

WEST FAIRLEE CENTER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Dear Friends,

June 1, 2012

This year at the West Fairlee Center Congregational Church was a year of new initiatives and old traditions.

Last summer was a period of intense work on the interior of the church, and so we had only a few services, our traditional blessing of the ATV's and an end of summer service led by Heide Hoskins, to whom we are grateful for her continued support and that of the United Church of Christ. Thanks to the work of Rob Leitschuh and crew, the church is looking glorious in its new, white coat with green shutters. Moreover, the vestibule no longer has paint flakes dripping off the walls and ceiling, or gaping holes in the old plaster. It looks crisp and cheerful with its ceiling, walls, trim and floor painted. The old wall paint color was matched and is on file and reproducible as *West Fairlee Church Pink* (really more salmon than pink) from Benjamin Moore! We also have two new Adirondack style chairs out by the Historic Marker to replace the rickety bench.

During the fall and winter, we had new kinds of services in the sanctuary. On Veteran's day we had a silent meditation, which worked very well in that space and for that occasion. The Sunday after Thanksgiving we held a service of prayer of all faiths, with prayers from traditions ranging from Hindu, Taoist, Jewish, Christian and Muslim to Ba'hai, with great opening and close prayers from the Abenaki tradition. Nate and Jared Pero read the latter and also created a handout for us on the meaning of Thanksgiving for the northeast tribes, historically an occasion of massacre and pain, which we did not allow ourselves to forget, even while we celebrated life and gratitude. Almost all the prayers were read by actual practitioners of the spiritual tradition from which they came, a practice we intend to extend and deepen as we begin to move the church into an era of diversity and make it a place of prayer and meditation for all.

Finally, just before Christmas, we ended the valleys' traditional house-to-house caroling event with a few readings and some more singing in the church. It was icy, icy cold, because of our problems with the furnace (which we are resolving as you read!) but "full hearts, clear eyes, can't lose," and we huddled together happily before repairing for warmth and partying at the Middlebrook, thanks to the hospitality of Chris Aquino.

We have many ideas for the summer and the coming year, and many issues to address. Among other things, the sanctuary has yet to be repaired and painted. Although we planned to do the work this summer, the project is on hold since notification last fall about taxes due on the church property on Marsh Hill Rd. We are reluctant to spend the designated money for painting as we may not have the funds to pay property taxes in October. Look for this issue to be discussed at our annual meeting in June (see below) along with other business both old and new.

Please join us.

Cooley
Cooley (Cleo) Kearns
Moderator
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PS Services start July 8 at 7 pm - hope to see you! - Jane

*P.S.S. With you could see how beautiful the building is. Call whenever you come up for a visit!
Best,
Debbie*

ANNUAL MEETING: Friday June 22, 2012,
7PM
3831 Middlebrook Road (home of Cooley Kearns)