The Spire

From Your Pastor

January 2007

Charlie Brown is at bat. STRIKE THREE! He struck out again and slumps over to the bench: *"Rats! I'll never be a big-league player. I just don't have it! All my life I've dreamed of playing in the big leagues, but I know I'll never make it."* Lucy turns to console him. *"Charlie Brown, you're thinking too far ahead. What you need to do is set yourself some more immediate goals."* He looks up. *"Immediate goals?" "Yes,"* Lucy says, *"Start with this next inning when you go out to pitch. See if you can walk out to the mound without falling down!"*

A new year signals a new chance to start with the next inning. God is a God of next innings. Consider words about God that begin with "*Re*":

Rebuild
Renew
Restore
Refresh
Reshape
Recreate
Reassure
Rebirth
Recover
Redeem
Rekindle
Replenish

- Isaiah 40:31 *"Those who wait for the LORD shall RENEW their strength."*
- Jeremiah 31:25 *"I will satisfy the weary, and all who are faint I will REPLENISH."*
- 2 Timothy 1:6 *"REKINDLE the gift of God that is within you."*
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 *"If anyone is in Christ, he or she is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"*
- Psalm 23:3 *"He restores my soul."*

If you were to make a LIFELINE by drawing a line across the page, starting with zero on one end and your best guess age of death on the other, X marks the spot of your current age. It's interesting to mark your age at significant happenings in your life: jobs, houses, kids, grandkids, achievements, losses. One thing about this exercise is for sure: there is nothing at all that you can do about what happened before that "X" on your life line. You can't change what happened before, you can't re-write your history, and you can't alter the fact that events in your life occurred the way they did. All you can do is to **start with the next inning**.

Start with some immediate goals... to rekindle the gift of God that is within you.

– John Zehring

JANUARY SUNDAYS

January 7	Message: *Never place a period where God has placed a comma*. Baptism: Nolan Richard Urian. Communion.
January 14	Message: *I and not the Lord*. Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend. Children go directly to Church School. SERMON TALK BACK following worship
January 21	Message: *Never be afraid of anything or anybody*. Presentation of Bibles. Meeting for anyone who would like to consider joining the church, following Worship.
January 28	Message: *Why I believe in the Church*. Reception of New Members. ANNUAL MEETING of the Congregation.
February 4	Message: *Finding the happiness you want*. Communion. Installation of Board, Council and Standing Committee Members. SERMON TALK BACK following Worship.

Baptism:

Nora Mae Fitzgerald Parents: Sean and Erin Fitzgerald November 26, 2006

Would you like to join the Kingston Congregational Church?

A meeting will be held **January 21** following the Worship service for those wishing to consider membership in the Church. Please enjoy some brief refreshments at Coffee Hour and then come to the Fireplace Room (directions available at The Welcome Table in Fellowship Hall) to meet with John Zehring and a member of the Board of Deacons.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES:

January 21	*The Christian Way of Life*. Leader: Kevin Munroe
February 4	*Worship*. Leaders: Enrico Garzilli and John Zehring

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Home Communion

If you are unable to attend church due to a serious illness or accident, the Board of Deacons will be glad to bring communion to your home. Please contact the church office at 783-5330 and Shirley Schock will pass on the message to the chairperson of the Deacons.

Bible Study

Please join us for Bible Study at KCC. We meet upstairs above the office on Monday mornings at 9:30 a.m. After a couple of weeks off for the holidays, Bible Study will resume on January 8th.

The Annual Meeting of

The Kingston Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

Will be Held in the Church Sanctuary
Following the Worship Service
Child care will be available

Sunday, January 28, 2007

10:45 a.m.
Martha E. Hartman, Clerk

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of Quarterly Meeting October 22, 2006
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Stewardship Committee Report
6. Discussion and Adoption of a 2007 Budget
7. Nominating Committee Report: Election
8. President's Report
9. Old Business
10. New Business
    Safe Church Policy (on church website)
    Welcome Statement
11. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

CONSENT ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY THE COUNCIL
Welcome Statement The statement will be filed with church policies and could appear on such places as the internet, the cover of the KCC Annual Report, and the wall in the front vestibule of the Church. ***Council will ask the congregation for a vote of approval of the Welcome Statement at the Annual Meeting in January.***

Kingston Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
Quarterly Congregational Meeting
Sunday, October 22, 2006

Moderator Angelo Mendillo called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m. A quorum was declared with attendance "easily exceeding" 55 members.

INFORMATION DISTRIBUTED: ***Agenda; Minutes of Quarterly Meeting, June 25, 2006; Minutes of Special Congregational Meeting, September 10, 2006; Treasurer's Report January, 2006 through September, 2006; Draft 2007 Budget;*** and ***Welcome Statement.***

It was moved, seconded and passed (M/S/P) to adopt the agenda for today's meeting as presented.
M/S/P to accept the minutes of the June 25, 2006 Quarterly Meeting as presented.
M/S/P to accept the minutes of the September 10, 2006, Special Congregational Meeting as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT Richard Shaw, Chair of Trustees, read the Treasurer's Report prepared for the meeting by the treasurer Ben Smith who was out of town on business. The report shows we are running a deficit of $6858 but there is unreported fund raiser (cruise) income. Ben concludes we may break even for 2006 if we "collect on all actual pledge dollars and control expenses for the rest of the year." Ben reported the Roof Repair Fund at $7010 and Dick updated that to $8900 as of today.

Paul asked Margaret Munroe and Elizabeth McNab to come forward joined by the other Alaskan voyagers. They presented a $9,778 check from Yankee Travel to KCC which represented a $7,000 profit from the cruise and a $2,778 incentive bonus based on the number of people (39) in the KCC group. They recommended this type of activity for fundraising and asked anyone interested in a similar experience in 2008, perhaps to the Mediterranean (suggestions welcome), to contact them.
M/S/P to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented with a special note of thanks to Margaret, Elizabeth, and all those who worked on this fundraiser.

PRESENTATION OF DRAFT 2007 BUDGET FOR DISCUSSION--RICHARD SHAW Dick briefly noted changes: Most board and committee expenses are pretty much the same as in 2006. Building and Grounds up $1200; UCC Basic support up $1000; Pulpit Supply at $15,000 to provide for pulpit supply during the Pastor's sabbatical in 2007; fundraiser amount reduced to $4000 and endowment income up $3,000. The proposed pledge amount for 2007 of $332,531 is up $44,531 from the $288,000 budgeted for pledges in 2006.
Ken Kermes, Chair, reported that the Stewardship Committee supports the expense budget including paint reserves and the sabbatical funds. He noted that there are currently 206 individual/family pledge units compared to 225 in 2003. With 206 pledge units averaging a 7.6% increase over last year's average pledge amount we would realize an average pledge of $1420 per unit which would generate a pledge total of $293,000. We need to encourage all members of the congregation to pledge and to increase our pledges if we are going to meet the $332,531 pledge amount in the 2007 KCC Draft Budget.

DISCUSSION
1. Wayne Lee and his students are assessing the steeple tilt. There is no current projected cost.
2. Our budget process is governed by the By-Laws.
3. Final copies of the 2007 KCC Proposed Budget will be available two weeks before the KCC Annual Meeting, January 28, 2007, so that members will have time to review the document before it is presented to the congregation at the annual meeting for a vote of approval.
4. Salaries are based on Rhode Island Conference, United Church of Christ (RICUCC) guidelines.
5. Concern was expressed about the allocations for staffing expenses versus plant upkeep expenses.
6. Time and talent as well as financial resources are valued contributions.

7. Stewardship Committee plans: a. Written communication to 300 families, hoping 215 or more will respond, and, b. Reaching out by phone and possible face to face contact with the hope of educating members about pledging, getting feedback and answering questions. Jack Beliveau, Chair of CE will educate the congregation about costs involved in our CE program.
8. A suggestion was made that if cuts need to be made some consideration be given to decreasing the pastor's increase this year in light of his last year's salary increase and the sabbatical costs.
9. Two projects are planned so far for 2007 fundraising: 1. sale of bricks and 2. sale of reproductions of one of Jane Clayton's drawings and an auction of the original. Permission has been given by the family.
10. The endowment is not a contingency fund. A stretch budget requires a stretch pledge and we need to expect all members to pledge.
11. We should be realistic.
12. Our endowment was up 5% as of June but we are under-endowed for a church this size.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES--RICHARD SHAW Blue Jeans Sunday is November 12, 2006.

BOARD OF DEACONS--TOM BRILLAT The Welcome statement prepared by the Deacons and adopted by the Council was read by Tom who noted he was pleased to present it and that discussion is still going on as to where it will be used (Spire, Sunday Bulletin, etc.).

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION--JACK BELIVEAU The Safe Church Policy is ready for Council approval. Sunday School stats--75 children are registered and 45-50 attend each week. Sandee Andrew and Jill Dumican will lead the Senior High group.

BOARD OF MISSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE--TINA LETCHER The Board is grateful for KCC's support of our Missions program.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP--HELEN ROWE-DRAKE Upcoming events: Nov. 18- Mother-Daughter Luncheon (gingerbread houses); Dec. 10- Sale of Christmas gifts; and Dec. 15- Christmas dinner. WF's finances are separate from the budget. About 75 women contributed $2800 for WF's missions projects and programs this year.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT--PAUL SCHUBERT Paul welcomed new members and thanked Jill Dumican, Sandee Andrew and the Stewardship Committee. Thanks to Deb Shaw, KCC's liaison for the All Church Worship Service at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet, Sunday, October 29, 2006, in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the RI Conference. Thanks for contributions to the roof fund. Thanks to Harold Henn and John Hatch who will be rotating off the Investment Committee, to Jim Aukerman and to the Chair, Richard Geisler. The Leaders' Retreat was held on Sept. 9 at the Zehring's home. At the All-Boards Meeting, Sept. 20, those present told what motivates them to volunteer at KCC. Ira Williams will preach on Nov. 12 during John's study leave. Next Sunday we will gather at church at 9:00 a.m. for coffee, announcements, the offering, and prayer before traveling to Rhodes on the Pawtuxet.

OLD BUSINESS None
NEW BUSINESS A fundraiser featuring Tom Brillat, storyteller, will be held at KCC, Dec. 3, 2006.

The moderator thanked Deb Shaw and Cindy Dowgiallo for their help in printing and collating the handouts for today's meeting, Richard Shaw, Chair of the Trustees, and the clerk.
The meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m. with prayer led by Pastor Zehring.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha E. Hartman, Clerk

Welcome Statement of
The Kingston Congregational Church, UCC

Welcome *to new visitors*
and to old friends.

Welcome *to grandparents, to*
mothers, fathers,
single people and children.

Welcome *to people of all colors,*
cultures, abilities, and sexual orientation,
to young and old;
to believers and questioners,
and welcome to questioning believers.

Welcome *to all who have no church home,*
need strength, want to follow Christ,
have doubts, or do not believe.

We joyfully and unconditionally
welcome you.
We hope you find peace and inspiration
in our service.

You are welcome here.

Adult Education

WINTER – January 16, 23, 30
7:00 pm in the Fireplace Room

The Gospel of Mark

Mark is the earliest of the four Gospels and the starting point for both Matthew and Luke, yet because it is short and does not contain the added stories and narrative of those that follow, it is sometimes overlooked. The class will consider this formative book in light of the most recent scholarship in order to understand its impact and its meaning to us today.

Kevin Munroe is Assistant to the Pastor, a student at Andover Newton Theological School, an architect, and former university teacher of architecture. Prior to his becoming In Care in the Rhode Island Conference, Kevin served as President of the Church Council.

Planned Giving Seminar

The Planned Giving Committee will be holding a seminar after church on February 25th in the Fireplace room to explain 2006 changes in the tax laws that provide exciting new opportunities for charitable giving and tax savings. More details will be forthcoming in the February *Spire*.

Peace and Justice Task Force

The Peace and Justice Task Force is planning to have **Joyce and Steve Desposito** from the **Peace Alliance** speaking during the **Minute for Missions** at the service on January 21, 2007. They will be available after the service, during coffee hour, for questions regarding the **Department of Peace** and will have literature on the Peace Alliance. We hope many of you will be at that service and attend Coffee Hour to find out about the exciting new **Department of Peace** that has been gaining support and momentum in both Houses of Congress.

Emig Lecturer

The Missions Board and the Peace and Justice Task Force has invited the Rev. Delle McCormick from BorderLinks to be the 2007 Emig Lecturer on **February 11, 2007**. She will be preaching during the service and have a sermon talk back in the Fireplace Room at 10:45AM. At noon there will be a soup and salad lunch. All are cordially welcome and invited to bring bread and/or dessert to share.

The Rev. Delle McCormick comes to us with a wealth of experience to share. She currently heads "BorderLinks," a bi-national non-profit organization in Tucson, AZ that offers educational seminars along the US/Mexico border focusing on the issues of global economics and immigration. In addition, BorderLinks has developed projects to respond directly to community needs in the borderlands, including a day care center and leadership training on both sides of the border.

She has also been a minister at Barrington UCC Church, and worked in Mexico--first as Pastor and Director of the Cuernavaca Center for Intercultural Dialog on Development (CCIDD) and later as Minister and Missionary in partnership with Common Global Ministries in Chiapas.

S. P. N. M.

From SOUTH PROVIDENCE NEIGHBORHOOD MINISTRIES a very LARGE THANK YOU to each person who contributed to the Christmas offering in which we were included. Every penny is used in a frugal way. Also special thanks to church school children and everyone else who sent scarves, mittens, hats, and toys for our young neighbors. Women's Fellowship and Pat Weeden, our Super Sweater Knitter, donated sweaters and small items left from their sale to SPNM's Christmas offerings. Wrapping paper was gleaned from CVS last year by Elizabeth McNab. As I write on 12/15, volunteers are preparing to help parents choose gifts for their young ones. Hooray for all!

Linda Mendillo, Judy Scott, and Doris Findlay

"An Inconvenient Truth"
Coming to KCC Friday, January 19th

7:30 to 9:00 pm in the Fireplace Room.
(See David Barwise's book review in the December *Spire*.)

Habitat for Humanity

A warm thank you to all those who generously provided lunches for workers at 79 Pierce Street, Westerly in November.

Tom Brillat and Susan Perkins-Brillat	Beth Curtis
Carolyn and Vernon Bradley	Barbara and Gordon Johnson
David Barwise	Dottie and Ed Leduc

I truly appreciate all who have volunteered since January, 2000 when this job of lunch coordinator became my labor of love.

A letter of *deepest appreciation* has just been received for our church's efforts on behalf of Habitat for Humanity. The letter was signed by Louis A. Raymond, Executive Director and Jane Hendricks, Pres. Board of Directors.

Please remember Habitat for Humanity in your prayers, labor, and gifts. Let's help one family enjoy a decent, safe, and affordable home.

Carolyn Barwise

Women's Fellowship

Monday January 8th, 7:00 pm
Program: Panel Discussion
Come hear fellow KCC members discuss their faith.

Cindy Buxton Tina Letcher
Gary Harlow Mark Mersereau
Helen Rowe-Drake
All are welcome (Men, too!)

Jr. High Fellowship

January 7th is our next Pizza Nite from 5-7 pm.

Deacon Frank Lenox will join us for a lively discussion about how Science and Religion can fit together. Frank is a physics teacher in East Greenwich.

Call Sue Macy at 294-6513 if there are any questions.

Senior High News

Sunday, January 21st - lunch after church at church - make your own sub Sunday

Friday, January 26th - dinner and movie night

Everyone is invited - KCC Pasta Dinner, Friday, February 2nd at 6 pm.
$5/adults and $2.50 for children