

**TEWKSBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01876**



To the Members and Friends of the Tewksbury Congregational Church, greetings:

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 3 and Article XI, Section 4e of the church bylaws, I have prepared this document as the official report of the Church for fiscal year 2007. Contained herein are the reports of the officers, standing and special committees, and other organizations taking the name and working under the auspices of the Church. This report is presented for your review and will be adopted as the official report of the Church pursuant to the second article of the warrant for the Semi-Annual Meeting to be held on May 18, 2008. Financial reports will be presented under separate cover. Additional reports may be added by motions to amend at said meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Jenkins, Clerk

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General

Rev. Jonathan C. Goodell, Pastor.....	3
United Church of Christ.....	5
Church Council.....	6
Fairgrieve Loan Fund.....	6

Standing Boards and Committees

Board of Deacons – Donna Haines, Chair.....	7
Board of Trustees – Steve Raso, Chair.....	8
Board of Religious Education – Jim Kenney, co-Chair.....	10
Rita Masters, Director of Religious Education.....	11
Membership & Enlistment Committee – Jean Metcalf, Chair.....	12
Music Committee – Stephanie Muse, Chair.....	13
Missions Committee – Beth McFadyen, Chair.....	14

Special Committees

Memorial Gifts Committee – Carolyn Fialkowski, Chair.....	18
Building Committee – Ed Henderson, Chair.....	19

Social Groups

Holiday Friends.....	20
Ladies Aid.....	20
Junior Youth Fellowship.....	21

Rev. Jonathan C. Goodell, Pastor

In the year 2007 I saw the following developments. Two years ago we held a series of congregational meetings about vision and direction for the congregation. Out of those meetings came a set of goals. We worked on recruitment for our boards and committees through a knowledge fair in the fall of 2006. We adopted several initiatives for outreach, including a whole-church outreach event in the Memorial Day parade and an innovative contemporary worship service on Sunday evenings. And we formed an ‘outcomes team’ that looked at how to develop stronger leadership in the church. This group led a retreat for the Council in November of 2006 and then a second leadership retreat at South Church in Andover with Rev. Ellie Richardson. They also hosted a single event by the group “Walking in the Way” to bring closure to a year where we were aware of the loss of members around social controversy, including our “open and affirming” conversation a year earlier. We built leadership training moments into the all boards’ nights in the spring of 2007--out of the retreat with Ellie Richardson. In the fall of 2007 it seemed good to hand the agenda of change and leadership development to the Council rather than having a parallel track for change with a smaller group, the outcomes team.

Where has all of this gone? I think we have weathered some turbulence and sit in a quieter and steadier place as a church. We struggle with making the Council strong enough to take on larger questions of leadership and vision; it is not our expectation for the Council. (Although it is firmly in the by-laws that the Council is now an executive group) But without mandating greater authority for the Council we do not have a congregational structure to hold this conversation. Parallel tracks (a specially formed task force) do not work as well for us. We have to take the essential questions to the Council and ask it to work in a way that is somewhat outside the norm of its own patterns. I raise this issue because I see the Council as more tuned up for this than they have been. But until the church acknowledges the challenge of raising up stronger, more visionary leadership, the pastor is limited in what he/she can do.

I am grateful for a series of more limited initiatives that have gone well.

- Confirmation, re-written and integrated with the UCC statement of faith, now spans the calendar year from January to November, giving confirmands a broader grasp of church and theology and time to assimilate new insights after their freshman year
- Mexico mission trip... I was able to join a third trip and saw the tremendous satisfaction in the faces of our people as they tackled real problems, hands on issues, and risk moments in sharing faith in the squatters village next to the orphanage that we are helping to build.
- New Steps worship... almost a dozen worship services held in the evening with assistance from Bob Mulvey and minister of music Paul Costanza (a friend of Bob’s from a church that does only contemporary worship). Rock style worship, testimony, open prayer and energized preaching.
- Open Door... was the outgrowth from this outreach effort. New Steps was exciting for the participants but did not take root with our own people as a vehicle for inviting friends and neighbors to church. Open Door happens on Sunday morning as a fresh approach to faith development. It is again enriching our own people... but also creating a place for newcomers to get closer to our own parish alongside of worship.

- Our UCC connection was explored by a task force of Council and deacons. We came to the end of this process of education in a positive stance, with a report to the congregation at the January annual meeting in 2008.
- Lent was an experience of small group conversation around the text for each sermon and then a chance to see that connection grow into the sermon of the week. The sense of collaboration between myself and the participants in the program was mutually satisfying and was commented on by many members of the Lent experience. We continued this approach this year by looking at the lectionary gospel, Matthew.
- Sabbatical. I was very grateful for a sabbatical that allowed me a mix of sabbatical rest and vacation and study time to rest, reflect on my own experience of worship, and learn how to slow down through contemplative journaling and reading and writing poetry.

God is good and has been leading us in ways that we both recognize deliberately and that we are only somewhat conscious of. At a recent workshop I found myself reflecting on the wonderful question... "When we are at our best, what does our experience of _____, look like at TCC?" The Council will be adopting this positive set of perspectives in the next couple of weeks as it reviews the highlights of this year and looks ahead to 2008-2009.

Warmly in faith,

Pastor Jonathan

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

There has been quite a bit of activity at all levels of our denomination in 2007. The highlight of the year at the national level was General Synod XXVI in Hartford, CT celebrating the 50th anniversary of the merger that created the UCC. There was plenty of entertainment, workshops, and opportunities for worship, as well as business. Bill Moyers and Barack Obama were the keynote speakers. The Collegium of Officers drafted a Pastoral Letter calling for an end to U.S. involvement in Iraq, which was ratified by the delegates. Pastor Jonathan attended “Synod in the City” day on Saturday and I stayed for the weekend and observed the business as well, including participating in a committee discussion regarding a proposed rule change.

The Conference was also busy, largely with matters involving restructuring. The Annual Meeting was divided into two parts. The first part was held in Cromwell, CT at the hotel being used by the Massachusetts delegation to General Synod. I was a delegate to that meeting and Pastor Jonathan was elected at that time to the MACUCC Commission on Evangelism and Vitality. The second was held in the fall at the DCU Center in Worcester. It was at this second meeting that the delegates ratified “A Still More Excellent Way”, which is a plan drafted by the Board of Directors to address declining Conference resources. Valerie MacKenzie, Stephanie Muse, and I were delegates to that meeting.

There are a couple of highlights at the Association level as well. Over the summer we welcomed Rev. Carol Atwood-Lyon as the new acting Associate Conference Minister for the Andover and Essex Associations. The Board of the Association continued to meet with various churches to maintain and strengthen the covenant among our churches. In 2007, Valerie stepped down from the Church & Ministry Committee and Stephanie and I were re-elected to the Board of Directors. We also have an e-mail newsletter for anyone interested in hearing about activities in our fellow Andover Association churches. If you would like to receive this newsletter twice a month, send a blank email to Andover_Association-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christopher Jenkins,
MACUCC delegate and Association Scribe

CHURCH COUNCIL

The Council's function is to "visualize the entire task of the Church, to advise the Pastor on the general direction of Church activities, and to cooperate with the Pastor in the formation of a well-rounded program". As such there were several discussions and activities undertaken by Council in 2007. Highlights include the following:

- Working with Deacons to educate ourselves and the congregation about our affiliation with the United Church of Christ;
- Developing brief Leadership Moments to be presented at the opening of ABCs;
- Facilitating effective communication within the church;
- Discussing how to recruit and retain members;
- Addressing concerns about leadership fatigue;
- Encouraging deeper discussions and discernment regarding stewardship;
- Spearheading the process of an all-church evaluation;
- Laying the groundwork for an all-church retreat;
- Preparing for the 275th anniversary of the church in 2009.

Many of these discussions and activities continue into 2008.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christopher Jenkins
Council Secretary

FAIRGREIVE LOAN FUND

This trust was established by Mrs. Ethel Jackson in honor of her brother, Arthur Fairgrieve. The purpose of this trust is to make loans to persons over 17 years of age who are active members of our church, and who desire to obtain a college education or its equivalent. The trust fund is administered by the Pastor and senior (Life) Deacons. At all times, \$21,750.00 must be retained in this fund as the principle amount.

Throughout the year, we continued to encourage repayment of previously awarded loans. In addition, as requests are received, we may disburse funds to qualifying students. No loans were either requested or disbursed in the past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Natalie Thistle
Yvonne Hall
Robert Jenkins
Rev. Jonathan Goodell

BOARD OF DEACONS

*“Because we care deeply for you,
we are delighted to share not only the gospel of God but also our own selves.”
1 Thessalonians 2:8*

There are many facets to the role of a Deacon in our church. Some of our work is obvious—acting as a Deacon of the Month (DOM), serving communion, assisting the Pastor, keeping the sanctuary tidy and changing the paraments and candles. More importantly we help to plan worship, lead Bible studies, and Lenten programs, meet with new members, baptismal families, and confirmands, and bring communion to our shut-ins during Advent and Eastertide.

A highlight of the past year was, together with the Personnel Committee, forging a new covenant with our Pastor. Of course, no one could forget working on the chicken pie supper! During the summer, we worked to support the worship services while the Pastor was on his sabbatical. At the Deacon’s Retreat in the fall, we chose “to become a more caring community of faith” as our theme for the year. This means reaching out to each of our members and friends in any way that we can.

Because we are a small close-knit and supportive group, we are able to do the everyday tasks required, but it means that everyone has to take more turns at being responsible. In order to be effective in our endeavor to show our caring, we really do need to embrace new members on our Board. It is our fondest hope that others in our congregation will be, as each of us presently on the Board was, called to serve.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Haines, Deacon Chair

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Over the year, the Trustees were very busy helping to make improvements to the church and satisfying member expectations. Many improvement areas were planned while others came to as a surprise. In no particular order are the various updates from the Board of Trustees:

Parsonage

- Hired 'Lake Exteriors' to install 10 replacement windows.
- Met with tenant to compile 'wish list' items for 2008.
- Tenant complained of mold in basement that was believed to be causing family to be sick – Trustees worked with local organizations to determine that mold was not the problem (supporting lab test results provided). Potentially, the cost to correct a mold problem was estimated at \$3K.
- Plans in 2008 are to include the installation of a sump pump and dehumidifier.

T- Mobile

- Met with T-Mobile representative to review equipment upgrades.

Fellowship Hall

- Installed (4) new classroom doors (4) security glass and updated (1) existing door with security glass.
- Replacement door costs generously donated by church members who wish to remain anonymous.

Strip / Wax floors

- Hired 'Ozzie' from Lowell Janitorial Supplies.

MetroPCS

- Jim Carr, Russ Adams, Ed Henderson and Trustees formed a sub-committee to potentially establish an additional tenant to the cell tower.
- Received lease agreement that is currently under review.

Lighting

- Replaced 6 balusters in Education Wing and 1 in office
- Replaced security light batteries through out church.
- Replaced Cross and Sanctuary lights - thanks to Steve Trudeau for his bravery of climbing the church ladder and actually changing the lights.

Office

- Reviewed heating issues in Pastor's office.
- Paul Oliveira (Ken's son-in-law) finished the carpet installation in Pastor Jonathan's office.

Fire Alarm System

- New radio alarm system installed to improve emergency communications with the Town of Tewksbury (L.W. Bills).

Grounds

- Obtained quotes to perform weekly landscaping duties (incorporated into budget).
- Thanks to Heather Richtsmeier for years of general landscaping; leading mulching projects; planting flowers and maintaining the Friendship Garden.

Side Entrance

- Rubber mats donated and installed to replace the old tattered rug.
- Weatherproofed columns.
- Hired teenager from Parsonage for snow shoveling.

Parking Lot

- Bruce Panilaitis and sons repaired potholes at parking lot entrance.

Spring and Fall Cleanup

- On both occasions, many TCC Members showed up in fellowship to help clean up the church grounds for all to enjoy.
- There are too many names to list, so a Special Thanks to all that participated.

Coverall

- New custodian (Alexis Cepeda) assigned to TCC.
- Saved \$200 due to summer reduction in service.
- Revised existing cleaning schedule to accommodate an additional day (6 days / week) with no additional budget increase.

Green Meadows

- Increased rent to \$2,500 per month.
- Utilities cost analysis at renter's request determined that monthly rent is fair.

Rentals

- Trustees have been collaborating with Finance and Treasurer to update existing rental contract agreements and rental collection tracking.
- We are also revisiting the current rental rates.

Boy Scouts

- Permission granted to use 1 classroom during weekly meeting to encourage younger members to their organization.

Furnace

- Oiled furnace pistons
- Jack Hall replaced fuses for Sanctuary.
- Plan to work with independent firm to improve energy efficiencies.

Elevator

- Gaskets replaced and other major service required in 2007.

Security

- Currently trying to determine the best course of action to improve church security.
- Security lock installed for Nursery.

Budget

- Completed and submitted an accurate budget for 2008.

Thanks to everyone who contributed their time and talents to help the Board of Trustees this year. As always, your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Steve Raso, Jim Keddie, Ken Mouser

BOARD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Christian Education program continues to grow stronger each consecutive year. We have had quite a few new families and student registrations. The worship program for our Junior and Senior High students, led by Betsy Goodell, continues to be a growing and exciting part of our Church. Their humorous Christmas Pageant performance was well received by the church. We continue to support the efforts of Rita Masters and her hard work as Director of Religious Education and continue to explore and plan for Adult Education. RE worked with Pastor Jonathon to improve our confirmation process.

Rita continues to serve as DRE and organizes the weekly Sunday School classes, which this year started with an exciting Rally Day. She was also instrumental to the success of many of our church school activities including: Teacher appreciation dinner, Scholarship Breakfast, Advent Workshop, coordinating Nursery support, organizing Palm Sunday, and anything else the church school supports.

Throughout the year, the Church School supported many programs in cooperation with Pastor Jonathan, Council, and the Missions Committee. The Thanksgiving Food Drive and Heifer Project are examples of these programs.

Youth Ministry continues to grow. We have strong Senior High Youth Fellowship with Stephen Trudeau and Ann-Marie Baldwin as leaders. The Junior High Fellowship is led by a great team consisting of JoJo Scharmer and Cricket Foss. They have submitted their own report of their activities for the year. We have met with Senior and Junior Youth leaders alternately at our monthly board meetings and continue to support them in their mission.

In June, Children's Day was held in the church with a hot dog picnic following. We appreciate all the hard work and dedication of the teachers, youth aides, substitute teachers, and nursery volunteers.

During the summer months there was a Mini Church School held for the children. This is staffed by volunteers and youth each Sunday.

As a Board, we continue to work on a Safe Church Policy. We are still working with Steve Trudeau, our safe church advocate, to improve the safe church policies. He has reported his activities separately as an officer of the Church.

Future direction of the board includes policy and procedure development, refinement of job descriptions, continuing adult education, and support of our youth programs.

The Board wishes to thank the Congregation for their enduring support of RE programs and recognize our youth for their ability to extend themselves to do God's work and reach outwards into our neighboring communities.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Kenney, co-Chair

Rita Masters, Director of Religious Education

The enrollment has continued to increase during 2007. Five new families enrolled their children, total of 10, for Sunday School. There were few changes in teaching staff which is always a blessing. A special thank you to the dedicated teaching staff for all the time and sharing of their faith with the youth of TCC. Staff members not returning for 2007-08 are Jill Bearce, Lisa Estevas, Elaine MacDonald, Jay McFadyen and Bob Mulvey. We thank them for service to the TCC Sunday School program and wish them God's continued blessings as they find new avenues to share their faith with those around them. New staff include Sara SanClemente, Nicole Hewitt, Marilyn SanClemente, Linda Wieselquist, and Shirley Smith. What a blessing for TCC to have a teaching staff of 30+. Sue Hansford along with her staff of volunteers provides nursery care for the youngest of TCC. This was Sue Hansford's final year as Nursery co-coordinator. She has faithfully led this special ministry to TCC youngest for over 20 years. She will be dearly missed. As a special tribute to her, the nursery was officially named the Sue Hansford Nursery. Nansi Sorano is the new Nursery co-coordinator.

During the summer there were thirteen Sundays where mini-Sunday School was provided for children for 3 years old to Grade 3. Another thank you to the entire volunteer teaching staff that allows this summer Sunday School program to happen each Sunday.

Special programming included the Lenten Workshop with over 50 participants, an Advent Workshop with over 70 participants, Youth Sunday, and a Christmas pageant presented by the Junior and Senior classes. During the year students receive a birthday card signed by their teachers and Pastor Jonathan. This birthday card program is made possible by the efforts of Pat Stoddard who addresses, stamps and sorts the monthly Sunday School birthday cards for the teachers. The teachers only need to sign the card for their students and put them in the mail.

The Sunday School continues to be a strong, growing Christian education program spreading the message of God's love for each of us, both young and old. It has been a very rewarding year for me personally as Director of Religious Education. This report would not be complete without a special thank you to the teaching staff, Pastor Jonathan Goodell, the Board of Religious Education, the music program leaders and Sue Howard for all their help and support to the weekly Sunday School program here at TCC.

Respectfully submitted,
Rita Masters, DRE

MEMBERSHIP & ENLISTMENT COMMITTEE

Membership & Enlistment Committee continues to schedule greeters for worship services on Sunday morning. We have been providing greeters at the front entrance of the church. Name Tag Sunday has continued to be received well by our Congregation. This is an opportunity for us to get to know each other, and put a name to the faces we see every Sunday morning including visitors to our church.

We have had two potluck suppers this year. An old fashion potluck last spring and a Turkey potluck in November, the suppers include games, fun, and conversation along with an opportunity to get to know each other better, not just the hello at coffee hour or the Sunday morning greetings to the folks sitting beside us at church. This year the Turkey Potluck welcomed over 60 people, we all had a great time good food and family fun for young and old alike.

Friendship Pads continue to be maintained, and we use this information to find those who are not attending church regularly - intending to encourage them in worship participation. Person who are new receive an introductory/welcome letter from Pastor Jonathan. We continue to work on better follow-up for these new attendees and also for those who have not attended for some time.

We have received good reports on the welcome packages, and continue to have them at both entrances of our church.

Thanks to Friendship Circle and the donation of the lovely table that was Marilyn SanClemente grandmothers we achieved our goal of sprucing up the lower narthex, all together with the palms everything looks very welcoming.

The committee gave one reception last spring to welcome our new members Sheryl, Scott & William Imhoff, and Peggy Mello. We had three receptions this fall, one for new members, Todd & Vicky Wacome, and Pam McAskill. A reception was also given to our confirmands, Jennifer Hogan, Stephanie Kelly, Andrew Lafortune, Abigail Pinard and Samuel Stanley. A celebration reception of 40 year plus members, Gordon Bryant, Alice & Walter Golen, Jean & Dick Leighton & Roy Patterson receiving their 45 year certificates, and Leta Haddock, George Thompson receiving their 50 year certificates.

In our ongoing effort to make our church a more welcoming church, Jonathan and the committee has adopted a new policy regarding Baptism. We have expanded the role of TCC Godparents to the role of a Companion Family. This companion family will meet with the baptism family, greet them when they arrive for their three Sunday services, and introduce them to other people at coffee hour if they would like to meet more of our church family.

We also continue our goal to find ways to encourage the congregation to take an active part in greeting others as part of their ministry, to make our church a more welcoming community. The committee thanks Marylou Adams for her help in greeting visitor to our church each Sunday morning as she stands with Jonathan in the narthex at the end of our service.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Metcalf, chair; Jim Carr & Heather Leary

MUSIC COMMITTEE

The music program at Tewksbury Congregational Church has experienced a successful, but somewhat challenging year. The Music Committee would like to thank all of the paid and volunteer staff members of the TCC music program. Serena Santoro performed marvelously as the Music Director, as has Craig Seaman as our Organist and Choirmaster. Jennifer Brazeau continues to lead the Jubellation ringers. Bruce Panilaitis continued leading the Junior Choir and Cathy Seaman did the same for the Cherub Choir.

In March of 2007 the Jubellation Ringers participated in the annual Merrimack Valley English Handbell Festival at Tewksbury High School under the direction of Jen Brazeau. Ed Henderson stepped in to lead the Carillon Ringers for the Easter Service.

At this point in time a permanent Handbell director has not been found.

Over the course of the entire year the congregation enjoyed wonderful music from all of the very talented musicians of all the choirs and musicians invited for special performances.

In the fall of 2007 we received a donation of a Barock Piano. The piano was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Russ Adams and Dr. and Mrs. William Adams in memory of S. Paul and Velma Adams. The piano will be dedicated after the first of the year.

As we look to 2008 we hope to find a permanent Bell Choir Director for both bell choirs. Many thanks to the musicians and directors without whom we would not have such a successful music program.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Muse, Gail Pendergast, Sarah SanClemente and Lisa Parker-Scalfini

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

In 2007, our Missions Committee continued its legacy of giving through service projects, financial support, in-kind donations, child sponsorship, and education and advocacy. This report provides a summary of our Giving Programs and highlights other events that made 2007 perhaps one of the most active years in TCC history.

Service Projects

As has become tradition, we began the year with the creation of Baby Baskets for The Wish Project of Lowell. Missions is overjoyed to note that this project has grown by leaps and bounds under the loving care of Pam Bussey and Diana O'Toole who continue to create baskets throughout the year. And in January and February, several members hosted Baby Blanket Workshops at their homes to encourage members to join together to knit and crochet beautiful homemade blankets to add to the baskets. Over 120 baskets filled with baby supplies have been blessed and donated on behalf of TCC to young mothers in need.

After a very successful brownie baking project (200 brownies!) for the Lazarus House (of Lawrence) Soup Truck in March, we decided to bring brownies to our monthly meal service at the Lowell Transitional Living Center. Each month, volunteers gather and use donated ingredients to bake homemade chocolate chip brownies to serve at the Thursday meal. The clients of LTLC have given us wonderful feedback on how nice it is for them to have a homemade treat with a cup of milk (which we also supply).

In May, a handful of TCC members volunteered at the Tewksbury Food Pantry to help sort incoming donations from the annual Postal Carrier Food Collection Day. It was a wonderful opportunity to see the inner workings of the Pantry, which TCC supports both financially and with our own ongoing food collections.

The Fall brought talk of reinstating Dorcas' Kitchen, a meal provision program serving members who are ill, homebound, or in need of loving care from their TCC Church Family. It was suggested that Missions support the program through funding of the groceries and packaging supplies *and* that Missions identify a program coordinator. Jean Metcalf kindly volunteered to take on this role, and the first cooking session occurred in December with plans to prepare meals every 2-3 months in 2008. Meals are stored in the freezer, located in the Vestry, and all members are welcome to take a meal from the freezer and personally deliver it to a TCC member.

Financial Support

At the start of the year, the Missions Committee determined that it was better to offer significant financial support to fewer organizations than to offer smaller amounts of money to many. And so, we selected three recipients of large quarterly pledges. Harvest Hands, our Mexico Mission Program partner, received \$750 quarterly, the Tewksbury Community Pantry received \$300 quarterly, and the Church's Wider Mission Program of UCC also received \$300 quarterly.

The following organizations received single financial gifts from TCC in 2007:

- United Christian Foundation Campus Ministry (UMASS) ~ \$99
- City Mission Society, Boston ~ \$300
- Mission of Deeds, North Reading ~ \$500
- Covenant House ~ \$100
- Lowell Transitional Living Center ~ \$250
- NE Veterans Outreach Center, Haverhill ~ \$250
- Iglesia Hispana, Lowell ~ \$200
- SHIFT, Lowell ~ \$250
- Protestant Campus Ministries, Lowell ~ \$100
- GRIP Project, Lowell ~ \$100
- Somebody Cares Greater Lowell ~ \$163.80

Additionally, Missions collaborated with the Finance Committee to suggest organizations in need of financial support which might benefit from receiving a portion of our Advent and Lenten offerings. To that end, the Lowell Transitional Living Center received \$600 from the Lenten offering in April, and Place of Promise (also of Lowell) received \$537.50 from the December Advent offering.

The Missions Committee is also responsible for several worship offerings that are held throughout the year. In February, \$745 was collected for Tools & Blankets Sunday, and Missions voted to designate \$255 of 2007 budget dollars in order to make a \$1000 donation to Church World Service for this effort. The April/May Heifer Program resulted in the collection of \$2600 to purchase life sustaining animals for people in need all over the world. The traditional Christmas Eve Veterans of the Cross collection, benefiting retired clergy, netted \$733.

In-Kind Donations

Perhaps our greatest efforts have been focused on gathering “in-kind” donations. We have requested both new and gently used items and have had wonderful outpourings of both.

Our ongoing collections include non-perishable food for the Tewksbury Food Pantry, toiletries for shelters, and ink cartridges (as a fundraising effort) for the Lowell Campus Ministries.

Other collections include the following:

- Baby supplies (onesies, blankets, lotions, diapers, etc...) for the Baby Basket program which benefits the many clients of The Wish Project of Lowell
- Easter candy for the children’s Easter Basket Program, sponsored by The Wish Project of Lowell
- School supplies and the School Bags project for Church World Service, which serves poor children seeking an education (30 denim school bags were filled)
- Treats for the October Mexico Mission Trip, including donated toiletries, stuffed animals and school supplies plus gifts for our sponsored student, Azael, and his family
- Care packages for our two sponsored children from Guatemala, which included school supplies, clothing, undergarments and socks, new shoes, and candy

- One bed, two water filters, and two Christmas tamale baskets which were purchased for the two sponsored students from Guatemala
- Halloween candy collection which was sorted and then re-packaged into treat bags for clients of the Lowell Transitional Living Center
- Winter Outerwear (including coats, hats, mittens, boots) to share with clients of The Wish Project of Lowell (total collection was 78 articles of clothing)
- Thanksgiving Potato collection for the 120 Thanksgiving baskets that the Tewksbury Community Pantry created and distributed to Tewksbury families in need
- Giving Tree holiday gift project for which 300 gifts were collected and shared with the Asian Task Force and the Mass Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
- Sweatshirts for 12 children residing at Solomon Mental Health Center in Lowell in the pediatric or adolescent lock-down unit
- Two vacuum cleaners which were purchased with Missions budget dollars and gifted to Place of Promise of Lowell for their two residential housing units

Child Sponsorship

Since 1999, TCC has sponsored Peterson Tanis, the second New Missions student from Haiti, following the beloved Johnny LaPointe. Because Johnny was so endeared, and because we desired for all Sunday School children to have the experience of knowing and growing up with a student in need living in a different part of the world, we decided to quadruple our sponsorship efforts by adding 3 additional students to our program. Joining 13 year old Peterson is 15 year old Dario from Guatemala (Mayan Families), 11 year old Azael from Mexico (Harvest Hands), and 8 year old Florinda from Guatemala (Mayan Families).

The Missions Committee created a 10 year sponsorship plan which allows for new sponsored students to enter the program (approximately) every two years, thereby attaching the sponsored child to the 2nd and 3rd grade Sunday School classes so that they continue on their educational journeys in tandem. As has been tradition, we will use Coffee Hour donations to fund the sponsorship fees and will purchase incidental gift items for the students using our annual Missions budget dollars. (The Missions Committee continues to staff the weekly Fellowship/Coffee Hour with a rotation of more than a dozen volunteer servers.)

Education and Advocacy

At times, Missions can offer to assist local human service providers by sending letters of support and advocacy to government officials and/or potential benefactors. We did just that early in the year with a letter from Jonathan and TCC to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts seeking funding resources for the SHIFT (Subsidized Housing for Individuals and Families in Transition) organization. Additionally, we put great effort into educating our Congregation about the needs of the poor and oppressed in our community and about ways in which to help the non-profits that support them.

Other 2007 Activities:

Missions was pleased to support Jean Carr in coordination of TCC's third Mexico Mission Trip in October. We purchased t-shirts for the group, and we financially supported their mission with approval to use matched funds from the James Bequest for all of their fundraising efforts.

In August, we invited George DeTellis Jr. from New Missions to lead us in worship and to present information about the New Missions school sponsorship program in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. His sermon provided the Congregation with information and insight into daily life in Haiti and the history of the New Missions ministry which was founded by his parents more than 20 years ago.

An ongoing project which began in the Fall is the Psalm 91 Bandana Project. Deacon Sue Trudeau brought to our attention the mission of a soldier's mom from Maine who wished to supply each soldier with a new bandana inscribed with Psalm 91, the soldiers prayer. We sent a donation of \$200 toward this effort and asked that she send one dozen bandanas to TCC for distribution to TCC members and extended family serving in the military. To date, we have sent 7 bandanas to our own military people with prayers of health and safety from TCC. This project has been warmly appreciated by our members.

Creation of the Mission/Outreach T-Shirts occurred in the late Spring with a grand unveiling at the Memorial Day Parade where 50 or so members proudly marched, kazoos in hand, to represent TCC. These wonderful bright red t-shirts have since been distributed to all who have participated in a TCC service project. They are especially useful when working as a team at events such as the Food Pantry Sorting Day and the monthly meal service at Lowell Transitional Living Center. We will continue to distribute these t-shirts while encouraging our members to "earn" one.

Summary

Our year began with Chairperson Jean Carr and members JoJo Scharmer, Emir Galevi, Leanne Keddie, and Beth McFadyen, and it ended with Chairperson Beth McFadyen and members JoJo Scharmer, Emir Galevi, Cathie Seamen, and Suzanne Spezzano. The enthusiasm to do God's work is in all of us and we are very pleased to continue to serve Him by providing a large number and variety of giving opportunities and experiences to our TCC membership.

In God's Love,

Beth McFadyen
Chairperson, Missions Committee, 2007-2008

MEMORIAL GIFTS COMMITTEE

The Memorial and Gifts Committee received and accepted gifts given by families and friends for the following:

- Jack & Nancy Deeney a gift of \$50 for Music Committee in memory of Patti Boucher
- Russ & Mary Lou Adams a gift of \$300 to offset costs for the tuning, installation, and moving of the Barock piano recently donated to the church by Russ and his brother, Dr. William P. Adams, in memory of their parents, S. Paul and Velma S. Adams.
- An unrestricted gift of \$100 to TCC to honor Natalie Thistle from her daughter Janet Fox used toward the purchase of followers for the altar candles.
- Memorial Gifts made on Derek Moats behalf; \$162.50 given to the Mexico Mission trip and \$162.50 given to the Board of Religious Education.
- White paraments purchased for the altar in memory of Esther French and Paul Howard from the following gifts: A gift of \$100 from Jean French in honor of her mother, Esther; a gift of \$120 from Donna Haines in memory of Paul; and a gift of \$100 from the people of TCC in Paul's memory.
- Ladies Aid gave a gift of \$25 in memory of Esther French. She was a member of Ladies Aid and every time someone from the group dies, a gift is given to the church's memorial fund.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Fialkowski
Ann Marie Baldwin

BUILDING COMMITTEE

During 2007, the Building Committee continued to focus on weather-sealing the exterior of the church building. Projects finished early in the year include painting of the tower louvers and the faux square columns at the front of the building, thereby completing the effort to clean up the front of the church. The Committee also received the results of a property survey performed by Vancura and Brennan. The survey is necessary preliminary work for addressing the parking lot project.

Other projects discussed over the course of the year included:

- application of sealant to the exterior brickwork,
- impact on the sanctuary were the organ to be replaced and/or moved,
- repairing/replacing the parking lot, and
- repairing/replacing the sanctuary windows.

The most progress was made on the windows project. A number of contractors met with Jack Hall over the summer to see the condition of the windows and to make recommendations for repairing them. The Committee weighed whether to try to restore the windows to their original condition or to completely replace them with modern vinyl windows. The Committee ultimately decided, based on financial and ease-of-maintenance reasons, to recommend to the Congregation to replace the old windows with vinyl windows. The congregation voted overwhelmingly to support this recommendation. As the year drew to a close, we had received bids for the work but were awaiting updates specific to our project. We hope to have the work performed in Spring 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Russ Adams
Lynnette Allen
Russ Baldwin
Jack Hall
Bob Jenkins
Jim Keddie
Steve Richtsmeier
Ed Henderson, Chair

HOLIDAY FRIENDS

Holiday Friends are a group of ladies in our church who make Christmas decorations for the church fair table held this year on December 1, 2007. We started early this year with some summer workshops as we had people interested in crafting with us. This gave us a great start, thanks to all who helped with our summer workshops.

We began our regular schedule in September and met every Thursday, with the exception of those Thursdays on which Friendship Circle met, until fair week. During fair week we worked just about every day doing fresh baskets, wreaths, and fresh arrangements.

We had a good time this year and enjoyed having some new ladies working with us. This is a great opportunity for fellowship in our church. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all who participated in Holiday Friends this year.

Sincerely,
Marilyn San Clemente and Jean Metcalf

LADIES AID

Members of the Ladies Aid met for lunch during the year and enjoyed a variety of programs. They also carpooled and enjoyed traveling to local restaurants as an added enjoyment. Programs included a social auction, packaging homemade cookies for shut-ins, a hat and fashion show, talk on Alaska, and a food auction.

At every meeting, table decorations reflect a theme. Members take turns hosting and serving at our luncheons. Evelyn Fraser stepped down as Secretary after doing this job for many years and it was taken over by Priscilla Edgecomb. Barbara Buckley corresponds with members of the Ladies Aid and passes around cards for each woman to sign and the cards are mailed by Barbara. Jean Leighton continues to keep the financial affairs in order, and Natalie Thistle provides spiritual nourishment as she blesses our meals.

Members meet January through June and then recess for the summer months. We begin in September with a pot-luck, "*Welcome Back*" meeting. During the summer months, a meeting of the Board is called and programs are discussed and scheduled for the year. Alice Golen provides members with a list of upcoming programs and an updated membership list including member's birthdays.

Esther French, a long time member of Ladies Aid, passed away in December 2007. A \$25 donation was given in her memory to the church's Memorial Fund. A donation of \$100 was given to Heifer International and a \$25 donation to the Salvation Army. Monies earned from our social and food auctions help us provide money for donations.

It is gratifying to have such an active membership. We have a wonderful attendance at our meetings and enjoy the companionship of each other during our meals and programs.

Respectfully submitted,
Eleanor Corey, Chairperson, Ladies Aid

JUNIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Respectfully Submitted by JOJO Scharmer

We have eight (12) registered seventh and eighth grade students (8 girls and 4 boys)

New hours this year: We have met almost every Sunday from 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Our **theme** this year is “Creating Christian Love”

Activities are centered on Faith, Service, Fun and Community.

Faith:

- We end in prayer every meeting
- The youth created an Advent Worship service
- The youth have an opportunity to fill our a prayer request card
- We center many activities on Scripture
- The youth participated in an Advent Scavenger hunt

Service:

- The youth assisted at the Chicken Pie Supper
- The youth helped with the Fall clean-up
- We served at Lowell Wish Project sorting clothes
- We made cards to send to Micala, a 13 year old girl who is a cancer survivor but is now waiting for a new heart. The cards have been mailed one a week.
- We collected and filled shoeboxes for the Samaritan’s Purse project
- We are initiating sock collection for children and adolescents living in a long term mental health facility
- The youth visited and sang Christmas carols to the residents of Blair House

Fun:

- We went apple picking (at the grocery store due to inclement weather) and returned to the church to bake apple crisp
- We went to a Hay Maze along with the Senior Youth
- We had a “For all of us” birthday party
- We had an Advent dinner consisting of Tacos
- We play lots of games

Community:

- The youth worked on a Covenant, and learned of Bible covenants
- Elected officers
- The youth participate in games, utilizing teamwork
- We will be attending an in-house retreat in March
- Our final meeting will include incoming sixth grade youth