

# Cross Currents

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church

Fall 2008

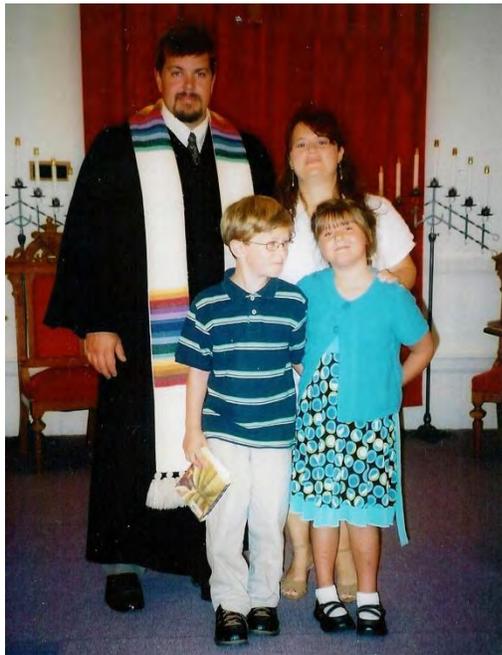
P.O. Box 114

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Featuring ace reporter Nell Parks

Compiled and edited by Mary and Kirk Hinote



It has been a busy fall at the First Congregational Church in Bingham. We have been fortunate to have the guidance and leadership of Chad Poland as we move through this transition period. Pictured here is Rev. Chad with his wife, Emily, and their children Ethan and Hannah.

## News flashes

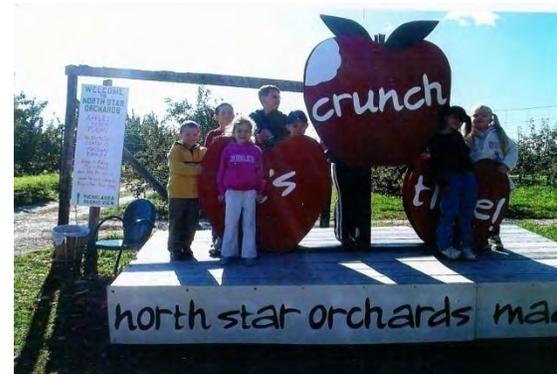
Thanks to Deaconess Mary Wade for serving this year as secretary/treasurer of the Sunday School.

**Sunday School** attendance is growing slowly, but steadily. Attendance varies between 12 and 17 students each Sunday. On a stunning October Saturday, the Sunday School held a family apple picking day at North Star

Orchard. The families rode on the tractor-drawn wagon, picked apples and shared a snack on the crest of the hill overlooking the Western Maine mountains. Praise God for His bountiful gifts and for the beauty of His earth!

One of our Sunday School teachers, Chelsea Laweryson, has written a play for Christmas. She and Caleb have cleaned the stage, made some set designs, and are busily rehearsing parts with the children.

**Mark your calendar for 7 P.M. Saturday December 20, 2008** and share this touching Christmas Story with our budding actresses and actors.



One Sunday school student became concerned about animals in shelters and asked if others would help him gather food contributions. A box was placed in the chapel entrance where members of the adult congregation could support his project. Thank you to the animal lovers in our congregation for your generous donations!

The well-known Heifer Project has been chosen by the Sunday School as its mission for this 2008-2009 year. A percentage of each week's offering will be set aside to send to the project in April 2009.



In addition the Sunday School students chose to send one Sunday's collection to the "Feed the Children" program. We sent this organization a check for \$29.00, enough money to buy boxes of food for three families.

Remember that Sunday School is the responsibility of all of us. Have you invited children to join our Sunday School?

**Proverbs according to some Sunday School first graders:**

*As You Shall Make Your Bed So Shall You... Mess It Up.*

*Better To Be Safe Than... Punch A 5th Grader.*

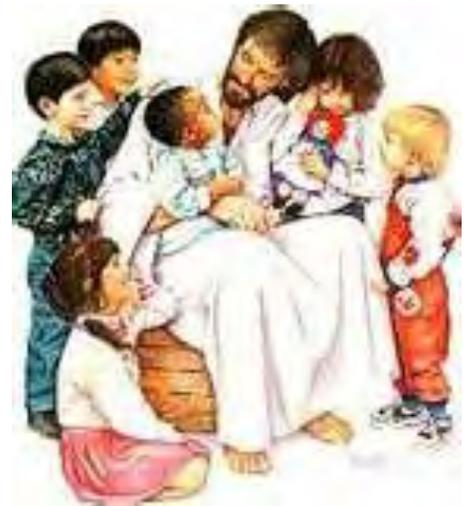
*Strike While The... Bug Is Close.*

*If You Lie Down With Dogs, You'll... Stink In The Morning.*

*Where There's Smoke, There's... Pollution.*

*A Penny Saved Is... Not Much.*

*Laugh And The Whole World Laughs With You, Cry And... You Have To Blow Your Nose.*



## Opportunity for service

At Thanksgiving time the Sunday School plans to continue the tradition of preparing and delivering fruit baskets to shut-ins and the elderly. Can you help out with preparation or delivery? Call Ethel Lishness 672-3616 or Kirk Hinote 672-9300 co-superintendants to offer your help.

And don't forget to thank our volunteer Sunday School teachers. They are doing an awesome job!

## Church Circle has had a busy fall

- On September 24, 2008 the Circle served a luncheon buffet for family and friends after the funeral of Earl Savage.
- September 27 and 28 the Bingham Fly In was rained out.
- President Norma Stevens decided to move the food booth and the lawn sale inside the Parish Hall. In this combined event the Circle ladies earned \$943.00. Wow! What a wonderful success.
- At its October 15 meeting the Circle voted to give \$500.00 to the church for heating oil. Thank these hard working people for their hard work!
- The October 11 Harvest Supper was a combined effort of the Circle members and other church members. Gloria Jean Shaw chaired the kitchen crew. Jen Robinson organized solicitations and sold the tickets. Net profit for the church was \$500.00.
- On November 1 the circle put on its annual fair and luncheon. These busy ladies earned \$1050.00. They voted to donate it to the oil fund.
- November 10 the circle was asked to do a buffet luncheon for family and friends after the funeral of Joseph Walls Sr.

All women of our church and parish are invited to join the Circle. We meet the third Wednesday of the month from September to June. We do not meet in December. If you cannot join us at 2 PM for the business meeting, join us at 3 PM for tea and fellowship. Our next meeting is Wednesday November 19. Thank you for all you do!



## **Prudential Committee**

We have made some much needed repairs this fall. In care and maintenance of the buildings, vinyl siding blown off by wind has been replaced on the west side of the church. Security lights have been installed.

### ***The financial system of checks and balances:***

We know that our church family and friends have been waiting to see what changes we have made in caring for the finances of the church. We have consulted with financial specialists in developing a system of checks and balances for our church treasury. The Prudential Committee has been burning the candle at both ends to get things back on track. They have been putting in extra time to reestablish accounts that reflect the original donor's wishes. The church's bookkeeping has a system of checks and balances to insure that any of our gifts to the church will be allocated as directed.

The Prudential Committee has set up the following system:

- All offerings are counted by two non-related members of the Prudential Committee and together they record the totals.
- They then give the offering to the financial secretary who keeps a weekly record, and disburses the money as the donor has indicated.
- The financial secretary gives the money to the treasurer.
- The treasurer deposits the money in the bank.
- The bank sends monthly statements in triplicate to the church treasurer, the Chairman of the Prudential Committee, and one other church member. The treasurer is also church member as the bylaws of the church require.

The Prudential committee and the church treasurer work closely together in paying bills and writing checks. The treasurer meets monthly with the Prudential committee and answers any of the Prudential Committee's questions. The treasurer's deposit tickets are checked against the financial secretary's records. The bank statements are compared from month to month. The treasurer will send an annual report to the church each year, and the church will have annual audits.

## **Diaconate**

The diaconate has maintained its usual service to the congregation and parish. They also oversee our student minister's duties. Caleb Clark has visited parish members as guided by the diaconate, including nursing home visits, visits to shut-ins, and visits to members of our church and community. The diaconate voted in October to invite a group of Caleb Clark's college friends who have a rock band to come to play for a young audience at the church in January. They are currently planning services for the Advent Season and our traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. Over the next few months they will be working closely with Rev. Chad to set goals for our church, including developing criteria for hiring our next pastor, and addressing the needs of our community.

**On Saturday, December 13 there will be a Christian rock concert from 7 to 8 P.M.** featuring MDJ, Modern Day Jeremiah, a musical group from the Orrington Congregational Church.

### **What is our choir up to?**

**Our choir will be part of a 250 voice concert on November 23, 2008. This concert is held annually at the Pleasant Street Methodist Church in Waterville. You are urged to attend if you have not had this experience. Seating is limited, you need to go early. Kirk or Mary Hinote can give you directions, or any member of our choir.**



Caleb Clark, our seminary intern, is helping out in Sunday School by conducting opening exercises in the sanctuary. Caleb has also been running a Bible study class on Monday nights at 7 P.M. With cooler air arriving, we have decided to meet at the John Owens home on Rollins Street in Bingham. Come join us as we study the book of **James**, the brother of Jesus. At the first class a lively discussion ensued when Caleb wondered what it might have been like to be a child and have Jesus as a brother.

During the November 16 service, church members discussed the possibility of having Rev Chad Poland serve as an interim minister of the First Congregational Church. Rev Chad cannot serve full time, but will be with us on Sundays and will be available for guidance and consultations. His counsel throughout the summer and fall has been invaluable. If the church approves, he will work with the committees and assist the church in shaping our path for the future. A meeting is slated for November 23 after church.

**This is thanksgiving time first proclaimed by our Pilgrim forefathers. Come and worship with us. Prepare for the coming advent season. "God bless us, everyone."**

**Fall Worship Schedule:**

**Sunday School:** Sundays at 9:00 A.M.

**Church :** Sundays at 10:30 A.M.

**Bible Study:** Mondays at 7:00 P.M. through December 8

**Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."**

**"Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked. Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."**



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