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Pastor Search Committee

“Haven’t you found a new pastor yet?” That was the headline of our last report which appeared in the July / August 2017 newsletter. As we said then: “This process will be complete not just when *any* candidate shows up, but rather when the *right* person answers the call. We must wait for that person, and trust that we will recognize them when they arrive.”

The committee begins the new year without having a settled pastor candidate to present for membership vote. We don’t have a candidate because we held to our commitment to wait for the *right* person. We will not recommend someone because we feel pressure to have a body, any body, in the pulpit.

Over seven months we considered profiles from five candidates from three denominations: American Baptist, Reformed Church in America and United Church of Christ. Four of these candidates came to Tunbridge for interviews and we saw two of them lead services.

In late October we found a candidate we thought was right for our church. Another church thought so too, and a couple of weeks after receiving our offer he accepted a position closer to his current residence and family.

The committee remains committed to the search and the belief that we will find the right person. When we started our work we were told it would take at least 18 months. The pool of people

wanting to work in church ministry is limited and church vacancies are many. We intend to take some non-traditional measures to help find a pastor, including advertising, using social media and contacting divinity schools.

In the meantime we wait for the right person to answer the call.

Euclid Farnham, chair; Lisa Amodeo, Connie Button, Amy Frost, Nan Frost, Kay Jorgensen, Ben Wolfe

Parish Council

Kay Jorgensen

Happy new year and best wishes for a year of health, happiness and peace. As we look ahead we wish the Pastor Search Committee members success in finding a settled pastor for our congregation. When it comes time to vote on accepting the committee’s candidate only church members will be eligible to participate. Anyone interested in becoming a member before then can send a request note to the Parish Council.

In December we mailed the annual canvass letter informing people about the church’s work and asking for financial support. We appreciated this note received from out-of-state church friends who responded to the letter: “Wish we could participate more. We always find The Tunbridge Church so welcoming and are impressed with how you define ‘community.’”

Thanks to years of fundraising and generous bequests and donations, we begin the year with our properties in good shape with new front steps and

walk at the Parish House and painting and rewiring of the Congregational Church. We will again host the annual Just Desserts, Community Yard Sale and Anything Apple community events to support capital projects. A lot of work remains to be done at the Parish House when funds permit.

The Rev. Jo Shelnett led our worship services during Advent and Christmas. The season brought many pleasures including our choir, directed by Judie Lewis, and guest musicians. More than 110 people attended both the Dec. 24 morning service and the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols.

Janet Zug assembled a large cast, including 13 young children, for "The Christmas Story" pageant presented during the morning service. Adults portrayed the innkeeper, were narrators and helped with costume coordination, prompting and moving the manger to and from the church. Chauffeurs made the rehearsals and pageant possible.

Kudos to Janet, accompanist Judie Lewis, and helpers and participants Dominick, Joshua and Isabella Amodeo; Plover Corbett; Margot Frost; Elaine Howe; Devon-Lyn Scout Kamorowski; Marybeth Lang; Jamie-Lyn Loura; Jasper, Miles and Rowan Lawrence; Koltin LeDuc; Dawna Neron; Emmalynn Mae and MacKinlee Elaine Potter; Cameron, Jed and Lorelai Putney; Maggie Serviss; Jo Shelnett; Olivia Swayze; Rose Terami; Isabelle and Owen Weed; Ben Wolfe; and Bruce, Markus and Laila Zug.

And thanks to administrative assistant Hoyt Bingham who worked with Janet, Jo and Judie to prepare the two Dec. 24 bulletins and pageant insert.

Everyone is invited to attend the Feb. 4 potluck dinner and Annual Meeting at Town Hall following the worship

service. Reports from the treasurer and various committees will be given. Members will vote on the budget and elect Parish Council members. New business is always welcome for discussion.

The Just Desserts evening of music, refreshments and silent auction on Feb. 17 from 7-9:30 will feature two lively musical groups for good listening, sing-along and dancing. The \$5 admission will include a coupon for the door prize drawing. Plates with two desserts and fruit, cheese and crackers plates will be \$5 each. Tea and coffee will be served. Several special desserts will be sold by silent bidding.

Donations are welcome for the silent auction. Items to date include four Handel Society of Dartmouth concert tickets, a Saturday Sewing Circle throw, painted sap bucket, maple book with quart of syrup, a massage session with Hoyt Bingham, DVD sets and gift certificates. Those who can't attend are welcome to put in a bid on auction items. We'll try to help with rides for those who don't drive at night.

The silent auctions for Just Desserts and Anything Apple raise significant funds. If anyone has new unwanted articles that might make good auction items they can be given at any time to Kay Jorgensen. Gently used and Christmas items are also appreciated for the July yard sale.

Community Food Shelf

Sue Barnaby

Thirty-two families received boxes containing a Christmas dinner and breakfast from The Tunbridge Church's Community Food Shelf on Dec. 16. The families were also able to choose from a variety of donated gift items when they came to the Parish House to pick up

their food. The church's Outreach Committee organized the project.

The Christmas boxes were donated to, packed and given out by many, many helping hands. The Tunbridge Central School Student Council conducted a holiday food drive before Thanksgiving for both holidays. Council members organized the drive and delivered the foods donated by students and staff.

Clever Clovers 4-H Club members made more than 32 plates of decorated cookies for the Christmas boxes. The Tunbridge Recreation Committee donated its December Sunday breakfast proceeds, which netted over \$1,000 for the Christmas boxes plus donated foods. The money was used to purchase Christmas box food items, including hams.

Many other local individuals gave food, gifts, money and their time to help pack the boxes for the families.

THANK YOU to ALL who helped make this happen. Many, many hands helped make Christmas a better day for lots of local families!

January/February Calendar

Regular Events:

Sunday Service: 10 a.m. Congregational Church, Tunbridge Village

Thursday Choir rehearsals:
children 6-6:30, adults 7 p.m.

Making Change: Wednesdays,
Parish House, 5:30 p.m.

Community Food Shelf: Fridays,
Parish House, 4-6 p.m.

Special Events:

Jan. 28: UCC Annual Meeting in the church after worship service

Feb. 4: Potluck dinner and Annual Meeting after the worship service, Town Hall

Feb. 17: Just Desserts, 7-9:30 p.m., Town Hall.

News, Notes & Thanks

Pulpit Supply

The Rev. Claire Bamberg will lead worship services on Jan. 7 and 14 and Feb. 11 and 18. The Rev. Jo Shelnut, who was with us during December, will lead the Jan. 21 and 28 services. The Rev. D. Gene Kraus will lead the Feb. 4 worship service and serve communion.

Children's Choir

The children's choir rehearses from 6-6:30 p.m. on Thursdays. Please pass the word to all families with young children. The choir will sing for the Jan. 28 worship service. Janet Zug will direct the choir. She can be reached at 889-9602 or zugglasstudio@gmail.com.

UCC Meeting

The annual meeting of the United Church of Christ component of the church will be held Jan. 28 in the front pews after the worship service.

Christmas Traditions

Thanks to the people who turned out to trim the beautiful tree given by the Amodeo family, hang the wreaths, put greens on the window sills, set up the outdoor creche and get the church ready for Christmas. Judie Lewis played the piano and Elaine Howe led carol singing before refreshments were enjoyed in the Parish House, hosted by the Outreach Committee.

The following week carolers sang at more than a dozen local homes where they also gave out poinsettia plants and then regrouped at the Amy and Matt Frost home for refreshments.

Thanksgiving Bags

Many people – bakers, shoppers, bag fillers and deliverers – contributed to the annual distribution of Thanksgiving treats bags that Sue Barnaby organized.

The Parish House was busy on Nov. 18 as cookies and crackers were bagged, cheese sliced, fruit and muffins counted, cocoa packets put in Tunbridge Fair mugs and more as the bags were filled. Fifty-three people, plus residents of Riverbend Home in Chelsea, received treats. Elsie Farnham addressed cards that were mailed to church friends not in the area.

The packers were Sue Barnaby, Shirley Boles, Nancy and Randy Chapman, Mary Fisk, Nan Frost, Elaine Howe, Linda Hoyt, Marybeth Lang and Judy Tucker. Deliveries were made by Sue Barnaby, Shirley Boles, Nancy and Randy Chapman, Elsie Farnham, Euclid Farnham, Brenda Field, Mary Fisk, Nan Frost, Alan and Pat Howe, Carley Howe, Elaine Howe, Linda Hoyt, Kay Jorgensen, Ernest Kennedy, Marybeth Lang and Judy Tucker.

Castagner Memorial Service

A memorial service will be held at the church in June for Arnold Castagner who died Oct. 31 at age 89. Arnie grew up in North Tunbridge. After college and U.S. Army service during the Korean War he left a corporate accounting job and started a long career in baseball and basketball coaching and teaching.

Memorial donations may be made to Tunbridge Congregational Church, PO Box 270, Tunbridge, VT 05077 or the Tunbridge Food Shelf, c/o Euclid Farnham, 24 The Crossroad, Tunbridge, VT 05077. A full obituary can be read at www.boardwayandcilley.com.

Children's Book

Marybeth Lang has published a children's book, *The Singing Rooster*, with colorful illustrations by Wayne McKenzie. It illustrates a song that Marybeth, who is a choir member and pediatric nurse, composed for a young patient.

The song, which can be heard at www.TheSingingRooster.com, includes animal sounds recorded at the Tunbridge World's Fair. The book is available through the website and from Marybeth.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

JANUARY

- 01 – Liz Zaroogian
- 05 – Judie Lewis
- 07 – Cameron Putney
- 15 – Dawna Neron
Ken Danforth
- 16 – Wright Frost
- 17 – Maggie Serviss
- 20 – Tom Wells
- 24 – Abby Gross
- 28 – Carley Howe
- 30 – Margaret Rogers

FEBRUARY

- 02 – Marybeth Lang
- 04 – Judy Tucker
- 14 – Bunchie Angel

Parish Council

Kay Jorgensen, President
Dawna Neron, Vice President
Sue Barnaby, Secretary
Townsend Swayze, Treasurer
Nancy Chapman
Rob Howe
Maureen Moriarty
Judy Tucker
Ben Wolfe