



## The Brick Meetinghouse Newsletter

**OCTOBER 2017**

First Congregational Church of Swanzey

United Church of Christ

Rev. Damon Anderson, Pastor

Cindy Sweeney, Editor

### WARRANT

To the Members of  
The First Congregational Church of Swanzey, NH  
United Church of Christ

You are hereby notified to meet at the First Congregational Church of Swanzey, NH, immediately following worship service on October 15, 2017, to act on the following articles:

### AGENDA

1. Review of newest version of our governance structure and vote on whether to accept it
2. Response to congregational letter – including discussion about the position of pastor and possible vote on the topic
3. VanderWyden presentation take-aways and next steps
4. Other for the good of the order

September 28, 2017

Betty Tatro

Betty Tatro, Moderator

### A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR:

Patience and Persistence to the People Who are the First Congregational Church of Swanzey. I was heartened at the turnout of thirty people at the meeting with VanderWyden Consultant, Rev. Dr. Ken Baily, on the evening of September 24. The future of this church is very present in the thoughts and emotions of many. Let that swell of support for the church's future continue as we move into the book study of *Beyond Resistance* on October 1 and the Congregational meeting on October 15.

During worship, as we continue to work through the story of the Exodus, there is a growing awareness of how that sacred story parallels the life of the First Congregational Church of Swanzey at this moment. When the congregation of Israel begins to leave slavery behind, they are confronted with

what appears to be an impossible impasse – a body of water is before them and an army waiting to destroy them is behind. They appear trapped between drowning and destruction. A distinct path is found by navigating through what they feared to be their death.

Continuing their journey towards liberation, the congregation of Israel finds themselves in the wilderness. In this difficult place, they feel vulnerable and anxious, disoriented and confused, stuck and tense, sad and grief-stricken. They begin to question their existence and turn up the heat on their leadership. The congregation is looking for something certain rather than realizing what the wilderness is. The wilderness is a liminal place where transition and change become possible. There the congregation is able to shed its old identity and explore the possibility of becoming a people moving towards the Promised Land.

Being in the wilderness is uncomfortable for any congregation. So is dealing with uncertainty.

A pastor or consultant can accompany the congregation during this time of trial. We can support and walk beside. We can encourage and embolden. We can guide and inform. We can tell the sacred stories and perform life-giving rituals. We can make people aware of scapegoating and remind of the Eternal Presence and Divine Spirit that was there for Moses and Jesus. . .but no pastor can save the congregation from this time in the wilderness. The hard reality is that you must be willing to go through the wilderness. It is this extremely uncomfortable journey which saves you.

After going through the wilderness, the congregation of Israel, as well as the First Congregational Church of Swanzey, will not be spared future challenges. There will always be challenges. That is unavoidable. However, by intentionally not avoiding the uncomfortableness of the wilderness, the congregation finds purpose and strength. Skills develop that can be used to create the future and meet its challenges. The congregation refines its identity and brings about its unique contribution to the world.

Be blessed.  
Pastor Damon

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The article below is enclosed for your reference and provides a minister's responsibility for the UCC church.

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## **THE ORDAINED MINISTER'S CODE**

### **THE ORDAINED MINISTRY**

+ I believe that God calls the whole Church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ; that the privilege of witnessing to the gospel in Church and society belongs to every baptized Christian; that God empowers the ministry of the Church and its members by the Holy Spirit; that the Church nurtures faith, evokes gifts, and equips its members for service; and that God calls certain of the Church's members to various forms of ministry in and on behalf of the church.

+ I have been called by God to be a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ and ordained by the United Church of Christ to preach and teach the gospel, to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership.

- + I will seek to witness to the ministry of Jesus Christ.
- + I will preach and teach the gospel without fear or favor. I will speak the truth in love.
- + I will administer the sacraments and rites of the Church with integrity.
- + I will diligently perform the work of ministry which I have agreed to perform.

### **PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTRY**

- + I will nurture and offer my gifts for ministry to the Church. I will seek to call forth and nurture the gifts of others in the Church and join their gifts with mine for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ and the health of the Church.
- + I will seek to understand, support and interpret the diverse ministries of the Church and its members as carried out throughout the world. I will stand with those who risk personal well being because of actions taken in response to their Christian convictions.
- + I will work cooperatively and collegially with those whom I serve in the particular ministry to which I have been called.
- + I will stand in a supportive relationship with my colleagues in ordained, commissioned, and licensed ministry, offering and receiving counsel and support in times of need.
- + I will be an advocate for fair standards of compensation for all ordained and lay employees of the church, particularly in the place where I serve.
- + I will be a responsible participant in the life and work of my Association, Conference, and the United Church of Christ.
- + I will be a responsible representative of the Church Universal and participate in those activities which strengthen its unity, witness and mission. I will seek the counsel of the Conference or Association Minister or the Association Committee on the Ministry should divisive tensions threaten my relationship with those with whom I minister.

### **THE ETHICS OF MINISTRY**

- + I will regard all persons with equal respect and concern and undertake to minister impartially.
- + I will honor all confidences shared with me.
- + I will not use my position, power, or authority to exploit any person.
- + I will not use my position for personal financial gain, nor will I misuse the finances of the institution which I serve.
- + I will not perform pastoral services within a parish or for a member of a parish without the consent of the pastor of that parish.
- + I will deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and successor.
- + I will not, upon my termination and departure from a ministry position, interfere with nor intrude upon the ministry of my successor.

### **GROWTH IN MINISTRY**

- + I will encourage and participate in the regular evaluation of my ministry.
- + I will seek to grow in faith, knowledge and the practice of ministry through intentional continuing education, study and devotional life.
- + I will cooperate with my Association in the periodic review of my ordained ministerial standing.

## **COMMITMENTS TO SELF AND FAMILY**

- + I will live a life which honors my commitments to my family.
- + I will honor my need for time for physical and spiritual renewal, recreation and vacation.
- + I will honor my family's need for privacy and time together.
- + I will be a responsible steward of my personal and family finances. I will honor and accept responsibility for all debts which I incur.
- + I will attend to my physical well being and avoid abusive behaviors and abusive use of substances.
- + Relying on the grace of God, I will lead a life worthy of the calling to which I have been called.

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## **VanderWyden Presentation 9-24-17**

Present – Bruce and Betty Tatro, Howard Lane, Bob Ballou, Keith and Pru Fraser, Shirley Rediker, Tina Messer, Sandy and Rick Allen, Marlene Ballou, Becky Hays, David and Cynthia Stinson, Ruth Hayn, Ron and Jane Parent, Linda Svok, Carol Roof, John and Brenda Goodman, Marge and Damon Anderson, Ethel Nilsen, Cheri McDaniel-Thomas, Linda and Jim Lamothe, Joan Hagar, Pat Haselton

Introductory speech – Ken Baily – We are in a discernment phase as a congregation and goals are yet to be set.

Annual Pledge campaigns, feasibility studies, Capital campaign are not about fund raising but rather faith raising. Creating a better facility to make our ministry more effective. We aren't asking people to give to improve toilets but rather to make our church more accessible to the people who might partake in our ministries.

Pledge campaign should be conducted face to face not through an e-mail or a letter. A change in how stewardship is conducted can cause the amount of money raised to go up. Giving can increase by 9 – 20 percent. When we take care of our body we take care of the body of Christ.

They write a custom made program and train us to do a capital campaign. The training runs for 12 weeks and the campaign can last for 3 years - \$200,000 over the 3 years. (4 tax years) Tithing can happen over time as certain expenses in a family budget stop. Antiques, property, jewelry, stocks might be given to the church for the church to sell.

Clarity builds trust and faith in the process but we must be specific. Entering into a campaign takes a congregational vote - 8 people set aside for the 12 weeks. The majority of churches identify a mission component OCWM, to their fund raising project. Endowment is one of the most difficult things to raise money for. Also planned giving leaving money in your will to the church.

Vander Wyden does not charge a set percentage but they try to keep the costs down. Between 2 and 5 cents on the dollar is what they get out of what we raise. Set aside resources for brochures, mailings, around \$1,000 to \$2,000. Thumb drives /DVD's. At this point in the process they are usually committed to doing the project.

Is VanderWyden about to help us with the stewardship campaign so that we can pay for the lights? Tell what we are trying to do that will make us a better church with more resources. Colleges and Universities do these kinds of campaigns. Asking questions is a good way to structure a visit rather than a presentation.

We have to set the goal correctly. We don't want it to be unattainable have it become a disappointment. Set a goal and a challenge goal. Based on this moment in our capacity. 2 TO 8 times the annual giving of the church. If the goal goes above 5 times the annual giving then they need a feasibility study. Other congregants need to come on board as well as the leadership that is currently in

place.

Jean Leslie Clark – a psychologist – Hard to feel capable if we do not feel lovable. Sensing God’s love and taking care of ourselves.

This church needs a victory. A new parking lot may not be the point but it might be the goal that would bring us a victory. Raising \$150,000 will help us toward that victory and start to build that track record of success.

One member is retiring at the end of the year – may need to cut back – the numbers in our congregation cannot support what we are doing. Discussion of the fact that many of us cannot afford to do more than we are. The perception in the community that we may be more well off than we are.

Capital funds have a specific goal.

Helping to put our situation into perspective think of what it cost the early settlers to build this church and congregation. Crops could fail, Native Americans could chase them back to Massachusetts, homes could burn and still they persisted. Looking as it from a financial point of view if we were to multiply what they spent by today’s standards the building could have cost the settlers a million dollars in today’s money.

Damon - We are in a lull right now. Who are we at this time and who can we be. Things have to change but we need to do it intentionally. Urgency is upon us it can become constructive or destructive. There are ways to prepare a future for us.

80% of people come to church for the first time are invited. We UCC do not invite people to come. IDEAS - Bring a friend Sunday. Jesus serves breakfast – kids come in their pajamas – send them home with breakfast cereal.

A church that is Bible centered but does not beat people with the Bible.

Capital campaign to make investments to support the church. Any combination of ideas can be mixed and matched. May ask for annual expenses as part of what we are fund raising for.

L Chip money – church state mixture of money to serve a community service.

Bring religion to the younger generation. All churches are having difficulty drawing in young families.

Maybe we need to visit a church that is attracting young families. Have a plan of what to observe for and what questions to ask.

Increasing giving in a retirement age congregation. We get creative. Oh, I didn’t know I could give that. Art items – diamond rings – when the assembly has a certain demographic – people have different blessings and abilities.

Next step –Congregational Meeting - internal conversation – stop to pray with companions and look at the details and demands differently, book discussion, worship.

Wrap- up – are we getting closer, clearer, and are we together?

**A MINISTRIES CHART WILL BE ADDED BY HAND TO THE END OF THIS LETTER FOR HARD COPIES, AND INCLUDED IN THE EMAIL DOCUMENT FOR ONLINE COPIES**

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## THIS N' THAT

- ◆ **MONTHLY CALENDAR:** The calendar is often updated during any given month. A corrected version will be posted on the bulletin boards with any changes.
- ◆ **PRAYER REQUESTS:** To all those who need our prayers and support, please contact Pastor Damon to let him know your situation or have a friend or family member call the church. Because of privacy, sometimes we are not aware until you tell us.
- ◆ **DEACON COVERAGE FOR OCTOBER:** Rick Allen
- ◆ **ONLINE NEWSLETTER:** Please consider a shift from your paper newsletter to one sent via email. It would mean a great savings on stamps, and **THE E-MAIL VERSION IS IN LIVING COLOR!** Leave a message for Cindy in the office at 352-6689 if you want to make the switch. Thanks!

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## October Milestones

(**Please note:** If you are new to the church, or if we've missed you on our monthly milestones list, or even if you wish to have your name or a family member's name removed from the list, please contact me at: [officeswanzucc@ne.rr.com](mailto:officeswanzucc@ne.rr.com) or 603-352-6689. Thanks. Cindy Sweeney, Administrative Assistant.)

**MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES:** October 29, 1957, Eunice Nelson; October 26, 1986, Barbara Huguenin, Betsy Dubois; October 12, 2008, Arla Lundberg.

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:** October 15, 1960, Bob & Martha Wilber; October 22, 1977, Chris and Lorrie Brown; October 1, 1994, Kristen and Peter Goodenough; October 18, 2003, Ken & Jessica Colby.

**BIRTHDAYS:** Martha Henry & Chloe Page, October 1; Brenda Kerylow & Joanne Miner, October 5; Desmond Kelley, October 8; Marlene Ballou, October 10; Matthew Colby; October 19; David Gale, October 20; Mackenzie Roof, October 27; Marshall Roof, October 30.



**ADULT POT LUCK LUNCHEON**  
**~ OCTOBER 25, 2017 ~**  
**11:45 ~ 1:30 p.m.**

We gather for our Pot Luck luncheon at 11:45, pray & eat at noon. For the luncheon, kindly provide a main dish, salad, or dessert to share. Beverages are provided. We hope you will join us for a time of good food and fellowship! You don't have to be a member of the church to attend. Bring friends and neighbors. Please feel free to call Deb Sprague at 357-0125 if you have any questions or suggestions.

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**COMMENTS WELCOME:** There are two containers labeled “Comments” in the church. One is located in the Narthex and the other is in the Lounge. Please use these containers for your comments and/or suggestions. You may remain anonymous if you wish.

**CHURCH SURVEY:** A church survey is being prepared for a congregational evaluation. Prior to receiving this survey, please give thought to why you attend and/or support the First Congregational Church of Swanzey.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** We need all of our kids to join us! Surprises in store ... Learning always ... service projects to help others. Come and bring your friends!!!! It's every Sunday at 10:00. Become strong in your faith and knowledge!!!!

## SERVICE MINISTRY

"Others, Lord, yes others, Let this my motto be. Help me to live for others, so I may live like thee..."

There is so much grief and disaster in our world at this moment, that we need to take some time to see how we can help. Help does not have to mean only money. There are other ways you can be of service:

- pray, pray, pray ~ for the well-being of the people involved, for proper aid to be sent, for the physical and emotional state of our world and its people
- continue to bring in old eye glasses that can be sent on
- bring food and necessities for Snack Sack AND Gert's Pantry---protein is always in short supply
- smile and welcome people--you might be the bright spot in someone's day
- give to Neighbors in Need ( Sunday, Oct. 15 an offering will be collected)
- support Mission Night at Nick's Restaurant next Wed. Oct. 4. If you don't like to drive in the dark; go early! A percentage of the cost of your dinner will be given to us to support our mission projects.
- support the October 21<sup>st</sup> Third Saturday Supper--proceeds will go to our Christmas Kids project
- remember God loves you for who you are---tell others

## KIDS' CLUB 2017

**Who: all kids--- kindergarten - 6th grade**

**When:** Beginning Thursday, October 19 (3rd Thursday of the month) after school until 5:00

**Where:** 1st Congregational Church, UCC, Swanzey

**What:** besides activities and snacks and stories; something new is going to happen this year... we are going to become a service group---each meeting we will be completing a service project help others. Kids' suggestions will be welcome. Come enjoy yourself and make a difference to this world.

**NOBODY IS TOO YOUNG!**

**The Nick's Mission Night will be October 18th from 4:00 until closing. Coupons needed this year.**

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It's MISSION NIGHT at Nick's Restaurant,

Rt. 10, West Swanzey, NH    October 18 ~ 4:00 until closing

Please join with the members of the Swanzey 1st Congregational Church, UCC to support our mission programs. Bring this coupon with you , and the church will receive 20% of the cost of your meal to help fund our service projects. Help us make a difference in the world! Blessings.

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**Cut out the coupons above and bring them to Nick's!**



**NEW ADULT BIBLE STUDY OF MARK TO BEGIN:** The deacons met with Pastor Damon and David Stinson last month to discuss starting a new small group Bible Study in the church. The class will meet on a weekday morning--probably Thursday--for one hour, beginning in November. The first book to be studied will be the Gospel of Mark. Stinson, who will lead the class, has taught scripture for over forty years to small groups in churches. He looks forward to getting to know more members of our church and to studying Mark with them. For more information about the group, please speak to him or to Pastor Damon in church. *(For those of you who do not know him, David is a recently retired UCC minister from New Jersey. He and his wife, Cindy, spent their summers here in Westport and have retired to permanently live here in Swanzey (Westport). Please be sure to greet them on Sunday mornings.)*

**FROM TRUSTEES:** Please remember to send in your pledge checks even if you are unable to attend worship. It is important to keep up with pledges so that we can pay the expenses of the church. The trustees are still looking for at least one person to serve on the Board of Trustees. Please speak with Bruce Tatro or Joan Hagar or the Moderators – Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas or Betty Tatro. If you see something that needs to be done around the church, please feel free to share your talent to do that task if you are able. The trustees have also posted a To-Do list on the bulletin board just outside Friendship Hall. Thanks.

**CARING CRAFTERS** (Formerly Craft Group): 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, from 10:30-12. We have a head start on Christmas Fair items. Cards will always be needed for holidays. What would you like to do? Come join this friendly group for crafts, coffee and conversation.

**BASKET RAFFLE LIST:** Please sign up by the end of October, so raffle tickets can be put together and publicity sent out. This may be the last basket raffle, since we have probably tapped out all the resources after so many years! You are so appreciated for your participation and amazing contributions. We have 9 baskets signed up, and need at least 15. The Christmas Fair is scheduled for December 1 and 2. See Pat Haselton for information about baskets!

# Third Saturday Supper

**Saturday**  
**October 21, 2017**  
**Serving 5:00 to 6:30 PM**



## Menu

**Rosemary Chicken with Potatoes**  
**Buttered Green Beans**  
**Caesar Salad    Rolls**  
**Pumpkin Cake and Bars**  
**Coffee, Tea & Punch**

*Takeout  
Available*

**\$10.00 for Adults**  
**\$5.00 for Children 6-12**  
**Children under 6 - Free**

*Handicapped  
Accessible*

**First Congregational Church of Swanzey**  
**679 Old Homestead Highway**  
**Swanzey, New Hampshire 03446**  
**603 352-6689**

**[www.swanzeyucc.com](http://www.swanzeyucc.com)**



# October 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 Svc  Soup & Study 5:00 p.m. FH	2  6:30-8:00 FH Happy Trails	3	4 10:30-12 FH Caring Crafters  5:50-7:20 p.m. Daisy FH	5  Huskies FH 5:00  Girl Scouts CL 5:30-8:00 p.m.	6	7
8 10:00 Svc  Soup & Study 5:00 p.m. FH	9  6-7:00 Wolves CL	10 6-7:30 Interact FH 6:30 Christmas Fair CL	11 9:30-4:00 FH Garden Club  5:50-7:20 p.m. Daisy FH	12  Huskies FH 5:00	13	14
15 10:00 Svc Congregational Mtng after svc. Soup & Study 5:00 p.m. FH	16	17 6:30-8 pm Pack FH	18 10:30-12 FH Caring Crafters 4:30 Ministry 5:50-7:20 p.m. Daisy FH	19 3:00-5:00 Kids' Club FH Huskies FH 5:00 Girl Scouts CL 5:30-8:00 p.m.	20 Supper prep ALL DAY	21 Supper prep ALL DAY 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sat. Supper Chicken 5-6:30 p.m. FH
22 10:00 Svc  Soup & Study 5:00 p.m. FH	23  6-7:00 Wolves CL	24	25 11:45-1:30 FH Adult Pot Luck 5:50-7:20 p.m. Daisy FH	26  Huskies FH 5:00	27	28
29 10:00 Svc  Soup & Study 5:00 p.m. FH	30 J & J 9:00 a.m Halloween FH	31 J&J 9:00 Halloween FH	1	2	3	4

**CALENDAR WILL BE UPDATED AS NEEDED**

**FH = FRIENDSHIP HALL**

**First Congregational Church of Swanzey, UCC**  
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Web site: [www.swanzeyucc.com](http://www.swanzeyucc.com)

**RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED**



**OCTOBER 2017**