

***THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
VERNON, UCC***

ANNUAL REPORT

for

Organizational Meeting

June 3, 2012

INTERIM SENIOR PASTOR

A long, long time ago when I was serving my first parish in central Pennsylvania, Maggie and I greatly enjoyed one special Italian restaurant in that area. All the dishes were homemade and cooked to order. As a result, eating there was never done quickly and that was part of the design and the charm. In fact, there was a note at the bottom of the menu that read, "All dishes are cooked to order. This will take longer than many people are used to, but we trust the results will prove worthy of the wait."

At this point in our shared time of this interim transition ministry, we have been together for 21 months. At one time, the average time for an interim ministry was 24 months, but increasingly the range has more often been in the 24-30 month range. Given that, I am confident that our time together will fall well within that range, as I expect the Search Committee to complete their work this calendar year.

Questions have been raised about the length of this search and I would like to briefly address those. If you've ever painted a room in your home, you well know that it takes more than just applying paint to the walls (despite the allure of those commercials from Home Depot). It takes time to move furniture, wash walls, patch holes, tape baseboards and so on. In fact, it's been my experience that prepping a room to paint takes longer than the time needed to apply paint and clean up.

I think this is a good metaphor for our interim time together. While at one time, we were prepared to call a Search Committee together back in January 2011, the Church Council wisely chose to "move ahead by moving backwards" and called together an Executive Committee to work on a series of concerns that had special priority in our shared life. Taking the time to research, evaluate, discuss and decide about these concerns will pay great dividends in the years to come. While that prolonged the time prior to the establishment of the Search Committee, the results of that work will be very valuable in the search for a new Senior Pastor. It is the equivalent of "prepping the room" prior to painting.

Every Interim Pastor has his or her own way to assess the needs, set priorities and move ahead in this intentional time of ministry. My style has always been a bit more generic than some colleagues, as my priorities are to focus on the matters at hand in order that the incoming pastor can focus her or his energies on "people and program." That has meant different foci and priorities in different churches. All of this has now come together and I believe the Search Committee is well prepared for their very important task.

It can be awkward to single out church members whose help has been so valuable over the past year because I certainly do not want to overlook or minimize anyone's contributions. FCCV is richly blessed with so many members who invest so much of themselves and make our shared efforts at ministry such a priority in their daily lives. It is such a blessing as a pastor to know that with a phone call to the Trustees, a repair will be swiftly made; with a call to the Deacons, a ride can be arranged or a post-funeral reception arranged; and so on throughout the boards and committees of the church. After Hurricane Irene and the pre-Halloween blizzard, there were persons (and I'm not sure who all of them were) who made a review of the church and clean up here a priority.

There are two persons whose contributions to the ministry of the church have a special value to me as an Interim Pastor. Our church website (www.firstchurchofvernon.org) has greatly benefited by the efforts of Gerry Dyar. Gerry has had prior experience as a webmaster and has brought that expertise here for our shared efforts. Also, in the past year, Karl Prewo has chaired the Human Resources Committee and has done a wonderful job in revising our Personnel Policy, getting our personnel records updated, and creating a very effective avenue of administration for the church

and our staff. The contributions of Gerry and Karl, along with so many others, have certainly helped to make this time of interim transition ministry especially productive.

Over the past year, so many good memories come to mind of our time together and our shared ministry. For me, one memory that will stay with me was of a Sunday afternoon in late July. On that day, the Deacons, in their wonderful ministry of hospitality, had just completed their third post-funeral reception in ten days. As you will remember, it was a hot summer last year, and as the reception concluded and the clean-up progressed, everyone there was hot and tired from the events of recent days. But at the same time, there was such a good spirit among everyone, so much fellowship and laughter as the day concluded. The concluding verse of "Come, Labor On" echoed through my mind on the ride home that day. "And a glad sound comes with the setting sun, 'well done, well done.'"

Please keep the important work of FCCV and the Search Committee in your daily prayers. Our shared ministry in this time of transition ministry continues. So, for now, grab another breadstick, top off your glass and wait with hope for what comes next. Let us trust in the promises of God that "the results will prove worthy of the wait."

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. David Minnick

MINISTER of CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sunday School Superintendent: Cindy Madden

Assistant Superintendent: Jen Condry,

Summer Sunday School Superintendent: Victoria Madden

Youth Advisors: Beth Fowler, Halene Fujimoto, Dave Hockenberry, Debi Hockenberry, Kathleen McClure, Sadie Burnett-Pollack

Youth Basketball Chaperone: Randy Ramsdell

Sunday School Music Director: Steve Westerberg

Sunday School Bells Director: Kevin Maki

Child Care Coordinator: Christa Hockenberry

3yr/4yr/5yr Teachers: Adam Boucher, Kevin Maki, Jacquelyn Mead, Jaclyn Leonard

1st/2nd Grade Teachers: Jennifer Jensen, Cheryl Turner

1st/2nd Grade Shepherds: Jena Maki, Aarika Mallory

3rd/4th Grade Teachers: Debbie Bartos, Diane Mead

3rd/4th Grade Shepherds: Nick Bartos, Haley Hasty

5th/6th Grade Teachers: Annie Longo, Jean Philbrick

7th/8th Grade Teachers: Greg Mias, Alexa Philbrick, Erika Sturgis

Substitutes: April Calvelli, GloryAnn Hockenberry, Suzanne Maki, Peter Melander, Ian Pettigrew

This past year, the Sunday School welcomed a few new families, keeping our attendance steady. We are using the Cokesbury Power Express rotation curriculum. Teachers stay with the class the whole year and the workshop curriculum is rotated each week among the class.

Last June, Vacation Bible School welcomed 140 children and 45 volunteers. The theme for 2011 was "Shake it Up: Where Kids Carry out God's Recipe." "Operation Overboard, Dare to Go Deep with God" is our theme for this year.

Youth Fellowship, combining 6th-12th grades, met every month. One month we did mission projects (Giv2) and the other month we did fun activities. We started our Giv2 Mission year with a kick-off event with Rev. Da Vita McCallister. We lost a month of Giv2 because of the winter storm in

October that knocked out power in the town for about 10 days. But we were successful in completing the Crayons for Cancer mission, fellowship and activities with the Buckingham Estates Memory Care Community in Glastonbury and working on Martha Fowler's gardens. Our fun activities included Laser Tag, basketball, sleepovers and our Tag Sale Fundraiser.

Youth Fellowship Mission Week: In July 2011, the youth worked with the Christian Activities Council in Hartford. Our advisors were Debi Hockenberry and Greg Mias. They worked with children 3 years -6th grade at two different sites from 9 AM-4 PM. The youth then talked about their experience during worship in September. The youth did a fantastic job but preferred a mission week like they did the previous year - a different place every day. My goal for this year, July 2012, will be to put this together.

The Confirmation class studied many different topics that included worship, religions, funeral home, revelation, Lent, Easter, church polity, Communion, Baptism and faith. The class visited a Jewish synagogue, the Bloomfield Cathedral and a funeral home. They also volunteered at the Cornerstone Soup Kitchen from September-May and went to New York for the Youth Services Opportunities Program (YSOP). In Vernon on a Saturday, we served from 20-60 meals. In New York over 36 hours we served more than 1200 meals. Our chaperones for the YSOP mission were Chris Buxton, Donald Montgomery and Suzanne Maki.

The Executive Committee sent out a questionnaire to the congregation and one of the suggestions was to bring back the Family Life Ministry. Pastor Cindy Carr and I decided we would start with the Hands of Peace Puppet Ministry show and a dinner. The evening was well attended, so there is a need and desire for this type of program in our church.

To work in Christian Education - from board members, superintendents, teachers, advisors, chaperones and our music teachers - you need commitment, dedication and a calling to this ministry. It is a ministry that is vital to the growth of our church. We could not do anything without our volunteers and for that I thank each one of you. Our children and youth and all those we help through our different missions are blessed to have your support so we can continue on.

God Bless,
Linda Shivers, Minister of Christian Education

MODERATOR

A great big thank you to all of you who have donated your time, talent and treasure to our Church. In the past year (June 2011 - May 2012), so many people have contributed and provided leadership to the programs and work that needed to be done at FCCV. Specifically, thank you to Steve Westerberg and our Executive Committee; Daryl Gottier and our 250th Anniversary Committee; our Search Committee which was formed this past year, led by Sue Mias and joined by Nick Bartos from our youth group. Also, thank you to Bill and Elena Kerr for chairing our new Communications Committee. Many thanks go out to the Board of Trustees and the volunteers who refurbished the parsonage, which subsequently led to its rental. This is just some of the work and effort that will lead our Church into the future.

Thanks to our Nominating Committee for again providing all Boards and Committees with the members required by our Bylaws. And ongoing thanks to all the boards and committees that keep FCCV a functioning and welcoming place. You will read in the following reports about the leadership and good work done by our boards and committees. I encourage you to read them all and recount this very busy year for our Church.

A special thanks to those who have helped me throughout the year, especially Karl Prewo, chair of Human Resources, Tom Sweet, Vice Moderator and Nancy Young, Church Secretary.

I have been proud to serve our Church as Moderator. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony Muro

BOARD of DEACONS

Your Deacons are committed to providing assistance to the Pastors in their ministry to our Church, as well as serving the congregation in Christian love.

Our 2011 -2012 program year included some fresh new ideas and tasks which are listed below.

- The Deacons supported Rev. Carr's "Angels Among Us" program which brings youth participation into the worship service.
- We worked with Rev. Carr to finalize the revised church Covenant which was approved by the congregation this year. The proposed wording did not change the philosophy of who are, but modernized the language.
- The Deacons supported our ministers and the Executive Committee in the execution of the World Café and Appreciative Inquiry which helped us understand what kind of church we wanted to be.
- We implemented a "Student Deacon" program where we invite one or two high school students to join the deacons for a one year term. Many churches have this type of program. Thanks to Rev. Minnick who polled several churches to get some background information on this type of program.
- Under the coordination of Jan Muro, several Deacons and church members provided rides to Sunday services. Thanks to Jan and all of the "Sunday Drivers."
- The Deacons, with the help of our student Joseph Tobin, planned an Easter Sunrise Service which was well attended and spiritually moving. Thanks to Joseph and Marilyn Newton who spearheaded the effort.

With pastoral leadership, we successfully continued with our traditional church services which included monthly Communion, baptisms when needed, Laity Sunday, Thanksgiving breakfast and service, Longest Night service, Christmas Candlelight service, Ash Wednesday service, Agape Dinner, and Maundy Thursday service.

Our Care Network provided rides to appointments and meals to those in need of occasional short-term assistance. Thanks to Jan Muro and Margaret Klukas for coordinating this effort and to the many who offered their time to assist others.

Over the past year, we coordinated several funeral receptions in Fellowship Hall. Thanks to Phyllis Chase, Delythe Kracke and Marilyn Newton for their time in planning the receptions and to all those who helped with food and the memorial services.

The Deacons sponsor the Bereavement Care Coordinator Martha Fowler who sent cards to the families of those who have lost loved ones. We also sponsor the Cradle Roll Coordinator Joan Apel

who posts a list of all recently baptized babies on the bulletin board downstairs. Thanks Martha and Joan!

Cheryl Purnell and Delythe Kracke made sure we had acolytes at the worship services. Thanks ladies for rounding up our youth to bring the light of God into our sanctuary.

Every week, many of your Deacons visited church members and friends who are confined to their homes. Phyllis Chase also sent out cards and letters to members and friends to remind them that they are in our prayers.

Leaving the Deacons this year after serving for the maximum of 6 years are Margaret Klukas, Cheryl Purnell and myself. On behalf of Margaret and Cheryl, I want to thank the entire Deacon team, Cindy and David and the entire congregation for the support you have given us. We were honored to be your servants.

Respectfully submitted in Christian Faith,
Greg Mias, Chairperson

BOARD of FINANCE

Throughout the year we met to review performance against budget and to keep tabs on our investments. This past January, we presented, and the congregation approved, a budget that called for a deficit of about \$7,000. Results through April suggest that we are pretty much on track with indications that we could break even, and quite possibly, show a surplus. As Steve Bright reported in January our investment portfolio is performing up to expectation.

The most significant effort this past year was completing the total restructuring of our investment portfolio such that it tracked the three funds managed by the church. Those funds are the General Fund, which holds all monies available for church operations, the Church Established Endowment Funds and the Donor Established Endowment Funds. Each fund is now invested in its own family of mutual funds (TRowe Price, Fidelity and Vanguard) rather than across several funds, which had previously been the case. This greatly reduces the complexity associated with managing the performance of our investments and simplifies the process when adding new moneys or adjusting the balance between equities and fixed income investments. While all were involved in this rather complex and involved task, we thank Steve Bright for leading the effort necessary to make it happen.

The membership of the board will remain the same next year except for the welcome addition of Kate Fowler. Thanks to Michelle and Dave Bower, Don Melander, Nancy Parker and Harmon Howe for helping with the count of Sunday's offering.

Respectively submitted,
Milton N. Doremus, Chair

BOARD of TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees has been very busy this past year. Fortunately, we had a full board and were able to divide the responsibilities among us. We owe a special thanks to Holly Boutwell, Dave Symonds, Jim Tomko, John Koziol and Barbara Melander for carrying more than their share of the load.

PARISH HOUSE - The Parish house took up a great deal of time as we prepared it for new tenants. Floors were refinished, paper stripped, walls painted, sheetrock replaced and bathrooms redone. We also had new flooring installed in the kitchen and downstairs bath. A new roof was installed, and a dangerous tree removed that was leaning over the house. We also installed a new garage door opener.

CHURCH - We helped with the installation of a new stove in the church kitchen and had much faulty plumbing repaired. We have switched suppliers of maintenance paper goods in order to save money, as well as having paper towel dispensers changed so that they all use the same towels.

DAYCARE WING - An inspection by the Fire Marshall indicated that we were not completely in compliance with new regulations. We have taken several steps to get up to code, and the remaining changes will be completed in the next few months. Thanks to the Fire Marshall for his help in keeping us all safe.

An inspection by the Board of Health showed that we have a minor problem with lead paint deterioration on the window frames. We have hired a certified company to remediate this, and are also in the process of replacing several windows that are in disrepair. To reduce heating costs, we are also sealing the window areas to make them tighter. We have hired a cleaning company to take care of the day to day cleaning of the daycare wing, and so far have been pleased with the results. We hope that this will be a lasting relationship.

GROUNDS - We now have a mowing company taking care of mowing and some cleanup outside. We have been quite pleased with the results and look forward to continued savings over doing this in house. New trash bins (from Vernon DPW) have made trash collection and disposal much more efficient.

NEXT YEAR - We will finish the lead remediation and fire safety upgrades. We will be hiring a company to go forward with much-needed steeple repairs. This project alone will cost around \$30,000.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Bower, Chair

BOARD of CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Board of Christian Education has had another busy program year. We are blessed to have Linda Shivers, our Minister of Christian Education, Cindy Madden and Jennifer Condry, two dedicated Superintendents of Sunday School, and a solid core of volunteers who Shepard and teach Sunday School each and every week. We are fortunate to have Deb and Dave Hockenberry, Helene Fujimoto, Beth Fowler and Sadie Burnett-Pollack as youth advisors who help with our Fellowship Programs and the exciting Giv2 youth program. For more comprehensive details about Sunday school, Giv2 Youth Fellowship, Confirmation, and Vacation Bible School, please review the Minister of Christian Education's report.

Sunday School has changed a little bit this program year. While using the same curriculum, we have gone back to team teaching with Shepherds assisting. This provides continuity from week to week. The first Sunday of the month is "Music Sunday" for grades K3-5. This is taught in a group format. Led by the MCE and Steve Westerberg, the children have a Bible lesson, learn songs, and under Kevin Maki's direction, learned how to play the handbells. They performed during two worship services this year with hopes of playing more in the future. After, the 6th grade students treat the children to a homemade snack they have prepared as part of their lesson.

This summer, Victoria Madden will again run our summer Sunday School program. As in the past, it will be one combined class for grades K3-3, led by rotating teachers. We will also participate again in Vacation Bible School, a joint venture that is led by the MCE, Deb Hockenberry, and a few local churches. Due to space constraints, it is not held at FCCV.

It is a joy to work with the children of this church each week. Please take the time to thank the people who tirelessly volunteer to do this every Sunday. We are always in need of teachers, so if you can ever help out, we would be thrilled to have you. It is a great way to grow in your faith and you will enjoy the experience.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Montgomery, Chair

BOARD of MISSIONS and OUTREACH

This year we had several events. The School Store was a success in providing local school children with school supplies in the amount of \$350. We provided Thanksgiving Baskets to 105 families and received \$150 in donations. A collection for Irene relief was taken and totaled \$376. The Christmas Giving Tree was a huge success. We collected 180 toys - 40 more than the previous year. A special collection was taken to help the Somers Congregational Church whose building was destroyed by fire. Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, a check was given in the amount of \$1327.

This year our Church-Wide Mission Project was the Hockanum Valley Community Council Food Pantry. The project ran for four consecutive weeks. Soup and cookie mixes were sold. The children of our congregation decorated and provided snack bags for children in the community. Non-perishable food items, gift cards and cash donations were collected throughout the four weeks. A total of \$2737 in cash, \$320 in gift cards and 918 non-perishable items were donated to help families in our community. All this was made possible by the generosity of our congregation. We also supported the UCC with a Neighbors in Need collection of \$155 and One Great Hour of Sharing.

Meals at the Cornerstone Soup Kitchen continue on a monthly basis on the first Saturday of every month. We continue to support the Tri-Town Pantry with food donations from the Mission Box.

The following is a list of other recipients of donations from the Missions budget:

- Connecticut Conference Per Capita
- Tolland Association Annual Dues
- Andover Newton Seminary
- Habitat for Humanity
- Rockville High School Project Graduation
- Cornerstone Foundation
- Visiting Nurses Association
- Tri Town Shelter
- Vernon Ambulance
- Tri Town Fuel Bank
- Town of Vernon Department of Social Services

I would like to thank the congregation for their ongoing support. I would also like to thank the Board of Missions members who help make all this possible through their hard work and dedication.

Respectfully submitted,
Gilmay Markunas, Co-chair

BOARD of MUSIC

The 2011-2012 program year was productive, though we also had some challenges to cope with. This is the first year that the Board of Music has had full responsibility for the Music at First program, including arranging all concerts. Due to the extra work this brought to the board, a Music at First Committee within the Board of Music was created to accommodate that work and also offer new opportunities for those who would like to help with the music programs. Advertising for Music at First was reviewed to make sure that announcements went into as many local publications as possible, as well as local access television. This should be easier with the newly re-formed Communications Committee. The February concert during Black History Month was cancelled due to scheduling issues with the other groups involved (we hope to resolve this for next year), and though the collaborative effort between Mary Jo Simonds-Huneger and James Burr had to be cancelled, Judy Handler and Mark Levesque took the available concert spot. The Music at First Committee is actively contacting and searching for new music groups with additional variety to bring to the series. The Board looks forward to continuing to provide funds for the Les Childs Scholarship.

The Carillon Singers (with volunteer Director Mary Jo Simonds-Huneger) began rehearsing in the spring for Music Appreciation day. Volunteer Director Leanne Connolly has been working with the Transformers, (children through grade 5). They were able to participate at several worship services. Leanne also continues to volunteer to direct the Contemporary Choir, which invites people of all ages in the church to sing contemporary Christian music periodically throughout the year during some of the worship services. The Joyful Noise Handbell Choir, under the volunteer direction of James Burr, again brought the sound of the bells to the church during special services and programs throughout the year. Mary Jo and James are members of the 250th Anniversary Committee. James has brought his unique knowledge of historical music to the once-a-month “Historical Moment” – part of our ongoing 250th Anniversary year celebration.

Members of the Board of Music participated with Greeter and Coffee Hour assignments and, when needed, communicated pertinent information about practical matters and relevant Church Council information to the Sanctuary Choir. At the time of this report, the staff evaluation process is underway for this program year. The Board is also expecting the inventory of music owned by the church to begin shortly.

Sadly, Joe Connolly, Board Chair, passed away in November, leaving the Board to fill his substantial shoes. Board members stepped up and everyone pitched in to stay on track and continue the example of Joe’s enthusiasm and love of music in the church.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Fisher Orr

STEWARDSHIP and EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

The Stewardship and Evangelism Committee is responsible for promoting and identifying personal commitment of time, talent and treasure among the members and friends of the Church. It is also responsible for stimulating interest and growth in the church through community outreach. The committee worked to achieve the following objectives for 2011-2012.

- Using the “Count Your Blessings” theme, we executed the Pledge Drive for 2012 where \$238,130 was pledged by 182 pledging units.

- Conducted a phone campaign where committee members contacted non-pledging units to retrieve information, reach out to those who have not been in attendance recently and to encourage stewardship
- Provided name tags to church members who needed them
- Set up a “Greet, Eat and Meet” schedule for 2011-2012
- Maintained the Friendship Register. Mary Wheeler, a committee member, sent out Welcome Cards to visitors and those wishing to be contacted.
- Maintained Welcome Centers in Fellowship Hall and the Narthex with information from various Boards and Committees
- Welcomed 22 new members between June 1, 2011 and May 31, 2011
- Produced various articles for the Carillon and Sunday bulletins educating our members on stewardship and opportunities within FCCV
- Lynn Sweet worked with the Nominating Committee to assist in filling positions on our boards and committees for 2012-2013.
- Maintained the Guest Book in the Narthex for those visiting to sign and provided Welcome Gift Bags for visitors
- Kate Fowler attended UCC’s 2012 March in the Son workshop where she attended two seminars – “Creating a Season of Giving” and “Turning Visitors into Members – Hospitality 101.” We hope to utilize this information during 2012-2013.
- Maintained the “Pay it Forward” program throughout 2011-2012 as the congregation took ownership with their continued funding. What began as a two-week journey in October 2010 has now lasted 19 months thanks to the generous contributions of the members and friends of First Congregational Church of Vernon. We are so grateful to our donors who have allowed “Pay it Forward” to continue its ever-giving blessings to those in need. Our committee was invited by Patsy Bjorling of the Connecticut Conference UCC to make a presentation of its PIF program at the Conference Annual Meeting on May 12, 2012. The committee also created a display to showcase the many organizations and charities that have benefited because of “Pay it Forward.” Information on “Pay it Forward” has been posted on our website by Gerry Dyar.
- Invited Patsy Bjorling to discuss E-Giving and stewardship with our committee. We then shared this information with the Board of Finance, the goal being to have this available, someday, for FCCV members.

Our committee will continue to promote the church-wide message of “Connect Through Christ ~ Connect with Us” as it works to support the ministries of FCCV. Several items that our committee will address in the upcoming year:

- Develop and implement the Pledge Drive campaign for 2013. Continue to work with the Board of Finance on time line implementation
- Further find ways and ideas to increase membership and encourage active participation from current membership
- Maintain information in the Welcome Centers and Name Tag Board
- Seek new ways of communication to reach current members and the local community
- Develop a Stewardship and Evangelism web description
- Follow up on the E-Giving program
- Recruit new members for the Stewardship and Evangelism committee
- Continue to support and maintain the “Pay It Forward” program until funding ends
- Support the 250th FCCV Anniversary campaign

The Stewardship and Evangelism Committee is committed to reaching its goals for the coming year. We will continue to support FCCV and cooperate with other boards and committees to further support the church and its growth while embracing the church-wide message of “Connect Through Christ ~ Connect With Us.”

2011-2012 Committee Members

Mary Wheeler	Stephen Repetto	Kate Fowler
Lynn Sweet	Louise Theriault	David Minnick – Interim Pastor
Paul Shimer	Nancy Parker	Jim Wilson – Deacon Rep.
Charles Markunas, Chairman		

Respectfully submitted,
The Stewardship and Evangelism Committee

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Library is open any time the church is. We work to provide helpful resources for the congregation. Copies of bulletins, Carillons and Annual Reports are available, as well as devotional books. This year several books were added to support the Sunday School and Lizzie: The Letters of Lizzie Chester Fisk and Behind the Smile by Peter Brenner were added to reflect some of our church's history. In addition, several new books were added to the children's section. These books deal with sensitive topics such as illness, special needs and the loss of a pet or loved one. We are eager to make the Library a helpful resource for the church. Please drop any suggestions for additional books/DVD's in the Library mailbox.

Respectfully submitted,
Daryl Gottier, Librarian

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee was expanded in February 2012 to establish a focus on advertisement and promotion of church events.

To date the following has been achieved:

- Communication template created for standardization and consistency
- 6 various media channels are in use and contacts established
- FCCV website updated by Gerry Dyar
- FCCV Facebook site updates in progress by Gerry Dyar
- Advertisement completed for 5 church events through multiple media channels
- Established monthly meetings

Next Steps:

- Expanding on media channels and creating new contacts
- Create additional advertisement styles for maximum effect
- Establish internal procedures and processes

Committee Members:	Committee Advisors:
Bill Kerr, Co-chairperson	Tony Muro
Elena Kerr, Co-chairperson	Gerry Dyar
Nick Bartos	
Aarika Mallory	
Steve Repetto, videographer	

TEACHING PARISH COMMITTEE

FCCV has been a Teaching Parish for 15 years and Joseph Tobin was our 9th Field Education Student. The Teaching Parish Committee is grateful to our congregation and pastors for supporting this mission and ministry and for its financial backing. As a result of our student and his Learning Contract, we had several new programs this year – a Service of Light on December 21, an Easter Vigil on Good Friday and FCCV's first ever Easter Sunrise Service held in our Memorial Garden.

Due to the congregation's vote to fund the TPC through the church's operating budget, we have been able to apply for a student from Andover Newton Theological School for the 2012-2013 program year.

Thank you for your support.

The TPC Committee

Karen Prewo, Chairperson

Larry Bates

Betsy Gerakaris

Marilyn Newton

Mike Swan

FURNISHINGS and MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

The Furnishings and Memorials Committee acknowledges gifts donated in memory of loved ones and records them in the Memory Book. The newest Memory Book may be found in the cabinet in the breezeway for all to see. It contains pictures and records of recent acquisitions to the church. Six other books are kept in the Bible stand in the Sanctuary.

Our committee works with the Board of Trustees to approve any furnishings, floor coverings, decor and other items that may be purchased or donated to the church. We are also directed to approve any posters or wall hangings of any type before they are hung in the building.

This past year we painted and papered the area by the elevator off Fellowship Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Sullivan

MEMORIAL GARDEN COMMITTEE

Committee Members: Phyllis Chase, Marilyn Newton, Al Newton, Daryl Gottier, Eric Gottier, Jim Montlick, Paula Dascomb, Bob Warner, Larry Heebner, Millie Oliphant, Ellie Swan, Dick Wurst, Betty Ann Wurst, Steve Morse, Jane Morse

There were two interments. Application fees have been paid for one site.

The October snow did a lot of damage. Several shrubs were replaced. Daryl and Phyllis have worked very hard in a continuing effort to keep the Garden beautiful. Marilyn and Al have spent numerous hours mowing and weeding. Kurt Dembeck has spread fertilizer as well as crabgrass preventer. Their work is very much appreciated. Eric and Al arranged to have several large rocks placed in the area behind the Welcome Rock. They look terrific. Dick has painted the Arbor.

Phyllis has coordinated efforts with The Garden Barn, arranging for replacement of the shrubs. She has also coordinated the selection of the 250th Anniversary Tree - a Star Magnolia. The tree was dedicated as part of the celebration at the Church picnic in May.

The beautiful Memory Tree glowed again during the Advent Season. We thank the congregation for

their continued support.

We celebrated an Easter Sunrise Service in the Garden with Joseph Tobin officiating. It was a beautiful and moving morning. The service was well-attended and we look forward to making this an annual event.

We placed American Flags in the Garden to honor our veterans on Memorial Day and will do this again on Veterans Day.

Jim Wilson and Bob Warner donated their Pay It Forward money to help fund the 250th Anniversary Tree.

The responsibilities of the Committee are divided as follows:

1. Treasurer: Steve Morse
2. Application Coordinator: Phyllis Chase
3. Internment Supervisor: Jim Montlick
4. Designee to Church Council: Phyllis Chase
5. Maintenance Supervisors: Al and Marilyn Newton
6. Recording Secretary: Daryl Gottier
7. Committee Chair: Jane Morse

Thank you to all who have contributed their time and efforts working in the Garden. Please take a walk through the garden and appreciate the beauty and peacefulness that it offers.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Morse, Chairperson

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Human Resources Committee met regularly to review and act on the following:

The FCCV process of performance evaluations of paid staff.

A schedule and process for providing Performance Evaluations for all paid staff by June 1, 2012 was put in place.

The protocols and procedures for performing background screening.

A protocol for background screening was initiated with the advice and assistance of the UCC Insurance Board and its support company, Praesidium Inc. All FCCV paid staff, the members of the HR Committee and the Treasurer, were successfully processed.

The protocol was then expanded, in collaboration with the FCCV Safe Church Committee, to apply to all FCCV program volunteers working directly with the "at risk" (children and youth, handicapped and elderly). A summary document "FCCV Safe Church Responsibilities and Protocols" was submitted for consideration by Church Council and approved by Council at its April 11, 2012 meeting for "trial basis" use during the 2012-2013 program year. Upon completion of this period of use, the document will be updated based on experience gained and submitted for final Council approval and incorporation into FCCV's Personnel Policies.

Respectfully submitted,
Karl M. Prewo, Chairperson

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

This has been another busy year for Women's Fellowship – always growing spiritually with good fellowship within the group and individual circles. Work began last fall in preparation for our Holiday Fair this coming November and will continue through the summer. We urge you to come and enjoy the fun and meet new people.

In September we were on retreat at the Salvation Army Camp, a beautiful setting for spiritual growth and molding new friendships. We also held a meeting where we invited all women to come and learn more about what we as a group do in the church. This included an ice cream social. Our Apple Festival that included dinner, baked goods and crafts was held in October. In November we sold pies for Thanksgiving. "Cookies in a Box" was a December "special"– always a big hit. In January we helped the 250th Anniversary Committee serve an "Old Fashioned Dinner" using recipes from old church cookbooks. The dinner also included a contest for best aprons. This was a huge success. The Mother/Child Banquet in March featured a pasta dinner with entertainment provided by the Lutz Museum. They brought animals, snakes, etc. for the children to touch and learn about.

With so much happening during our 250th Anniversary Year, we decided to end our program year early.

If you have a chance, take a minute to stop in the kitchen to see our new stove, purchased last fall. It's just beautiful!

We try to offer programs that meet the needs of all the women in our church. Remember, all women who attend our church are part of Women's Fellowship. Our circles are Baskets, Prayer Shawl, Evening Circle and Crafts. We hope that each of you will find a "fit" in one or all of these groups.

New ideas are always welcomed. Think about joining us for program planning or working on something for the Fair or becoming active in a Circle.

Again, we thank all the women who have given their time and talents which continue to make our fellowship strong and spiritual.

Respectfully submitted,
Phyllis Chase and Daryl Gottier, Co-Chairs

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Early in 2011, a group was organized by the Church Council to review, discuss and make recommendations to the Council and the church about several pressing concerns. That group, which became known as the Executive Committee, completed their task and at the Council meeting on December 7, 2011, made their recommendations for further discussion and acceptance.

From April through November, the committee met 21 times at meetings that averaged two hours. They hosted the World Café and a Night of Appreciative Inquiry and contracted with the Hartford Institute for an online survey – all in an effort to gain information upon which to make their recommendations.

The primary challenges set before the Committee focused on four concerns that were primary to the church this year.

- The formation of a Search Committee for a new settled Senior Pastor
- Questions about the Parsonage – keep, maintain, sell or demolish
- The need for and possibility of a Capital Campaign for the church properties
- Questions about current staffing and possible reconfiguration in the near future

Over the course of this past year, some matters were quickly reviewed, passed on to Council and acted upon. The decision was made to repair and renovate the Parsonage. This allows for the property to be used for rental purposes or for the possibility that a pastor would choose to live there.

A Search Committee has been organized and has begun to meet with the goal of finding a new settled Senior Pastor in the days ahead.

The remaining items were ones that needed more attention and discussion.

After meeting with Ms. Patsy Bjorling, Associate Minister for Generosity Ministries of the CT Conference, and based upon her recommendations, no large scale capital campaign will be undertaken. Ms. Bjorling recommended that a capital campaign only be taken on when a church has had a pattern of balanced budgets for several years in a row and when the settled Senior Pastor has been with us for at least three years. Given that FCCV has had a recent history of deficit budgets and that we were in the midst of a transition stage for a Senior Pastor, a large-scale capital campaign will not be undertaken in the near future.

Regarding current and future staffing issues, the Committee's recommendations, approved by the Church Council on December 7, 2011, are as follows:

- There will be one change in staffing during the 2012-2013 program year (concludes on June 30, 2013). The Church Secretary's hours (presently 35 hours per week for 45 weeks, 16 hours per week for 7 weeks during the summer) will change to 20 hours per week for 45 weeks beginning September 2012 (the 16 hours per week in the summer will remain the same).
- Re-direction of staff focus toward the priorities raised through the various surveys taken (World Café, Appreciative Inquiry, etc.)
- Educate and increase the activities of the congregation, boards and committees while stressing the need for increasing stewardship support.
- If at the end of the 2012 Stewardship Campaign, financial support of the current budget is not within \$5000 of a balanced budget, the position of Director of Christian Education will be eliminated effective July 1, 2013. The duties currently being handled by the DCE would then be shared by other staff and church members.

This has been a challenging but very important, and long overdue, task. On behalf of FCCV, I wish to thank all the members of the Executive Committee for their dedication to this important project.

We are all aware of the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead in our shared efforts to be the First Congregational Church of Vernon. May God bless and inspire us in our efforts to rise up to the challenges and to enthusiastically pursue the opportunities that lay ahead.

Executive Committee Members: Steven Westerberg, Dave Symonds, Cindy Madden, Steve Bright, Sandra O'Gara, John MacDougall, Greg Mias, Holly Boutwell, Patty Noblet, Tony Muro, Linda Shivers, Rev. Cynthia Carr, Rev. David Minnick

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Westerberg

250th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

The First Congregational Church of Vernon has a history that dates back to the birth of this country. We have the privilege of serving on the committee to help organize the celebration of our church's 250th Anniversary. The year kicked off with a church luncheon in November. An anniversary banner was raised on the front of the church and the original site of the church on Sunnyview Drive was visited. In January, a church dinner serving recipes from several old church cookbooks was held with over 200 people attending. In April, a program called "Letters from Lizzie" was presented. It was a one-woman show featuring the letters of a woman whose family attended FCCV in the 1800's. In May, a Family Picnic was held after church with old time games for all. A tree was also dedicated in the Memorial Garden.

Once each month, Sunday worship has included "Three Minutes in History," presenting windows into our church's past. For several of those Sundays, music from the time period being discussed was incorporated into the service. The display case in Fellowship Hall has been changed to correspond with the monthly topic.

Festivities are planned to take place throughout the fall, with the culmination being a Homecoming Dinner on November 17 followed by a Sunday Anniversary Service on November 18.

We are blessed to have a church with such a wonderful past and are honored to be working toward its future.

Respectfully submitted,
The Anniversary Committee

USHERING COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Ushering Committee, I report that the total attendance recorded for the 42 services from May 1, 2011 to April 22, 2012 is 6,705 compared to 6,552 for 42 services in the previous year. This year the reporting procedure again conforms to the standard UCC reporting practice of the best 10 months and Sundays only. The average attendance (UCC) was 159.6 for the 11/12 period versus 156 for the 10/11 period or a increase of 2.3%. The two Christmas Eve services had an attendance of 304. The two Easter services had an attendance of 338, a .01% decrease from 2011. Following is a detailed report of the attendance for the church year.

Those who served on the Ushering Committee as scheduled Head Ushers for the 2011-2012 term were: the Chairperson, Harmon Howe, Judy Ramsdell, Pat Aldrich, Amy Shannon, Barry Beckwith and Harry Mead. I wish to thank the aforementioned people plus all members of the congregation who assisted before, during and after the worship services.

Respectfully submitted,
Harmon Howe, Chairperson

USHERING COMMITTEE - ATTENDANCE REPORT 2011/2012

Date	Attendance	Notes	Date	Attendance	Notes
2011			2012		
05-01	131		01-01	86*	
05-08	134		01-08	151	
05-15	137		01-15	171	
05-22	136		01-22	147	
05-29	83*		01-29	196	
06-05	138		02-05	138	
06-12	219	Confirmation	02-12	153	
06-19	134		02-19	174	
06-26	108		02-26	180	
07-03	64*		03-04	154	
07-10	100		03-11	136	
07-17	90		03-18	157	
07-24	82*		03-25	139	
07-31	108		04-01	218	
08-07	90*		04-08	338	Easter
08-14	91		04-15	133	
08-21	95		04-22	173	
08-28	0*	Hurricane	04-29	149	
09-04	76*		05-06		
09-11	170	Rally Sunday	05-13		
09-18	242		05-20		
09-25	182		05-27		
10-02	142		06-03		
10-09	134		06-10		
10-16	150		06-17		
10-23	162		06-24		
10-30	0*	Snowstorm			
11-06	73*				
11-13	146				
11-20	176				
11-27	156				
12-04	179				
12-11	234				
12-18	253				
12-25	51*				

*These weeks are excluded based on the standard UCC reporting procedure of Sundays only for the best 10 months attendance.

Total attendance for the best 10 months (42 wks.) is 6,705.

Average attendance for the best 10 months is 159.6/wk.

CLERK'S REPORT

MEMBERSHIP – JUNE 1, 2011 **651**

Additions

Letter of Transfer	1
Confession of Faith	8
Reaffirmation of Faith	1
Youth Membership	22
Reactivated to Membership	2
Associate Membership	<u>0</u>
Total	34

Deductions

Transfers	4
Moved to Inactive	88
Withdrawn	9
Deaths	7
Andrew Dugan (1953) 7/17/11	
Penny Simmers (1980) 7/23/11	
Janet Boucher (1967) 9/19/11	
Joseph Connolly (1994) 11/12/11	
Robert Ordway (1994) 12/6/11	
Olive Ferguson (1950) 1/24/12	
Martin Fagan, Jr. (1993) 3/23/12	

Total -108

MEMBERSHIP - MAY 31, 2012 **577**

Rev. David Minnick	Rev. Cynthia Carr	Rev. Joanne Myer
Baptized 2	Baptized 5	Funerals 1
Funerals 9	Married 2	
	Funerals 3	

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Dascomb, Clerk

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Officers, Boards and Committees

July 2012 – June 2013

MODERATOR:	Tony Muro '13-2
VICE MODERATOR:	Tom Sweet '13-2
CLERK:	Catharine Foote '13-1
ASSISTANT CLERK:	Pat Lazaren '13-11
TREASURER:	Bill Boutwell '13-5
ASSISTANT TREASURER:	Steve Morse '13-4
CHURCH SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT:	Cindy Madden '13-9
CHURCH SCHOOL ASST. SUPERINTENDENT:	Jennifer Condry '13-2
HISTORIAN:	Joan Apel '13
ASSISTANT HISTORIAN:	Geraldine Strong '13
LIBRARIAN:	Daryl Gottier '13

BOARD of DEACONS

Don Peacock '14-2	Bob Warner '13-1	Pat Lazaren '15-2
Jon Dunlap '14-2	Jan Muro '13-1	Michelle Bower '15-2
Larry Bates '14-1	Debbie Marshall '13-1	Bill Kerr '15-1
Mike Swan '14-1	Mary Wheeler '13-1	Susan Pilkons '15-1
Pam Lyons '14-1	Delythe Kracke '13-1	Judy Ramsdell '15-1
Marilyn Newton '13-2	Jim Wilson '13-1	

Deacon Emerita: Phyllis Chase (06/12/05)

BOARD of TRUSTEES

Dave Bower '13-2	Barbara Melander '14-1	John MacDougall '14-1
Dave Symonds '13-1	Holly Boutwell '14-1	Sue Mias '14-1
Will Dowty '13-1	Jim Tomko '14-1	John Koziol '15-2
		Brad Leonard '15-2

Trustee Emeritus: Richard Saich (06/09/96)

BOARD of FINANCE

Patty Noblet '13-2	Al Newton '13-1	Dave Grigg '14-1
Milt Doremus '13-2	Gaile Dembeck '14-1	Kate Fowler '15-1
Steve Bright '13-2		

Chair, Board of Trustees Assistant Treasurer

Counters: Don Melander, Dave Bower, Michelle Bower, Harmon Howe, Nancy Parker

BOARD of CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Deb Kinney '13-1	Jean Philbrick '14-2	Cheryl Turner '14-1
Suzanne Maki '13-1	Annie Longo '14-1	Donald Montgomery '15-2
Diane Mead '14-2	Erin Prewo '14-1	Deb Bartos '15-2
Childcare Coordinator:	Christa Hockenberry	
Deacon Rep.	Director of Christian Ed.	Church School Superintendent
Pat Lazaren	Linda Shivers	Cindy Madden

BOARD of MISSIONS and OUTREACH

Deb Hockenberry '13-2	Jeri Bebrin '13-1	Sandra O'Gara '15-2
Deb Cutting '13-2	Lynn Toolan '14-1	Jennifer Condry '15-1
Gilmay Markunas '13-1	Maria Assard '15-2	Ken Morgan '15-1
Monica Becker '13-1		
Ad Hoc: June Gillon, Meg Bebrin		

BOARD of MUSIC

Helen Dahling '13-1	Michelle Giordano '13-1	Anne Garrison '15-1
Serena Volovski '13-1	Halene Fujimoto '14-1	Leanne Connolly '15-1
Gretchen Fisher-Orr '13-1		

FURNISHINGS and MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

Sally Sullivan '13-4	Sandy Yamarik '13-3	Chris Kunz '14-2
Bev Duncan '13-3	Joyce Sepulveda '13-3	Lynne Yampanis '14-1
Pat Lazeren '13-3	Jane Burr '14-2	
Furnishings and Memorial Committee Emerita: Charlotte Driggs, Muriel Schiebel		

WAYS and MEANS COMMITTEE

Carol Slicer '13-2	Susan Pilkons '13-1	Holly Boutwell '14-2
Halene Fujimoto '13-1	Michelle Bower '14-5	Nancy Shoemaker '14-2
Emily Westerberg '13-1	Janice Peacock '14-4	Phyllis Chase '14-1
April Gothberg '13-1	Ann Harford '14-3	Paula Dascomb '14-1

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Paula Dascomb '13-1	Robin Youngdahl '14-6	Nancy Parker '14-1
Phyllis Chase '14-9	Betty Ann Wurst '14-2	Marlene Bennett '14-1
Librarian: Daryl Gottier		

STEWARDSHIP and EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

Kate Fowler '13-1	Charles Markunas '14-3	Mary Wheeler '14-1
Stephen Repetto '14-5	Paul Shimer '14-3	Nancy Parker '14-1
Lynn Sweet '14-3	Louise Theriault '14-2	

AUDIT COMMITTEE (3 Elected in January)

John McDougall '14-2	Carol Slicer '14-1	John Koziol '14-1
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FLOWER COMMITTEE

Pam Lyons '14-10	Betty Ann Wurst '14-7	Renee Burrus '14-3
Jane Saich '14-9	Elly Swan '14-7	Lois Montlick '14-3

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Steve Repetto '13-3	William Kerr '13-2	Aarika Mallory '13-1
Elena Kerr '13-2	Gerry Dyar '13-2	Nick Bartos '13-1

USHERING COMMITTEE

Harmon Howe '14-8	Amy Shannon '14-4	Barry Beckwith '14-3
Pat Aldrich '14-5	Judy Ramsdell '14-3	Harry Mead '14-2

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

At Large: Karl Prewo '13-2		
Board of Music Rep.	Board of Trustees Re.	Board of Christian Education Rep.
Board of Deacons Rep.	Board of Finance Rep.	Senior Pastor, Ex-Officio

TEACHING PARISH COMMITTEE

Betsy Gerakeris Karen Prewo Larry Bates
Marilyn Newton Mike Swan
Board of Deacons Reps.: Larry Bates and Marilyn Newton

MEMORIAL GARDEN COMMITTEE

Phyllis Chase '13-5 Jane Morse '13-5 Elly Swan '13-1
Al Newton '13-5 Dick Wurst '13-5 Millie Oliphant '13-1
Marilyn Newton '13-5 Betty Ann Wurst '13-5 Larry Heebner '13-1
Eric Gottier '13-5 Steve Morse '13-2 Sarah Wojteczko '13-1
Daryl Gottier '13-5 Kurt Dembeck '13-2 Jonathan Pielak '13-1
Jim Montlick '13-5 Paula Dascomb '13-3

SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE

Sue Ferruolo Hal Cummings Patty Noblet

PASTORIAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Deacon: Mary Wheeler '14-2
Nominating Committee (1 yr term) - Dee Kidd '14-2
Nominating Committee (2 yr term) -
Pastor (1 yr term) - David Minnick
Pastor (2 yr term) - Phyllis Chase '13-1

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE (volunteers)

Consists of representatives from all Boards and Committees

STATE CONFERENCE DELEGATES

Delegates

Emily Westerberg '13-2 Steve Westerberg '13-2

Alternates

Marilyn Newton '13-4 Al Newton '13-4

TOLLAND ASSOCIATION DELEGATES

Delegates

Helen and Al Dahling

Alternate

Kate Fowler

DAYCARE CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patty Noblet '13-1 Board of Trustees Rep.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Steve Repetto Don Melander