

The CHIMES

What's INSIDE

- 2 Financial Update
- 3 From the Pastor
I Was Wondering . . .
- 5 New Adult Classes
- 6 Missionaries Visit
- 7 Flocking
New Members
- 8 Children and Youth
- 9 Vacation Bible School
- 11 Autumn Equinox

A publication of Franconia United Methodist Church, Alexandria, VA

Mason Neck State Park—Only 14 miles from FUMC All Church Picnic

Sunday, September 28th is the date for our All Church Picnic. Make plans to attend this fun event! We will kick off the food at 3 p.m. and either nap or hike or play corn-hole and other games after that!

Make sure to bring a potluck dish to share, your own plates and utensils and whatever you'd like to drink. The church will provide hot dogs and hamburgers. We have reserved the same shelter at Mason Neck as last year, the one under the shade trees close to the playground.

Carpools are being organized and directions will be provided. **It's only 14 miles from the church** but a world away in providing a perfect and peaceful location for a fall picnic, so please come!



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

BRING:

- * Potluck Dish to Share
- * Your Own Plates and Utensils
- * Your Own Beverage

Church will provide hot dogs and hamburgers.

September



Servant Volunteers Needed

Have you noticed the increased number of children at church in recent months? Visitors and new members are bringing their children to church . . . More children means more servant volunteers are needed.

As the Children and Youth Ministries gear up this fall, you have the opportunity to serve God by assisting with Children's Church, Nursery, Sunday School, Tweens and Youth. Servant volunteers are an important element of this vital ministry at Franconia United Methodist Church.

SIGN UP TODAY!





As we prepare for the 2014 Advent season at Franconia United Methodist Church, we are seeking ways to further inspire your relationship with God through the celebration of Jesus' coming to earth at Christmas and the anticipation of His coming again.

As part of this effort, we are soliciting individual devotionals from our congregants aimed at putting Jesus at the center of our holiday season. From September 7th through October 12th, you are encouraged to write a devotional meditation which reflects your personal perspective of the Advent season and demonstrates your confidence in knowing that Jesus Christ was sent by God to live among us, and that He will come again in glory, as God has promised.

It is our hope that we will assemble a sufficient number of devotions to compile a booklet which will be distributed on November 30th the first Sunday in Advent, and will include daily devotions through Epiphany. You may include your name on your submission or may elect to submit your devotion without attribution. The devotions do not have to be long, none should be longer than one page, but they should reflect your personal relationship with God and your thoughts as we move through the Advent season. You may leave your devotionals in the box marked "Advent Devotions" in the narthex.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Dickinson.



Cindy Langan, Finance Chair

As of July 31, 2014, Franconia UMC has a deficit of budgeted offerings below budgeted expenditures of \$931. This is a decrease from our surplus as of June 30 of \$1,805. This is the result of offerings being lower than budgeted expenses. Our year-to-date offerings are approximately \$19,000 less than last year as of July 31st. Expenditures are only up about \$1,000 for the same period. Our reserves are \$19,791 compared to \$19,315 last month.

The Capital Fund balance as of July 31st is down to \$8,646 from \$10,313. The continued decrease is primarily due to the first payment on the water pipe repair. Another \$5,000 was paid in August to finish the repair. The Trustees have postponed other planned improvements to the Church property until we can replenish the Capital Fund.

The July numbers are definitely not where we would like to be and we would definitely like to reverse this trend. We are still in a fairly strong financial position. Our reserves remain solid despite the decrease in offerings. August offerings show some positive things. Offerings for the month through August 17th were \$18,055 with 2 more Sundays left and Contributions to the Capital Fund were \$3,480 due to your generous response to our plea for help to replenish it.

Franconia UMC is a very generous congregation. You have always shared generously when needs are brought to your attention. I ask that you prayerfully consider additional support for FUMC at this time, so that we can reverse this downward trend and return to a strong financial position. This will allow us to continue to follow the vision that God has given us.

Please continue to support Franconia UMC financially and with your prayers, presence, service and witness so that we can continue to move forward in the direction that God is leading us to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world!

	<u>Budgeted Offerings</u>	<u>Budgeted Expenses</u>	<u>Surplus/ (Deficit)</u>	<u>Reserves</u>	<u>Capital Fund</u>
JULY 31, 2013	\$319,399	\$301,099	\$18,300	\$10,385	\$20,275
JULY 31, 2014	\$301,180	\$302,111	(\$931)	\$19,791	\$8,646
DIFFERENCE	-\$18,249	\$1,012	-\$19,231	\$ 9,406	-\$11,629

Missionaries Visit

Left to right: Suzanne Ackley, Chair of the Missions Committee; Kip Robinson, Nancy Robinson, missionaries in Sierra Leone; and Pastor Catharine Guest. (See article on Page 6.)





By: Pastor Catharine Guest

Well, you knew it would happen. You knew you couldn't escape it. Every time you turn around I am thrusting my cell phone in your direction and saying – want to see the world's most BEAUTIFUL grandbaby girl??? You politely look (that is if you can't dodge into a doorway when you see me coming) and say "why, she's beautiful!" Which, of course, she is – but we both know so are your grandchildren, your children, your nieces, your nephews, your brothers and sisters – all babies are so beautiful! And each time a baby is born we are so very excited.

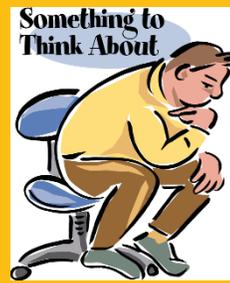
I wonder why that is? I mean after all new babies mean LOTS more loads of laundry, LOTS more stuff to carry around and put away, LOTS of toys to trip over, LOTS more planning about how to get to and from places as simple as the 7-11 and most of all, LOTS less sleep! Babies change our lives forever – they consume all the free time we used to claim for ourselves to read a book, play a round of golf, catch lunch with a friend or just sit and enjoy the quiet of our homes. Now our time is all consumed by a tiny human being that we didn't even know a few months ago! Yet, we are SO excited!

Why is that? Because a baby is a sign of

God's promise that life will go on as our Lord continues to make all things new. According to scripture God knows each of us before we are born – before we are a twinkle in our daddy's eye or a sweet smile on our momma's lips. Each child that God creates is already loved by the heavenly Father and God has plans! Plans for goodness and joy, plans for a future with hope. Hope that as we raise this child with Christian love and kindness, as we instill in this child a sense of blessing and worth, this child will become an instrument in the hands of our mighty God – and be used in a powerful way – all for God's glory. Perhaps that is why we get so excited when a baby is born: each child born is one more opportunity for things to begin again. What is it we say each and every time a child is born? THIS child is something special and indeed that is so, and we can't wait to watch that plan unfold!

As members of God's family, specifically at FUMC, we are all excited at the babies, children and youth that are coming in increasing numbers to join us. We are as excited as their parents were when these children were first born. Why? Because their presence in our midst is a tangible witness that the future of FUMC is a wonderful one. God has plans for these children and youth – and God has plans for us as we raise them together for His glory. God is making all things new! Aren't you excited? Oh, and I have pictures...would you like to see our beautiful babies?

And to God be the glory, AMEN.



**I Was Wondering . . .
What, if anything, am I supposed to do while others are receiving communion?**

Communion is a sacrament in which we participate as the whole Body of Christ as we commune not only with our Lord but also with each other. Were the communion rail large enough we would all come forward and receive the Lord's Supper together, but thanks be to God, our congregation is too large for that so we go forward in smaller groupings yet still as one body.

While we wait for the usher to invite us forward, we are invited to pray for those who go to commune before us. When our turn comes, they are invited to be in prayer for us. After receiving the elements, we have the opportunity to pray at the rail, or return to our seats where we are invited to continue in prayer for those yet to come forward.

Whichever we choose, we are called to prayer – prayer for ourselves and prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ – the communion of all saints (us) united in prayer as we remember our Lord's sacrifice and look forward to His victorious return where we will celebrate together at a table with room for all!



Koinonia Foundation Employment Opportunity

The Koinonia Foundation, a non-profit, Christian-based organization providing food, clothing, and emergency financial assistance in the Franconia/Kingstowne area, is seeking a bilingual (English-Spanish) administrative assistant to support our work with clients, staff, volunteers and donors. The ideal candidate has the requisite skills for the position, but also is patient, compassionate, and committed to making a difference in the community. This position is benefits-eligible, and currently funded for a 30- hour work week, with the possibility of increased hours in the future. For the full announcement and application process, please view this link on the Koinonia website: <http://koinoniacares.org/about/staff/>

LETTER FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During July, the Church Council reviewed security procedures within the church. As a result of that meeting, the Trustees were directed to re-key all of the doors to the church, since the locks had not been changed in a number of years.

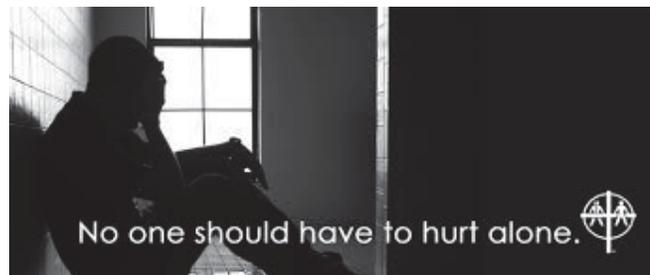
In early August, the Trustees re-keyed all of the door locks to the church, and the Trustees have been issuing new keys under our new accountability procedures to members of the church who need them. If you feel you need a key, please leave word with the Church Secretary and the Trustees will contact you about issuing you a key.

Sincerely,

Bruce Bartolain
Church Council Chair



Meeting and talking with members of FUMC over a cup of coffee following worship is a way for visitors to learn more about FUMC. Please be a part of the welcoming community at FUMC! The fellowship time following the 11 AM service is a time for greeting visitors and guests and for conveying our pleasure to see them. You can participate by volunteering to help set up and clean-up. All of the supplies will be provided for you. To sign up electronically, which will also provide you with an email reminder in the days prior to your commitment, go to: www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10C0445A8AC2CA75-postworship



Or you may want to consider becoming a Stephen Minister . . . Stephen Ministry is a program that offers the opportunity to minister to others by being a confidential listening ear, one who offers reassurance of God's love when it's difficult to recognize it. For someone going through a crisis, a Stephen Minister can be a refuge to share the pain and hurt that sometimes comes in life, when no one else seems willing to listen.

To learn more about Stephen Ministry , contact Barbara Lawrence [703-628-5283](tel:703-628-5283) or Pastor Catherine. The next Stephen Ministry training is scheduled to begin in January of 2015 and will continue to the first week in May. The training is held one evening each week for 3.5 hours.

Praise and Worship

Individuals who sing and play musical instruments are meeting on Tuesdays at 7:30 PM at the church. As efforts begin to have a Praise and Worship Service in 2015, more people are needed.

If you sing and/or play a musical instrument and would like to participate in a Praise Band, join the group on Tuesday evenings. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Catharine. You can send an email to catharine.guest@gmail.com.



RELIEVE EDITORIAL STRESS:
TURN IN YOUR ARTICLES EARLY!
RE M I N D E R :
DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES IS
SEPTEMBER 15

10 Biblical Traits Your Kids Will Remember You For

Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott
 Begins September 21 at 9:45
 In the 'parlor'

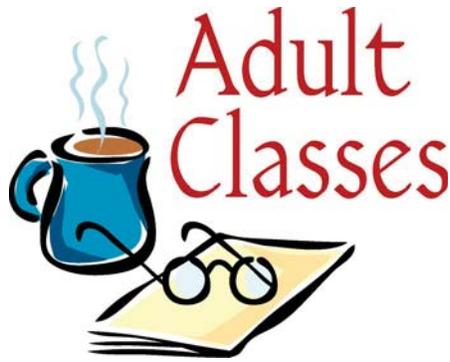
Bring your children to Sunday School and join other parents in conversation!

Who you are matters more than what you do. When your kids are all grown up, how will they remember you? In 6 video based sessions, Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott will take you through a parenting approach you won't find in any other parenting resource.

In reality TV style, take a sneak peek at the real-life parenting moments and vulnerable questions from 20 families.

Discover 10 Biblical traits that will make you a better person and a better parent. Then begin to intentionally pass on key traits to your kids.

Sign up by September 10 with Pastor Catharine so that we can be sure to have materials for you!



I Wish Jesus Hadn't Said That!

Steve Timmis

Two opportunities to meet:
Sunday, 6 PM, beginning October 5
Tuesday, 7PM, beginning September 23

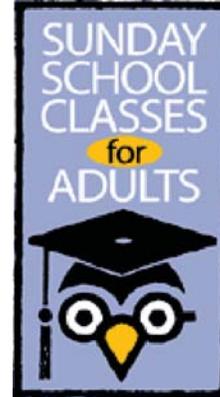
Some reviews:

"A humble, witty, honest, and wise sage explores some of the hard sayings of Jesus and makes them clear and compelling."

"For a Christianity that has been lulled to sleep by a pleasant, self-help Messiah, this book is the awakening course-correction. In chapter after chapter, Steve Timmis brought me back to the sayings of Jesus I thought I'd made peace with and showed me afresh the tension His words were meant to create in the hearts of His hearers."

We may wish that Jesus hadn't said these things, but . . . I'm sure glad He did!

Sign up by September 10 with Pastor Catharine so we can have materials for you!



Seekers Class to Study Old Testament

Beginning September 7, the Seekers Adult Sunday School class will begin a study of the Old Testament using one of The

Great Courses video series. The course will "offer an introduction to the history, literature, and religion of ancient Israel and early Judaism as it is presented in the collection of texts called the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible, and the Tanakh."

The lectures in this series will be presented by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, a professor at the Vanderbilt University Divinity School. She has earned degrees from Smith College and Duke University and has written and lectured extensively on Old Testament topics.

Please join us in September for this series. Help us interpret what these ancient writings mean for us today. The Seekers meet in Room 305A (third floor) of Cokesbury Hall beginning about 9:30 (after the conclusion of the first service). We break at 10:30 to accommodate our choir members.

Come for a Sunday or a number of Sundays. You will always be welcome.

Reminder

One Stop for Announcements

Franconia United Methodist Church now has a single, easy-to-remember, email address to which you can send information that you or a ministry team would like to have publicized in the Chimes, on the outdoor sign, in a press release, on the electronic bulletin board and/or in the bulletin. The address is: news@franconiaumc.org

Anything you send to "news" will be forwarded automatically to everyone who is responsible for publicity. You no longer have to think about where or how you would like your information published or announced or whom to contact to make that happen. A single email to news@franconiaumc.org will inform everyone who can help you spread the word about your news or announcement.

Missionaries Visit FUMC in August

On Sunday, August 10th, we were blessed to be joined by Kip and Nancy Robinson, our missionaries to Sierra Leone. Kip preached a sermon entitled "Milk Comes in a Can" at both services, while Nancy handled Children's Church.

Nancy presented a slide show during the Mission breakfast about their lives and mission in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Nancy described the mission they set up outside Freetown, the challenges they've faced and their hopes for the future. Nancy discussed the civil war in Sierra Leone that destroyed much of the infrastructure in the country and the Ebola virus that is currently ravaging the country.

Both Nancy and Kip spoke about their worries for their friends back in Sierra Leone given the outbreak of the Ebola virus. For Nancy, their current exile is a painful reminder of her family's exile from Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia), when she was a child. The family had to leave everything behind.

Nancy is responsible for leadership training for both clergy and laity in the areas of worship, including music; sacramental theology and practice; and stewardship.

Kip is responsible for providing hospitality to visiting mission teams and overseeing mission projects, including building schools run by the Methodist church. The United Methodist Church operates a network of elementary and secondary schools, four hospitals, and several other health facilities in Sierra Leone and anticipates establishing a school of theology in the near future.

Continued on page 8

Attention On-line Shoppers...

The goal of the UMC's Corporate Partner Program (an arm of the General Council of Finance and Administration (GCFA) is to help local churches generate non-traditional revenue streams.

UMCmarket.org is its newest program. By downloading the UMCmarket browser application, you will be able to create micro-donations to FUMC every time you shop online. This is done at no cost to you or to the church. Go to <http://www.umcmarket.org> to discover more about how this works.

Please know the goal for UMCmarket is NOT to promote shopping, but to encourage us to slightly change our existing online shopping habits in a way that will benefit the missions and ministries of Franconia UMC.

The list of retailers is varied: gifts and flowers, books, electronics, and home products, as well as travel and car rentals...and a lot more. If you shop online, please consider giving UMCmarket.org a closer look.

Or Shop at AmazonSmile...

Online shoppers can use UMCMarket to benefit Franconia UMC or can go to AmazonSmile to support UMCOR or another charitable organization you may choose.

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases on [AmazonSmile](https://www.amazon.com/amazonsmile) to the charitable organization of your choice.



Choose **United Methodist Church & Its Affiliated Organizations** to support UMCOR when you shop at smile.amazon.com.

What is UMCOR?

Compelled by Christ to be a voice of conscience on behalf of the people called Methodists, UMCOR works globally to alleviate human suffering and advance hope and healing.

UMCOR, which is the United Methodist Committee on Relief., was established in 1940 and continues today to provide humanitarian relief when war, conflict,

or natural disaster disrupt life to such an extent that communities are unable to recover on their own.

UMCOR's work reaches people in more than 80 countries, including the United States. our goal is to assist the most vulnerable persons affected by crisis or chronic need without regard to their race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. This goal is based on the belief that all people have God-given worth and dignity.

Autumn brings falling temperatures and the need for a warm wrap. A prayer shawl from Franconia UMC can give your friend or relative the warmth and support of prayer. Wonderful for babies too. Contact the Prayer Shawl Committee— Sandra or Suzanne Ackley at 11 AM service or Debbie Gordon at 8:30 AM service.



You Have Been “Flocked”

When you wake up one morning to see pink plastic flamingos in your yard, you have been flocked.

The Franconia UMC Youth Group is beginning a “flocking” fundraiser to support the Youth Ministry Mission Trip in 2015.

Here’s how it works:

1. Complete a pink (of course) form providing the name and address of the friend to be flocked. Place the form and your check in the box in the narthex or the box in Cokesbury. Please indicate on the form any special instructions, such as a specific date, to make sure the recipient enjoys the complete experience!
 - For a donation of \$15, the youth will place 12 flamingos in the yard of the designated friend. For a donation of \$30, the flocking will include 24 flamingos.
 - You may choose to let the friend know who you are or you can keep it a secret.
2. The flock of flamingos will be placed in your friend’s yard quietly “under cover of darkness” so that your friend will find the flock to welcome in the new day.
 - A sign in the yard will indicate that the “flocking” was done by the Youth of Franconia United Methodist Church.
3. The flock will be removed “under cover of darkness” the following night so that another home might

become the temporary roost of our pink feathered friends!

4. If you absolutely do not want to be flocked, you can buy anti-flocking insurance for \$15 and you will be safe ...for this year. (Forms for anti-flocking insurance are also available in the narthex and in Cokesbury.)

We hope you will participate in this opportunity to put the FUN in FUNdraiser!

Flocking requests may be made through Sunday, October 19. All flocking will be completed by the end of October.

If you have questions, contact Mende Wentzel at dcym@FranconiaUMC.org.

Note: Unfortunately, flamingos are not allowed to flock on public property or at apartment complexes.



Remember that flocking is a sign of Friendship and Love! Enjoy flocking others and smile when you are flocked!

A New Viewpoint

(With apologies to Luke for the loose paraphrase of Luke 18:9-14)

By: James E Magaw

Two persons went up to the church to pray.

One said, “I thank you God

That I am the defender of the status quo.

I am against every change that is proposed,
And I will never be any different.

I will protect and defend the old ways
Because the new ways are always wrong.”

The second said, “I thank you God

That I am not like the other person.

Every time a new bandwagon comes along,
I jump and hold on tight

Until the next one comes along.

I will never be accepting of the traditional,
Because the old ways are always wrong.”

A third person came into the church to pray,

But instead of talking and threatening and boasting,

Listened to the beautiful music of God’s good news.

That person’s heart was filled with new life
And new ways of looking at the world around her.

She left with a smile on her face

And the warm love of God in her heart.

When she came back,

She was followed by dozens of others,

Transformed by one who listened to God.

From: [Alive Now](#) July/August 2014



Joined Franconia UMC on August 17

Josephine Coker

Alison and Eric Plessinger

* Baptized

Victoria Alexis Plessinger

Christian Michael Plessinger

Kennon Cooksey

Amy and Ryan Shaffer

* Grace and Jacob

Curt Wilson

Continued from page 6

Missionaries Visit

After the 11 o'clock service, a reception was held in Cokesbury Hall. In true Methodist tradition, no one left hungry. A tradition carried out in Sierra Leone as well, as Kip and Nancy said every visitor to the mission is fed.

Before they left, Nancy presented Suzanne Ackley, FUMC's Missions Chairperson, with a doll from Sierra Leone. The doll (the one on the left in the photo below) will be donated to the History Committee and be put on display in the History Room on the lower level.



The Children and Youth Ministries are excited to kick off the new year on Sunday, September 7. Bible Study and Fellowship is available for all ages of Children and Youth and the Nursery is fully staffed on Sunday Mornings from 8:15 AM - 12:30 PM.

Sunday School for children from Age 3 through the 6th grade is at 9:45 in the Sunday School wing. The curriculum is *Grow, Proclaim, Serve* by Abingdon Press. The children are divided into classes by ages and are currently in the third year of the three-year cycle that covers the entire Bible. Sharon Pappajohn and Libby Hall are the Lead Teachers.

Children from ages 3 through 3rd grade are dismissed to attend Children's Church in Cokesbury following the Children's Time in the 11 AM Worship Service. The curriculum is "The Story" for preschool and early elementary children by Max Lucado. The 31-week series gives an overview of the entire Bible.

The Tweens (4th- 6th grades) will meet on Sunday Evenings in the Tween Room, upstairs next to the Youth Room. The Bible Study segment of the evening is using the curriculum, "The Story for Kids." The rest of the evening will be divided between music, games, fellowship, and business (as they learn to plan for themselves what they want to accomplish as a group).

The Youth Group (7th—12th grades) will continue to meet weekly from 6:30 to 8:30 pm on Sunday Evenings in the Youth Room on the 3rd Floor. We will be continuing with "The Story for Teens" during the Bible Study time. The other half of the evening is games, fun, fellowship, and business. The members of the Youth Group have grown so much in the past year in planning their own events and activities and the new year will be an exciting one!

Beginning Sunday, September 14

Weekly Bible Study and Fellowship 6:30-8:30 PM

Tweens (4th, 5th, 6th Grades)
(Music 6:30—7:00 PM)
Tween Room
3rd Floor

Youth (7th—12th Grades)
Youth Room
3rd Floor



Official City Bird of Madison, Wisconsin

It doesn't fly and it's certainly not native to Madison, Wisconsin. But in 2009, on the 30th Anniversary of the Bascom Hill Pink Flamingo prank, the Madison City Council voted 15-4 to make the plastic pink flamingo the official city bird.

UW-Madison students woke up to see a flock of the birds on Bascom Hill on the first day of classes on September 4, 1979.

The Pail and Shovel Party, a collection of merry pranksters on campus, set up 1,008 of the lawn ornaments as a prank.

Announcement of Resignation

Dear Members of Franconia United Methodist Church,

This week I submitted my Official Letter Of Resignation as the Director of Children's and Youth Ministries at Franconia United Methodist Church. My family responsibilities have changed this past year and are at a point where I need to be able to be out of town for unexpected and extended periods of time and thus I am unable to continue as a paid staff member.

This was not an easy decision for me. Bruce and I have prayed about it and sought the counsel of family and close friends, just as we did before I applied for and accepted the position nearly a year ago. I love my job and all the people associated with it but my family needs to become my priority at this time. It has been a joy to work with the children and youth and their families, as well as the entire staff and the congregation. We have been blessed as the ministries have grown and flourished. Bruce and I would like to continue being a part of FUMC and serve where God leads. We both feel FUMC is our church home.

Thank you for your incredible support of the ministries I have been privileged to serve this past year. Your unending love and support have been such a precious

blessing to me and to Bruce. We love being a part of Franconia UMC, the ministries and the fellowship. Each one of you has made an impact on our lives and you have truly lived the love of Christ. Bruce and I look forward to continuing to serve in ministry with you and nurturing the friendships God has given us.

Thank you, Pastor Catharine, for your leadership, encouragement, and prayers for my ministry at FUMC. We have been a good team, working together to nurture the children and youth in their faith and their growth as children of God. I cherish our friendship in Christ and pray it will continue to grow as God continues to Bless us in new ways.

Thank you, members of the SPPRC [Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee], for your confidence in hiring me and ongoing confidence and guidance in my ministry at FUMC throughout the year. I am grateful to have come to know each one of you.

May God Bless you and keep you in His Loving Care today and always.

Love in Christ,

Mende Wentzel

Director of Children's and Youth Ministries

Change or Transformation

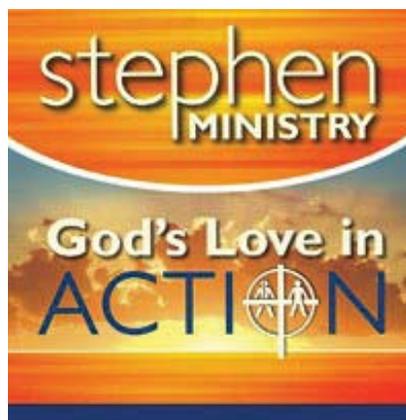
By: Flora Slosson Wueller

We are surrounded, overwhelmed, battered, swept along by outer change. The inner self adapts, adjusts, survives, but too often does not undergo any deep transformation. We have reacted rather than acted.

This is the great, grave distinction between change and transformation. Change refers to adaptation, reaction, without necessarily involving any *newness of being*. Transformation implies new being, a new creative energy flowing from the center which acts with creative power upon surrounding events.

Source: [Alive Now](#), July/August 2014

If you know someone who is hurting who may benefit from Stephen Ministry, please let Barbara or Pastor Guest know. Stephen Ministry is confidential and we will not be able to disclose whether someone has a Stephen Minister caring for them. But we will certainly pray for all who are lifted up as having serious troubles and are in need of God's special care.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2014

Thoughts on the New Vision

By: Elaine Balducci



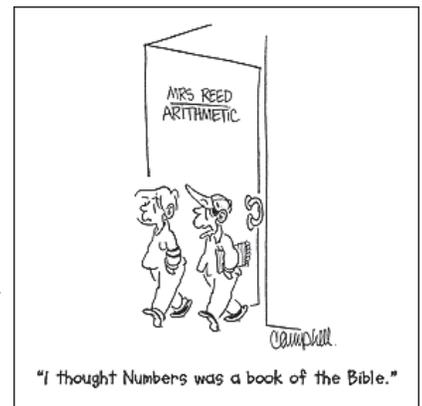
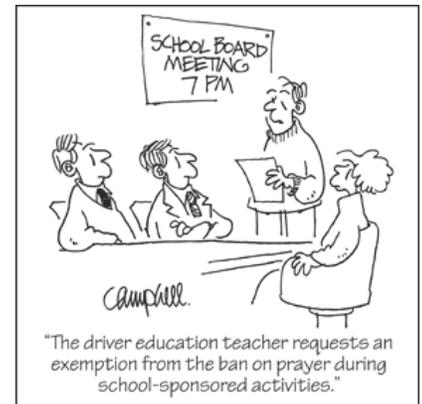
When asked to be a member of the Church Council at Franconia United Methodist Church, I was reluctant. My plate was full and I wasn't sure what the expectations were. But that little voice inside me said accept the invitation and see what happens. Now I know it was God tugging at me and now I see where God is doing some wonderful things through FUMC and it is very exciting!

Recently, at the off-site meeting of the Church Council, we went through a very interesting exercise of mapping out all the ministries in which Franconia United Methodist Church is involved. It was truly mind boggling to actually see how our church does so very much, and with such limited resources. The exercise was the first step of several in an effort to determine how we can move forward in supporting our church vision and ultimately reach out into our community in an effort "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." The process will continue with the next step requiring all the ministry teams to take a closer look at the activities and determine if they fit into the vision of the church. Once complete, the Church Council will review the various activities and further determine where God wants us to focus our efforts.

You can imagine how difficult and somewhat painful this will be as many of the ministries have been passionately nurtured for many years. It will be a challenge to set aside personal feelings and really listen to what God wants us to do.

There are exciting changes on the horizon for Franconia United Methodist Church and the Church Council is working mindfully, diligently and most importantly, prayerfully to follow God's plan.

I am honored to be part of the Church Council and so glad I followed His tug.



Not Necessarily Called

Even when a need exists and we are well qualified to meet it, we are not necessarily called to respond to it. Something may seem logical for us to do, but that does not mean that God calls us to do it.... Similarly, simply because a task or undertaking is good to do does not mean that we are called to do it or that we should continue doing it. To be doing what is good can be the greatest obstacle to doing something even better.

By: Suzanne Farnham et al

Source: [Listening Hearts](#)

PINK PLASTIC FLAMINGO LAWN ORNAMENT

Don Featherstone, a plastics company employee, designed the first lawn flamingo in 1957. Pink **plastic flamingos** are one of the most famous lawn ornaments in the United States.

The plastic pink flamingo has become an icon of pop culture. Featherstone won the Ig Nobel Prize for Art in 1996 for the creation of the flamingo lawn ornament.

The Ig Nobel Prize, a parody of the Nobel Prize, is awarded annually for ten unusual or trivial achievements. The awards are sometimes veiled criticism (or gentle satire), but are also used to point out that even the most absurd-sounding avenues of research can yield useful knowledge. Ig Nobel is a play on the words ignoble (characterized by baseness, lowness, or meanness) and the Nobel Prize.

Featherstone and his wife Nancy live in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, where they keep 57 plastic flamingos on their front lawn.



THE AUTUMN EQUINOX

The autumnal equinox is the first day of fall. For most people, fall is a time that ushers in harvests, preserving food for the upcoming months, enjoyment of the colors of the changing leaves and beginning to prepare oneself both physically and psychologically for the upcoming colder months. For Keats, the famous poet, fall was the "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness". A beautiful season, fall is filled with color, crisp days and provides an excuse to indulge in great foods. And it all begins with the first day of fall.

Understand the meanings associated with the autumnal equinox. The Equinox is the day when both the daytime and nighttime are of the same length, which has been long interpreted to mean that the world is in balance. Once the autumnal equinox passes, the nights begin to get longer and the temperatures will start to fall. Autumn is a time of dual purpose—time to gather the main harvests and time to determine what is needed for the upcoming winter. Fall is considered the season of balance, a time during which you can restore balance to your own life.

Consider staying up during the night to welcome autumn. Many people like to welcome in fall by remaining awake all night, to honor the equal length of day and night. Perhaps hold a small dinner party for friends and feature autumn flavors, such as squash, pears and apples. (You may choose just to stay up until midnight instead.)

Set up a display to welcome autumn. If you want to share your joy at the arrival of fall, consider building a display featuring autumnal items like pumpkins and straw in your yard. You might want to include a scarecrow or even spelling out words such as "Welcome to fall!". Your display could also be an expression of your gratitude to God for the harvest from the Earth.

Be creative. For those who love crafts, autumn is a great time to start some fall-inspired projects. Fall crafts you might consider: Make leaf prints, craft a fall wreath, frame fall foliage for decoration, and make corn stalk decorations. For those who love food craft, fall is the ideal time to make preserves and pickles.

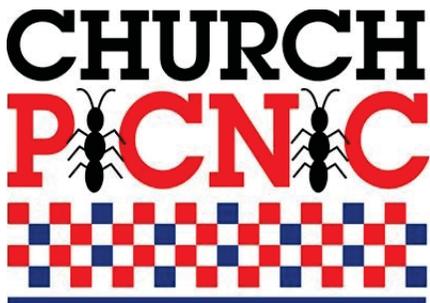
Make a list of your inner harvest. An inner harvest refers to the achievements and experiences that you have had during the past few months. As you realize what you have done with God's help and how you have coped with challenges during the past months, you can restore gratitude in your life. Be grateful to God for what you have accomplished.

Express your fall awe. If you are a photographer, artist or writer, try to capture the essence of fall in photo, artwork or word form. Don't just focus on the changing leaves and bountiful harvests; consider the deeper meanings of the season as they resonate with you.

Turn your home into a haven. Fall is the time of the year when people begin to turn from outdoor pursuits and start moving back indoors more often. (Of course, don't let it stop you from making the most of the glorious sunny fall days outside!) It's a good time to restore balance in the home, to give it a spruce up before the upcoming holidays and before winter arrives.

Pray. Autumn is a season when the buzzing activity of summer dies down and the excitement of life outdoors begins to relax into the more evenly paced, more predictable rhythm of fall. Think about the ways you may have neglected your spiritual growth and how you can renew your commitment to God. Try to find your balance, in the same way that the world finds its balance on the autumnal equinox.

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See Details Inside—Page 1

The CHIMES

SEPTEMBER 2014



Sunday, September 7: Grandparents Day

Thursday, September 11: Patriot Day, Remembering those who were injured or died on 9/11/2001

Tuesday, September 23: First Day of Autumn

Thursday, September 25: Church Council Meeting, 7:30 PM, Stage Room

Sunday, September 28: All-Church Picnic, 3:00 PM—7:00 PM, Mason Neck Park

Sunday, October 5: Blessing of the Animals

Tuesday, October 7: FUMC Charge Conference, 7:30 PM



Franconia United Methodist Church is a multi-generational, Christ-centered community called to reach out to the young adults and families in the Franconia/Kingstowne area. We welcome all and together respond to the challenges of daily life through worship, study, and fellowship. As led by the Holy Spirit, through dynamic and innovative ministries, we will make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Pick Up “The Chimes”

To save on the increasing cost of postage, we are asking that those who do not receive the newsletter by email, please pick up a copy at church. Copies will be available in the narthex and in Cokesbury Hall. Beginning with the October issue, “The Chimes” will be mailed ONLY to members who are homebound or reside out of town.

