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Kenneth A. Clarke, Minister

Mike Briggs, Moderator

**March 2010**

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**FROM THE MINISTER...**

By the time this column reaches you the Old First Church's annual meeting will be history. A hallmark of our congregational tradition is the recognition that the power to gather and maintain a church rests with its members bound in covenant together for the worship of God and teaching of each other. One of my best first impressions of our congregation is the sense that so many have stepped forward through the years to help in ways large and small so that this congregation can have a productive present and secure future. This has been especially true in the last few years and so it is good to remind ourselves that any church will function best with strong and committed leadership drawn from the talent and time of all of its members. We are blessed with such a diverse and willing membership.

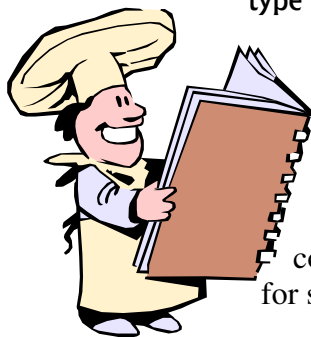
In some ways similar to our town meeting traditions, the work of diverse people for the good of the church is not always smooth. Now I verge on a type of heresy here in providing an image for you; for I know the story of the ceiling of our church: the domed ceiling and cornice it has long been said to represent the cross and the world. May I suggest that the circle created by the dome can also represent the wide arc of our membership—those drawn “under the dome” on this revered spot in Old Bennington? Those drawn by a circle cast wide stand under the cross, in worship, service and fellowship. That circle which takes in all; and the cross which brings us to Easter: in those two realities lie our tradition and the future of the church.

The Rev. Ken Clarke

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**The Old First Church Cookbook Committee is ready to receive your recipes!**

We are looking for recipes of all kinds including: Appetizers & Beverages; Breads & Rolls; Soups & Salads; Desserts; Vegetables & Side Dishes; Cookies & Candy; Main Dishes; Wild game; Recipes that include Maple syrup; Ethnic or “Heritage Meal” type dishes; Old Time Recipes/New England; or basically anything that you think others would enjoy!



Recipes can be emailed to any of the committee members, to the church office, or can be hand written on the enclosed Recipe Collection Sheet and submitted to the church office (more sheets are available in the narthex at the church or at the office). We will be collecting recipes through April and hope to have the books available for sale this summer.

Don't be shy about submitting multiple recipes, as we will need many to fill the book! Email recipes to: Kathy Buck: [kbuck@svsu.org](mailto:kbuck@svsu.org); Pat Guerrero: [VTPattyG110@msn.com](mailto:VTPattyG110@msn.com); Sue Katz: [sekfinancial@comcast.net](mailto:sekfinancial@comcast.net); Wendy Schmitt: [wendy.schmitt@comcast.net](mailto:wendy.schmitt@comcast.net); Mary Walling: [mewalling2@myfairpoint.net](mailto:mewalling2@myfairpoint.net); or the church office: [oldfirst@sover.net](mailto:oldfirst@sover.net)

# The Lantern

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church

On February 28<sup>th</sup>, the congregation met for its annual meeting in the church sanctuary following worship. We received the written reports submitted by officers and committees, elected new people to office and adopted the budget for the year.

Thank you to all committee members who offered their time and talents throughout the year. Special thanks to Mark Donovan who has stepped down after eight years of service as treasurer and to Kiki Traver who has stepping down as moderator. Fun fact: Kiki has gone to well over 100 council and special meetings of the church serving as our Clerk and Moderator! She sure does deserve a break!

If you were unable to attend the meeting and would like a copy of the report, please contact Nancy in the church office.



## WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

The Women's Book Group will meet at Sylvia Carpenter's home, on March 18

at 7:00 PM to discuss the book *The Wednesday Letters* by Jason Wright.

If you would like to participate in the Book Group or need more information, contact Wendy Schmitt



## In the Community

### FREE SUNDAY SUPPER

We will prepare and host the Free Sunday Supper at 2<sup>nd</sup> Congo Church on March 14. If you would be interested in helping, please sign up in the Sunday morning BLOG or contact Nancy in the office. All who dine are very appreciative and it is a fun way to spend a couple of hours!

Donations of spaghetti sauce, spaghetti noodles, meatballs, Italian bread, bagged salad or desserts would be greatly appreciated.

### Lunch at Harvest House

We continue to collect food for the Harvest House who provides a warm meal each day to people in need in this area. Your donations of soup and canned meats have made a difference in how many they can feed on a daily basis. Donations can be brought to the church office or left in the box in the church narthex.

#### Items needed:

Canned Vegetables	Coffee	Pasta sauce
Velveta Cheese	Canned meats	Ziplock bags
Macaroni noodles	Alfredo sauce	
Cream of Mushroom soup		



Be sure to set your clocks ahead before you go to bed on Saturday, March 13!

### Easter Memorial Lilies:

If you would like to remember loved ones with Easter lilies, please send your gift to the Church no later than Sunday, March 21. Please let us know how you would like us to list the name of the loved one(s) and the giver(s).

**Save the date!!!** This year The Old First Monumental Tag Sale is returning Saturday, June 5. The warm winds of June seem like a distant dream today but the months will pass quickly. **NOW** is the time to clean out your attic and those over-stuffed closets and to set aside items for the sale. Ask your friends and neighbors to do the same.

We are in the process of forming this year's tag sale committee. If you are willing to help in the same capacity as last year or if there are folks out there who are looking to join a great bunch of people please contact Marsha (447-3868) or Nancy (in the church office 447-1223). We had a great time last year! Our first organizational meeting will be scheduled in early March. Stay tuned...

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*March 2010*

*Vermont's Colonial Shrine: Welcoming all to share God's light,  
and proclaiming God's embracing love since 1806*



**“Go Out Into The World And Make Disciples”**

Have you invited a friend to worship with us? One of the few specific things Jesus told his disciples to do was to make other disciples. Let us not be shy about inviting others to share in the good news. It is the most reliable way to have a growing congregation.

**SMILE!**

We are creating a new church directory and we will be taking pictures after worship on Sunday mornings throughout the month of March. Ken Walling is our photographer and he is willing to meet with families at other times too. To schedule an appointment for sometime other than a Sunday morning please contact Ken at: 447-4844 or by email [kewalling@myfairpoint.net](mailto:kewalling@myfairpoint.net)

**Old First Yoga**

If anyone is interested in participating in another yoga (Body Flow) class at the Barn, please let Nancy in the church office know. We need to have a minimum of 12 participants and we would be looking to start classes as soon as possible.

If you participated in the winter session (that just finished) then you know what type of class Body Flow is, but if you are new to Body Flow and would like more information, please talk to Nancy or someone you know has participated in the class.