

FIRST PARISH CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL United Church of Christ

Volume 6—Issue 2

Serving Christ & Community since 1744

February 2011

Interim's Message—"GET TO KNOW ME"

Thank you so much to everyone for welcoming me into your church as your long-term supply preacher. Since I will be with you for the next two months I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. Currently I am a student at Bangor Theological Seminary and plan to graduate this coming May with a Masters in Divinity.

For the last ten years I have been a member at State Street Church in Portland. There were many opportunities where I helped teach Sunday school as well as having co-led a Bible study class for adults. In addition, I have served two full terms (six years) on the Board of Deacons and served on the Search Committee for our last pastoral search. For several years my family enjoyed spending Labor

Day weekends going to Family Camp at Pilgrim Lodge. I have been a youth counselor for fourth and fifth graders and have been a Dean for family camp.

As of August 2010 I am back on the Board of Deacons. Additionally, I am a Pastoral visitor on the behalf of State Street Church and visit parishioners who are homebound. Last November I joined the Small Church Mission Team.

Last month my classmates and I went on a Mission/Immersion trip to Guatemala.

Over the next few months I will be working on my senior project. As part of my senior project I led a woman's retreat on the topic of Hospitality and will continue to explore that theme.

When I am not spending time with my husband and daughters, I enjoy traveling, play-

ing tennis, walking, and spending time at the beach. Favorite activities include catching up with friends and reading mystery novels.

I look forward to getting to know you better over the next weeks. My plan is to spend one day a week at church and schedule some pastoral visits while I am with you.

Blessings,
Petra

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BOARDS, COMMITTEES, ETC., you must submit a report to the newsletter editor by the Monday after each council meeting! See back for email address!

COUNCIL MINUTES—February 6, 2011

The Council met following the morning worship service. Attending were: Pastor Petra Smyth, Moderator John Skillin, Brenda Skillin, Ted Moon, Will Gavin, Merrill and Janice Fogg, Elaine Wilmot, Barbara Thompson, Barbara Skelton and Ann Westervelt.

Theo Record was asked to be present prior to the opening prayer in order to explain what was being done with our computer and telephone situation. He gave his report and then departed, due to a previ-

ous engagement. The meeting opened with prayer by Pastor Petra. Her questions about meeting times within the church (i.e. Missions, Trustees, Deacons, etc.) were answered. There will be a workshop on February 20, 2011 with candidate Peter Hindriech. Moderator Skillin presented to us a written way of having prayer concerns. The Clerks report was accepted after changing the word “require” to “ask” that committees help with postage payments. The Treasurer was absent. The Financial Secretary presented two written reports which were accepted. Deacons have not met. Couples and Singles held a surprise dinner and presented a gift to Reverend Roundy. Trustees will meet February 17th to discuss the Pastor’s financial package, signage for the church, and the Parish Market. The snow and ice condi-

tions on the roof were also discussed.

Mizpah will meet February 19th. They are receiving funds in memory of Marge Lowell. Her will leaves \$1000.00 to the church. It is hoped that these funds could be used for painting the outside of the church. Stewardship Committee reports that they are still optimistic concerning pledges. New Business: The windows in the narthex were discussed. All reports must be given to Ruth Porter by February 8. Pastor Petra was welcomed to our congregation. One of the bids at the Historical Society’s Silent Auction (to be held March 19, 2011) will be the opportunity to ring the church bell. A concern was raised regarding the quarters received in the collection plate. They are to be used for the Deacon’s Fund. Meeting Adjourned at 12:35 pm.

E. Ann Westervelt
Clerk



Council meetings are for everyone, especially committees, boards, and officers of the church! Don't let those seats stay empty!

President's Remarks

During this very traditional winter the President has been very busy.

As a member of the Search Committee, we have visited two different neutral pulpits and listened to two possible candidates for the office of pastor of our church,. One of these candidates greatly impressed the members of the Search Committee. There will be a meeting of the Church Congregation on February 20, 2011.

The Pastoral candidate will present a sermon and at 11:30 the Congregational meeting will convene for the purpose of voting on the candidate. You are strongly encouraged to attend.

The Couples Club hosted a going away party for Reverend Anne Roundy. She was led to believe that she was invited to the Couples & Singles Club for a meal before the Trustees meeting. She even commented on how

many people were in attendance. She finally figured it all out when she was presented with a large white package to unwrap. This proved to be an original painting of our church. She was deeply moved by the whole event as were all in attendance.

The February Council meeting was held on February 6, 2011. Due to the wet snow the attendance was sparse. Interim Petra Smyth had many questions and

after receiving the appropriate answers she seemed much more at ease.

The committees in attendance gave their respective reports and the meeting was adjourned. The next Church Council meeting will be on March 6th. If you are unable to attend be sure to submit your report in writing.

President
John Skillin



For All of You Who Filled Stockings
for the Residents of the Freeport Nursing Home:


THANK YOU!!!

Christmas Day celebration at Freeport Nursing Home is structured around the stockings that Freeport's Elementary and Middle School students have made and you have filled. It is a morning where anticipation and excitement fills the hallways and gathering rooms. The staff have as much fun in giving out the stockings and watching them being opened as the residents have in receiving them! Every resident receives a stocking, the only gift given out at their party on Christmas Day; each stocking carefully put together by you with gifts in it that that particular resident is sure to appreciate and/or love.

This year, again, you brought great joy to all: yes, in the gifts that you picked out, and YES, in the larger gift of letting the residents know that they matter and are not forgotten. Being "not forgotten" was especially important this Christmas as there were a number of residents whose family members simply could not afford to visit nor send a gift.

Thank you to all of you! I hope that you had fun filling the stockings and thinking about the resident who would be opening the surprises you had given them...

Blessings for 2011,



Lin Peyton
January 5, 2011



News from Stewardship

Our role is to work with the Council and all committees on financial goals and fund-raising. We are within \$7,000 of our goal for pledges for 2011. Our thanks go out to all who have pledged already—and we just need to hear from a few more of you to meet our needs. Please take a few minutes to let Barb Skelton know how much you plan to put in the collection plate over the next year. We need this commitment from our members and friends in order to provide our mission expenses for all we do for others in our community and beyond, to fulfill our responsibilities for the settled pastor contract, to maintain the needs of the church building we meet in.

We offset the budget need of \$33,000 through our fundraising as well. What

fun we have on these events—Fourth of July, Christmas Fair, bean suppers, our picnic at the Skillin's, the yard and plant sale—and so much more.

If you were at church a couple weeks ago you received a notebook and pen. When you think of across an idea for a great fundraiser, or a way to further our relationships within ourselves, towards our neighbors, and those beyond our backyard, write it down and bring them to Church each Sunday. Drop the note in the basket up front.

Remember, we are the Church that the community of Freeport enjoys and supports in many ways. We meet and greet so many locals and provide year-round warmth and worship for so many tourists who visit our town. Our light is shining. We are the salt that sustains us all. We are the “Community Church.”



Music Committee



...make a joyful noise!

The choir has been thinking about the season of Easter and what wonderful music we might sing! Please join us each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. to practice if you can. No voice is too small—or large!

We are looking for a variety of singers—female, male, and even youngsters to help us with the variety of song we hope to sing each week until Easter.

No ability needed! We don't “try-out”, we don't require musical training, we're just singing for the sheer pleasure of singing and to praise the Lord! Come help us out!

Happy moments, PRAISE GOD
Difficult moments, SEEK GOD
Quiet moments, WORSHIP GOD
Painful moments, TRUST GOD
Every moment, THANK GOD

Purpose Driven Life ~ Rick Warren

Fear can keep us up all night long, but
faith makes one fine pillow!



As human beings we all want to be happy and free from misery...we have learned that the key to happiness is inner peace. The greatest obstacles to inner peace are disturbing emotions such as anger, attachment, fear and suspicion, while love and compassion and a sense of universal responsibility are the sources of peace and happiness.

~ Dalai Lama

We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature - trees, flowers, grass- grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence... We need silence to be able to touch souls.

~ Mother Theresa

He who has faith has an inward reservoir of courage, hope, confidence, calmness, and assuring trust that all will come out well - even though to the world it may appear to come out badly.

~ B.C. Forbes

Inner peace can be reached only when we practice forgiveness. Forgiveness is letting go of the past, and is therefore the means for correcting our misperceptions.



Words to Live By...

A very dear friend of mine shared this story with me a while ago. She has experienced many life tragedies, the worst of which, I dare say, the loss of a child. She has always amazed me and has been a constant source of inspiration. To me, the Rose in this story is her, in all but her age! I hope you are inspired, in some way, after you read it. ~ Blessings, Ruth.

The first day of school our professor introduced himself and challenged us to get to know someone we didn't already know. I stood up to look around when a gentle hand touched my shoulder.

I turned around to find a wrinkled, little old lady beaming up at me with a smile that lit up her entire being.

She said, 'Hi handsome. My name is Rose. I'm eighty-seven years old. Can I give you a hug?'

I laughed and enthusiastically responded, 'Of course you may!' and she gave me a giant squeeze.

"Why are you in college at such a young, innocent age?" I asked.

She jokingly replied, 'I'm here to meet a rich husband, get married, and have a couple of kids...'

'No seriously,' I asked. I was curious what may have motivated her to be taking on this challenge at

her age.

'I always dreamed of having a college education and now I'm getting one!' she told me.

After class we walked to the student union building and shared a chocolate milkshake.

We became instant friends. Every day for the next three months we would leave class together and talk nonstop. I was always mesmerized listening to this 'time machine' as she shared her wisdom and experience with me.

Over the course of the year, Rose became a campus icon and she easily made friends wherever she went. She loved to dress up and she reveled in the attention bestowed upon her from the other students. She was living it up.

At the end of the semester we invited Rose to speak at our football banquet. I'll never forget what she taught us. She was introduced and stepped up to the podium.

As she began to deliver her prepared speech, she dropped her three by five cards on the floor.

Frustrated and a little embarrassed she leaned into the microphone and simply said, 'I'm sorry I'm so jittery. I gave up beer for Lent and this whiskey is killing me! I'll never get my speech back in order so let me just tell you

what I know.'

As we laughed she cleared her throat and began, 'We do not stop playing because we are old; we grow old because we stop playing.

There are only four secrets to staying young, being happy, and achieving success. You have to laugh and find humor every day. You've got to have a dream. When you lose your dreams, you die. We have so many people walking around who are dead and don't even know it!

There is a huge difference between growing older and growing up.

If you are nineteen years old and lie in bed for one full year and don't do one productive thing, you will turn twenty years old. If I am eighty-seven years old and stay in bed for a year and never do anything I will turn eighty-eight.

Anybody can grow older. That doesn't take any talent or ability. The idea is to grow up by always finding opportunity in change. Have no regrets.

The elderly usually don't have regrets for what we did, but rather for things we did not do.

The only people who fear death are those with regrets.'

She concluded her speech by courageously singing 'The Rose.'

She challenged each of

us to study the lyrics and live them out in our daily lives. At the year's end Rose finished the college degree she had begun all those months ago.

One week after graduation Rose died peacefully in her sleep.

Over two thousand college students attended her funeral in tribute to the wonderful woman who taught by example that it's never too late to be all you can possibly be.

When you finish reading this, please share Rose's peaceful words of advice with your friends and family.

I have passed these words along in loving memory of Rose.

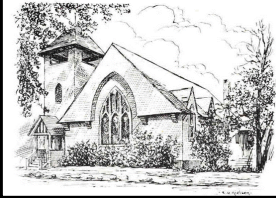
Remember: We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.

God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage. And if God brings you to it, He will bring you through it.

Every day you receive a miracle (if you don't think so, look out your window when you wake in the morning and think about it.)

And always try to remember that good friends are like stars; you don't always see them, but you know they are always there. Treasure them each and every day of their lives.

FIRST PARISH CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL
United Church of Christ



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Serving Christ & Community since 1744

Sunday Worship Service 10 a.m.
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Soon to be
on the Web!



Our faith is over 2000
years old; our think-
ing is not!

Jesus wandered alone for 40 days.

How long have you?

Isn't it time for religion with relevance?
The United Church of Christ. We're about
justice, understanding and exploration.
So no matter who you are, or where you
are on life's journey you - and your
questions - are welcome here.
God is still speaking.

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OF CHRIST**