



FACTORS THAT ARE CHANGING CONGREGATIONS !

Research reveals that since 2001, congregations across the United States experienced rapid changes in seven major ways.

1. INCREASING USE OF ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY:

Churches embrace the Internet as a way to enhance their mission. Congregations use their Web sites as electronic billboards to help people in the community know about their services and programs. Seventy-four percent of congregations use e-mail or Facebook to stay in touch with their people.

2. INCREASING DIVERSIFICATION IN WORSHIP:

The percentage of worshipers favoring traditional hymns and music dropped. More churches are including the children and youth in the worship leadership and the use of visual projection equipment on a regular basis.

3. INCREASE IN CARING MINISTRIES:

The involvement of worshipers in activities and programs that serve members and neighbors has increased. The largest increase is in services for children and youth – such as job training, literacy programs, scouting, and sports. Other areas of participation: emergency relief activities – including food, meals, clothing or other assistance for people in crisis; and cultural activities such as music and arts programs.

4. DECREASING SIZE:

On average, congregations are smaller today than they were in 2001. While four in ten congregations averaged 100 or fewer worshipers in 2001, today six in ten fall into that small-church category.

5. MORE OLDER WORSHIPERS:

The average age of worshipers increased from fifty in 2001 to fifty-three today. Almost seven in ten worshipers are now forty-four years of age or older, up from six in ten worshipers of that age in 2001.

6. MORE EDUCATED WORSHIPERS:

Among worshipers who are age twenty-five or more, the percentage of college-educated in the churches increased from 38% in 2001 to 47% today.

7. LESS – FREQUENT ATTENDANCE:

Fewer of today's worshipers report attending services on a weekly basis. In 2001, 83% came to worship several times a month that number has dropped to 76%.

QUESTION:

Looking at those seven changing factors, what ideas might strengthen our congregation's future?

WHAT DID NOT CHANGE SINCE 2001?

Despite several changes among U.S. congregations, a portrait of worshipers across the country exhibit stability in the following ways.

1. Unchanged demographics:

The gender ratio, the marital- status profile, and the household composition of worshipers remain unchanged.

2. Participating Non-Members:

Today, about 12% of worshipers are non-members. Yet differences between younger and older participants indicate that the percentage can grow in the future. People like to participate but not to commit.

3. Congregational Involvement and Financial Giving:

Little change has occurred in the ways worshipers involve themselves in church activities. Still today four in ten hold leadership roles in the congregations; and almost one-half give between 3- 5 % of their income to the congregation?

QUESTION:

Looking at these unchanging factors, what ideas might strengthen our congregation's future?

As we trace around our congregation's profile, what long- lasting impact do we see our congregation making in our neighborhood, region, and world?

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In Christ,
Reverend Esther Rendon-Thompson



Deacons Article – June 2011

“Did you know?”

I thought I would try providing something a little different this month in the Steeple Sounds from the Board of Deacons. I hope these “did you know” facts provide some food for thought. I found this information on the Mass Conference of UCC and the UCC web sites.

-Over three-quarters of un-churched people in this country have never been invited to anything by anyone in a church.

The three key people in hospitality ministry are:

1. A parking lot attendant
2. A greeter at the door
3. A connector to work with newcomers

-70% of young people (ages 18-22) leave their congregations never to return. If they try to return they are often treated as second-class citizens. Many end up in non-denominational churches where they are treated as leaders.

-There are only two types of worship:

1. Relevant to the people the church is trying to reach, and
2. Irrelevant

-Associate Mass Conference Minister Jim Antal will be retiring at the end of this year. Rev. Antal has been a close friend and supporter of Central Square Congregational Church. Blessing to him.

-The all-white Congregational church in Granville, Massachusetts called the Rev. Lemuel Haynes as minister. He was the first African-American ordained to Christian ministry in a mainline tradition (1785).

-In 1853 Antoinette Brown was ordained as minister of a Congregational Church in New York, making her the first American woman ordained into Christian ministry.

-The United Church of Christ was the first denomination to ordain an openly gay person. The San Francisco Association ordained Bill Johnson in 1972.

-Massachusetts Conference Annual Meeting delegates led the way in the Open and Affirming movement, which invites congregations to pray and study whether they are called to fully welcome gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people into their lives and ministries. The 185th Annual Meeting adopted the first ONA resolution within the UCC in 1984, and General Synod followed the next year.

Rich Sullivan

Board of Deacons

Worshiping God in a community of believers is the reason we gather in this place.

Mary Louise Gifford, *"The Turnaround Church"*



CENTRAL SQUARE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CABINET MEETING MINUTES
April 20, 2011

Attendees:

Moderator: Mark Sorgman	Vice Moderator: N/A	Treasurer:
Ass't Treasurer: Larry Brown	Clerk: D. Brown (Mike Bundock proxy)	
Financial Sec'y:	Ass't Financial Sec'y:	Historian: N/A
Trustees: N/A	Stewardship: Rob Basler	Outreach: N/A
Deacons: Rich Sullivan,	Growth: Nancy Winter	Music: N/A
Carol Chaffee		Nominating: N/A
Christian Ed: Terry Reynolds	Altar: N/A	Search: N/A
Memorials: N/A	Ways & Means: N/A	Fair: N/A
Women's Guild: Ruth Labonte	Members: Debbie Rice	Youth:
Rev Esther Rendon-Thompson,	Interim Pastor N/A,	Minister of Music

- 1) Mark Sorgman called the meeting to order at 7:10pm
- 2) Rev Esther led devotionals.
- 3) Minutes from the previous meeting were approved with noted corrections.

Discussion:

Minor correction Pg 2 CE – Terry Reynolds acted as liaison at the Mission dinner event.

4) Pastor's Reports

a. Rev Esther –see attached Minister activity sheet.

5) Treasurer's Report - report given by Larry Brown

a. Finances are currently above water- We spent \$10k more than pledges received. We have \$ 2700.00 available as cash flow. The 6% money designated for Outreach is in a separate account available as Outreach requires it. We have 15 months cash available to pay the Mortgage payments.

Rev Esther brought up the conference report which indicated we did not pay all of our dues. Larry will check, but believes the discrepancy is the result of us sending the balance in late January 2011.

6) ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD REPORTS

A) Board of Trustees – report given by No representative- Mike Bundock commented

- a. Per last meetings discussion Mike provided Trustees with the CPA information. The 2010 session is over but it appears we are legitimate candidates for 2011. Funding for the doors to the Church should be approved by the town. (CPA funds).
- b. Mike also provided the office/ Moderator/ Trustees with Capital campaign literature which was obtained from MACUCC.

B) Board of Deacons – report given by Rich Sullivan

- a. Deacons developed a document explaining the communion elements for those people helping out.
- b. Filled out the portions of the Profile for the Search.
- c. Continued to propose BY-Law change and clarification- Sect 2 paragraph (a) in particular.
- d. Deacons involved in Maundy Thursday service
- e. Developing a Minister evaluation process and form- greatly needed.
- f. Rev Esther has a planned vacation May 14-28 (changed). Rev. Bill McCoy will preach May 15th.
- g. Purchased a portable communion set for travel use.

- h. Parish care ride volunteer list needs to be updated.
 - i. Rich has volunteered to chair the nominating committee.
- C) Board of Christian Education – report given by: Terry Reynolds
- a. June 12th Children’s Sunday/ Honor HS graduates
 - b. June 19th Summer Group Sunday school starts.
 - c. At a parent’s request, suggested Bible readings will be by age group.
 - d. Terry looking for a gate for the nursery.
 - e. CE has coffee hour in May. Curriculum to be ordered in May.
 - f. CORI information has not been returned to the Church as yet- Especially needed for the Mission youth leaders.
- D) Board of Stewardship – report given by Rob Basler
- 1st quarter statements are going out this week. Pledging is within expectations.
 - The campaign will continue after Easter with a “commitment “theme.
 - Would like to work with Growth for more ideas on getting people in here.
 - Develop accounts for fundraisers- Debbie spoke to attaining dreams via fundraisers.
 - Asked for authorization to follow through on the coupon placard and a Jewelry fundraiser for Dominica. These were approved by Cabinet. An operating account will be set up it will be a general fund. Request for a permanent sign in the front of the church to promote our events- Debbie volunteered to approach the town for permission.
- E) Board of Outreach – report given by No representative.
- a. Larry said there were 2 requests from Outreach
 - b. \$200 for Teen Challenge and \$500.00 for the Mission Youth trip.
 - c. All concerned as there is no Chairperson and lack of Cabinet attendance.
 - d. Mark will contact them.
 - e. **After discussion Cabinet agreed to adopt a policy that Committees that do not have a Chairperson must have their requisitions signed by 2 members of the Committee.**
- *This will need a quorum vote which was not present.**

7) STANDING Ministry REPORTS

- A) Growth Ministry – report given by Nancy Winter

- a. New welcome booklets passed around- very impressive.
 - b. Street signs are up one damaged- Kevin is going to setup.
 - c. Re naming/ reassigning names to the internal rooms in the church- ease of identification. - suggested a contest, numerical, former pastor names. Growth will discuss.
 - d. Single mom's group trying to stay together- maybe –the jewelry fundraiser will keep them together for a cause.
 - e. CE has coffee for May.
- B) Memorial Ministry – report given by No representative.
Altar Ministry – report given by No representative.
- C) Music Ministry – report given by No representative.-Mike commented
Music ministry will lead the May 22nd service.

April 29th Bella Voce @ church concert- free

Praise chorus; **April 30: 10 a.m. rehearsal**

May 1: Sing in Worship

May 21: 10 a.m. rehearsal

May 22: Sing in Worship

June 12: Meet in Sanctuary at 8:30

(no Saturday rehearsal)

- D) Search – report given by Mike Bundock
The ministry is moving forward with the summary/ analysis of the Church Profile. We expect to complete the final statement in the next 2 weeks then complete the actual minister job description shortly thereafter. This will be based on the information obtained through our Church profile survey and the modified sample Minister job description received from the MAUCC.

We will then submit the job description to Cabinet for review and approval. At that time Trustees should start developing a tentative financial package for the prospective Minister.

Our intention is to have this information available to the Conference in time for newly graduated ministers to be considered for the position.

- E) Nominating Ministry – report given by No representative.-
Rich Sullivan offered to chair and get things rolling.

Mark is looking for one more at large member.

F) Women's Guild— report given by Ruth Labonte

- a. Involved with the Ellen Carroll Memorial fund
- b. May 4th last meeting of year- by ticket purchase only.
- c. May 1st- organizing the Bailey baby shower after service in the fireplace parlor
WG & F is providing food.

8) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Mortgage- Jack Melcher and Mark Sorgman went to our current mortgage holder to discuss a possible remortgage. Variable 5 year rates- the rates are based on income plus market index? It would be a 15 yr note. We will save approximately \$200.00 per month compared to our current payment. The Bank would need a document stating the approval of the refinancing by the entire Congregation. This is similar to our original Mortgage where the Moderator will be approved as the representative. Mark will see if the original document is available for wording purposes. We would still have near 15 months of available funds for mortgage payments- We will need a Capital campaign. Trustees are working on this.
- b. Trustees are getting quotes from College town Glass for the front door replacement and estimates for the door between classrooms.
- c. There was much discussion about by-law revision. The Moderator and others were concerned that resources would be a definite issue to undertake this project at this time. Other opinions stated we need to do this sooner than later.

9) NEW BUSINESS

- a. None discussed

10) UPCOMING CHURCH CALENDAR

- April 29th Bella Voce @ church 7pm
- Easter breakfast setup and prep Sat April 23rd 2-4pm all welcome
- Easter breakfast- approx 7:30 after sunrise service
- Praise- April 30th: 10 a.m. rehearsal- all welcome

11) REMINDERS

Next Cabinet May 18th, 2011

12) As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:07P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Bundock, CSCC Clerk (proxy)

Approved / Corrected : 05/18/2011

NOTICE

*Central Square Congregational Church
71 Church Street
Bridgewater, Ma 02324*

SPECIAL CHURCH MEETING

SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 2011

TO ALL MEMBERS:

Please be advised that there will be a Special Church Meeting immediately following the worship service on Sunday, June 12, 2011 in the Sanctuary. The purpose of the meeting is to hear and act upon the following motions:

- **Vote in new members**
- **Vote to authorize the Corporate Officers to refinance the mortgage on the parsonage.**
- **Vote on nominees for Officers, Boards & Committees.**

Background on the refinancing motion can be found in the following article.

No other business matters will be voted on, unless presented in writing to the Moderator prior to the meeting. That business will be added to the agenda ONLY after an affirmative vote by 2/3 of the attending-voting members.

Sincerely,

Darlene S Brown
Church Clerk

Article for Discussion & Vote

Motion for the Church to borrow a sum of money to refinance the existing Mortgage which is against the Church property located at 81 Union St., Bridgewater MA, also known as the “parsonage” and authorize the Corporate officers of the Church to obtain a loan not to exceed \$212,000 dollars and to execute a mortgage agreement with the Bridgewater Credit Union to secure repayment therefore at terms they consider in the best interest of the Church.

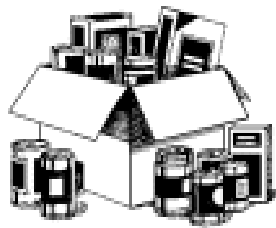
Background

The existing mortgage, a 5 year note will become due in just over a year. Refinancing is necessary since the Church does not have the funds to pay off the mortgage balance. Refinancing now has two distinct advantages 1) interest rates are lower than we're paying now, lowering our payment by approximately \$200/month and 2) the new loan term will be 15 years, giving the Church additional time to resolve the remaining mortgage.

The current balance is approximately \$205,000 closing costs are estimated to be about \$5,000 and there might be some legal expense. For the purposes of this article I'm allowing for \$2,000 in legal expense but it could be just a few hundred. So, the total authorization requested in this article is for \$212,000, but hopefully the final number will be lower.

The funds from the existing mortgage were used to complete the capital improvement project as-well-as other capital expenditures on the Church and parsonage and ongoing mortgage payments.

Based on current discussions with Bridgewater Credit Union the new mortgage would be a 15 year note, amortized for 25 years, and the interest rate would be reviewed at five and ten years, with a balloon payment due at year 15.



Bridgewater Food Pantry

Bridgewater Food Pantry is in need of specific items: ketchup, mayo, mustard, pancake mix, syrup, cereal, rice, rice pilaf, jelly, peanut butter, instant mashed potato, canned fruit, cake mix, crackers, juices (bottles and juice boxes), coffee, and tea. There are boxes provided in the narthex for this collection. Thank you!



June Stewardship Notes:

Leave it to New England! Just when you thought the weather was going to break into spring, we are reminded it's always too early to put the winter clothing away.

When all is said and done, we anticipate the warmth and good weather which we know will arrive – eventually!

This is much like the enthusiasm and anticipation of our church members. We have been looking forward with much anticipation for the Search committee to finally announce that our goal of hiring a full time Minister is completed.

Our congregation has stated numerous times during the course of the year that we deserve (need) a full time Minister. We need to support that effort through our commitment of raising our pledges by 20%. This has been the Stewardship message for the past year and we hope each of our members have seriously committed to support this goal. Please turn in your reconsidered pledge card.

While you are going through the process, please fill in an EFT (electronic funds transfer) form. It helps the church's cash flow during the summer months and while you enjoy your vacation there is no worry as your pledge is up to date.

With any luck, Central Square will be in serious negotiations with our new Minister in the near future.

Mike Bundock

On behalf of the Stewardship committee:

Rob Basler (Chair), John Sharland and Debbie Rice



Liturgists/Lay Participants

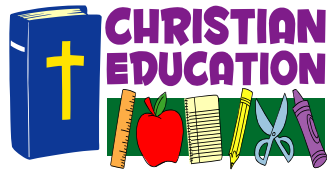
Upon invitation of our pastor, Rev. Esther and the Board of Deacons, if you would like to take part in worship, inclusive of reading scripture and/or leading the opening prayers, please sign up for a specific date at coffee hour in the next few weeks. The Deacons will organize a schedule for Rev. Esther so that she can just notify, via email, the scheduled person of what prayers and readings she would like you to deliver from the lectern.



June 12th Sunday is Commissioning for the Mission Youth. All Mission youth should plan to attend the worship service and following the service is a mandatory Mission youth and one parent meeting. Please come to the meeting to complete the permission slips, bring insurance cards, and complete medical forms. this will be a meeting just to complete the paperwork and will be short. Co-ordinator: Donna Oneil, 508-689-3408

June 25th, Saturday All Mission Youth will have a fun team meeting at the lake at Brian Maxfields house. Get to know your mission team with some lake side activities as we did last year! Time will be sent in an email but plan for the day.

June 26th Mission Youth meet at the church at 7:30 am for the Mission trip to the Adirondack Mountains, return Friday July 1st.



Christian Education

Communion for Kindergarten Class

The kindergarten class will be learning about communion and formally participate in the communion service with their families. The class is invited by the deacons to come to church Sunday, June 5th at 9:30 a.m. to watch and learn about the preparation and serving of communion. When the Sunday school classes come and sit with their parents during the communion service the kindergarten children will do the same for the first time this year. It should be a meaningful experience for the children and their families.

Kids of the Kingdom

The last Kids of the Kingdom meeting of the church school year are on Friday, June 10th from 6-7:30 p.m. The group is lead by Denise Molinari and Meg McDermott. All children in grades 4, 5, and 6 are invited to attend. Bring your appetites, be ready to enjoy a game, and have fun creating a craft. Come and enjoy the fun.

Children's Sunday

Come celebrate the Sunday School Church year with your child on Children's Sunday, June 12th. The children will participate in the service through song, prayer, and celebration. We will honor all graduates, celebrate Pentecost, and commission the Mission Youth. Following the service everyone is invited to the fellowship hall to enjoy our traditional make your own sundae. We hope to see you all there.

Summer Sunday School

Summer Sunday school begins on June 19th. A variety of activities have been planned for the children while learning about Jacob and Esau and Joseph. Music, stories, games and crafts are on the agenda and the tent from last summer may make an appearance once again.

If you would like to volunteer and teach a class or assist please see one of the members of the Christian Education committee or sign up at the bulletin board by the back door.

CE Calendar for June

Kindergarten Communion – June 5th @ 9:30 a.m.

Kids of the Kingdom – June 10th @ 6 – 7:30 p.m.

Children’s Sunday and Make your own Sundae – June 12th



Praise Chorus News!

Praise Chorus will be singing in worship on June 12th, which is Children's Sunday! Everyone is welcome to sing, shake a tambourine, or even just clap along with the beat, and we would especially love to have youth and children participate. We will learn two songs in the sanctuary at 8:30 that morning, which we'll share with the congregation during the service. Please contact Gabrielle at gab.heath@yahoo.com with any questions. ♪



Flowers for the Church Altar

Would you like to see fresh flowers more often on the altar? You can donate flowers for display on Sunday mornings for celebrations such as birthdays or anniversaries, or in memory of loved ones, and then take them home or have them delivered to a shut-in. Please see Jane O’Connell after church or call her at 508-697-3602.

Pilgrim Association

Massachusetts Conference - United Church of Christ

Installation of

Rev. Kristy Coburn

Sunday, June 5, 2011

beginning at 3:00 PM

**At the request of United Church of Christ in Abington,
Abington, Massachusetts,**

**The Pilgrim Association will gather for an
Installation Service**

on

Sunday, June 5, 2011

at 3:00 PM

At

United Church of Christ in Abington

10 Bedford Street

Abington, Massachusetts

**The afternoon begins at 3:00 p.m., with a service of worship,
as the Association, in covenant with United Church of Christ in Abington,
will**

Install

The Rev. Kristy Coburn

as Pastor

Following the Installation Service

There will be a reception in the Parish Hall

Directions

United Church of Christ in Abington

10 Bedford Street

Abington, Massachusetts

781-878-0199



June 2011: Searching for Identity and Citizenship

I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons.

Psalm 69: 8

The Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) was started by missionaries in the early 1800s. Now it has more than 900 churches nationwide, and 150,000 members. Global Ministries partners with CCT to minister to the 1.2 million people in Thailand who belong to ethnic minority groups, such as the Karen, Hmong (Meo), Yao (Mein), Akha (Egaw), Lahu (Musoe), and Lisu.

Many hill tribe people, although they were born in Thailand, do not have birth certificates, meaning they have no citizenship, no identification documents, and no legal identity. The lack of citizenship means that these ethnic minorities are considered illegal aliens in their own land and have little access to basic services like education and health care, employment, and the right to own land.

Searching for Identity and Citizenship for Ethnic Minorities in Thailand is a new project by CCT. Nine volunteers help villagers apply to become Thai citizens. The project expected 100-200 individuals to receive citizenship documents in the first year of the project. As of August 2010, almost 1,000 people had filed for citizenship. Of those, 210 had been granted citizenship and an additional 776 were registered and waiting.

Among the 210, Mayuree and her three younger sisters recently became Thai citizens. Their father and mother had obtained citizenship years ago but, due to the lack of education Mayuree's parents did not know how to register their children. Mayuree said "I am very happy to receive the citizenship. I am a Thai now. I am happy because I can go to school and obtain public services that other Thai people receive."

Please pray for this new project, and the impact it has on improving the lives of so many.

Global Ministries works with the Church of Christ in Thailand to fund the Citizenship project.

June 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2 Bereavement Group 6-7:30 Parlor Brownie LL 6:00 Al-Anon	3 Al-Anon	4
5 Communion Sunday AA	6 Christian Ed Meeting 7:00 NA	7 Outreach 7:00 Growth 7:00	8 Trustees 6:00	9 Bereavement Group 6-7:30 Parlor Stewardship 7:30 Al-Anon	10 Kids of the Kingdom 6:00 GS 73502 LL 6-7:30 Al-Anon	11
12 Children's Sunday (Ice Cream Sunday) Intergenerational Sunday AA	13 NA	14	15 Cabinet 7:00	16 Bereavement Group 6-7:30 Parlor Daisies LL 6:00 Al-Anon	17 Al-Anon	18
19 Summer Sunday School Begins AA	20 NA	21	22	23 Bereavement Group 6-7:30 Parlor Al-Anon	24 Al-Anon	25
26 Mission Trip to Adirondacks – leave AA	27 Mothers' club 9:30 NA	28	29	30 Bereavement Group 6-7:30 Parlor Al-Anon		

July 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Mission trip returns Al-Anon	2
3 AA	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY NA	5	6	7 Bereavement Group 6-7:30 Parlor Al-Anon	8 Al-Anon	9
10 Teen Challenge AA	11 NA	12	13	14 Bereavement Group 6-7:30 Parlor Al-Anon	15 Al-Anon	16
17 AA	18 NA	19	20	21 Bereavement Group 6-7:30 Parlor Al-Anon	22 Al-Anon	23
24 AA	25 Mothers' Club 9:30 NA	26	27	28 Al-Anon	29 Al-Anon	30
31 AA						