

Diaconate 2009 Annual Report

Your 2009 Diaconate continued working together to bring opportunities to the congregation. As we said thank you to our exiting deacons, Nancy Nurnberger, Theron Simons and Betty Roberts, we welcomed Stacey Cypher, Barbara DeBisschop, Joyce Monem and April Slauson to the 2009 Diaconate.

In March, Emily Polek made the decision to step down as chair-person, and Jennifer Dupont and Kim Sherwood were voted in as co-chairs for 2009.

In March, we began our Lenten Series, Mark of a True Christian. Also, for the first time, a Lenten Devotional booklet was created. The daily devotionals were written by many members of our congregation, and was quite a success. Again this year, on Maundy Thursday, the Diaconate sponsored a Seder Meal, led by Barbara and David DeBisschop. We thank them for leading us and teaching us about this symbolic meal. The Ecumenical Good Friday service was held at St Michael's this year. The Easter Sunrise Service was held at 6:30 a.m., and our two traditional Easter services were held at 8:30 and 10:15 as normal.

June brought us to Confirmation Sunday, where our confirmands became adult members of our church, accompanied by their sponsors and their parents.

In September, our annual Labor Day service was held at the home of Peggy and Rick Dufresne, which is always a great time of fellowship in a different environment other than our sanctuary. We also held another successful New Beginnings Sunday, with a pancake breakfast and a luncheon, followed by a celebration of Marji Hughes' 10 years of Christian Education service. A new confirmation class began in September, and they were welcomed with a dinner sponsored by Diaconate, and all participated in the Trust Walk.

October brought us to World Communion Sunday, as well as Laity Sunday. This year we were blessed to have Mrs. Joyce DeBisschop preach an amazing service with a very meaningful reflection. Due to low attendance, we held our last Sunday Evening Service on October 24th.

In November we participated in the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service which was held at St Michael's this year, and worked on the upcoming Advent Season.

December of course brought us to the birth of Christ. In the weeks prior to Christmas, we had our Service of Centering, which reminds us what Advent is really about. Our Longest Night service was held, and this moving service is always one to remind us all that God is always with us, even through our darkest times. On Christmas Eve we held two services, one at 5:30 and one at 11:00pm, and both were well attended.

Throughout 2009, we held Fredd Ward "In Care" as he works towards his service in ministry. Also, the Diaconate voted to hold Kimberly Hughes "In Care", as she moves in the same direction.

We, your Diaconate, are always ready and willing to serve our community of faith. We hope to be able to continue to serve the congregation in 2010 and further, as we work towards opportunities in the spiritual growth and life of our congregation, always knowing that God is guiding us and will lead us to do what is best for our church.

Yours in Christ, the 2009 Diaconate:

Stacey Cypher	Lois Messner	Kim Sherwood
Barbara DeBisschop	Joyce Monem	April Slauson
Peggy Dufresne	Laurie Phillips	Edie Sletner
Jennifer Dupont	Emily Polek	Richard Smilo

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NAUGATUCK

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

The following report represents activities conducted by members of the Business Committee of the Congregational Church of Naugatuck for the year 2009. At the beginning of the year, the Committee had 7 members within four (4) Subcommittees, two (2) Co- Treasurers, and the Senior Pastor Gordon Rankin. At the close of the year, the Committee had 9 members within the four (4) Subcommittees, two (2) Co- Treasurers and one (1) Assistant Treasurer, and the Senior Pastor Gordon Rankin. Two of the current members' terms will be expiring as of February'10, with one new member to be added in February'10.

SENIOR PASTOR

Yet another busy year for our Senior Pastor ensued in 2009, with the following issue's addressed:

- The proposal from child day care company Spark, Inc., to utilize our building for a summer camp, was eventually voted down by the Business Committee, and later withdrawn by the company itself. Tender Years did extend the agreement with us by one month in order to host a summer camp.
- A donor agreed to pay installments of \$1000.00 over a three month period to help with operating expenses.
- Installation of "Snow Falling Sign" installed around parking/walking areas: cost \$35.00/piece.
- "Safe Church" policy regarding hiring practices worked on and implemented.
- "Cottage Meeting" to be set up some time in the future.
- Scouts: There were issues of friction between Troops 102 and 138. As Charter Organization heads, Gordon and Marston Price from St. Michael's Church became involved. To resolve the situation the church asked Troop 102 to take certain actions. The Troop complied and hopefully progress is being made toward reconciliation.
- Copier replaced at same cost, with old contract costs covered by company.

TREASURER

The 2009 calendar year once again began with a number of challenges concerning the budget and the financial wellbeing of the Congregation:

- 2009 represented the first year in which the church returned to its former total return policy percentage (5% from 6%). This is the percentage of monies withdrawn from the church's Endowment.
- 2009 Preliminary Income Statement, as of 30 November'09, shows an operating loss of (\$31,905.33) on revenue of \$318,677.75.
- The beginning of the year saw continued pressure on financial markets, resulting in continued declines in the asset values of the Endowment, Dibble, and Curtiss Fund. By year's end, the financial markets had improved substantially, however the monies to be withdrawn from the Endowment (configured in Sept'09) decreased due to its decrease in dollar value and the change in the percentage to be drawn.
- Energy costs for heating fuel, both gas and oil, declined year over year due to the world wide recession and economic slowdown.
- Loose plate offerings down year over year.
- Special distribution of \$10,000.00 received from Bank of America due to an error in reporting Dibble Fund proceeds.
- Projected 2010 budget estimates a loss of \$54,945.00.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Another busy year for the B&G team, as a number of projects/tasks were completed during the year:

- Oil purchase/deliveries for year made at different intervals. Energy prices declined along with the rest of market in late 2008 then started to rebound as the overall market began recovering from its lows set in March'09.
- All water leak problems in Parish House and Sanctuary taken care of.
- Chair's delivered to Russian Orthodox Church.
- Knox boxes installed. Fire Department has a key.
- Work completed on Men's/Ladies Rooms in the Sanctuary.
- Work completed by Boy Scouts around garage and Sanctuary doors. Painting of Sanctuary Door adjacent to Church Street to be done. Many thanks to Zach Blum who took on this work as his eagle scout project.
- Developing a "Green Church" policy/attitude; recycling of cans, bottles, and paper.
- Landscaping around church to be completed in spring'10; \$8,000.00 (from a directed gift) set aside for project. Estimated cost to complete project: \$2700.00
- Backflow tested by Connecticut Water; cost \$50.00.
- Any bad matting on ramps removed and replaced.
- New freezer purchased with funds donated by Clothier.
- Schmidt Electric completed projects (lighting) in both the Parish House and Sanctuary.

- Boiler problems fixed in Sanctuary.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors installed in Parish House.
- Lock on Linda's office replaced.
- Issue's carried over to 2010 include:
 - 1) Work on the Fire Escape platform on Parish House; bid received: \$25,000.00: placed on hold.
 - 2) Installation of Safety Tape on stairs leading into Parish House; 4 rolls at approximately \$35/roll estimated.
 - 3) New gutter for wooden roof; correct color needed.
 - 4) Landscaping project.

TRUSTEES

A turbulent year in the financial markets once again highlighted another busy year for this Sub-Committee:

- A rather challenging year in the financial markets highlighted the sub-committee's monitoring of assets in the Endowment. As of November '09, the Endowment was valued at \$2,807,695.60, up from the December 31, 2008 value of 2,509,649.04.
- Relationship changed with the financial managers of Endowment Fund, as the two managers with UBS left the company to work for Morgan Stanley. Endowment remained with UBS, under new managers, while the sub-committee investigated the possibilities of moving the fund to Morgan. Craig to meet with principles involved to determine the best course of action.
- Moving of some of the funds to different investment tools proposed.

FISCAL

The year began with the task of developing an amendment to the "Safe Church" policy:

- Addendum to the "Safe Church" policy adapted by sub-committee, which was later approved by the entire Business Committee and Council.
- Work on fiscal '10 budget completed.

STEWARDSHIP

"We need you today, so our church will be here tomorrow"

The 2009 calendar year represented yet another successful Stewardship Campaign, culminating with a most generous response from the members of the Congregation:

- The goal for the '09 campaign was \$150,000.00

- For the year, members gave \$134,282.00, representing approximately 90%% of goal set by Stewardship at the beginning of campaign; the total fell \$15,718.00 short of goal.
- Out of the 308 members, 118 responded with their pledges.
- Various ways for church members to contribute:
 - 1) Gift on behalf of someone else
 - 2) Bequeathed
 - 3) Gift of various financial instruments, including equities.
 - 4) Items of some value which may be placed on EBay and sold over the internet. A picture would be taken of the item with a contract as to an agreed upon minimum price. The item will remain in the donor's home. If the item is sold, the sales proceeds become a charitable donation. If not sold, it remains the owners. The Co-Chair of this process, Craig and Jennifer Dupont, will completely handle the transaction. The Congregation needs to consider items of value, such as furniture, a collectible, or jewelry as donations. Whenever families move, or downsize their home, or have a relative who needs to close their home, they can use this process which will benefit both parties.
- CD's were handed out as gifts for pledges that were received.
- Gift Cards to be developed by Stewardship, with a recommendation to place a church on the face of the card and a brief message inside stating that a donation has been made to the church. Cards could be given in memory of a birthday, anniversary, or of a holiday.
- Announcements made in church, as well as write-ups in the Parish Scope and Bulletin.
- "Thank you notes" sent out at the conclusion of the campaign.

The 2010 Stewardship campaign started in October'09, with the following adopted as its message:

"Imagine the Possibilities.....

- The goal for the '10 campaign is \$130,000.00
- As of 23 December '09:

Total number of pledges received to date: 92
Total \$\$ value of pledges received to date: \$104,775.00
Value of last year's pledges still outstanding: \$32,174.00

Number of new pledges: 10
Number of increased pledges: 18
Number of decreased pledges: 15
Number of pledged unchanged: 49

If we receive pledges from those who pledged last year, but haven't done so yet, and they pledge the same amount we will hit our goal.

- Announcements made in church, as well as write-ups in the Parish Scope and Bulletin.

- Other discussions/proposals
 - 1) A Financial "Thermometer" developed to let church community know where fund raising stands.
 - 2) Possibility of having more dinners/brunches after church services to raise funds, or during special events.
 - 3) Maintaining contact with new members, and staying in touch with current members.
 - 4) "Growth Committee" + "Stewardship Committee" = more outreach to church community.
 - 5) "Balance the Budget" dept reduction plan discussed.
 - 6) Asking members for a one-time donation to help with financial short-fall.

- End of January will receive current figures on 2010 campaign.

GENERAL ENTRIES

Closed Projects/Items

- Paid for new laptop computer for Marji.

Active Projects

- Financial Planning program/course to be proposed to congregation in earl 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Frenis
Business Committee Chairman

Christian Formation Committee Annual Report 2009

Changes in the church structure at the Cong. Church of Naugatuck led to the creation of the Christian Formation Committee in 2009. The 4 member committee along with Marji Hughes, director of Christian Education and Youth spent the year working to create opportunities for the entire church community to grow in faith and spirit. The CF committee took seriously the responsibilities inherent in leading others on the Christian journey, and recognizing that the classroom education model is only one way that persons of any age may gain knowledge of our faith studied and discussed possibilities.

One result was a new Church "School" program called "Power Xpress". *Power Xpress* is a rotation model curriculum which explores a faith or bible based theme over the course of 4-8 weeks. Each Sunday, children separated into age groups participate in specific activities (Experience Stations) that reinforce the theme. Experience stations may include: Story, Cookery, Music, Art, Drama, Science, Games and Video. Adult leaders are responsible for only 3 weeks during each session. In the fall we began with "Respect", "How the Bible Came to Be" and closed the year with "The Gift of Jesus". To truly succeed with the rotation model we don't need teachers in the traditional sense, we need energy, creativity and (short-term) commitment from across the spectrum of church members. We look at this change as part of our continuing journey together as a faith family.

The Christian Formation Committee developed, assisted with and undertook a variety of programs and activities over the year including "Corned Beef and Magic", Heifer Day, Children's Day, Summer Church School, Vacation Bible School, Teacher Barbecue, Junior Worship, the Advent Workshop, and the Christmas Pageant.

We raise up with joy the hiring of a Sunday morning nursery coordinator in January and the positive effect a week-to-week presence has had on our babies and toddlers as well as on the parents who trust us with their precious ones.

The committee plans to spend time developing a Young Adult Ministry as well as introducing more opportunities for our generations to come together for learning, worship and service in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted

Dixie Lafo, John Rodgers,
Anna Messner, Lois Fortin
Marji Hughes (ex-officio)

Mission Outreach Annual Report 2009

Having had the opportunity to meet only once, it is apparent that Mission Outreach has yet to be established under the new committee structure. That being said, it is amazing how much our church family has accomplished in the past year.

The year in review shows great success in some of our regular projects as well as some new endeavors. We have successfully:

1. Collected lollipops for our service men.
2. Knitted/crocheted and distributed countless prayer shawls to those in need of our love and care.
3. Become involved with the N.E.O.N. project, though we can do more in this area.
4. Collected food items for the Ecumenical Food Bank and for the Thanksgiving baskets.
5. Collected thousands of pull tabs for the young girl with brittle bone disease.
6. Helped to raise money to send our own missionary team to LaRomana.
7. Completely clothed 10 community youngsters through the New Beginnings Program.
8. We raised over \$1,600 for Heifer International through our M and M's for Heifer Project and with the help of the P.F. car wash.
9. Sent cooling collars and some helmet liners to our servicemen.
10. Contributed to the Ecumenical Toy sale.
11. Had fun at Advent workshop and then distributed the fruits of our labors to our shut-ins.
12. Participated in a new Angel Tree format.
13. Donated money to the victims of the earthquake disaster in Haiti.
14. Donated socks, towels and toiletries to St. Vincent dePaul Shelter in Waterbury.
15. Donated clothing and/or hours of work to the Clothier which supplies people in need with inexpensive but beautiful clothing as well as donates the money it raises to many Church and community causes.

These are just a few of the ways we continue to remain a Church "without walls"! During this year, we will hopefully get involved with Habitat for Humanity, which will give more of us an opportunity to make a "physical" effort to help those in our area communities who are less fortunate than we are.

In the meantime, our mission team is planning this year's trip to work at Casa Hogar and its surrounding communities.

The focus of Mission Outreach can be summed up in a prayer that was offered through e-mail during the Christmas season:

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

When the song of the angels is stilled;
When the star in the sky is gone;
When the kings and the princes are home;
When the shepherds are home with their flocks;
Then the work of Christmas begins...
 To find the lost
 To heal the broken
 To feed the hungry
 To release the prisoner
 To rebuild the nations
 To bring peace among people
 To make music in the heart!

Keeping Christmas in our hearts, all year long, will make our mission to others foremost in our minds. Let us remember how blessed we are! Let us share our blessings with others today and every day!

Thank you for your understanding. We plan to do better as an established committee during this new Church year. Keep your eyes and ears open for new opportunities to do God's work!

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce A. DeBisschop
Emma Fabian
Emily Goodwin
Sandra Ward