



Annual *Report*

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE
OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY
YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

134th Annual Meeting
January 27, 2013



1st Congregational United Church of Christ
1200 Clark Street, Rapid City, SD 57701
(605) 342-5787 www.rcfirstucc.org

2012 Annual Reports

2012 was a year of growth in many different dimensions for our congregation. Together we made history and built upon the foundation laid by our forebears in this exciting congregation.

The Year in Review

2012 was a year of change at First Congregational United Church of Christ. After a year in which we had outperformed the budget adopted by the congregation, the Department of Stewardship and Budget presented and passed a balance budget. The budget served the congregation well throughout 2012. Income and expense estimates were accurate and the smooth-running budget set the background for a change in the format of meetings of the Church Board. The Church Board kicked off the year with a retreat and continued their vision and planning process throughout the year. The Capital Improvement Task Force went to work gathering data on building improvements for our congregation. Each Department of the congregation explored new ways of doing the work of the church and made changes. It was not a year of “business as usual,” and the result was growth.

Highlights of the ministries of 2012 include the following activities, events

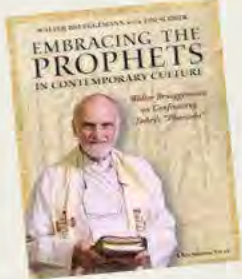
and programs:

January:

- On Sunday, January 8, following worship we had an open meeting and discussion about the possibility of purchasing an additional lot to add to the church property. The meeting was not designed to make a decision, but rather to gather information and opinions. Based on opposition voiced in the meeting, no further action was taken by the congregation.
- A new confirmation class was launched with an intensive meeting schedule. Those preparing for confirmation met on Wednesdays and Sundays throughout the spring.
- A new young adults group was formed. They planned activities throughout the year.
- The Court of Honor for Eagle Scout and church member Kenny Umentum was held.
- United Church Youth began the year with work on their recycling program.
- The Adult Discussion group focused

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on local church issues with a discussion on the proposed land purchase and the church budget.

- We welcomed six new members into our congregation.
- Glimpses of Our History, a book about our church compiled by Rev. Henry Bradshaw was distributed to members without cost due to a generous gift to our congregation.
- The Kerygma Bible Study group began studies of Galatians and James.
- We commissioned Chuck and Sybil Rounds for their annual trip to Costa Rica to support the Vacation Bible School at our sister church.
- Our annual meeting was held January 29. We adopted a balanced budget and elected leaders for the coming year.

February:

- The Call newsletter sported a new format with more articles by church leaders, including a monthly column by our moderator and regular reports on the work of the Church Board.
- Confirmands were all matched with their mentors and were busy meeting twice most weeks.
- Trent Eddy shared video clips from his participation in the National Men's Honor Chorus with the congregation.
- United Church Youth led the congregation in receiving donations for the Souper Bowl of Caring. Food and cash

donations were taken to Church Response.

- The Department of Hospitality held an all-church birthday party.
- We celebrated Ash Wednesday with a soup supper and the imposition of ashes.
- We began a six-week Lenten Bible Study based on Walter Brueggemann's "Embracing the Prophets, Confronting Today's Pharaohs."
- Church Board and Department Members met for a half-day retreat to organize their work for the year, learn more about their responsibilities, and engage in visioning about our congregation's future.
- We held a special service of prayer and thanksgiving for the ministries of Rev. Dr. Ray Schatz as we bid Ray and Chere farewell on their move to Uplands Retirement Community.

March:

- The Young Adults Group began regular Bible study as part of their meetings.
- Church member Sheila Long launched a new Women's Bible Study.
- The Adult Discussion Group focused on presentations by church members Ed Boyd and Dave and Marrelyce Seaman.
- We received the annual One Great Hour of Sharing all church offering to support disaster relief and development around the world.
- We formalized our relationship with Love, INC as a new mission project of our congregation.
- The Department of Hospitality hosted a baked potato bar following worship on March 18.
- The Women's Fellowship had great success with their spring rummage sale.

April:

- Holy Week was the first week of April. Palm and Passion Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Celebrations set the tone for the entire month.
- We participated in the first ever Sunrise at Main Street Square on Easter Morning.
- A Memoir Writing workshop launched a new group in our congregation who meet regularly to share their writing experiences.
- We hosted a laity empowerment workshop: "Unwrapping Your Gifts" in partnership with the South Dakota Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- Ben Anderson of Breakthrough, Inc. helped our congregation consider how we can widen our welcome for differently-abled individuals with a special presentation in worship and a conversation with the Adult Discussion Group.
- Pastor Kathleen led a discussion group on Spiritual Disciplines for the Adult Discussion Group.
- Once again youth from our congregation provided leadership for the Bowl for Kids' Sake

fund raising event for Big Brothers, Big Sisters.

- The Senior High Group continued their monthly brunches. The April Brunch was held at the Colonial House restaurant.
- The Women's Fellowship Spring Luncheon featured D'Vine Favor with a theme of "Life is a Song Worth Singing."
- The Tuesday Craft Group sponsored a "Bring Your Own Hobby" retreat for women at Storm Mountain Center.
- The Good Morning Circle held a Bridge Marathon

May:

- The House Band returned for a Mother's Day Musical Extravaganza.
- The Woodchuck Society was busy splitting wood and making plans for delivery of unsplit wood to the Cheyenne River Reservation to be split by our partners in Eagle Butte.
- The Annual Sunday School picnic was a treat for all involved.
- We celebrated the rite of Confirmation with seven confirmands joining our congregation.
- United Church Youth celebrated the year's ministries with a Pizza Party.
- We recognized two high school graduates. The 1st Congregational Trust awarded "Power of One" scholarships to Trent Eddy and Siri Palm.
- We participated in the Strengthen the Church all church offering.

June:

- Members of our congregation participated in the annual meeting of the South Dakota Conference of the United Church of Christ in Aberdeen.
- "Super Heroes of the Bible" was the theme for our week long Vacation Bible School that concluded with a picnic under the big tent at Palmer Gulch Campground.
- The Woodchuck Society held their annual picnic.
- We launched a companion to our prayer shawl ministry with a prayer bear ministry.
- Lay Minister Becky Fleming led the grand camp at Placerville, launching a summer of outdoor ministries at our conference campground.
- Pastor Ted was a workshop presenter at the UCC Musicians National Network gathering in Kansas City. Both he and Pastor Susan participated in the conference's workshops on music, teaching and worship
- The Memoir Writing Group continued monthly meetings throughout the summer
- We celebrated ordination anniversaries of three of our members. Rev. Ray Schatz has been ordained for 55 years. Rev. Richard Behringer has been ordained for 45 years. Rev. Mary Nelson Keithahn has been ordained for 25 years.
- A new theatre group was launched.
- We participated in the Love, INC Clothe a Kid

program.

July:

- The fireworks were cancelled due to dry conditions and so was our annual ice cream social and fireworks viewing.
- Craft and quilting days continued throughout the summer. Quilts of Hope continued to supply special quilts for each baptism.

August:

- The Church Board held a planning retreat.
- The Women's Fellowship held another record-setting rummage sale.
- Pastor Ted and Rob Burton continued to work with the Dakota Association on issues relating to the transfer of native church land titles.

September:

- The Church School Fall Kickoff Carnival was held with a bounce house, special treats, booths, games and activities for all ages.
- We held a "Blessing of the Backpacks" for all of our children as they began a new school year.
- 40 Days of Prayer for Children began.
- Church Chat resumed after a brief summer break.
- The Church Board launched a new Communications Roundtable to help coordinate newsletter, web, press release and other communications within our church and from our church to the wider community.
- Lifetouch Photography was in our church taking pictures for a new photo directory.
- We shipped the 20th box of resources for the





Nashville Children's Project coordinated by Leslie Brookes.

- The Woodchucks were busy with regular splitting parties getting ready for fall deliveries.
- The Black Hills Chamber Music Society celebrated its continuing relationship with our congregation by offering free tickets to the concert of the University of Nebraska Brass Quintet. The group provided special music for worship on the day of the concert.

October:

- Photo sessions continued for our church directory.
- "Graceful Gratitude" was the theme for the Women's Fellowship Fall Retreat held at Placerville Camp.
- The Men's Bible Study group began monthly meetings.
- We held a Mission Festival Sunday on Worldwide Communion Sunday with tables highlighting many of our congregation's mission and outreach programs.
- The all church Volunteer Fair offered opportunities for people to learn about and become involved in our congregation's ministries.
- The Pastoral Relations and Personnel Committee held Listening Circles focusing on worship.
- The First Wednesday Family Night was a game night for all ages.
- The Library Task Force was busy organizing the church library—a task that proved to be larger than originally anti-

pated.

- Fourth and Fifth graders received Bibles in special presentations in worship. The Bibles were special students' editions with covers made by Quilts of Hope.
- We participated in the Neighbors in Need all Church offering.

November:

- Church crafters held a silent auction and craft sale to support the ministries of our Sister Church in Costa Rica.
- The Department of Stewardship and Budget conducted their annual pledge drive. This year, they prepared a proposed budget to go with the pledge appeal. Their appeal for an 8% increase in giving was met by our generous congregation.
- We participated in the Church World Service Blankets+ offering.
- The annual Turkey Taxi of the Woodchuck Society made a run to Eagle Butte with a full pickup load of turkeys to be distributed by Dakota Association congregations. Members of the Woodchuck Society joined with our Eagle Butte partners in splitting additional firewood to be distributed.
- The monthly family night was a fall festival with activities for all ages.
- Our congregation participated in the downtown Rapid City Thanksgiving Service held this year at Faith Temple.
- The Kerygma Bible study group launched

an Advent Bible Study series.

December:

- In addition to our Sunday Advent services, midweek prayer services were offered on Wednesdays during Advent.
- The Family Advent Festival featured crafts for all ages.
- The Woodchucks took caravans of trucks and trailers on two deliveries to Wanblee on the Pine Ridge reservation in December. 2012 closed with a record amount of firewood split and delivered.
- United Church Youth prepared 100 treat bags for the Oyate Okiciyapi. The entire congregation got involved by donating leftover Halloween candy for the project.
- We participated in the Angels of los Guido program to support the children of our sister church in Costa Rica.
- We participated in the Christmas Fund all church offering.
- Our children led us in a meaningful worship service filled with drama and music.
- Our Christmas Eve services were well attended and meaningful.
- We ended the year worshipping with the Grigg Family Band on the last Sunday of the year.
- During the last week of the year, new doors were installed on the west end of our building.
- December financial reports showed an operating surplus of \$19,984 for the year.

Statistical Report

Membership beginning of 2012	573	Baptisms	9
Deaths	10	Weddings	4
Transfers out	0	Funerals	12
New Members	35		
Membership end of 2012	598	Average Worship Attendance	154



Looking Back . . . Looking Forward

Moderator: Becky Umenthum

At its annual meeting on January 24, 2010, the congregation voted to adopt a strategic plan with seven goals. During the past year the church board has discussed each goal. We looked at what has been accomplished and what we wanted to do next. Each goal is listed in the table below along with our some of our plans for 2013.

Looking Back	Looking Forward
Goal #1: Continuing mutual interaction will be demonstrated between First UCC and those populations/ cultural groups in need.	In addition to the activities of the Woodchuck society and the youth groups, Jail Ministry, and our participation in Church Response and Love, Inc., we will continue to look for opportunities to interact with those in need. Our pastors and the women of our church worked with the family of Ray Valadra to say "goodbye" to Ray in a way the respected both the traditions of our church and those of the Lakota culture.
Goal #2: First UCC will offer worship opportunities as diverse as our congregation.	Our pastors and musicians continue to provide exciting worship services both on Sundays and at special times during the church year. The Wednesday night Advent services of candle lighting, scripture, and quiet prayer were especially meaningful to me. The Worship committee has been working since last fall to plan special services for every night of Holy Week.
Goal #3: First UCC will have 95% of its congregation involved in volunteer activities that support the mission and ministry of the church.	Both the Mission Fair and the Volunteer Fair last fall provided members of our congregation with opportunities for becoming involved in the mission and ministry of our church. Now it's up to each individual to make a commitment to be involved.

"During the past year the Church Board has discussed each goal. We looked at what has been accomplished and what we want to do next."



Goal #4: Energy consumption by First UCC will be reduced by 70%.	We have completed many items that were able to be done within the regular budget. The higher cost items are being explored by the Capital Improvements Task Force.
Goal #5: First UCC will have an organized outreach program for those members in transition.	During the August Leadership Retreat and the fall Church Board meetings, we've had discussions about how lay people could be involved in visitations. Rev. Kathleen Batchelder is coordinating this effort, which we're calling "Congregational Connections".
Goal #6: Information about church activities, concerns and successes will be available to keep church members and friends connected.	The Communications Task Force invites all members to participate in the regular meetings of the Communications Roundtable. Come learn about upcoming events and help us plan how to share the news with the congregation and the community.
Goal #7: Attendance for church services/Sunday School will be increased by 10% by 1/2011.	In 2012, Sunday School attendance increased 10% and worship attendance 7%. We are planning a "Bring a Friend Sunday" on February 24th. It takes <i>all</i> of us to invite and welcome people into our church.

Communications Task Force

"We have found that Communications/PR is an exceptionally large collection of endeavors, often interrelated, that touch on nearly every part of the church."

This task force was established by the Board in early 2012 to assess current internal and external Church communications and identify potential opportunities for improvement. The task force is chaired by Gerry Boehrs, and members are Becky Umenthum, Doris Marie Strom and Brent Long. Ted Huffman has been helpful to the group as requested, and has been more active as work has progressed.

We have found that Communications/PR is an exceptionally large collection of endeavors, often interrelated, that touch on nearly every part of the church. We have worked to identify and discuss as many as possible, but tackling every

idea for improvement at one time is not effective.

We have identified the following areas as opportunities to consider for further work:

1. Newspapers/traditional communication:

- Take full advantage of free church briefs section in Saturday newspaper, and consider recruiting a volunteer to coordinate this activity
- Consider regular presence in the "church directory" in the Saturday newspaper, at a cost of \$28 per week
- Consider newspaper advertising outside the regular church budget to be funded by mem-

bers who may wish to do so at any time.

2. Web Site

- Consider web site improvements, specifically a professionally designed site or a less expensive "template" approach
- Take steps to assign a staff member or volunteer to each section of the web site to monitor and update information

3. Monthly Meeting

- We have begun a regular monthly communication meeting and have met each month beginning in September for any staff people and church members who have information to



communicate for the next month. The meeting is timed to support the "Call" publication schedule. We believe if this becomes a robust, well attended meeting, that communication effectiveness will improve, that volunteer

"specialists" might emerge, and that we will learn much about the best ways to move forward. We encourage all staff to attend, and all departments and other organizations to be represented. Meetings to date have been

lightly attended, but have proved to be helpful and meaningful. We plan to continue these monthly meetings indefinitely, and will use the results to determine further direction.

Pastoral Relations & Personnel

The Pastoral Relations and Personnel Committee met 1-2 times per month. The following objectives/tasks were completed:

1. Evaluations for each pastor were completed.
2. A process for obtaining congregational feedback on various aspects of church life was developed.
3. The result of the process that was developed was the implementation of Listening Circles. We provided education for the congregation on the Listening Circle process

and recruited and trained facilitators and recorders for the Listening Circles.

4. The first Listening Circles were focused on our worship services and were held in October. The next Listening Circles will be focused on the Christian Education and Youth Programs and will be held in February. We plan to have at least 4 Listening Circles each year. Other topics for the Circles will include boards and committees, recipients of pastoral care, outreach projects,

evangelism and membership, fellowship groups and special events/seasonal programs.

Our membership for the coming year will change as members complete their time on the Committee but we will continue our quest for healthy communication and constructive feedback from our congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Kelts, Chairperson
Pastoral Relations and Personnel Committee

"We plan to have at least 4 Listening Circles each year. The first Listening Circles were focused on our worship services."

Capital Improvements Task Force

WHAT: A group formed to identify, prioritize, and secure cost estimates for needed major improvements to the Church building and grounds. This information is needed by the Stewardship and Budget Committee and the Church Board for planning purposes and potential capital fund drive efforts.

WHO: The group includes two members from Build-

ing and Grounds, two members of Stewardship and Budget, a representative from Women's Fellowship, and a member at large. Group size may vary to reflect needed input and expertise from Church membership.

WHY: The topic of a budget for capital improvements for our church has been kicked around in various conversations for some

time. The concern is that our annual budget planning for staff/programming/missions fails to address the coming expenses for boiler replacement, energy enhancements, air conditioning, roof, parking lot improvements, and other needed items. These capital purchases will need to be funded by our members and will impact funds available for traditional annual



“The Task Force will hold information meetings for all church members following church services on February 3 and again on February 10.”

operational expenses.

REPORTING: The Task Force is an advisory group formed by and reporting to the Board at their monthly meetings. Members of the Task Force will also keep their individual committees apprised on the progress and status of the group. No significant costs are anticipated for Task Force activities.

STATUS: First activity was to develop a list of potential capital improvements from information provided by the building and grounds committee, pastoral staff, and the energy conservation group.

Secondly, a local engineering firm was retained to review and report on the status of the building and its many systems. The report indicated the building and its systems were well built, have received excellent care over the many years, and while no immediate crisis exists, various areas could use attention.

Based on these findings the group began the process of securing bids repairs and replacements. To date bids have been received for front door and entryway replacement, shingle replacement, parking lot repairs, drainage and sidewalk repairs, a new sound and video system for the sanctuary and fellowship hall, and the addition of air conditioning for the sanctuary and fellowship hall. Bids yet to be received include front sign repair or replacement, new flooring for the fellowship hall, and a keyless lock system for the building. While the group is not advocating action on all of these projects, it was felt the Board and the membership could not conduct meaningful discussions on how to proceed without the costs associated with each project. Further, this is not an exhaustive list of potential projects or improvements for our building, but those deemed in need of immediate attention

from a safety or building preservation standpoint. Other projects can and will be investigated at the direction of the Board or the general membership.

NEXT STEP: All bids for the projects under consideration were received during January, and the findings were presented to the Board. At its January meeting the Board decided the Task Force would hold information meetings for all church members following church services on February 3rd and again on February 10th. Copies of all Task Force documents will be available for review by our membership in advance of these information meetings.

Committee members include Laura Boyd, Rob Burton, Randy Daughenbaugh, Randy Fisher, Evan Gallentine, and Eileen Rossow, with assistance from Dick Wade, Dave Ledford, and Harold Miller.



Status Report - Capital Improvement Task Force Project List

First Congregational United Church Of Christ Rapid City - January 16, 2013

PROJECT	STATUS	SOURCE / CONTRACTOR	ESTIMATED COST	NOTES / COMMENTS
Air Conditioning	Quoted	Heil Mechanical	\$147,000	Includes all materials, insulation, electrical, Tem-Tech control system, and excise tax for a 30-ton chiller system.
Air Conditioning	Quoted	Action Mechanical	\$116,685	Includes all materials, insulation, Tem-Tech control system for a 30-ton system. No electrical included.
New Heating & A/C Controls	Quoted	Tem-Tech	Included in Quotes above	Tem-Tech supplied and currently services our boiler control system. Has been a good source of information.
Roof Repair	Quoted	Bolt Roofing	\$ 74,000	Remove old shingles, replace with 50 yr asphalt/rubber shingle, with 15lb felt paper, all associated vents, drip edges, etc. as needed, remove old material.
			\$ 12,000	Add for steeple, same materials as above
			\$ 85,000	Add insulation board 2.5 inch R-14 with 7/16 OSB backing
			\$175,000	Substitute #1 taper sawn wood shake shingles
Parking Lot Repair	Quoted	B & H Asphalt	\$ 28,524	Patching 4", Mill and Overlay, Crack seal, Seal Coating, Striping, Mobilization. 2012 Pricing
Parking Lot Repair	Quoted	Hills Material	\$ 32,118	Patching, Crack Seal, Seal Coat, Striping, Mobilization, 2013 pricing.
Sound System	Quoted	Haggerty's	\$ 15,802 \$ 2,947 \$18,749	New system for Sanctuary audio system New system for Fellowship Hall audio system Total for new audio system for both locations
			\$ 15,445	Video system for Sanctuary
			\$ 5,400	Video system for Fellowship Hall
			\$21,460	Total for a video system for both locations
Floor Repair & New Floor Covering for Fellowship Hall	No one contacted yet	To Be Determined	N/A	Cracks in Fellowship hall floor, broken tiles. Floor movement is not static according to Building & Grounds personnel, may make repairs difficult unless replacement floor material is flexible.
Front Doors	Quoted	Hagen Glass	\$ 16,491 \$ 13,086 \$ 2,566	Replace front doors with similar frame-less doors, new concealed locks with card reader and 100 key cards. Re-use fish handles. Replace front doors with framed doors, manual locks, re-use fish handles. Horton Handi-cap operator for above doors. Existing operator would then be moved to interior entry doors.

Concrete Repair & Replacement	Quoted	Loren Doyle Concrete	\$ 11,750	Set and pour colored/stamped concrete at front of church. Approx. 47' x 25' x 4". Tear-out of old slate by others.
Point of Use Water Heaters	Quoted	Action Mechanical	\$ 8,025	Tear out and replace sidewalk/drain pads in rear of church along building, approx. 50ft of 5' wide sidewalk. Install three point of use electric water heaters (parlor kitchen, sanctistry, and staff bathroom) and one large gas tank-less on-demand water heater to supply the kitchen, restrooms, and nursery.
West Entry Doors	Completed	Hagen Glass	\$ 5,662	West entry door and frame and interior door replaced.
Engineering Study	Completed	TSP Engineering	\$ 3,052	Mechanical systems and energy consumption analysis.

Capital Improvement Task Force - Project List Items Yet To Be Investigated:

PROJECT	STATUS	SOURCE / CONTRACTOR	ESTIMATED COST	NOTES / COMMENTS
Boiler Replacement	Not Investigated	To Be Determined	\$ 60,000 – 70,000	Engineer estimates the remaining life of the boiler may be 5 to 10 years. No quotes have been sought for replacement but consideration should be given to funding eventual replacement.
Street Sign	Not Investigated	To Be Determined	N/A	The sign at the edge of our parking lot needs to be repaired and up-dated. No discussion or action has been taken on this project.
Alarm System and Door Lock Replacement	Not Investigated	To Be Determined	N/A	Alarm system is dated and needs review. Lock system for exterior doors may be up-dated to a key card/pass system if additional door replacement occurs.
Fellowship Hall Sound Reduction	Not Investigated	To Be Determined	N/A	Investigation into sound absorption materials for walls or ceiling to reduce unwanted noise and echoes, enhance use of this room.
Outside Storage Building	Not Investigated	To Be Determined	N/A	Larger building/garage to store many of the items currently housed in the Church building – chairs, tables, ladders, etc.

Capital Improvement Task Force - Project List Items Not To Be Pursued:

PROJECT	STATUS	SOURCE	ESTIMATED COST	NOTES / COMMENTS
New Energy Efficient Replacement Windows	Not Investigated	N/A	N/A	Engineering report advises window replacement based only on energy savings is not advised due to extremely long payback period.
Additional Insulation In Walls and Roof	Not Investigated	N/A	N/A	As above, not economically feasible due to extremely long payback period.

Senior Minister Ted Huffman

As the Capital Improvements Task Force met with engineers and contractors to research our building and desired improvements, one thing that they heard over and over again was how well-planned our building is. After 54 years of challenging institutional service our building is still sound, functional and serving our community beautifully. The visionary members of this congregation who participated in planning, funding and building our church home used the best materials available and invested in a future that reached beyond their own personal needs. Indeed we have inherited a great legacy from those visionary people of faith. Marveling at their vision, I have begun to wonder what legacy we are leaving for those who will belong to this church 50 years from now.

We took a step down the road of that legacy a few years ago when we funded the expansion and modernization of our pipe organ. The instrument serves not only our needs in worship, but provides music for our community as well. And, the pipes we purchased with the generous gifts of our congregation will be capable of producing music 500 years from now.

For me a second sym-

bolic step down that road is the new door that is at the west end of our building. Funded by our reserves, the new doors replace 54 year-old steel doors. The old doors were solid and heavy and installed with the best hardware available at the time. They were opened and shut multiple times each day and finally they wore out and the time came when we needed to replace them. We might have chosen solid steel doors as a replacement. Instead we chose modern glass doors. It befits our faith. Instead of steel to keep out intruders, we have elected to use glass that allows those outside to see what is going on in our building. Our doors exist to open and welcome others into our community. Aside from the practical advantage of being able to see who is on the other side of the door and thus to avoid hitting someone with an out-swinging door, the west end of our building now embraces the vision of our main front doors: Allow the light of the world to enter our building and foster the free flow of faith and knowledge between our church and our community.

Maybe every year is a turning point in my ministry. As I look back, however, it seems to me that 2012 has been a momen-

tous year in our shared ministry.

2012 has been a year of engaging and significant worship. After a couple of years of transition in church staff, we had the luxury of a year with no changes in our paid personnel. Our leadership team has come into our stride and we have learned to work together in a manner that is efficient and engaging. The free flow of conversation and ideas in our planning sessions has given birth to a partnership of leadership that encourages participation by others. The role of lay readers has been transformed into that of liturgists – those who lead the work of God in our community. We have focused our attention on quality worship understanding that God values the significant moments “where two or three are gathered” as well as the high celebrations when we fill the sanctuary with people and music and liturgy. In addition to regularly scheduled worship, we have responded to the needs of our families with meaningful weddings and funerals, baptisms and confirmation.

2012 has been a year of engaging education. Our intensive Confirmation preparation schedule challenged students, mentors



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“All of our accomplishments have come from the deep dedication and generosity of our congregation. But God always calls us to the future..”

and parents alike. We worked hard and we worked deliberately to prepare for the rite of confirmation. The confirmands remain engaged in the life of our church. We challenged ourselves intellectually with the Brueggemann study during Lent and Kerygma Bible study throughout the year. But we also encouraged and saw the birth of grassroots educational activities. New women’s and men’s Bible studies were launched by lay members of our congregation. Church chat continued under lay leadership. The new Spiritual Practices and Memoir Writing groups arose out of the interests of our members.

2012 has been a year of growing in mission. We have talked about getting engaged in Love, INC. for several years. This year we took the plunge and the whole church got involved in the backpacks for kids and clothe-a-kid programs. Our crafters raised significant funds to support the ministries of our Costa Rica sister church. Prayer Bears were added to the Prayer Shawls that we distribute. The Turkey Taxi was filled with more turkeys for our

reservation partners than ever before. The Woodchucks entered new territory by hauling uncut and unsplit wood to Eagle Butte to be cut and split by our partners there. Our goal of involving more of our members in direct mission activity was demonstrated in our fall Mission Festival. Building on the positive energy of the Mission 1 program of 2011, we continued to grow our outreach programs.

2012 has been a year of extravagant hospitality. We welcomed 35 people into formal membership in our church. We reached out to our community with a powerful Vacation Bible School program. We transformed the opening of our worship into a time of sharing that extravagant welcome. For our congregation the words, “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here” is more than a slogan. It is our way of life.

2012 has been a year of responsible stewardship. Our church voted a carefully crafted balanced budget for 2012. We fully underwrote that budget and the plan worked successfully month after month.

Concluding the year with a modest surplus has enabled us to invest in capital improvements as well as the operation of our church. We not only are surviving, we are thriving. And we continue to invest in our future together. I have read report after report of financial crisis in the non-profit sector. Churches across the nation saw declining contributions. We do not fall into that category. Our growth has been solid and steady.

All of those accomplishments have come from the deep dedication and generosity of our congregation. But God always calls us to the future. There is more work to be done. There are more people to be welcomed. There is a new future to be crafted together. There is a new song to be sung. Change can be challenging. It can be upsetting. But change is a gift of our God who is always creating.

Thank you for the privilege of serving in this unique and wonderful congregation. I am excited to face the challenges of the year to come. With God all things are possible.



Education Minister Susan Huffman

ADULT EDUCATION

2012 was a year of strong educational opportunities for adults with the addition of a Women's Bible Study group and a Men's Bible Study group. I taught the spring Kerygma class on *Galatians and James* on Wednesday mornings. During Lent, Ted and I led the class on *Embracing the Prophets: Confronting Today's Pharaohs* by Walter Brueggeman. Both classes challenged class members to look at how the Biblical message is applied to our lives. I also arranged for a variety of presentations for the Sunday day morning Adult Discussion Group. Before Christmas, I began teaching a new Kerygma study *Let Your Light Shine*. Another study will begin next month and a Lenten study on Five Wishes is planned.

YOUNG ADULTS

One of my goals for 2012 was to start a Young Adults Group. Twelve months later, I am excited to report that we have an active Young Adults Group. Although it is a small group with a core of about five dedicated leaders who make it work, the group has involved other young adults who rotate in and out as their schedules allow. All three pastors have offered leadership and support,

while encouraging the young adults to run their own group. They have many good ideas and I am hopeful that this group will continue to be source of fellowship and learning for the young adults in our church. Supporting our Young Adult Group continues to be one of my priorities for 2013.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Work with youth this year has included a Confirmation class which led to seven young people confirming their baptisms and joining the church in May. I planned and coordinated the Confirmation program, and the class was team-taught by four of us, including pastors Susan, Ted and Kathleen and lay pastor Becky Fleming. We made use of the Sunday and Wednesday times already considered "church times." When we began the retreat format for Confirmation some fifteen year ago, I never thought we would return to such a traditional schedule of weekly Sunday and Wednesday meetings, but the schedule worked well with good participation from the youth. As in the past, each confirmand worked with a mentor on a special project. The contributions of the youth and mentors are much appreciated.

This fall, the youth programming returned to its regular schedule with meetings on Wednesdays at 6:30 and Destination Unknown once a month on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm. Ryan Webster and Kathleen Grigg have been serving as youth group assistants this fall, bringing young energy and ideas to the group. It has been fun for me to mentor these young assistants as they grow into leadership.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

We enjoyed a good spring with our Sunday School classes. I worked with members of the Department of Education and center leaders to develop our own curriculum for Vacation Bible School. Our theme, Heroes of the Bible, was fun for the kids. We had 38 kids participate. It was a busy week, but when some leaders became ill, others stepped forward to help. Overall, we had a very successful VBS. Sunday School has continued to grow this fall, with the addition of several new families with children. The curriculum we are using this year builds on the heroes theme. This curriculum is working well. Family nights were started again in October. We have mixed results so far with



"I am excited to report that we have an active Young Adults Group."





the Sunday format drawing more participation than Wednesday nights. We'll continue to work on opportunities for families to learn and grow in faith together.

NEW MEMBERS

Focusing on new members was one of my goals for 2012. The effort and work paid off! We had a great year, taking in 35 new members during 2012. That fell slightly short of my personal goal of 40 new members. Nonetheless, it was a successful year! There are five or six new members "in the wings," waiting for a good date. Trying to arrange a time for the Reception of Members reminds me how busy families are these days. I will continue to focus on adding new members this year, hopefully reaching the goal of 40 new members in 2013!

CONNECTIONS WITH THE NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

In September, Ted and I participated in the second

clergy retreat on "Sacred Conversations on Race." This was a time for us to be not teachers, but students, learning and growing in our understanding. Later in the fall, we participated in the service of Ordination for three of the pastors from the Dakota Association: Hampton Andrews, Norman Blue Coat and Mike Kills Pretty Enemy, and attended the funeral for lay pastor Judith Andrews, daughter of Hampton Andrews. Our delegation of five at Judith's funeral, across the state in Bonesteel, SD was the largest delegation from any congregation in the South Dakota Conference. The presence of both clergy and laity from our church was appreciated by our Conference Minister and others. Several years ago, when we began to develop a strategic plan for our congregation, Ted McBride, who was then moderator, challenged our congregation to develop stronger connections with the Native American people in our area. The goal

that emerged was eventually broadened to include other diverse groups, but the desire to work cross-culturally was retained. Over the years, we have slowly and steadily built relationships of trust with Native American partners in ministry. Probably the most significant step was the way in which our whole church was opened to the family of Ray Valandra for his wake and funeral service earlier this month. Welcoming others, sharing space, and being open to other traditions is not always easy, but our congregation responded with love and grace. I am proud to be a part of this church and I am aware of how we are all learning and growing in our knowledge and understanding of others. I look forward to continued opportunities for ministry in 2013.

"Welcoming others, sharing space, and being open to other traditions is not always easy, but our congregation responded with love and grace."



Nurture Minister Kathleen Batchelder

First Congregational is a diverse and exciting community of believers, and I feel very fortunate to worship and work here. During 2012, I have had rewarding, challenging, and instructive experiences as Minister of Christian Nurture.

In the area of pastoral care, I have been privileged to share times of joy and sorrow as I participated in a wedding, in three baptisms, and in several memorial services. I rely on and appreciate weekly Care Conferences with Ted and Susan as we report and discuss ways to visit and care for our members and friends who are ill and/or grieving. In our large congregation, it is an on-going challenge to hear about people's needs so we can extend pastoral care.

This year I have continued to work with the Department of Hospitality as we seek to extend a wider welcome to our members and visitors. I have also begun to work with the Department of Ministries as we seek to serve members of our congregation and of our community. Related to these two departments, I have continued to work in Jail Ministry, Westhills Bible and Book Study Group, Dinner for Eight, Church Chat, and Hospice of the Black Hills. I treasure opportunities to participate in

worship and to lead services when Ted and Susan are on vacation or study leave, as well as other times throughout the year.

In 2012, I was part of our Confirmation Leadership Team (with Ted, Susan, and Becky Fleming) as we worked with a wonderful group of students on their journey to confirmation. I enjoy working with Women's Fellowship on plans for retreats like our Craft Retreat in April at Storm Mountain. Lynn Grauman and I were co-chairpersons for our "Grace-full Gratitude" retreat in October at Placerville Camp. Our leadership team of thirteen women planned, facilitated, and presented drama, crafts, yoga, music, hikes, worship, and program for 38 women. We are already scheduled to return to Placerville for Retreat 2013!!

One of the highlights of 2012 for me has been the Spiritual Practice Group which began just after Easter. Our small group meets weekly in the parlor to pray, to practice Lectio Divina (deep Scripture reading), and to study a variety of spiritual disciplines such as prayer, meditation, Scripture study, praying and walking a labyrinth, and other practices to bring ourselves into deeper daily communion with God.

Two new commitments I have made in 2012 are outside our local congregation. I now serve on the Women's Board of the South Dakota Conference of UCC. I have also joined the board for United Campus Ministries at SDSM&T. I strongly believe in maintaining church connections with our young adults, and college years can challenge commitment to our faith. UCM's community forum programs have, in the past, provided strong connections between local churches and the Tech community. We are currently re-designing a "forum" program which I believe will be mutually beneficial to Tech students and the Rapid City community.

As a large congregation, at all times we have members who are fully engaged in the work of the church; we also have members who need special visits, and we have members who feel out of touch because they cannot regularly attend worship. So, my big challenge for 2013 will be working with the Department of Hospitality on Congregational Connections. We are asking people to let us know if they want to be visited (in person or by phone) and to let us know if they are willing to make regular visits. Hopefully, we will



"One of the highlights of 2012 for me has been the Spiritual Practices Group."

"The UCC is a vibrant denomination, and I treasure being a UCC pastor and teacher."

have a team of visitors who will help us keep in regular contact with each other.

As we begin 2013, I am excited to be one of the SD Conference delegates to UCC General Synod 29 which will meet June 28-July 2 in Long Beach, Cali-

fornia. I am eager to hear the speakers and debates, to experience worship with leaders of our denomination, and to meet new friends and to re-connect with seminary buddies. I'll keep you posted. The UCC is a vibrant denomination,

and I treasure being a UCC pastor and teacher. There is always more to learn, more to explore, more to do as we seek to be God's faithful people.

Department of Worship

The Department of Worship met monthly in 2012, except for June and July. Members are Alicia Sutliff-Benusis, Ruth Ann Karlen, David Seaman, Jane Ireland, Laura Switzer and Jodi Burke. Pastor Ted also attends regularly. The Department of Worship coordinates activities relating to the worship service in cooperation with the pastors, communion servers, and the music staff. This includes recruiting lay readers, greeters, ushers, and communion and baptism representatives. It also includes a member of the Altar Guild committee. The following is an annual summary of the primary activities within each committee, as well as for the department as a whole.

Communion and Baptism: The concept of establishing and celebrating Baptism anniversaries is still bouncing around. Changes were made to the baptism board and it looks great. There are times when we vary the Com-

munion Format, such as communion by intinction.

The Altar Guild: This committee has run smoothly this year, with little to no disruption. The Altar and the church are always decorated nicely.

Music: Karen Nelson continues directing our adult choir and she has done some beautiful work with the youth this year. Under her leadership the choir has sung regularly for worship and provided special music Sundays as well. Michael Bossen again directed the hand bell choir which played for worship about once a month throughout the year, except in the summer. Michael Ross has provided wonderful organ music along with his wife Karen playing piano throughout the year. Michael continues to tune our pianos. A celebration of music was planned and pulled off for Mother's Day, 2012. Two pianos were sold at the rummage sale this year. The department may attempt to sell

the better pianos on Craig's List or eBay?

Lay readers/Liturgists: Lay readers may now receive a copy of the Sunday program for lay readers on the Friday before their assigned Sunday. It is available at the church office or by e-mail. A vote was held and carried to change the name Lay reader to Liturgist.

Hospitality: Response cards have been handed out to visitors and this has been successful. The Hospitality department has a request with the capital improvements committee to change around the front entrance. There are blank name tags offered so newcomers can write their name on a visible tag for worship. Someone is usually up front near the guestbook on Sundays to welcome newcomers.

Ushers: We experienced retirement this year from some of our regular ushers. Jane Ireland has worked throughout the year to make sure that we have a regular group of ushers

"The Department of Worship coordinates activities relating to the worship service in cooperation with the pastors, communion servers, and the music staff."

each Sunday and this is running smoothly.

Board representative report: The board is working on the strategic plan and we came up with some recommendations that our representative took back to the board. The church constitution needs some work/ updating and the Department of Worship made recommendations to the board for this as well.

The church held listening circles this fall after worship to generate discussion and ideas on worship. These summaries will be made available to the Department of Worship in the near future. Members of

the Department of Worship attended the board retreat this past August. We have held discussions regarding soundboard operators, and a possible training session for them. A budget request was made to cover department costs and this will be voted on at the 2013 annual meeting.

There are three worship items worth mentioning specially: 1) Our church welcomed speaker, Ben Anderson, who speaks on church's welcoming those with disabilities. Reportedly someone, or someones, from the Black Hills Workshop have been invited to check out our dis-

abilities friendly church. 2) Members of the worship team are designing a special event for each day/ night of Holy Week, 2013. It is thought that by having something available at varying times during the week, that members of the church will have more opportunity to grieve the upcoming loss and resurrection of our savior. And lastly, 3) Our church recently hosted a Wake for Grandpa Ray Valandra, which was a beautiful example of how we wish to work hand in hand with our Native American brothers and sisters.



Department of Education

The duties of the Department of Education are vast and varied. We started the year with plans for summer Vacation Bible School. An average of 38 youth attended as we studied Super Bible Heroes. That theme was then carried to the Sunday Church School this fall and another class was added to accommodate the middle school age youth. Money collected at both events is being used for the needs of LOVE, INC. There were seven students who were confirmed in May. Bibles were presented to eight fourth and fifth graders. The quilters made Bible covers for these

Bibles. The first Wednesday of the month has been designated as Family Night as we welcome youth and their families. In January the Family Night was moved to Sunday as we celebrated the Feast of the Kings on January 6. The February Family Night will be held the second Wednesday to coincide with Ash Wednesday. Two big "fun" events were the end of the Sunday Church School game day in the spring, and the Fall Kick-Off Carnival. The annual Advent Workshop followed the theme "Deck the Halls" with crafts featuring Christmas symbols. The addition

of a hot chocolate bar was well received. The youth presented a Christmas program with songs and skits to the theme "Come to the Manger". The church library is the responsibility of this department and has been rejuvenated. The books are in order by topic and then by author. This is an on-going task and we invite all check out the library—and check out the books. Members of the department are Allison Hanson (chair), Sharon Darrow (secretary), Mindy Nickel, Lynn Grauman, Melissa Emerson and Stacy Storm.

"Two big fun events were the Sunday Church School game day and the Fall Kick-Off Carnival."



"Thanks to the wonderful support of our congregation, food coupon sales totaled \$99,520.00!"

Department of Ministries

Members were: Becky Fisher, Tish Wilkinson, Lois Moore, Thom and Melanie Palm, Georgia and Michael O'Connor, Mary Yelick, and Robin Franson. We met every month, but July.

Thanks to the wonderful support of our congregation, food coupon sales totaled \$99,520.00! We received an income from the local grocery stores, for our sales, of \$1,845.65!

We served the hungry at the Cornerstone Mission during the months of March and June. We served the months of August and November at the Mission's temporary kitchen at Zayner's Parkway Restaurant. We received many helping hands from the congregation with food preparation.

During the months of January and September, we served meals to members and friends of the United Campus Ministries at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

In April, we added food cards from Wal-Mart and Sam's Club to our inventory. This gave members of our congregation another opportunity to help us increase sales and boost our income.

Donations-As we learned that the pantry of Church Response was nearly empty this summer, we decided to give them \$2,000 from our account to purchase food. In September, several department and other members of the congregation filled bags of food for local and international people in need through the Kids

against Hunger program. The program was held at South Canyon Lutheran Church and our department donated \$250 for the cost of the food we packed. In December, our department donated \$200 from our account for four of the families that were in the fire on 6th Ave.

Also, in December two of our members volunteered to help parents at the Salvation Army's Toy Store that was held at the old Runnings Store.

Throughout the year, because of the generosity of our congregation, we collected and delivered to Church Response, 1,333 pounds of food! Many thanks!

Department of Hospitality

Our department continues to evolve in its care to the congregation by "widening our welcome". We coordinated many special events this year.

In January we hosted the annual meeting with caramel rolls and fruit.

The "All Church Birthday Party," held in February, was a delight with wonderful themed decorated tables

for each month and very creative birthday cakes. Do you remember the "R2D2" cake?

We had a Potato Bar in March, with lots of toppings, hosted Muffins for Moms in May, and Donuts for Dads in June The Ice Cream Social in July was cancelled due to fire danger.

The end of September,

our department spear headed the new church directory. The church office is currently putting the finishing touches on this project and hopes to have it available in January 2013. Over 132 photos were taken by Life Touch and over 35 photos were either submitted or taken in house.

The All Church Volunteer Fair took place in Oc-



tober. We continue to encourage our church members to volunteer where and when they can. Volunteering is a way to get to know members of our church and learn how our church works.

During the year we met with guest book coordinators, offered assistance to

“Dinner for 8” and identified ways to improve our entryway to make it more inviting.

Our newest campaign is called “Congregational Connections”. A team of church members are making plans to call and visit those who are unable to attend church regularly.

We met monthly except through the summer.

Members: Julie Burton, Kyle Grauman, Marrelyce Seaman, Deb Tompkins, Jim Webster and Patsy Valandra and Rev. Kathleen Batchelder.

“Our newest campaign is called ‘Congregational Connections.’ A team of church members are making plans to call and visit those who are unable to attend church regularly.”

Department of Building, Equipment and Grounds

Due to the price of water, and the amount needed to keep the church yard green during the severe drought, our watering cycle was cut back to three times per week. Hopefully the yard appearance can be improved during the coming year. Harold Miller and Dave Ledford replaced sev-

eral broken or cracked glass panes in the sanctuary and fellowship hall. A new entrance door has been installed on the west end of the building. New latches for restroom stalls have been received and installed. Four circulation pump motors associated with our heating sys-

tem required major repair. A water pipe located in the ceiling of the north wing near the fireside room ruptured. Structural damage was kept to a minimum thanks to some fast action by some of the membership.



Good Morning Circle

Membership: 25 members

Meetings: Eight monthly meetings were held during the year in addition to the Christmas tea.

Activities included:

Sunday morning coffees
Semi-annual rummage sales
Served at several funerals
Helped with a surprise birthday party
Helped with “The Butterfly Tree”
Sponsored an Indian child
Donated to Cornerstone Mission

Donated to Church Response
Donated to the church library
Donated to Blanket Sunday
Helped sponsor the Christmas tea
Enjoyed interesting programs

Good Morning Circle helped with many church activities, donated to important mission projects, and enjoyed interesting programs.



Good Morning Circle Financial

MAUREEN DYMOCK, treasurer

2012 Beginning Balance 2025.20

Income:

Pledges	1,120.78	
Least Coin	9.51	
Blessings	21.90	
Bridge Marathon sale	265.58	
Bridge Pads and		
Sale of cook books	<u>23.00</u>	
Total Income	1440.77	<u>1,440.77</u>

3,465.97

Expenses:

Postage	95.00	
Bridge Marathon Lunch	206.42	
And prize and misc.	78.00	
Donations:		
Blanket Sunday	100.00	
Wider Church Ministries	233.00	
& Child Sponsorship		
Church Response	500.00	
Cornerstone Mission	500.00	
Least Coin	<u>22.98</u>	
Total Expenses	1,735.40	<u>(1,735.40)</u>

Ending Balance 2012 1,730.57

Women's Fellowship

Peggy Eckholm, Treasurer

2012 Beginning Balance 8,044.97

Income:

Rummage Sales	12,774.16	
Women's Retreat	2,152.00	
Receptions	1,725.00	
Spring Tea	640.00	
Miscellaneous	792.23	
Total Income:	18,083.39	<u>18,083.39</u>

26,128.36



"The Women's Fellowship netted \$12,774.16 on rummage sales in 2012!"

Expenses:

Cornerstone	1,000.00	
Costa Rica	1,000.00	
Senior Meals	700.00	
Church Pledge	1,500.00	
Pantry	500.00	
Placerville	1,671.00	
Spring Tea	780.00	
Church Response	500.00	
Hospice House	500.00	
Rummage Sale (Beg. cash)	1,842.00	
Rummage Sale Ads	65.00	
Kid Cozy	300.00	
Storm Mt. (BYOH Retreat)	528.00	
Receptions	473.13	
Hancock Fabric (batting)	190.48	
Captain Clean	291.50	
Retreat Supplies	170.95	
Two new round tables	211.96	
New Bibles	211.85	
Mower Repairs	238.83	
Miscellaneous	<u>1,445.95</u>	
Total Expenses	14,120.65	<u>-14,120.65</u>

2012 Ending Balance 12,007.71

Good Evening Circle

Cindy Ledford, Recording Secretary

The members of the Evening Circle begin each fall with a potluck supper. We continue to assist with the semi-annual rummage sale, coffee hours, cleaning of the sanctuary and kitchen. We sell dishcloths as a

money maker to help support Church Response, Black Hills Children's Home Society, Cornerstone Mission, WAVI, HIKE, Feeding SD, and Meals on Wheels. Kid's Cozy was again well staffed in October. Our circle hosted the annual Christmas Tea this

Year.

Sybil Rounds gave a program on our sister church in Los Guido. There were book reports given that were very interesting. Our circle plans on meeting at 6 p.m. this year in hopes of increasing our membership.



"The members of the Evening Circle begin each fall with a potluck supper."





Good Evening Circle Financial

2012 Good Evening Circle Financial Report – Bernie Lambert, Treasurer

2012 Beginning Balance 562.13

Income:

Pledges	123.00	
Dishcloth Sales	251.00	
Lois Bradstream Memorial	500.00	874.00
Total Income		1,436.13



Disbursements:

Sangamon Mills (Dishcloths)	283.00	
Lois Bradstream Memorial	50.00	
BH Children's Home Society	25.00	
Cornerstone Rescue Mission	50.00	
WAVI	25.00	
HIKE	25.00	
Feeding South Dakota	50.00	
Meals on Wheels	50.00	
Church Response	50.00	
USPS (Stamps)	8.80	
Total Disbursements	616.80	616.80

2012 Balance on Hand 819.33



The Woodchuck Society works around the world to warm homes and strengthen relationships.



Altar Guild

Balance on Hand 1/1/2012 \$1,624.61

Income

Lily sales	\$339.00	
Vase return rebate	\$42.00	
Poinsettia sales	\$420.00	
Donation	\$0.77	
	<hr/>	
Total income		\$801.77

Expenditures

Two candle lighters	\$75.80	
Eco-Palms-First Congregational	\$67.30	
Easter lilies - Jolly Lane	\$363.28	
Card & stamp money for Cour- tesy/Correspondence—R.A.Karlen	\$50.00	
Poinsettias-Jolly Lane Floral	\$452.25	
J. Tripp-felt, vinyl, flower items	\$25.15	
Record Book--Office Depot	\$9.53	
J. Tripp-3 flower calendars	\$29.90	
	<hr/>	
Total expenditures		\$1,073.21

Balance on Hand 12/31/2012

\$1,353.17

Submitted by,
Lois Moore, Treasurer



In addition to providing candles, flowers and other items to enhance worship on a weekly basis, the Altar Guild assists with weddings and other special services in the church as necessary.