

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GREEN'S FARMS

Westport, Connecticut



ANNUAL REPORT May 2010 - May 2011 for the 300th Annual Meeting May 22, 2011

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Senior Minister Annual Report 2010-2011

Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare. Psalm 40:5

Dear Friends,

2011 may go down in Green's Farms Church history as the year of many plans. The 300th Committee (and its many sub committees) spent the year planning and executing a host of events to celebrate our anniversary through history, music, art, preaching, partying, and even cycling. The Brainstorming Group, and now the Youth Minister Search Committee, spent the year in conversation with youth, parents, staff, the congregation as a whole, and the wider church to plan how we will move forward with this vital ministry. Staff and lay leaders spent hours planning how to keep our work with teens "humming" without the leadership of an experienced, full time minister. The Outreach and Education departments planned new ways to reach out beyond our four walls with the 300th Challenge. The Stewardship department, under the leadership of John Twiname, planned a new program of planned giving. To say nothing of the usual planning that goes into sustaining the weekly worship, study, music, fellowship, pastoral care, and outreach which is at the heart of what we do as a community of faith. To put it mildly, a whole lot of planning has been going on, and the pages of this report that follow attest to it all.

But what of God's plans? The real life of a church happens when our eyes are opened to the wonders of what God is doing in our midst, to the things God has in store for us. In the midst of all our planning, as we survey our church's long, rich history, we'll be blessed beyond measure if we can catch a glimpse of God's plans for us. And we'll know we're blessed when we can declare with the psalmist, "None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare."

300 years of gratitude and awe. Now, that's something to celebrate.

The Joy Continues...

Jeffrey Rider
Senior Minister

Moderator Annual Report 2010-2011

As I complete my term, I would like to express my gratitude to you – the members of Green's Farms Church – for allowing me the privilege of serving the last two years as your Moderator.

First and foremost in my mind is the commitment of the people in this church to bring the word of God to everyone who enters our Meetinghouse, whether it's for the hundredth time or the very first...and to continue inviting new members to experience that same joy we experience week in and week out.

We all know that GFC is run on a daily basis by a remarkable staff... and we have been reminded of that every week of the last year since the loss of our Associate Minister. I just can't thank them enough for their hard work and dedication. But it takes many more dedicated people than that, so I also want to thank you - the many volunteers it takes to keep GFC operating at a very high level - especially those who jumped in and kept our Youth Programs going all year after Amy departed. You are all part of the hundreds of volunteers in our church who are making a difference in the lives of those in our congregation, our communities, and in towns and villages around the world. I am reminded of a recent sermon from Jeff in which he expressed some of the many ways you generously give your time, talent & treasure. You...*sing in the choir...greet guests...host coffee hour...visit the homebound...send pink cards... deliver flowers...write checks...teach Sunday School...prepare bread for Communion...clean up after events...serve on committees...usher on Sundays... fold bulletins...stuff envelopes...work on our website...drive kids to Confirmation...proofread mailings...join Covenant Groups...pray for others...cook meals...run meetings...study the bible...host Memorial receptions...bag lunches for the homeless... support disaster relief... encourage youth...the list goes on and on and on.* Obviously I can't name all of you in these few paragraphs, but I thank every single one of you for your never-ending dedication to serve God and your community.

The new team of volunteers – led by your next Moderator - Mark Kammert – is experienced, knowledgeable and dedicated, so you should feel very comfortable and secure as we look forward to celebrating our 300th Anniversary next month, and the beginning of another century of uninterrupted Sunday Services.

As I said last year, I am excited to see what God has in store for Green's Farms Church in the years ahead...so buckle your seatbelt; it should be quite a ride!

Faithfully Yours,

Bob Atkins
Moderator

Minister of Music Annual Report 2010-2011

The 2010-2011 Church Year at Green's Farms Church has been a spectacular celebration of our 300th anniversary. Throughout the entire year we have enjoyed events related to our anniversary. We successfully commissioned and premiered three musical works which have been featured at some of the major festivities during the year. Our Homecoming Sunday in September, 2010, marked the premiere of our newly commissioned hymn text from poet James Gertmenian. *O Holy One and Nameless*, our new hymn, has been sung on numerous occasions throughout the year and was extremely well received by our congregation. On November 14, 2010 we presented the premiere of James Woodman's *Green's Farms Concertino* for organ and brass quintet, with the Arlberg Brass Quintet. On March 27, 2011, we presented the premiere of Edward Thompson's two new anthems, *Psalm 150* and *Through All Generations*, with the composer conducting. The *Totally Thompson* morning included three additional works by Edward Thompson along with our commissions. It has been a complete pleasure working with the composers and on the music, from the time of the commissions, through the periods of study and preparation, right through to the premieres themselves. I am delighted to report that we will reprise all of the commissions on Sunday, June 12, 2011, and both the Arlberg Brass Quintet and Edward Thompson will be with us once again. What a marvelous year it has been for new music!

In addition to our musical premieres, our 300th anniversary celebration also included two lovely concerts, one by members of the Stamford Symphony, and the second by members of the Staples High School Orphenians. Both were well attended and enjoyed by both church members and others from our community.

Our outstanding choir and section leaders have inspired us with music of great beauty throughout the year. Samia Bahu, Selena Moretz, Sanjay Merchant and Steven Magnuson are such a blessing to our Music Ministry. Thank you to the many volunteers who have given so freely of their time for rehearsals and services throughout the year. Thank you to Culver Casson and Paris Cheffer who have worked with us on various musical projects throughout the year. In addition to the premieres noted above, we have presented special music and guest musicians for Thanksgiving, throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons, for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Easter, and for a special jazz service on May 15. I am truly grateful for the strong support from our congregation for the Music Ministry. Without it, we would not be able to present a year full of fine musical events.

It has been an honor to celebrate my twenty-fifth year at GFC with so much great music. I look forward to continuing the celebration!

Dr. Eileen Hunt
Minister of Music

Green's Farms Church 300th Anniversary Celebration



During the 2010-2011 Church year we began the commemoration of our 300th Anniversary. There have been many wonderful events and activities and some extraordinary moments, including

The unveiling of our 300th logo and our theme: Remember, Rejoice, Renew

A Cemetery Lantern Tour conducted by Peter Jennings with able assistance by GFC's own thespians: Bill Rubidge, Bob Custer, Allen Raymond, Jerry Walker and Steve Magnuson and other church members Rick Towers, Alison Fisher, Michaela MacColl, Rown and Margaux MacColl

An original hymn composed for GFC's 300th Anniversary by James Gertmenian sung for the first time on Homecoming Sunday 2010

A new three-movement work for brass written by James Woodman performed on November 14, 2010.

"Totally Thompson" Sunday featuring works commissioned for the occasion and performed by the combined choirs of Green's Farms and Saugatuck churches on March 27, 2011

A concert on April 3, 2011 led by Stamford Symphony conductor Eckart Preu at the harpsichord and musicians from the Symphony, featuring beautiful music from the era of GFC's founding

A concert by the Staples High School Orphenians, who were joined by students from Green's Farms Elementary School and the Columbus School in Bridgeport

A Heritage Bike Tour of the area with special stops at Fairfield Congregational Church, Saugatuck Congregational Church and Green's Farms Church, organized by Tony Menchaca with able assistance of Don McNees

Sermons by "Sons of the Congregation", Peter Allen and Jeff Braun

"Remembrances", a conversation with GFC Seniors sharing memories of the church from the past 50 years, organized by Wayne and Carol Balfanz, with Seniors Allen Raymond, Bruce and Marge Allen, Bob Custer, Del Horsfall, Tom and Elaine Long

Lectures on the History of Congregationalism in New England by Jonathan Lee of Hartford Seminary

An ongoing project to better organize, analyze and preserve GFC's archival documents, spearheaded by Maggie Parkhurst and Cheryl Bliss.

As exciting as all this has been, there is much more to come. For example,

An updated history of Green's Farms Church by noted author Michaela McColl to be published in the fall of 2011

On May 22, 2011, the unveiling of a bronze plaque by our own Justin Wiest recognizing the ministers of GFC

The premiere of a film about the history of Green's Farms Church as told through stories of the people of GFC on June 10, 2011

An Art Exhibition featuring the work of many GFC artists, including a special 300th Anniversary quilt on June 10, 2011 from 5 to 8 PM

CELEBRATION SUNDAY, JUNE 12, including an all-church luncheon catered by GFC's Jonathan Mathias with special music, special guests and some *very* special surprises

Finally, in the coming months, we will focus more specifically on the 'Renew' portion of our commemoration, with opportunities for renewal of our individual faith and our church's commitment to serving others. Details coming soon!

Please join us as we celebrate this unique moment in the history of our faith community.

300th Anniversary Committee

Jim & Mary Ellen Marpe and Steve & Diane Parrish, Co-Chairs

Allen Raymond, Honorary Co-Chair

The Church Clerk Annual Report 2010-2011

TOTAL ACTIVE RESIDENT MEMBERSHIP, January 1, 2010		605
MEMBERS RECEIVED during 2010		
By Affirmation of Faith and Confirmation		19
By Transfer and Reaffirmation of Faith		<u>4</u>
Total Received		23
MEMBERS REMOVED FROM ACTIVE RESIDENT MEMBERSHIP during 2010		
By Death		5
Other		<u>14</u>
Total Removed		19
TOTAL ACTIVE RESIDENT MEMBERSHIP, December 31, 2010		608

THE BOOK OF LIFE May 1, 2010 - April 30, 2011

Baptisms	8	
Deaths of GFC Members	5	
Ann Barlow		May 6, 2010
Clinton Taylor		June 22, 2010
Mary Lee Casson		October 31, 2010
Cynthia D' Aiuto		December 28, 2010
Ada Eads		February 17, 2011
Memorial Services held at GFC	4	
Ann Barlow		May 11, 2010
Mary Lee Casson		November 12, 2010
Cynthia D' Aiuto		January 2, 2011
Alice McCollum Hunt		March 6, 2011

Deacons Department Annual Report 2010-2011

The Deacons continue on in caring for our congregation as an extended family. We provide support, empathy, sympathy and kindness to those in need as extensions of the pastoral care provided by the ministers and other members of our church community. We do this in many ways from sending notes and cards to delivering flowers to making a phone call or even visiting in person.

We have a new florist this year, Hansen's, which seems to be working out well. Hansen's delivers two arrangements to the church every Saturday, and the Deacons are responsible for giving these to two people or families in the congregation who may be in need whether grieving the loss of a loved one or recovering from an illness, or even on a happier note, to a family who has just baptized a baby or given birth to a newborn. We are pleased, for the most part, with Hansen's services, and they were helpful in providing poinsettias for us at Christmas, which we gave to members of the congregation who had lost loved ones during the past year. Easter plants were provided by Stew Leonards, once again this year, and similarly given to members who lost loved ones, were recovering, or simply to say "thanks for all you do".

Deacons assist in providing hospitality at memorial services at the church. We are there for the family before and after the service, and help with the receptions after the service with refreshments, setting up and cleaning up. Memorial Services held at the church this year were for Ann Barlow, Mary Lee Casson, Cindy D'Aiuto and Alice Hunt.

The Deacons did not host the Women's Christmas Coffee this year. As we discussed, this event might best be organized by the ladies of Sophia's Circle and/or the Membership Department.

We appreciate and give continued thanks to Alison Fisher and JoAnne LaBella for their guidance and help with communication so we are "in the know" for those in need of our friendship or support. And Bob Custer wears many hats from decorating to setting up to overseeing so much. We thank him and appreciate all he does to make everything at GFC run smoothly.

Although we didn't have an official "chair" of the Deacons this year, we came together as a group and gave our time and energy where needed. Thanks to Jeff for filling in and to the Deacons...Lucy Corey, Karen Eickhoff, Karen Atkins, David Feliciano, Paul Muller, Barbara Cross and yours truly. Kaye May was always just a phone call away – thank you!

Martha K. Bonti

Education Department Annual Report 2009-2010

Children's Ministry

Contributed by Lynn Rider

Extraordinary circumstances call for extraordinary measures. This year our church has been blessed by two extraordinary leaders, Brad Cosgrove and Lisa Laudico who have given countless hours to ensure that our Children's Ministry not only survives, but thrives as we prepare for the next Youth Minister. It's been a rare privilege and a lot of fun to work with them, and I know that our entire congregation joins me in offering heartfelt thanks for their sustaining work on behalf of the spiritual development of children and families at Green's Farms Church.

New Life

The first challenge we faced was building a Sunday School program for the Middle School. In honor of the 300th anniversary challenge we decided to focus on creating ongoing opportunities for middle school students to roll up their sleeves and live out their faith by serving others. Soon, two new programs, "Hungry Hearts" and "Cookies and Conversation" were born. Thanks to the financial and logistical support of the Outreach Committee, at "Hungry Hearts" every month 6th, 7th, and 8th graders form an assembly line and make 200 nutritious bag lunches for our homeless neighbors served by the Norwalk Emergency Shelter. Many parents stepped up to the plate to help with this effort, and three adults, Bob Bowman, Brad Cosgrove, and Ellen McNees provided ongoing leadership to ensure the success of this new initiative. They took our early scrambles and transformed this into a smooth and efficient operation!

Likewise, "Cookies and Conversation" combines support from the Outreach Department with help from a host of parent volunteers. Once a month middle school students bake dozens of delicious chocolate chip cookies to share with one of our ministry partners. A member of the Outreach Committee comes to talk about what the organization of the month does, whom they serve, and how our church understands supporting their work to be integral to a life of faith, before delivering the cookies to the organization as a sign of our ongoing support. The students have not only learned about what our church is doing in the world beyond our four walls, they have sampled some great baked goods together! This program owes its success to our head baker, Cathy Rotondo, and her family, John, Catherine, and Emily. Thanks to the Rotondos several middle school students have emerged as accomplished bakers, the entire class works beautifully as a team, and the students keep learning about all sorts of ways to love our neighbors in the name of Christ.

Meeting the Need

Once again we found ourselves bursting at the seams during the fall as we scrambled to find room for all the children of Green's Farms Church in 2010-2011 as the Lower Den was under construction! We have been blessed by the contributions of teachers Alison Blauvelt, Ingrid Johnson, and Cal Rider in the three-and four-year-old room, and by two teaching teams of Maura Mula and Dawn Hobbs, and Maggie and Lucy Parkhurst in the kindergarten room. These dedicated teachers develop age appropriate ways of teaching the Bible stories to our youngest students, and do a remarkable job of creating a welcoming faith community for our youngest students. Their extraordinary service is the backbone of our ministry to children.

The elementary students were taught by a host of talented volunteer teachers who rotate the teaching of workshops on a monthly basis. Additionally, once a month the rotation story is brought to the adults in a sermon in worship. This allows everyone in the family to share questions and ideas about the same story when riding home from church or sitting at the dinner table together.

Another way the Education Department rose to the challenge of increased participation and space constraints was the practice of big tent or festival days to provide special activities on large attendance Sundays. Other highlights of the program during the year included these memorable events:

On Thanksgiving Sunday, students in grades K - 5 gathered in the Social Hall to participate in our fifth annual harvest event, the Milk and Honey Cooking School. We took church history way way back in time as adults decked out in period costume helped the students taste authentic food and experience the table customs and rituals that shaped meals during biblical times.

In the winter we celebrated our sixth annual Bible Bee. Children learned to recite the famous "Wedding Passage" words from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, "Love Never Ends." A record breaking 19 students memorized major sections from I Corinthians 13:1-13. (see "Biblical Literacy," below).

We spent a special 6 weeks learning about the season of Lent using in class and take home activities to get in spiritual shape for Easter. Also new this year, each week during the worship service a different church school family presented a symbol for our Lenten banner designed to deepen our understanding of Jesus and his ministry.

The Education Department would like to thank all the volunteers who teach our children, contributing ideas, time, talents, energy, creativity, patience, and a whole lot of fun, making Sunday School the place we all want to be on Sunday mornings! In addition to thanking all the volunteer teachers, the Department would also like to recognize Maureen Fay for her kind, competent, and loving presence in the Nursery with our youngest children (and their parents!), and Teri Nasi for her energy, enthusiasm, and organization managing the wild logistics of the workshops. These two responsible and reliable staff members make a real difference in the life of our church.

Biblical Literacy

The Education Department focused its curriculum for the Bible Detectives during this 300th anniversary year on the theme of "Back to the Future". The Bible Detectives became time travelers to understand who we are as the people of God and where we're going by looking at the biblical mandate, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Students pored over ancient texts to learn what Christians do when they get together.

Increasing biblical literacy and providing opportunities for faith formation and Christian community serve as the organizing principles for planning curriculum and events. In addition to exposing students to a new Bible story in each rotation, the Sunday School teaches children how to pick up their Bibles and locate a text. Throughout the year children are encouraged to become familiar with Bible stories for both information and transformation, as a tool for encouraging their personal relationship with the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Special Events

What a year for special events! In June of 2010 we gave brand new Bibles to our rising Kindergarten students and rising Fourth graders at our end of year Sunday Sundaes celebration.

Fall 2010 was kicked off with a wonderful Homecoming event on our front lawn filled with hotdogs, a giant air slide, and lots of reunions.

A lovely Nativity pageant, directed this year by Caroline Barney and Lisa Laudico gave students from four years to 5th grade a wonderful chance to tell the Christmas story to the entire congregation on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Jan Topercer's life sized camel made the morning unforgettable!

Thanks to Education volunteers and the members of Icthus, the traditional Easter egg hunt provided a chance for our community to gather for a wild scramble on that beautiful morning giving children age 11 and under an exciting chance to celebrate New Life together.

Who can believe it's already time to get ready for another class of students to receive brand new Bibles? They grow up fast.

Youth Ministry

Contributed by Alison Fisher

2010-2011 was an exciting and successful program year for Youth Ministry at Green's Farms Church despite the obvious hindrance of being without a Youth Minister since last summer. It was my good fortune to have worked closely with Amy Forté for the past few years and therefore to be able to be instrumental in facilitating the continuation of many of the wonderful Youth Ministry programs that Green's Farms Church enjoyed under her leadership. Amy laid a strong foundation for the Youth Ministry programs and GFC is blessed with a multitude of talented and dedicated volunteers committed to the continuation of the Youth Ministry, most especially, Karen Kosinski. In addition to organizing and orchestrating many of the youth programs and activities and in a grand attempt to keep them interesting and enticing to our youth, many involved in Youth Ministry, leaders and youth, are lending input and support to the various teams that are leading the effort to find a new Youth Minister suited to Green's Farms Church.

Icthus

Karen Kosinski, aided by Icthus alumni, Nicole Kosinski and Rob Custer, with help from Jan Topercer and others, ran a marvelously successful High School Discussion Group (aka Icthus). Attendance ranged from 15 to 30 attendees each week. Meetings were held on Thursday evenings at church, at Karen's home and at Compo Beach. In addition to fun, fellowship and discussions about topics of the day and questions of faith, Thursday evenings often included prayer circles and special projects such as packing and sending care packages to our Icthus alumni away at college and Easter egg stuffing for the annual GFC Egg Hunt. The Youth Group hosted a dinner for Pivot House and enjoyed some frightful fun at Six Flags this fall, hit the slopes at Okemo for a winter weekend and celebrated the seasons with Halloween, Christmas and Valentine parties. The program is thriving and eagerly anticipating the leadership of a new Youth Minister.

Confirmation

This year's Confirmation Class boasts 25 Confirmands! These 8th graders were welcomed into membership at Green's Farms Church on May 15. This year's Confirmation leaders included veterans, Jeff Rider, Karen Kosinski, Gary Domenico and newcomer, Brad Cosgrove. Thanks to the leaders, the kids and the parents for the team effort that it takes for a successful program. Despite a serious lack of cooperation by Mother Nature this winter, classes met fairly regularly on Tuesday evenings from 6:00- 7:30. Dinner on Tuesdays was graciously provided by a different Confirmation family each week. Confirmands and their families also participated on Sundays as ushers, greeters and fellowship helpers on a rotating basis. Our January kick off retreat had to be rescheduled for March (because of...three guesses?...SNOW!) but it was a fun, fabulous, team building experience none the less. Thanks to Joanne Reeves for pinch-hitting as a chaperone at the last minute. Team Confirmation also hosted a festive potluck supper on Ash Wednesday serving almost 100 people. The outreach component of the Confirmation program, Faith Adventures, consisted of hosting a dinner for the men of Pivot House here at GFC and travelling to St. Luke's LifeWorks in Stamford to put on a Valentine's party & dinner for the kids in the after-school and day-care programs. Both of these events are already cited as favorite Confirmation experiences. 16 of this year's Confirmands will participate in the Mission Trip in June. This is indicative of lots of new positive energy for next year's Icthus group as this enthusiastic group rolls into high school and continues on their Journey of Faith.

Mission Trip

On June 25, 42 high school kids and 7 adult chaperone volunteers will head down to New Orleans, Louisiana for a week-long outreach adventure. This year's Mission Trip is through the United Saints Recovery Project (an outreach organization dedicated to rebuilding and revitalizing New Orleans), and promises to be a productive and worthwhile venture. Thanks to the trip leader, Karen Kosinski (again!) and her merry band of helpers: Nicole Kosinski, Rob Custer, Judy Hlawitschka, Jan Topercer, Tim Lattanzio, and our soon-to-be summer intern, Alex Woods. We held various FUNdraisers throughout the year to benefit the Mission Trip: a Christmas Bake Sale and Boutique, a Mardi Gras Gala and a Ladies' Sip 'n' Shop evening. Thanks to everyone for their help in cooking and baking, organizing and decorating, setting up and cleaning up, sipping and shopping... It is all for a great cause and welcome opportunity to work and be together.

It has been my pleasure to work with the numerous people who are committed to the continuation of the many and varied Youth Ministry programs during this transitional time in the life of this ministry at Green's Farms Church. We are blessed by the incredible support from the volunteers, staff and parents who have helped to nurture the faith life of our youth. I look forward to working with our next Youth Minister and providing insight, creativity and support to transport our Youth Ministry program to an even higher level.

Women's Ministry

Contributed by Diana Mrotek

Sophia's Circle's Planning Board is made up of 13 women: Carolyn Twiname (Asst. Chair), Gina Orban (Day Retreat Co-host), JoAnn Davidson (Secretary), Nancy Esteva (Communications Committee Chair, *Beach Chair* Co-host), Bobbi Hennelly (Communications Committee and Christmas Coffee Co-Host), Lucy Corey, Audrey Demetres (Outreach Committee and Christmas Coffee Co-host), Joanne Reeves (Day Retreat Co-host), Laura Pflug (Day Retreat Co-host), Joan Burgess (Litchfield Retreat Host), Lynn Gonsor-Anvari, Nancy

Aldrich (Christmas Coffee Co-host, *Beach Chair* Co-host), Blythe Ashton. The Board met on September 12, 2010, and decided on assuming more responsibility for its offerings by making the hosts for each event more autonomous and responsible for all aspects of the planning and execution of each gathering. Some permanent Committees (Communications and Outreach) and Board positions (Asst. Chair, Secretary) were also established.

Six events were planned for 2010-2011: *October Shore Stroll*, October 1 (18 women, 2 babies), *Thanksgiving Blessings* on November 17 (21 women), Annual *St. Birgitta's Day Retreat* on February 5th (23 women), *Sophia Open House* April 2, *Litchfield Overnight Retreat* on May 6-7 (6 women), *Bring a Beach Chair and a Friend* on June 15. As it turned out, Sophia agreed to do the Christmas Coffee (56 women), at the urging of the Deacons who decided not to do it, and therefore, the Board decided not to do the April Open House.

Women's Study Group read and discussed two books since September, 2010: *Counterfeit Gods* in the fall, and *The Reason for God*, in the winter/spring, both by Timothy Keller. The discussions were spirited and deep, as we probed the meaning of Keller's challenging and interesting ideas. This group became very cohesive, especially during the fall, supporting its members through life challenges along with engaging in discussions of the books. There was also renewed interest in the group's Prayer Shawl Project, with a number of new knitters joining the skilled knitters in creating these much appreciated gifts of prayer to members of our congregation, family and friends in need of them.

Prayer Circles are active and vital to the prayer ministry at GFC. At this time, there are four Prayer Circles: 1st Thursday, led by Jeff Rider; 2nd and 3rd Thursdays, led by Diana Mrotek; 4th Thursday, led by Diane Parrish. These Circles have become cohesive groups that engage in Christian fellowship and spiritual growth discussions, along with praying the Prayer Chain. The congregation is very active in this prayer ministry by requesting prayers, through direct contact with the staff and by using the lavender prayer cards in the pews in the Meetinghouse.

Faith Formation Offerings

Contributed by Dr. Diana Mrotek and Rev. John Twiname

During the "gaps" between Rev. Dan England's *Spiritual Gym* Bible Studies, Diana Mrotek and John Twiname presented the following workshops:

Advent Workshop, *This Changes Everything*, asked the question, "Do we experience the birth of Christ or merely acknowledge it, with some misgivings about the details?" In four sessions (November 21, December 5-19) during the 9 AM Sunday morning hour, led by Diana Mrotek, we explored this question and related ones in small groups. Examples of these ensuing questions were the following: should we take this opportunity to look with new eyes at how Christ's birth has changed our lives, and ask honestly, has it? How would the world and our lives be without Jesus' ministry, and conversely, how has the world changed and what changes have we allowed to permeate our lives because of his revolutionary message?

The answers to these questions and the other questions that followed, were pursued by participants in the groups with an energetic commitment that became the culture of this workshop. One participant was so moved by her experience that she wrote two papers framing her answers to the questions that intrigued her. These papers were distributed to other participants. As the program moved from general questions to more personal, specific ones, participants became more involved in searching for Christ in their lives. Two in our group agreed to witness Christ's impact on their lives, and these sessions were particularly moving to participants. One participant said after one of these sessions was finished, that if he (the speaker) can make such radical changes by accepting Christ into his life, "I can do it, too!"

24 Hours That Changed The World, A Lenten Series was presented in 7 sessions (March 16-April 27), using Adam Hamilton's DVD, and led by Diana Mrotek and John Twiname. The goal of this Lenten Series was to make Lent more meaningful and experience Christ's passion more deeply. Hamilton's DVD was particularly poignant and interesting because it was made on site in Jerusalem. We were thus able to see the actual sites that were so important in the last hours before Jesus death, drawing us more deeply and meaningfully into his suffering and anguish as he faced the inevitable Cross.

Each participant received a devotional book, with a reading for each of the 40 days of Lent, which was particularly well received. Our discussions became more honest and open as the Series progressed, and a number of participants expressed the opinion that the Series had helped deepen their experience of all that Christ experienced during those last 24 hours of his life. In the end, that he did so obediently to his Father's will, impressed us all and helped us understand that he died to reveal our sinful natures to us -- and then to forgive us.

Bible Study aka Spiritual Gym

Contributed by Rev. Daniel England

The Bible - source of our knowledge of Jesus and the early development of the Christian faith -- continues to surprise people. Some 30 people over the past year have met regularly on Sunday morning (actually getting up early) to attend studies this year on Revelation, Exodus and the Gospel of Luke. The class, led by Dan England, involves historical context and current controversies, peppered with insightful discussion and probing questions. The result is a solid adult forum in which matters of faith and practice are considered carefully but never without humor. Stuffy is forbidden. A small forum of participants assembled in April has provided input for a few changes in the coming months. It's a pretty good, popular series that has the added benefit of helping to form friendships in the bargain.

Fellowship Department

Annual Report 2010-2011

The Fellowship Committee started the year off with a few changes to our coffee hours. Leading the list was the usage of new receptacles for milk and cream. People seem to really like these...they allow for easy pouring and keep the contents cold. New dishtowels/pot holders were purchased in abundance as it seemed like we were forever trying to hunt these down.

We have continued to struggle with membership as several of our long-time members have gone on to pursue other departments within the church community. My list of Fellowship Angels has grown and I am hoping that I can recruit some of them to become committee members in the fall. To that end, this year's focus will be to continue streamlining our processes so that people will say YES when approached about joining Fellowship!

My goal is to grow the committee and have several members become completely capable of coffee-making, scheduling, etc.

We continued our annual projects which include: Christmas tree decorating, complete clean-up/reorganization of kitchen cupboards (both social hall and parlor) and pantry and summer Fellowship coverage.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susie Daut
Fellowship Co-Chair

GFC Seniors Annual Report 2010-2011

During the May 2010 - April 2011 Church Year about 90 members and friends participated in our events, which are listed below:

- Historical Bus Tour of Green's Farms and Westport Beach Areas
- Play - SHE LOVES ME – at Westport Playhouse
- Trip to Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme
- Play – HAPPY DAYS – at Westport Playhouse
- Musical – I DO I DO – at Westport Playhouse
- Annual Planning Meeting
- Play – DIARY OF ANN FRANK – at Westport Playhouse
- Trip to Storm King Art Center
- Musical – JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT at Cabaret Theater
- Annual Christmas Luncheon at GFC
- Tom and Elaine Long's pictures of their Amazon Trip
- Long time members shared stories and memories of Ed Strait and Bill Bryant Ministries

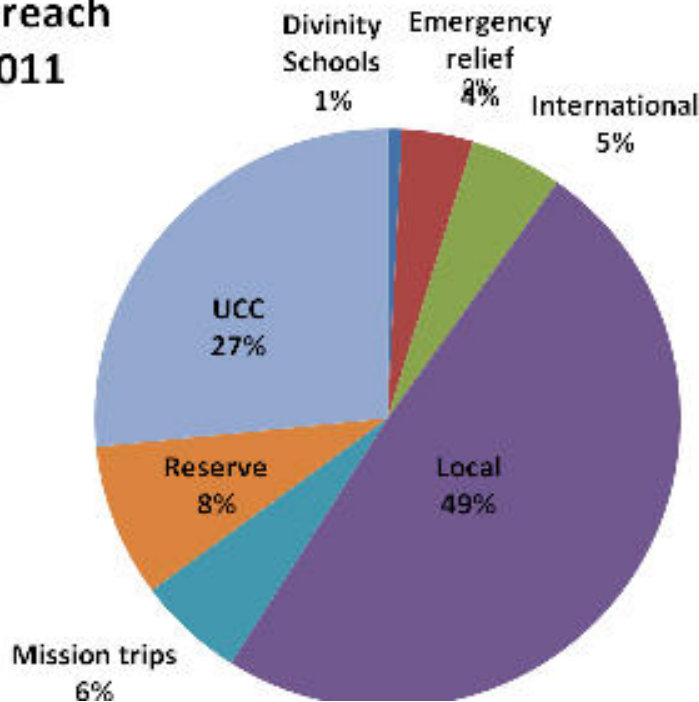
We look forward to new and interesting future events with increased participation and shared leadership.

Wayne Balfanz
Event Coordinator

Outreach Department Annual Report 2010-2011

Green's Farms Church

Outreach 2011



Distribution of the Outreach budget 2010-2011

Divinity Schools	\$1,000
Emergency relief	\$5,000
International	\$6,500
Local	\$62,400
Mission trips	\$7,500
Reserve	\$10,850
UCC	\$33,750
Total giving	\$127,000

Green's Farms Outreach department will this year distribute \$127,000, drawn both from the Outreach budget and from the Bryant escrow fund. The regular Outreach budget will be used to support local and international organizations with which Green's Farm Church has an ongoing relationship. The Bryant funds were used as needs arose – for example, to respond to the catastrophic earthquake in Japan in April 2011 and the spring storms in southern states of the U.S.

The mission of the Outreach department is to:

- Monitor the charitable agencies that the church supports and decide the level of financial support to provide
- Support hands-on outreach opportunities for congregants
- Coordinate in-kind donations made by the congregation through the church
- Coordinate special collections, both recurring and one-time collections.

The largest part of the budget went to support twelve local organizations providing social services and education in Westport, Stamford, Norwalk and Bridgeport. We supported families, children and seniors through the Domestic Violence Crisis Center and Christian Community Action in Norwalk, and Pilgrim Towers in Stamford, and the Burroughs and McGivney centers in Bridgeport. We addressed homelessness, rehabilitation and re-entry through Homes with Hope in Westport, and Pivot House, Bethel Recovery Center, and the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport in Bridgeport. We added two organizations serving women in Bridgeport to our list: Ark Ministries, a sober house, and Mercy Learning Center, an education program.

Hands on local outreach included involvement of GFC middle schoolers with Norwalk's Hungry Hearts program. On several Sundays through the year, the middle school students made hundreds of lunches that were delivered by Outreach department members and served at the Norwalk emergency shelter the following day. On other Sundays, the department shared more about the outreach of the church through the "Cookies and Conversation" program – the middle school students baked cookies to be shared with different organizations, and heard about the mission of the organization from a member of the department.

We also shared information about our outreach during a successful Mission Fair in October, when representatives from many of our supported organizations joined us for worship and coffee hour. In the spring of 2011 we began surveying the congregation about preferences for volunteering, to help shape the program in the year ahead. Considerable information has been gathered and will be reflected in activities in 2011-12.

Internationally, Green's Farms Church has supported the Indian Gospel Mission for two decades and was glad to welcome the founder, Brother Jacob Williams, and his son, Jabez, in October 2010, and to hear about the expansion of the organization in Guduvancheri, southern India. Our relationship with Simply Smiles, led by Southport's Brian Nurnberger, progressed with financial support and mission trips to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation, South Dakota, in June, and Oaxaca, Mexico, in August.

At Christmas, the Giving Tree program was coordinated by Bob Makuch, Melinda Caldwell, and Dale Najarian, and produced gifts for dozens of families served by Christian Community Action in Norwalk. In-kind donations from the congregation continued throughout the year, with food and clothing delivered to Christian Community Action in Norwalk, to Bridgeport Rescue Mission, and to Connecticut Food Bank in Fairfield. And the congregation continued to support the Gillespie Center in Westport by regularly cooking and serving dinner to the residents, while the year's confirmation class shared dinner and fellowship with the men of Pivot House in the spring of 2011.

As in previous years, our largest single donation goes to Our Church's Wider Mission, our basic support contribution to our denomination, the United Church of Christ. It will help churches in Connecticut and across the nation, and support the national and international outreach of the UCC. We also provided \$2,500 for Silver Lake, the UCC's outdoor camp site in Sharon, CT.

The department goes into the 2011-12 church year preparing to strengthen our church's local and international outreach, to involve our youth in Outreach, and to find fresh ways to bring our hands, hearts, talents, and faith to bear on our work with our neighbors.

Respectfully submitted

Jeff Booth and Claire England, Outreach Co-chairs

Ted Aldrich

Ben Aldrich

Drew Berman

Alison Blauvelt

Melinda Caldwell

Greg Gatta

Pam Gau

Dale Najarian

Bill McCutchen

Bob Makuch

GREEN'S FARMS CHURCH OUTREACH 2010
Outreach-Related Contributions in 2010

	Budgeted Outreach	Bryant Fund	Pass Thru Outreach	Gift of Giving	Donations in Kind	Total Outreach
Bethel Recovery Center	\$ 2,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,400
Boroughs Community Center	7,100	-	-	-	-	7,100
Bridgeport Rescue Mission	-	-	-	-	4,065 [e]	4,065
Christian Community Action	13,600	-	410 [c]	3,850 [d]	6,175 [f]	24,035
Council of Churches of Bridgeport	9,500	-	-	-	-	9,500
Domestic Violence Crisis Center	5,200	800	-	-	-	6,000
Gillespie Center	-	-	-	-	385 [g]	385
Hands on Outreach	-	225	-	-	-	225
Haiti Relief	-	3,000	14,214	-	-	17,214
Homes With Hope (formerly IHA)	11,500	-	410 [c]	-	3,600 [h]	15,510
Indian Gospel Mission	4,000	1,600	1,100	-	-	6,700
McGivney Community Center	5,600	-	-	-	-	5,600
Mercy Learning Center	4,000	1,500	-	-	-	5,500
Ministers' Benevolent Fund Donations	-	-	3,190	-	-	3,190
Norwalk Emergency Centre	-	395	-	-	-	395
One Great Hour of Sharing	-	-	1,405	-	-	1,405
Our Church's Wider Mission	31,250	-	-	-	-	31,250
Pakistan Relief	-	5,000	916	-	-	5,916
Pilgrim Towers	4,500	-	-	-	-	4,500
Pivot House	7,600	1,983	25	-	-	9,608
Retired Minister's Relief	-	-	400	-	-	400
Silver Lake Fund	2,500	-	-	-	-	2,500
Simply Smiles	2,500	1,000	140	-	-	3,640
Union Theological Seminary	250 [a]	-	-	-	-	250
Yale Divinity School	1,000 [b]	-	-	-	-	1,000
Youth Mission Trip	7,500	2,500	86	-	-	10,086
Total Contributions	\$ 120,000	\$ 18,002	\$ 22,296	\$ 3,850	\$ 14,225	\$ 178,373
As Percentage of Operating Budget	11.8%					17.6%

Notes:

- [a] Honorarium - John Twiname
- [b] Honoraria - Jeff Rider, Lynn Rider, Amy Forte
- [c] Distribution of GFCC share of Beach Church loose plate collection
- [d] Value of gifts supplied from Christmas Tree - 154 gifts @ estimated value of \$25 each
- [e] 100 bags of clothes @ estimated value of \$25, 6 coats @ estimated value of \$10, and 43 bags of food @ estimated value of \$35
- [f] 54 coats @ estimated value of \$10 plus 161 bags of food @ estimated value of \$35
- [g] 11 bags of food @ estimated value of \$35
- [h] 24 meals @ estimated value of \$150

Personnel Committee Annual Report 2010-11

Perhaps the most significant personnel-related event during the 2010-11 year was the resignation of Associate Minister, Amy Forté. Amy announced her decision early last summer. Following that, we sent a questionnaire to members of the Youth Group (Icthus) and a separate survey to their parents to gather input regarding what they felt were the most important things about Amy's youth program that had made it so effective. These responses were tabulated and shared with the special committee that was formed later in the summer to recommend the goals and structure for the 2010-11 youth group program and the framework for the years to follow. That committee, chaired by Kristin Wait, included representation from the Personnel Committee, the Education Department, the current Youth Group and Jeff Rider.

During the 2011 budget development process, the Personnel Committee investigated potential actions the church could take to gain greater control over the escalation of UCC medical insurance premiums. We concluded that the changes required to achieve a meaningful impact on church costs would produce an unacceptable burden on members of the church staff. As such, the Committee elected to retain the current arrangement, which is also followed by nearly all churches in the Connecticut Conference.

As part of the 2011 budgeting process, the Committee recommended salary action for staff members that was consistent with the current economic environment as well as the added responsibilities that had been assumed by the church staff as a result of Jeff Rider's sabbatical and Amy Forte's departure. Annual performance reviews will be conducted for staff members in May.

During the year, the Committee continued to receive highly professional support from the church staff as well as the Treasurer's Department. Our Treasurer, Andrea Register, and Vice Treasurer, Suellyn Durkin, have provided valuable counsel and initiative on personnel-related financial matters. With the able assistance of Assistant Treasurers Joan Bassett and Helen Ranholm, and the oversight of our Financial Review Committee of Susan Schmidt and Sally McNeela, our financial controls are excellent.

On Palm Sunday, the church celebrated the 25th anniversary of the ministry of our Minister of Music, Dr. Eileen Hunt. Under Eileen's leadership, the quality of our music program has become a major factor in attracting people to Green's Farms Church and a source of joy in each Sunday service. The congregation expressed their appreciation to Eileen with a standing ovation.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the members of the Personnel Committee – Bob Atkins, Jeff Rider, Mark Kammert, Brad Cosgrove, Lisa Laudico, Bill Rubidge, Steve Parrish and Andrea Register - for their dedication to enhancing the effectiveness and work satisfaction of our staff members.

Dave Braun
Personnel Committee Chairman

Stewardship Department Annual Report 2010-2011



Our Stewardship campaign theme for 2010 – 2011 was Renewal – the forward-looking part of our 300th Anniversary celebration. For many of us, the 300th celebration has been a time to rediscover what it means to be a Christian and to live out the traditions of our faith. One thing we share together is the blessing of our spiritual life as part of the Green's Farms community.

“Our fellowship ... grows from a common loyalty to Jesus, a common passion to serve the world, and a common purpose to do justly, to love kindly and to walk humbly with God”

As we enter our fourth century of ministry, the opportunities in front of Green's Farms Church have never been broader or more exciting.

Over the last few years, we have tried to give greater visibility to different parts of the life of Green's Farms Church, which is far more diverse and active than many of us realize. Again this year, we had group dinners designed to strengthen fellowship and to share information about our church. A huge thank you goes out to our wonderful dinner sponsors, whose contributions to this year's campaign were both creative and delicious –Donielle & Stu Hawley, Sarah & Tony Menchaca, Lisa & Bob Bowman, and Diane & Steve Parrish. Our Sunday services were filled with poignant personal stories of faith and outreach from Greg Gatta and Judy Hlawitschka, closing with Lori Redmer's story about the power of faith through her battle with cancer. We hope that the 2010 Stewardship campaign helped you better understand some of the needs and opportunities here at Green's Farm Church and within our local and global communities.

The results of the 2010 Stewardship campaign reflect your strong commitment to the vision and mission of our church, which again emphasized Outreach as ongoing economic difficulties continue to plague many of our neediest neighbors. We are pleased to report the results of this year's campaign – a total of \$850,000 was pledged by 217 families. More than one-third of the families who pledged this year increased their pledges, while nearly 42% maintained their pledges at last year's level. Unfortunately, 30 families that pledged last year were not able to pledge this year, although many continue to contribute regularly. (Last year, a total of \$874,000 was pledged by 229 families.) In addition to the annual Stewardship campaign, 30 families pledged another \$150,000 specifically for the 300th Anniversary celebration. Taken together, \$1,000,000 was pledged in support of the life and work of Green's Farms Church this year! WOW!!! And thank you!

Mark and Jane Mastrianni will continue as Stewardship co-chairs next year and will be joined by Al and Lori Redmer. We'd like to express our appreciation to every member of our family of faith for your faithful consideration of stewardship at Green's Farms Church – and, as always, to the ministers and staff for their help during this year's campaign.

Jennifer & Duncan O'Brien
Jane & Mark Mastrianni
Co-chairs, Stewardship

Trustees Department Annual Report 2010 – 2011

The Trustees of Green's Farms Congregational Church have several main responsibilities:

- Maintaining the Church's buildings, parsonages and cemeteries;
- Analyzing the needs of the Church and recommending an annual budget to the congregation for approval; and
- Managing the Church's endowment funds and developing a long-term plan to increase the financial resources of the Church.

The Church's physical facilities remain in good condition, overseen by David Mrotek and Bob Custer. During 2010, Dave and Bob supervised the replacement of a number of aged windows overlooking the Church's playground, completed repairs to the heating system and downstairs Youth Room in response to storm flooding, and continued painting and carpentry repairs in and around the Meetinghouse. In 2011, the Trustees, assisted by Jan Topercer and Steve Orban, are focusing on a major renovation of the Youth Room. Additional projects underway include repairs and painting of the Meetinghouse, upgrades for the main parsonage, and improvements to the Church's parking lot and outside lighting.

The Church's financial position continues to be strong. As a result of pledge receipts that exceeded expectations and lower-than-budgeted costs, the Church recorded an operating budget surplus of \$45,700 in 2010. Of this surplus, \$33,300 was applied to the Properties Repair and Maintenance reserve fund to help finance major projects planned in 2011, and \$12,400 was allocated to a staffing reserve for year-end bonuses equal to 3% of salary.

Budgeted pledge income for 2011 is projected to be \$39,900 lower than 2010's actual level. Despite expectations for lower income in the coming year, the 2011 annual budget maintains Outreach spending of \$120,000, equal to the 2010's level; provides for a 2.0% raise in staff salaries; and allows continued support for the activities of all the Church's operating departments. The Church's financial needs are likely to rise considerably in 2012 if the Church, as expected, hires a new Youth Minister later in 2011.

The Church's endowment funds in 2010 continued to perform well, continuing the rebound that began in 2009. On a blended basis, the Church's endowment funds invested in equity and fixed income securities showed a positive return of 8.8% overall in 2010, helping to increase the Church's total invested funds to \$1,178,200 at the end of the year. The Memorial Fund, the Church's main unrestricted endowment, recovered in value from \$374,000 in 2008 to \$503,500 at the end of 2010.

We thank all the Trustees and the Church staff for their efforts over the past year. Trusting in God's providence, we look forward to continued financial strength in 2011-2012.

Mark Kammert
Chair, Trustees

Worship and Music Department Annual Report 2010-2011

The department had a challenging year, as we did not have the full complement of members and had a chair but no co-chair.

We met as needed, typically monthly. Each member served for a month as Head Usher and then we picked up help from non-Members Bruce Blomfield and Sue Mahar to cover additional months, and covered the final months with ad hoc head ushers.

The head ushers recruited and supervised ushers, greeters and communion servers. With the assistance of Alison Fisher, our confirmands and their families served as ushers and greeters for most Sundays from January through May.

Our Minister of Music Eileen Hunt and Chancel Choir once again provided extraordinary music all year long. In addition to the standard program, Eileen also coordinated special music and new compositions for the church's 300th anniversary.

Summer services were held at Compo Beach as usual, with Walter Eads continuing as an ad hoc volunteer handing out bulletins and taking the offering as he has for many years. Regular 10 a.m. services were held in the sanctuary. Communion elements were provided and set up through most of the year by the head usher. Mid-year, we adopted an approach of having the existing head usher handle the communion elements for the next month, training the incoming head usher.

Thanks to all department members for their service throughout the year and to JoAnne LaBella, Alison Fisher and Bob Custer for their support. Department members have been: Joan Beer, Janis Collins, Roger Eickhoff, and Carlos Garcia.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the department,

Bill Rubidge
Chair