

# First Congregational Church of Ossipee

September 2010

## The Church Has Left the Building!

Our Faith in Action campaign begins Sunday, September 12. During this four-week initiative, we will focus on biblical compassion, service, and Christ's heart for those in need, through special worship services, small groups and daily devotions. Then, on October 3, instead of gathering for worship, we will go out into our community and serve! After serving we'll come back to church for lunch followed by a time of worship and testimony.



Our Faith in Action leadership team is currently finalizing the specific service opportunities for October 3. Each project is designed to directly touch lives and reflect Christ's love to others in our community. Some of the projects we're considering include:

- Providing firewood to area homes for winter heat
- Finishing construction on a home where the father is struggling with a serious illness
- Bringing an elderly woman's home up to livable standards
- Expressing appreciation to our soldiers serving overseas
- Encouraging area prisoners through card and letter writing
- Spending time at the nursing home visiting residents who don't normally receive visitors

These are just a few of the projects we're putting together. There will be a project for everyone, and we're expecting 100 percent participation!

One of the exciting things about Faith in Action is that it's not just about serving the community, but with the community. We're thankful for how local and county authorities have already helped us identify areas of need. And, we encourage you to ask God which family members, friends or neighbors you should invite to come join our service projects on October 3. Together, we can make a difference in our community.

Having completed our Sunday morning study in the Book of James, we all have a renewed passion for putting our faith into action. "As the body without the spirit is dead," James said, "so faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). And, as our Lord Jesus Christ told us, there is no greater commandment than to "Love our neighbor as ourselves" (Mark 12:31). Through Faith in Action we'll bring glory to God as we fulfill his calling upon our lives.

So...don't just go to church-BE the church during our Faith in Action campaign!

Yours in Christ,



# Bits and Pieces

## Welcoming Marc Swenson

By Dan Mitchum--Lead Pastor

The church family enthusiastically welcomed Marc Swenson to our pastoral staff on June 1. As our associate pastor Marc oversees all aspects of adult ministries, provides coaching for student ministries, and shares in the care and feeding of the congregation.

The Swenson family is no stranger to FCCO. Marc, and his wife Ruth, have been a part of our church community for the past several years. His familiarity with our church has enabled Marc to hit the ground running in his new ministry. In his first few weeks he's already assembled an Adult Ministries Directional Team and begun laying the foundation for new Adult Fellowship and small group offerings for the fall and beyond. Marc is also coordinating our Faith in Action small groups.

Marc comes to us with proven experience in ministry. Most recently, Marc served as mentoring coordinator at Life Bridge in Wolfeboro. Life Bridge is a teen-mentoring organization designed to give today's students hope, keep them off drugs and alcohol, curb teenage pregnancy, and equip youth to make good choices. Marc has also served on the pastoral staff of churches in Connecticut and West Virginia.

Marc and Ruth have three beautiful children: Hannah, Noah, and Willow. We thank God for giving Marc to us as our associate pastor! We look forward to many years of life together in Christ.



## Two Milestones Have Been Wonderfully Reached

By Jim Cooper

We have such good reason to celebrate God's goodness and wonderful provision.

Seven years ago, in early 2003, we stepped out in faith and launched the \$2,000,000 "A Place to Call Home" capital campaign to make room for growth and increased ministry to children and adults. The experts told us we would only be able to raise \$ 1,000,000.... and initially they were right. But as we stepped out that summer to begin work on the foundations and the exterior, additional pledges kept coming in to keep the project going. We ultimately not only received the pledges needed for the expansion but also for an additional \$200,000 tithe to missions. Praise the Lord!

Those of you who were there remember how exciting it was to pray around those open foundation trenches as we tossed in wooden paint stirrers on which were written the names of people we were praying for. Then over those foundations the Children's Ministry wing and the new Atrium sprang up by the Spring of 2004. Then the Adult Education wing and the auditorium upgrades were completed and placed in service by early 2005. We have now been enjoying this wonderful church facility for 5-6 years, and isn't it

hard to remember what it was like before?

Two aspects of this project, however, took some time to completely resolve. First was the sprinkler system. It failed, flooding portions of the new facility. But God's hand continued to be with us: the building restoration was covered by our insurance, and Mike Moore came on staff with the experience and the persistence to ultimately correct a flawed sprinkler system design and installation. With the funds raised in the recent short term capital campaign, the sprinkler system has finally been completely put right, and within the \$55,000 budget. Thank you Mike for a job well done!

Secondly, an unpaid balance of some \$50,000 remained from the FLC expansion. One of our members covered this for several years with a personal loan to the church, thus saving the church considerable bank interest. Then with your contributions to the short term capital campaign, we were able to completely pay off this final obligation by late Spring of this year.

We have been given a wonderful church facility, and we are now debt free! Hallelujah! Let us praise God together! It is good to remember and thank God for all His blessings.

One final thought comes to mind, "from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" (Luke 12:48c). Let us come together with united enthusiasm and prayerful purpose as we reach out to our neighbors with the love of Jesus, this Fall.

# Adult Ministry

## Plugging Into Adult Ministries

By Marc Swenson--Associate Pastor

The adult ministry team has been hard at work this summer. We recognize that there is no formula to master or equation to complete in order to bring about growth and transformation. It is through the work of the Spirit in cooperation with the heart that change takes place. Through a combination of meeting together, listening to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and taking a look at the congregational survey results, we feel that there are two key things that God is leading us toward this fall.

1. The adult ministry will provide opportunities for everyone to **get connected into a vibrant group that fosters spiritual transformation in the context of community.**

Through the survey, we found that 35-40% of the adult population is not connected into any type of community beyond worship. We also found that there was great enthusiasm for people to get involved, specifically in the areas of Adult Fellowships on Sunday mornings and Small groups in the homes throughout the week.

We envision a church where every adult is plugging into a vibrant community characterized by love, grace, authenticity, and service. Through AFs and small groups it is our hope that every adult will have the opportunity to grow in relationship with God, share the concerns of their hearts with others, and have their eyes open to the needs of those both in and outside of the church body. We are in the process of refining our AFs and establishing leadership for new small groups this fall, providing multiple opportunities for people to plug in and grow! Are you plugged in? If not, we encourage you to step out and plug in this fall.

2. The adult ministry will provide **short-term classes on Wednesday nights to equip individuals in specific areas of the Christian life.**

It became apparent through the survey that there is a hunger to be equipped in a variety of areas. We also recognize that people have full lives. One of the key learnings from the survey was this: In terms of equipping, shorter is better. As a church we are listening!

Throughout the year we will provide an opportunity for adults to participate in 6-week classes on Wednesday nights beginning with a dinner and time of fellowship. We will offer these 6-week classes three times a year, in the fall, winter and spring. We are look-

ing to highlight the content requested through the survey, including: marriage enrichment, Bible study tools, spiritual disciplines, financial stewardship, and an Alpha course. We will also continue the Men's Fraternity study!

My prayer for every adult in our church was first spoken by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:17. "I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love." The fruit of this prayer takes place as we digest the truths of God's Word in a transformative community. We are excited to see this begin through the Faith in Action groups taking place this fall and look forward to watch how the Holy Spirit will continue to bring people into transformative communities as we kick off our fall term the week of October 10! Begin to pray about how you will plug in!

## Sojourners

Sojourners is the young adult ministry of FCCO. We invite anyone 18-35 to participate. This is a safe place to share life and grow together in Christ. This fall Sojourners will be meeting in a new venue beginning in the middle of October. If you would like to get involved, please call Michelle Gill at 603.520.8867. Keep your eye out for more information.

## Attention all Parents...

This fall there will be a great opportunity to plug into a 6 week Parenting class on Sunday mornings, beginning October 17th called Relational Parenting. It will be led by Greg Swenson. Greg has taught in Christian Education for close to 40 years, raised 4 kids of his own, and is currently the headmaster at Cornerstone Christian Academy in Ossipee. Whether you are just starting out or living with teenagers, the content of this class will be invaluable. Topics to be covered include:

- Starting out on the right foot,
- Developing relationships that bring life to your child,
- Parenting as a united team,
- Discipline is discipleship,
- Setting boundaries and establishing responsibility without pushing your child away.

In addition to all of the incredible learning that will take place, this will also be a great opportunity for parents to build new relationships, learn to rely on each other as we raise our kids together in Christ, and even have a little bit of fun! We would love for every parent with children at home to participate!

# Children's Ministry

By Sabina Robbins, Asst. Director of Children's Ministry

## High Seas Expedition

July was filled with a lot of excitement as over 190 children and 90 volunteers set sail for the High Seas of Adventure during our Vacation Bible School (VBS) week. The campus was alive with kids everywhere. They had fun **fishing** for ice cubes with bare feet, **laughing** as the high school drama team acted out Bible stories, **wondering** what was going to happen next in the Chadders movie drama, **helping** make and eat snacks, **working** on a sailboat mobile to take home at the end of the week and **singing and stomping** their hearts out during music. While it is fun and amazing to see the energy- it is more amazing still to hear when kids **"get it"**, and how they explain to other friends why Jesus is the ultimate adventure. VBS is where you hear kids ask great questions and explain the Bible to each other. **Mark next years calendar for July 11-15 - you won't want to miss it!**



## Sunday Morning Fall Schedule

Wow! Can you believe summer is over? It has been awesome!! We are ready to get back on the school schedule for children's programs. Following is the schedule:

Infants through kindergarten full care for both services in the children's wing.

**First Hour KIDZONE:** Grades 1 - 4 attend worship with parents and are dismissed after song time to the lower Family Life Center (FLC) for an interactive adventure with Kidmo! videos and the Kidzone Team.

**Second Hour (10:30-11:30):** GREAT ADVENTURE for grades 1-4 in the lower FLC. Children in each grade level connect with a shepherd who takes them to various stations to learn the Bible stories. Each Bible story is told in 4 different ways through drama, theater, science, art, cooking or games.

**CLUB 56 for 5th and 6th grade students:** Students start with relationship and game time and then settle into amazing Bible studies with Deb and Paul Chrysafidis.

All children and students will be part of the Faith In Action program by doing related Bible studies. As always, please talk with your kids about what they learned at church and what new thing they discovered about the Bible. We join you in praying for your children.

"Memorize his laws and tell them to your children over and over again. Talk about them all the time, whether you're at home or walking along the road or going to bed at night, or getting up in the morning." Deuteronomy 6:6 (CEV)

---

## Women's Ministry Breakfast

Dear Friend of Women's Ministry:

We want you to know that our church is participating in a nation-wide initiative called, Faith in Action, this fall. Our Women's Ministry team is focusing its efforts and resources on helping to turn our church "inside out" and won't be able to host a breakfast this September. Check out [putyourfaithinaction.org](http://putyourfaithinaction.org) for more information on this exciting initiative and be sure to join us on December 4th for another "Stormie" Christmas.

Sincerely yours,

The Women's Ministry Team

Save The Date!  
FCCO's Christmas  
Women's Breakfast  
December 4, 2010

Look for your detailed  
invitation later this fall.

---

### FINANCES

Operating Funds—Month End  
January 1 to July 31, 2010

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Income	\$454,393	\$515,836
Expense	\$463,989	\$515,836
Net (Loss)	(9,596)	0

# Student Ministry

By Joel Gill, Director of Student Ministry

## Junction Student Ministry: Laying the foundation for years to come!

Pastor Dan's sermon, "The Practice of Patience", was incredibly applicable to what God has done in Junction Student Ministry (JSM) over the past few years. In the four years since I have come on board, I have seen many changes take place. We've all had to be patient as God brought leaders, ideas, programs, etc. and said things like, "Wait.", "Not right now.", "Be patient."

By following God's lead and being patient, we are moving forward and laying the foundation for what will be a strong ministry that is **dedicated to seeing students in junior and senior high begin and cultivate a lifelong relationship with Jesus Christ where they, fueled by His Spirit, actively love and serve those around them for God's glory.** God has brought the right pieces together at the right time for His purpose. I am thrilled to be part of this ministry at such an exciting time.

One of the things I am most excited about is the formation of the **JSM Leadership Team.** This is a team of parents and JSM leaders speaking into the direction of the student ministry. **This team will support me as the Director of Student Ministries, the students, and leaders as well as the ministry as a whole. They will help steer the direction of our ministry to accomplish the vision and mission God has set forth and be the voice of JSM in the larger church body.** Aspects that the JSM Leadership Team oversees include, but are not limited to the following.

- *Ensuring that proper volunteer leaders are in place.*
- *Creating a cohesive curriculum from 7th to 12th grades that meets the needs of our students.*
- *Increasing the involvement of students in the life of the church.*
- *Facilitating events that would bring families together, challenge their faith, and unite them as students.*

We look forward to another great school year of programming, events, and most importantly relationships. **Our vision is to support families by providing a safe Christ-centered environment where students can explore and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, fellowship with likeminded peers, invite others into what God is doing, and find their place of service in their local church and community through the support of caring leaders.**

For junior high students, Core begins on Sun. Sept. 12th and Fusion begins Wed. Sept. 22. **At Core students will be diving into God's Word and building a strong founda-** 5

**tion on His truth.** They will begin the year with the whole church Faith in Action initiative and follow that with topics like "Who is God?", "Life of Jesus", and "Reading & Understanding your Bible".

**Fusion will again be bringing students fun, food, and lessons that will allow them to grapple with how to live for Jesus in all areas of their life.** Small groups, where students grow in an encouraging environment with peers and leaders, are a big part of Fusion as well. We encourage all students to invite their friends to a Christ-centered event where they will feel comfortable and welcomed.

Senior high students begin Core on Sun., Sept. 12th and Synthesis on Wed., Sept. 22. Senior high students will also take part in the whole church Faith in Action initiative at Core following with lessons such as "The Parables of Jesus", "Growing on your own", "The Law and the Prophets", and "The New Testament". These lessons will have students diving into God's Word and building a strong foundation on His truth.

**Synthesis will once again be a Christ-centered environment where all students, churching, non-churching, whether they know Christ or not, will feel comfortable to come and explore and grow in their relationship with Jesus.** Through large and small group settings, students will have fun, grow together as a community, and be challenged to live for Jesus through all the temptations the world throws at them.

Through patience, prayer, and most importantly, God's guidance and timing, JSM is beginning to grow and move forward. The foundation of what will be, with God's leading, a vibrant and fruitful ministry is now being built. I look forward to continued growth and many more opportunities to see students grow closer to Christ and become an even more involved part of our church family. Please pray for those involved with JSM that they would continue to follow God's lead, and pray about how you might be involved as well. We always need others with a passion to see students grow in their relationship with God and to make a difference for God's glory.

## Global Outreach

After the disaster wrought by hurricane Katrina in August 2005, a team of people went down to Mississippi to see if we at FCCO could help out in some way. The following were involved in rebuilding over five trips between 2006 and 2007: Paul Dorian, Paul Ferguson, Don Butman, George Smith, Dave Vierus, Ovide Corbeil, Paul Vallely, Chris Buerk, Dave Sargent, Bill Reed, Beth & Barry Hutchinson.

### *Ramsay Hills Baptist Church*

*13300 Joe Batt Rd.*

*Ocean Springs, Ms. 39565*

*228-392-1752*

*E-mail [RHBC2007@bellsouth.net](mailto:RHBC2007@bellsouth.net)*

*Dear friends,*

*It does not seem like five years have passed since hurricane Katrina. On that day, so very much was destroyed.*

*It seemed as though hope was gone, and there would be no way for us to rebuild.*

*As if in a miraculous way, people from all over the country began arriving to help. What a blessing from the Lord.*

*We met so many people, who not only helped in a tremendous way, but these same people became great friends. So fondly and with great love, we think of all of you, often.*

*After five years, our church is working again for the Lord. Thanks to all of you, our hopes have been restored.*

*We love each of you from the bottom of our heart.*

*On this anniversary of the hurricane, instead of dwelling on the bad, we are remembering the love and friendship of each one of you.*

*Love you  
God bless  
Preacher*