegetable, baked beans, salad, homemade desserts and beverages. The cost will be

\$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children under the age of 11.

Your support is needed. If you would like to help out with preparations for the meal, or would like to help with serving it or cleaning up, please call Pastor Alice (379-2517). If you would like a ticket or two or three or would like to sell a few, call Abrah Carroll (379-4089). The Auxiliary will meet on February 5, at 7 p.m to put the finishing touches on the plans.

Why are those wicker baskets in the vestibule of the church? Well, they are there to collect foodstuffs. But where does it go and who takes it you ask. The Deacons take turns taking the food to the Salvation Army which has a food bank and to The Open Door which is a soup kitchen. Recently, we, the Deacons, have been taking the food to The Open Door located in the back of St. James Church, 150 Main Street, Winsted, CT. Now, your next question will be what is the difference between a food pantry and a soup kitchen? A food pantry can only give out canned and packaged foods and packaged products. A soup kitchen makes the food to be given out and therefore can use fresh produce that is given to them.

The Open Door is a soup kitchen that is currently serving 30-40 people a day and they are seeing an increase in their numbers. They gladly receive any foodstuffs donated to them and the foods that they cannot use in their meal preparation are put on a back table so that their customers may take what they need. The facility is light, bright and clean. The volunteers are helpful and cheerful. Helen Nay is in charge of the volunteers and question "answerer." If anyone is interested in volunteering or would like to ask her a question, she can be reached at 738-2449 between 10 and 10:30.

The Open Door is truly grateful for the support from the Colebrook Congregational Church (they even send thank you notes). I did learn that they do have a wish list that they keep on the refrigerator, so I took the liberty of copying it down so that I could pass it on to everyone. The list is as follows:

**Cleaners ~ Paper Products**

**Staples ~ Food ~ Foil**

**Coffee ~ Lettuce ~ Sandwich Bags**

**Scrubbers Cocoa ~ Brillo ~ Root Vegetables**

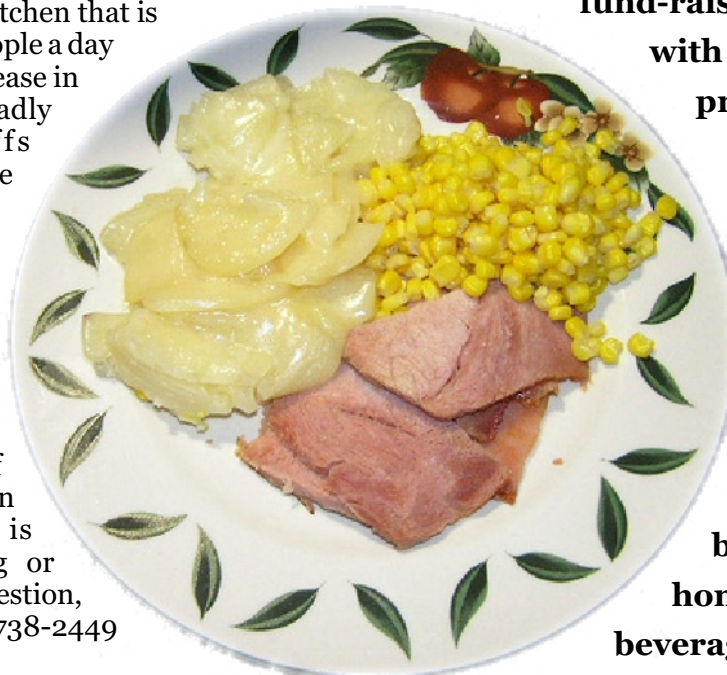
**Creamers ~ Gallon Size Bags**

**Sugar ~ Sugar Substitutes**

**Liquid soap containers (restaurant size to refill)**

We, the Deacons, thank everyone who has so graciously and generously donated to the food baskets. Your kindness has brought relief to many and we look forward to bringing your gifts to those two organizations.

*Respectfully, Liz Blum*



4.

*Did YOU KNOW...?*

**H**ow often the Church building is used...

- ▶ AA meetings weekly
- ▶ Worship services each Sunday of the year, followed by a Coffee Hour on many Sundays
- ▶ Childcare during the services
- ▶ A growing Sunday school (about 20 kids right now)
- ▶ Larger Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday services
- ▶ Annual Carol Sing,
- ▶ At least two live concerts per year sponsored by the Colebrook Historical Society, held in the Church
- ▶ Two groups--prayer and study group weekly
- ▶ Choir meets weekly
- ▶ Women of Spirit meets monthly,
- ▶ Daisy Scout troop meets twice per month

- ▶ Five Auxiliary events per year,
- ▶ Breakfast with Santa,
- ▶ Annual Corn Roast,
- ▶ Arm Chair travel,
- ▶ Colebrook Consolidated School uses the building for a portion of the Town Halloween party
- ▶ Youth group meets monthly
- ▶ Church Committee and other committees of the church meet on a monthly basis
- ▶ And the use is growing...



*Elizabeth Irwin Vergo,  
Chair, Church Committee*



*The Messenger*

*February 2009*

[www.colebrookchurch.org](http://www.colebrookchurch.org)

