



# 2016 Annual Meeting ~~~ Colebrook Connecticut

By Rev. Geoffrey W. Smith, Pastor

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

It is my honor to invite the Fellowship of Northeast Congregational Christian Churches to the May 2016 Annual Meeting, hosted at Colebrook Congregational Church in historic Colebrook, Connecticut.

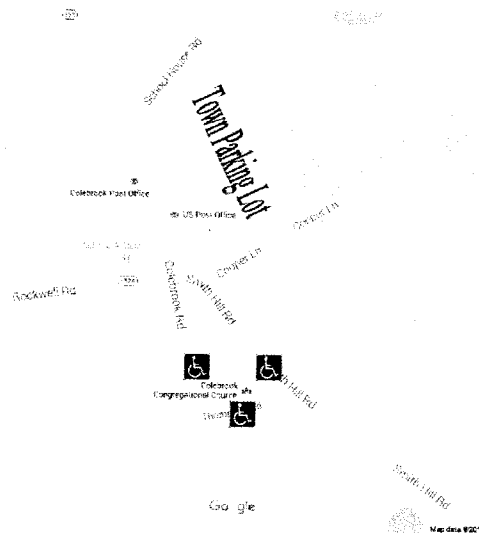
Our town was the last in Connecticut to be settled in the colonial period, and our village center is a well-preserved historic district, including the longest operating store in Connecticut. Their eclairs are the things of legends!

About parking, we ask that those who are able to park in the town parking lot next to town hall (map included), and save the limited parking around the church for those with limited mobility.

There will be a tea reception, and we ask that those participating bring cookies to share.

Our brief worship service will be on James 2, a living faith, and Jonathan Edwards, our Theologian and the father of Colebrook's first settled pastor!

After the business meeting, our dinner will be catered by the Colebrook Store. I look forward to welcoming you all to Colebrook!





## “Introducing”

On November 1st, Patricia Pryor began serving the members of Eagle Rock Congregational Church in Thomaston, CT. She is a life-long resident of Connecticut, receiving her earliest religious training at the Huntington Congregational Church in Huntington, CT, under the leadership of the well-known pastor, the Rev. Charles Smith. Currently the Pryors reside in New Hartford.

Her concentration in college was Cultural Anthropology which has provided insight into many of the differences we find between groups in the world of faith. She is also a graduate of World of Faith Bible Institute.

After a career in education as both a teacher and administrator, she felt the call to turn her attention more fully to Christian ministry. From 2008 until 2015 she was the pastor of Abundant Life Fellowship in Northfield. Prior to that, she and her husband Thomas, were active in a number of different denominations and independent churches. Mrs. Pryor is known as an avid student of the Bible and church history. In addition she enjoys the hobbies of painting and gardening.

She is the author of two recent books *The Controversial Christian Prophetess Elle G. White and Life's Lessons for Everyone*. The first is an in-depth study of the beginnings of Seventh-day Adventism and the prophetess who was their founder. The second is a devotional book helpful for personal or group Bible Study.

“The people of Eagle Rock Congregational have extended a gracious welcome to me,” she said, “and I’m enthusiastic about being part of the Lord’s work in the church here and in the community of Thomaston.”

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### ***A Message from The Pastor — Rev. Rae Munsell***

The New Year is upon us. The clean slate. The empty calendars. The time for resolutions and personal promises that begin, “THIS year I will finally...” And we always have the very best intentions, don’t we? Alas, the perseverance often fades by mid-January. Why is that? I think because resolutions and our promises to do what we have been avoiding are what we try to impose on ourselves from the outside. We have no real inner motivation to continue when we are too tired or too busy or too lazy. Perhaps a better way to start the New Year is to ask, “Lord, what would You have me do with this time You have given to me?” When God puts something in our hearts, then the motivation is from within us. And when God gives us the motivation, He will also grace us with the stamina, the steadfastness, the faith to see it through.

What new thing is the Lord gifting you with this year? Let’s take sometime to share and uphold one another as we walk together on our faith journeys in 2016.

## Pulpit Supply

By Barbara Erlendson

Did you know that pastors who are available to provide pulpit supply when your pastor is on vacation can be found on our web site ([www.ctfellowship.com](http://www.ctfellowship.com))? Their contact them directly. The fee is decided solely by the church and pastor, not the Fellowship. In fact, until recently the Fellowship would provide the name and contact number, but that was the extent of our involvement. The Fellowship, however, will be requesting from now on, that all pulpit supply pastors take the free online polity class available through the NACCC office (email Marie Steele at [msteele@naccc.org](mailto:msteele@naccc.org)). This will ensure that all pulpit supply pastors, regardless of their own tradition, will be familiar with ours.

We will also be tracking which church uses which pulpit supply pastor, so other churches with questions might be able to ask questions.

And Finally . . .

The Fellowship does provide up to \$1,000 to any church to attend the June NACCC meeting, if the following requirements have been met.:

- Attended 4 of 5 board meetings (June—March)
- Attended both semi annual meetings (May & October)
- Have contributed financially to the Fellowship
- All grant applications must be submitted by April 1

Please contact the office for an application.

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### Florence Church Goes “Robo”

Pastor Irv of Florence Church report great success with “Robo” announcements to the community “Call-em-all.com” works like a charm.. He notes that he is still building the database of names and numbers. Pastor Irv originally set it up last winter for the membership so as to quickly call the members if an event needed to be cancelled or re-scheduled. Most recently, he and his new Community Outreach Director, Rebecca Flinker have used it to promote a number of new events at Florence Church. They request names and numbers at each event noting “We want to keep you informed of all events.” Only 3 of 110 people have asked to have their names removed from the Robo’s. It’s easy to set up and costs only a fraction of what an ad in the paper would cost.

## ***FLORENCE CHURCH IS BLESSED:***

*By Rev. Dr. Irvn Gammon*

Florence Church called Rebecca Flinker to serve the church this past September. Rebecca, officially serving as the Community Outreach Director, brings creative energy and enthusiasm to the church. In addition to updating and maintaining the church website, Rebecca posts upcoming events on Facebook as well as photo and notes following activities. Most recently, she developed and proposed a fall Music Concert Series at the church. The community of Florence enjoyed an amazing selection of musical groups on Monday nights. These included community groups as well as college singers and musicians. The publicized goal of the fall concert series was the mission to support Safe Passages, a non-profit organizations assisting people subjected to domestic abuse. The Director of Safe Passages attended the concerts and was given an opportunity to speak about the important work of the organization. Donation baskets yielded \$808.00. Plans for a spring concert series is underway. We all were surprised to find a local paper photographer in attendance who noted he had heard some good things were going on.

In addition to this work, Rebecca has formed a junior choir which is blessing us with angelic voices each Sunday during Advent. There is growing interest in the choir in the community. What a blessing, indeed.

## *Hanover's Missions*

Hanover Congregational Church is involved in numerous projects that involve the adults and youth of the church and impact the local community. Beginning in 2004, before Thanksgiving, the youth collect food for the Thames Valley Council for Community Action. On a Friday evening before Thanksgiving the youth gather at the church to pack up the food for delivery and follow it with a youth event at the church. Over the years we have collected approximately 5000 pounds of food and radio station WCTY appreciates our mission-helping to feed the hungry in our communities.

We've delivered clothing to a local woman's shelter, gathered supplies for "Hope-In-a-Bag" to help women at risk living in shelters, made donation to Heifer Project and this year took on gathering toys for the Toy Closet at Yale Hospital in New Haven in conjunction with Libby's Motoworld in New Haven. Pastor Bob and his wife Therese deliver the toys on their motorcycles, though this year they took a car, also due to the quantity of toys gathered by the kids.

A relatively new mission project is our annual Mini Golf Tournament, "Sinking Holes for Cancer" to benefit the Jimmy Fund and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. This event takes place at Odetah Camping Resort in Bozrah, CT. The first year we raised \$2,000 for the Jimmy Fund and in 2015, our second year, we raised \$2,500. The golf course is the Championship Mini Golf course at the campground and we supply food and prizes. This is a great place to spend a couple of hours on a Sunday afternoon raising money for the Jimmy Fund and Dana-Farber.

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### A GOOD-BYE

*From Linda Johnson, Admin. Asst. FNCCC*

When I came to work here at the Connecticut Fellowship, as it was called at that time, in November of 1997, I was changing careers and had a lot to learn. Fortunately, everyone —everyone— I came into contact with was willing to help me through the learning process. Over the years I've met and come to admire so many wonderful people.

It's come time now for me to change "occupations" again, this time to that of retiree, along with my husband Wes (South Church Sexton), effective at the end of February. I have my list of Fellowship members' phone numbers and email addresses so you may still hear from me somewhere down the road.

*Linda*

## OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

### Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Listed below are the officers and committee members of the Fellowship and Ecclesiastical Society for the current fiscal year. If anyone wishes to contact the committees directly, please call or email the office in Hartford for contact information.

Moderator:

Rev. Dr. Irv Gammon

Assistant Moderator:

Karen Reich

2nd Asst. Moderator:

Rev. Dr. Steven Blackburn

Retiring Moderator:

Rev. Kevin Smail

Executive Secretary:

Barbara Erlendson

Recording Secretary:

Rev. Norm Erlendson

Asst. Rec. Secretary:

Karen Roy

Fellowship Treasurer:

Rev. Dr. Steven Blackburn

Asst. Fell. Treasurer:

Rev. Bobbie Chapman

Eccl. Society Treasurer:

Douglas Loux

Asst. Eccl. Society Treasurer:

Rev. Irv Gammon

Budget & Investments Committee:

Rev. Dr. Steven Blackburn, Rev. Norm Erlendson, Rev. Irv Gammon, Douglas Loux, Rev. Bobbie Chapman, Rev. Dr. Ken Wildrick, Rev. James Hill, Jr

Church Assistance & Development Committee:

Rev. Ron Lake, Rev. Lee Edwards, Rev. Kevin Smail, Rev. Stan White, Douglas Loux

Church Services Committee:

Rev. Jim DiQuattro, Rev. Norm Erlendson, Kay Page Greaser, Corrine Sternberg.

Nominating Committee:

Rev. Bobbie Chapman, Kay Page Greaser, Karen Reich, Rev. Norm Erlendson, Rev. Dr. Steven Blackburn

Pastoral Relations:

Rev. Norm Erlendson, Rev. Paul Ricard, Wendell Ritchie

Personnel:

Rev. Dr. Steve Blackburn, Rev. Rae Munsell, Rev. Kevin Smail, Rev. Bobbie Chapman, Rev. Dr. Irv Gammon

Youth & Fellowship:

Rev. Bobbie Chapman, Karen Edwards, Rev. Lee Edwards, Barbara Erlendson, Rev. Norm Erlendson, Rev. Irv Gammon, Brenda Gammon, Anna Gobar, Douglas Loux, Karen Reich.

President, Congregational Women:

Open to appointment.

Ad Hoc Committees:

Membership Committee:

Rev. Bobbie Chapman, Karen Reich, Brenda Gammon, Rev. Stan White

Ad Hoc By-Law Committee:

Sandy Dudek, Rev. Norm Erlendson, Kay Page Greaser, Rev. Rae Munsell

Ad Hoc Investment Committee:

Rev. Dr. Steven Blackburn, James Hill, Jr, Kim Kennedy, Douglas Loux,

Many thanks to last year's officers and committee members for their service to the Fellowship.

*The Fellowship of Connecticut Congregational Christian Churches, now known as the Fellowship of **Northeast Congregational Christian Churches** was formally organized in 1958 when, at its first annual meeting, the Constitution and By-Laws were adopted. The purpose of the Fellowship, as summarized by its first Moderator, Dr. Henry David Gray, is to "serve the churches and act as the agent of the churches in their cooperative work and witness of Christ."*

*The membership of The Northeast Fellowship has grown to 44 churches from not only Connecticut, but also Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York and New Jersey. Our members are old (1670) and new (2014), formal and informal, traditionalists and progressives.*

*Support of our member churches takes many forms, including financial assistance, pastoral placement services, youth activities, visioning seminars and bi-annual gatherings to conduct the Fellowship's business and to share news and information between member churches*

*The Congregational Ranger, the newsletter of the Northeast Fellowship, is published to foster communication among Fellowship churches, members, and friends. All members are invited to submit articles for publication. Please mail or call church-related news, happenings, events to:*

The Northeast Fellowship  
277 Main St, Hartford, CT 06106  
860-527-7001

-OR- email to: [connfell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:connfell@sbcglobal.net)

The *Ranger* may also be viewed on the Fellowship's website at  
[www.ctfellowship.com](http://www.ctfellowship.com)

**REMEMBER~~**

***Pray for our Fellowship, our churches, our  
pastors and people***