



No matter who you are...  
Or where you are on life's journey  
You are welcome here!

*A ministry in the United Church of Christ*

**Our Ministry Staff:**

Rev. Bill Klossner, Pastor  
Margo C. Lazzerini, Organist  
Judy Gerlach, Choir Director

**Office Staff:**

Peggy Kapinski, Manager

**Volunteers:**

Susan Cheney  
Susann Luckenbach

**Elected Leadership:**

Marsha Rutherford, Moderator  
Barbara Fleshman, Clerk  
Robert Naylor, Treasurer

**Office Hours:**

Monday - Thursday: 9:00 am - Noon

Phone: 941.637.8443

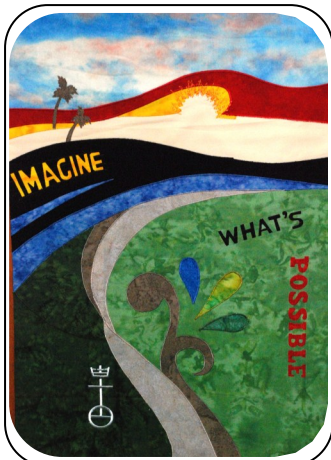
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**WITH GRATITUDE TO OUR FOUNDERS**

All of us are able, like it or not, to remember our birthdate. We mark the milestones, and we ask others to join our celebrations. But few of us can probably name the birthday of our church and the congregation that nurtures us each week.

Through the vision of a small band of people, our church gathered for its first worship service on October 14, 1984 in the first PGI Civic Association Building on Marion near Bal Harbor. The Rev. Doug Plaskett, founding pastor, and his wife, Nancy, had been working since August to gather those interested in becoming part of this new venture.

Building on that foundation laid 27 years ago, our congregation still looks

to serve the needs of our community, develop people of faith and witness, and actively welcome those who are still seeking a progressive voice of faith in today's world.

According to the historical records, of the 35 original "Founding Members" on February 24, 1985, only Craig Phelps continues to hold membership here. In addition, Craig and Barb Phelps were the first wedding for the church on August 17, 1985!

The people who have actively guided our ministries, the lay leaders who have shared the 'cost and joy of discipleship,' and the doors that open before us to each succeeding generation remind us that God is still speaking to this congregation, and that God has great plans for the people known as the Congregational United Church of Christ in Punta Gorda. All because a group of people imagined what was possible in 1984!

We are so happy that *Jean Boggs, Don and Judy Fike, Jim DeGood, and Mary Farnquist* have joined our fellowship and will be working alongside us as we increase the mission and ministry of our congregation. Each of them brings an enthusiastic spirit and a vision of faith to add to our already joy-filled congregation. Make them feel welcome as you meet them.



**Reorganization Update**

The Task Force that is addressing this process has gratefully received suggestions and questions from the congregation in response to their first draft. The result is the basis for transforming this plan into a revision of our Constitution and By-laws, which is currently the focus of their nearly weekly working sessions. They are striving to have these recommendations to the Executive Board in October to maintain the timeline for presentation to and action by the congregation in November.



# DOLLARS & SENSE

As of September 1st, our year-to-date operating expenses have been \$118,516. Our operating income has been \$108,055. Expenses are in line with our 2011 budget, but our income is slightly behind our projections for this moment in the year.

It is not unusual for expenses to be greater than income at this time in the year. Historically, operating income is strong at the end of the year.

With your continued faithful giving, we will achieve our goal of a balanced budget in 2011. Thank you for your support of our church and her ministries.

*Steve Rutherford, Finance Committee Chair*

Thanks to all who shared photos of your pet companions for our first "virtual" blessing of the

Blessing of the Pets



animals. Though they were not present with us that day, the cats, dogs, and birds who live among many of us, bring a joy and purpose to lives. May we all learn of the care for all of creation embodied in St. Francis of Assisi.

## A note from our Project Manager:

It has been my pleasure to work on this project. It would not have been possible without the financial support of the church, the work of several individuals, and the donations of the following:

- ♦ **Janice Davis**, who donated her time and expertise on the overall design details. Additionally, her professional standing enabled the church to purchase a majority of the supplies at a significant discount.

- \* **Matt Uebelacker** of Granite Enterprise of S.W. Florida who donated the beautiful granite accent piece.

I must also mention the fantastic help provided by **Bob Naylor, Steve Rutherford, Neoma Remiger, and Cindy**

**Fraze**. Clearly, this project would not have been a success without their assistance.

Finally, I want to thank **Rev. Bill** for his assistance during these last three weeks. He was always available when something needed to be moved, or when we needed supplies at the hardware and paint stores.

*Sincerely, Guy Greenfield*



October

2: **Ileah Bonzi**

6: **Arlene Remo**

10: **Bill Warner**

17: **Becca Pancoast; Rachel Piotrowski**

19: **John Schmuhl**

21: **Julian Cheney; Ellie Martin; Dick Michael**

23: **Jenna Klossner**

25: **Kathy Ringelstein Frantisch**

30: **Chris Klossner**

*October 1: Heinz and Mary Grieger (1960)*

*October 8: Ken and Mary Horton (1949)*

*October 10: Bill and Coloma Warner (1944)*

*October 14: Fred and Sally Benson (1972)*

**Birthdays & Anniversaries**

Dear Friends at Congregational UCC,

Thank you so much for your generous gift of \$833.00 to **NEIGHBORS IN NEED in 2010!** Two-thirds of your NIN offering goes to support Justice and Witness Ministries and one-third goes to support the Council of American Indian Ministry.

It has been another remarkable, yet challenging year in the United Church of Christ as we strive for justice and peace for all of God's people. No matter where they are, members throughout the church demonstrate that they are people of compassion and commitment. Local churches, conferences, associations, and the national setting work daily to address injustice in their communities, regions, the nation, and in the world.

We are encouraged by our relationships with conferences and partners of other faith communities. These efforts have proven that we can make a difference when we work together. We are thrilled to report that we will reach our goal of training 300 justice leaders in our Justice Leaders Engaging and Developing (Justice LED) curriculum by the end of 2011. We continue to take justice ministry closer to the people. We have various offices throughout the United States that provide support to our work.

**October is NEIGHBORS IN NEED month.** This year we are engaged in an exciting new campaign that honors our commitment to be ONE CHURCH - MISSION 1. From November 1 - 11, we encourage our churches to go an extra mile and collect an extra 1 million healthy food items, and additional \$111,111 for Neighbors in Need designated for hunger action, and 11,111 letters to Congress to support "Just Food" policies all over the world. For more information, go to <http://www.ucc.org/mission1>

Again, thank you for your contributions to NEIGHBORS IN NEED for 2010. Please continue your generous support in 2011.

In Christ's Service,

Paul Osgood, Chairperson, Justice and Witness Ministry Development Committee

M. Linda Jaramillo, Executive Minister



## THE WORK CONTINUES

With the completion of Faith Hall's spiffy new look, Guy Greenfield has undertaken one more task that will continue to improve the looks of our facility.

The hallway leading to Faith Hall has needed a new coat of paint on the walls and ceiling. The ceiling had suffered some water leakage from the a/c unit and had been repaired last year.

Both surfaces will now get new coats—the walls sporting the same soothing green as the Faith Hall walls and the ceiling a sparkling white. Thanks Guy, for all your efforts.



### Is Your Name on the Fellowship Host List?

With the renovations in Faith Hall, it has become a wonderful place to share in the fellowship of our congregation and our

Sunday morning guests. But that means we need fellowship hosts...won't you sign up to assure that we offer an extravagant welcome to all?

## THANK YOU FOR CARING!

Your generosity in response to the floods in the Northeast meant that we were able to send a check for \$500 to Rev. Joe Amico and the members of the First Congregational UCC in West Brattleboro, Vermont. You are a compassionate congregation!





**MISSION:1**  
11.1.11-11.11.11

That they may all be 1

ONE UNITED CHURCH on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice

ucc.org/mission 1

Nov. 1-11, 2011

God is still speaking,  **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

## What is Mission: 1?

ONE UNITED CHURCH on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food related injustice. This is Mission: 1.

Mission: 1 is an opportunity to make real Jesus' prayer for his disciples: "That they may all be one." It is also an opportunity to live out our faith — in unity — by offering the worship that God most desires from us: loosening the bonds of injustice and sharing our bread with the hungry.

The staggering facts compel us to act with compassion and to be voices for justice. 925 million people still suffer from chronic hunger worldwide, nearly 90 million higher than in 2000.

In the United States alone, 50.2 million people (up from 35.5 million in 2006), including 17.2 million children, are food insecure. They don't have the money or assistance to provide food for themselves and their families. We can be God's instruments of change.

**For the first 11 days of November (11.1.11 - 11.11.11), United Church of Christ congregations, colleges, seminaries, and health and human service agencies, will join together in a collective mission campaign to:**

- ◆ *collect more than 1 million food items for local food banks,*
- ◆ *raise \$111,111 in online donations for Neighbors in Need and \$111,111 for East Africa famine relief,*
- ◆ *and write 11,111 letters to Congress (in support of Bread for the World's 2011 Offering of Letters campaign) asking that U.S. foreign assistance be reformed to more effectively serve the world's poorest people.*

A continuously updated national tote board at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org) will keep the entire church apprised of our collective efforts.

### **But what will our congregation attempt during this same period?**

We will encourage our members and friends to donate :

- ◆ **11 cans of food from each person**, to go to the local Good Samaritan's Food Pantry
- ◆ **\$11.00 from each of us** to go toward the UCC goal for national and international alleviation of hunger
- ◆ **1 letter** to our Congressional representatives from each of us

You will hear more about this goal as we approach November 1, and if you would like to assist Jenny Seltzer and Jan Tulk as they lead the way for us, contact either one of them—they would love to have the help!

Let's rely on God to help us meet these goals!

# WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Did you know that there are over 200 students in Charlotte County Schools who are considered homeless? Did you know there is only one shelter opened in the county to serve the dozens of individuals and families whose only other alternative may be sleeping in their car, under a bridge, or in the woods? Join the Women's Fellowship at their October 14th Salad Luncheon meeting to hear **the Executive Director of Charlotte County Homeless Coalition, Angela Hogan** tell the story of the service in our midst. Bring your colorful and tasty salads to share. Joanne Arvid and Jean Boggs, our hostesses, will provide beverages and desserts.

Whether on **Kindle, iPad, or the good old hardcover**, bring your recent book to discuss at the **October Book Talk Tea**, where Sandy Armstrong will welcome the group into her home at 1 pm on Friday, October 21. The place is 716 Monaco Drive, near Twin Isles Country Club.

Get ready for your seafood bibs as the **WOMEN'S LUNCH OUT** will make the October 28 noon event great fun at the Murdock **Red Lobster**. Marie Nickerson is responsible for arrangements, so sign up at the kiosk, or call her at 625-1662.

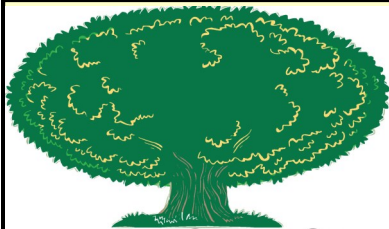
## Dates to Remember:

*Friday, November 18:* Set up for Holiday Food Fair, scheduled for the next day, November 19 (8 am-noon);

*Friday, December 9:* Christmas Luncheon

*Friday, January 27:* Card Party at noon

*Neoma Remiger  
Women's Fellowship, President*



## Memorial Gifts

We are grateful for the memorial gifts that are received to honor and celebrate the lives of those who have passed from our midst.

Some of the recently received gifts were used for the Faith Hall project, and others are designated for other projects.

*In memory of Janet Konkolic's mother...*

*In memory of Joanne Gunther...*

*In memory of Anne Dorr...*

*In memory of Win Hoyt...*



## Your Spiritual Side

*“Those who meditate on God's Word find the right path.”*

There are a few copies of the September-October issue of **The Upper Room** daily devotional booklet available in the sanctuary

kiosk. Next month's issue has arrived and will be placed later in October. You may also take the **CARE NOTE** brochures from the display to help you in your life's journey. New topics have been added recently.

Both of these resources are free to you, but your donation support will allow us to continue providing them for congregational use.



## Moderator's Message - Marsha Rutherford

Greetings, Friends!

If you haven't been in Faith Hall yet, you are in for a treat! It looks fabulous!!! The cabinets, rolling serve station, and refrigerator make this a space that is useful for so many activities. The granite top, window shades, and two lovely shades of green paint make this a space that is as beautiful as it is functional. Bouquets of thanks to **Guy Greenfield** for heading up this project and getting it (almost) completed in such a timely manner! I also must thank **Les Dorr** and **Dorothy Hoyt** for giving us the "seed money" to get this project started, members of the **Renovation Task Force** for their thoughtful input last spring, and **Phil Harnden** for some excellent architectural drawings of how our ideas could look. Others members directly involved were **Cindy Frazee**, **Bob Naylor**, **Neoma Reminger**, and **Steve Rutherford**. A friend of the church, **Janice Davis**, contributed her design expertise, and **Matt Uebelacker** donated the granite. How wonderful to have this area of the church freshened up for us to share in so many ways!

Speaking of freshening up, the Leadership Task Force has been meeting weekly to "freshen up" the organization of the church's leadership. Participation in our church and churches across the country has been changing; people want to **DO** ministry, instead of **MEETING**. It is difficult to get people to commit to relatively long terms of service, particularly in our retirement/part time community. The goal of this leadership reorganization proposal is to reflect these changes by having a smaller core group that meets regularly and by creating new opportunities for people to be involved in large and small ways. You will find the new streamlined version of the proposal in this newsletter. Please continue to ask questions and to make suggestions to the Task Force as it continues its work. I am excited about the possibilities of this fresh take on how our church can do its mission. I hope you can imagine them too!



Blessings, *Marsha*

## The Last Word

from Rev. Bill Klossner



My friends,

You are a blessing to this congregation, and your blessings multiply as they are spread throughout God's world. You may not think that you do much to serve God, but I remind each of us, [paraphrasing Jesus], that "when we reach out to those who are the most vulnerable," we reach out to Jesus himself. Let me share portions from the letter I received from my friend and colleague in West Brattleboro, Vermont, in thanks for our gift of \$500. Rev. Joe Amico writes, "*Our congregation has a new understanding of what it means to part of a connectional church where people respond to one another's needs...Just a month before [Hurricane] Irene hit we assembled Clean Up Buckets and sent them off to Church World Service. Fifty five buckets came back to Brattleboro as a response to Irene! In fact, the family hardest hit in our own congregation included our Missions Chair who had assembled those buckets! Over 60 volunteers from our church, community, and UCC churches in neighboring Massachusetts came to help get the five feet of muck out of their basement and clean up their yard.*

*As you can well imagine, clean up efforts continue. This week we found an apartment for the Chair of our Social Action Committee whose trailer was condemned when mold was found. Folks have been busy cleaning the new apartment, getting all her clothing laundered, and now the actual moving...You have been an incredible source of support. I appreciate your words, Bill, about a "new normal." I've used them several times this past month. I also appreciated your strong recommendation that I take time for myself. I hadn't realized what an emotional drain doing this work entailed...It's been a tough year for people in Brattleboro as one of our major downtown buildings burned leaving many low income families homeless, two murders, a teenage suicide, and then Irene. But again thanks to the tremendous outpouring of congregations like yours...we are being restored and revitalized."*



My friends, you continue to be blessings to people you don't even know!

*Rev. Bill*

# October 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 8:00am Eyeopeners AA
2 10:30am Worship 6:30pm FAA	3 8:00am Eyeopeners AA	4 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 8:00am Mens Breakfast 8:00pm Peace River AA	5 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	6 8:00am Eyeopeners AA	7 8:00am Eyeopeners AA	8 8:00am Eyeopeners AA
9 10:30am Worship 6:30pm FAA	10 8:00am Eyeopeners AA	11 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 8:00am Mens Breakfast 8:00pm Peace River AA	12 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	13 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 2:30pm Reorganization Task Force at Church	14 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 12:00pm Women's Fellowship SALAD Luncheon	15 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 1:00pm Herbert Balmer Memorial Service
16 10:30am Worship 6:30pm FAA	17 8:00am Eyeopeners AA	18 8:00am Mens Breakfast 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 8:00pm Peace River AA	19 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	20 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 2:30pm Reorganization Task Force 5:30pm Senior Singles Dinner at La Fontana	21 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 1:00pm Book Talk Tea at Sandy Armstrong's	22 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 5:00pm Greg Fellers/Susan Ferando wedding at Gilchrist
23 10:30am Worship 6:30pm FAA	24 8:00am Eyeopeners AA	25 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 8:00am Mens Breakfast 8:00pm Peace River AA	26 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	27 8:00am Eyeopeners AA 7:00pm EXECUTIVE BOARD	28 12:00am WF Lunch Out at Red Lobster 8:00am Eyeopeners AA	29 8:00am Eyeopeners AA
30 10:30am Worship 6:30pm FAA	31 8:00am Eyeopeners AA					