



∞ THE BEACON LIGHT ∞

† JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016 †

First Congregational Church of Riverhead

An Open and Affirming United Church of Christ
103 First Street Riverhead, New York 11901
Tel: 631-727-2621 ♦ Web: www.fccr.us

∞ PASTOR'S NOTE ∞

Dear Friends and Members of our First Congregational Church,

With thanks to God, we've really turned a corner. We're back in our sanctuary and into a new year of hope and promise.

January. It always seems like a pretty big deal to me. Although it includes two national holidays, and the weather tends to lend itself for staying in, I find it a most intriguing, engaging, and energizing month.

January is a time for looking back and looking ahead. In our personal lives, it is the number one time for new resolutions, largely focused on health and well being. It's when we take in the good, the bad, and the indifferent of last year and change it into the hopeful. Or perhaps, *not...*

After so many New Years, it is easy for some of us to simply ignore the New Year. After so many good thoughts, even plans; that came to naught, we've given it up. For some, New Year's Eve isn't celebrated; it's ignored. Then it comes and goes and nothing has changed. Life goes on, and it is what it will be, one day at a time.

Here's a thought...why not set a goal or two? You're wiser now, so make them realistic. Expand the thoughts, and go for not only what will make you better, but also what will make you *and us* better. God would like that. You will too.

Ideas:

-Spending more time with people, people outside of your regular environment, your dwell-and-stew places, is good for you. Volunteer. Get involved. Come to church. Get out of your head and your own world. Interact and be invigorated. Invigorate others with your presence. Make a difference which you can by your presence alone.

-Learning is not only fundamental but fun, and a mental plus. Sign up for a class or seminar this year. Come to Bible study (Friday mornings beginning again Feb. 5). Read more. Join Scribblers or keep a journal entirely for yourself. You'll be better, and we'll be better with you.

-Make more room for God in your life. Prayer happens, but you can make it more of a routine. Pray before you eat. Pray with your morning breakfast or beverage. Pray with lunch...and dinner. Pray before bed. If you've got those things down, add another time, and read a little of that Good Book you have tucked away close by. And be sure to come to church and join us for worship.

Here at church, we'll be sure to keep the opening of the year, both January and February, a time of genuine transition as we move on thoughtfully and prayerfully from the past, and plan and make plans. As the following pages reflect, we've been busy and we hope, with the help of God, to remain so.

Principal hopes and plans focus on affording the repair to sanctuary. We've spent about \$340,000 and have raised to date, with thanks to God, you and others, about \$100,000. That does leave us with a bunch to raise, and to do. Fortunately, none of the money we've raised to date includes grant funds. We should see some grant money in the next few months, but the high bar will remain. Consequently, we have fundraisers planned. The first is the brunch at the Dark Horse Restaurant on Jan. 24, and then will come our major and wonderful "Raise the Roof" choral and orchestral concert and auction at the Suffolk Theater on April 24th -- SAVE THE DATE. We're also moving steadily ahead with our journal sales, and raffle, so we remain optimistic that we can reach that \$250,000 (not including grant money) that we've set. But we continue to need your help. If you're not yet involved with our Capital Campaign, please know you can be. Buying a raffle ticket, selling a spot in the journal, and/or offering a service to raffle off are all grand ideas.

As for worship, here are a few things that you should definitely keep in mind in the weeks ahead:

- The Riverhead Clergy Council's Annual Service for Christian Unity will be held January 24 this year, at 4:00pm. St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church is our host.

- Lent starts early this year. Ash Wednesday is February 10. We will celebrate Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday with our sister UCC churches. This year, we will host the Ash Wednesday service and that is at 7:00pm. (Maundy Thursday will be at Baiting Hallow and Good Friday at Old Steeple).

-Then throughout Lent the Riverhead Clergy Council will again offer midweek services at 7:00 each Wednesday night. The first, on Feb. 17, will be held at Riverhead United Methodist Church. The service on the 24th will be at Old Steeple Church. In March, we're at the House of Praise on the 2nd, then we host the service on the 9th, and we close it out with a special service at St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church on March 16th. (We'll have reminders in the bulletin each week).

My prayer for us all is that we have a very blessed and genuinely happier 2016 than we had in 2015. Let God embrace you in each day, and look ahead with hope in your heart. It's going to be a great year, and we're already off to a fine start. Praise be to God.

Peace and smiles,
Pastor Sean

☞ CAPITAL FUND CAIMPAIGN ☞

Our "church family", has donated over \$57,865 towards the Capital Fund Campaign in the first year of our campaign. And that does not include all the time and effort that so many of you have put forth in support of the campaign or that you have pledged another \$38,140 next year. On behalf of the Capital Fund Campaign, I thank you for your continued and outstanding generosity.

Thankfully, we are worshipping again in our sanctuary and have raised nearly \$100,000 to date which is a lot of money, BUT we cannot get complacent; there is still a lot of work to be done and bills to be paid. The campaign will continue and we have two major fund raising projects under way that needs everyone's support, the Cash Raffle Ticket Sales and the *Raise the Roof Concert and Auction*.

The following is an accounting for the monies received for the campaign:

Member Donations - \$57,865	Friends/Community Donations - \$18,866
Memorials - \$1,610	Street Fair - \$200
Go Fund Me Account - \$8150	Cooperage Dinner - \$3,692
Suffolk Theater Concert – est. \$3,780	Santacon – est. \$3,265
Children's Car Wash - \$466	

The Cash Raffle ticket sale is being chaired by Bunny Burns. As of this writing, 208 ticket have sold. In order for us to make the planned \$24,000 by the April drawing, we need to sell another 392. Please ask your friends and neighbors if they want to buy or share the purchase of a few tickets.

THE major fund raiser of the year is the *Raise the Roof Concert and Auction* which will be held on Sunday, April 24 at the Suffolk Theater. George Moravek (prior church minister of music) will conduct the Raise the Roof Singers in concert and the Island Jazz Express big band will perform. We will honor Judy and Barry Barth for their dedicated work for those in need and the Town of Riverhead and hold a Chinese Auction, Silent and Live Auction at the event. The greatest opportunity for generating income is in the sales of advertisement space for our *Raise the Roof Concert and Auction* souvenir event journal. All of these different components of the event will bring in significant monies for the campaign. If we get enough advertisements, we have the potential of earning \$20,000 for journal alone. The event will have two different ticket sale categories; one will be \$35 for general admission ticket which will be available only through the theater box office and the other is a VIP reception ticket for \$100 available from Barbara Parsons. We will be mailing save-the-date notices in late January followed by invitations in March to people we want to invite to the event; send names, email addresses and mailing addresses to Nancy Rep or Marion Maino at nrepp@aol.com or mjmainsail@aol.com.

If we ALL do our part, we have the potential of meeting our objective for the first year of the campaign. Please contact any one or all of the following committee chairs to find out how you can help:

<u>Chair</u>	<u>What you can do</u>
Bunny Burns, Cash Raffle Tickets Sales	727-1576 <i>Sell ticket to neighbors and friends</i>
Nancy Repp, Journal Advertisements	288-9215 <i>Help sell advertisements for event journal</i>
Carol Gorman, Chinese Auction	369-2877 <i>Donate or solicit gift basket/help day of the event</i>
Sue Conrad, Silent and Live Auction	793-2801 <i>Donate or solicit auction items/help day of the event</i>
Barbara Parsons, VIP ticket sales	727-3106 <i>Promote ticket sales to friends and neighbors</i>
Pat Discioscia, email address listing	284-3523 <i>Submit addresses for save-the-date and invitation</i>

On January 24, the Dark Horse Restaurant is opening its doors to the public for a Sunday Brunch which will benefit OUR capital fund campaign. Jane Joerchel is in charge of the brunch and you can help by purchasing tickets and/or promoting the brunch to friends and neighbors. We will be sending invitations to all the churches and hope to have the event in all their bulletins. Although this event will not bring in the big monies like the spring event, it will be another few thousands that will help to pay our restoration bills.

It is going to take ALL of us working together to raise the funds necessary for us to restore our beautiful church.

~ Marion Maino
For the Committee

☞ CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ☞

The fall Bible Study finished Exodus just as Advent began. An average of twelve people were in attendance each week. Pastor Sean will lead a Lenten/Spring Bible Study beginning on Friday, February 5th, with a discussion of Deuteronomy. Bible Study meets in the parish hall so there is plenty of room! Please plan on joining in the fun!

College kits were assembled and mailed or delivered to seven of our youth. Included in the boxes were notes written by the Sunday School children. Thanks to all for their generous donations of goodies and supplies for these kits!

If you were in attendance on Sunday, December 20th, you had the delightful opportunity to see our children and youth light and extinguish the candles, do readings, take up the collection AND deliver the message, entitled "A Visit From Santa". With AJ Walker as the narrator, Matt LaCombe as Santa, and assistants Alivia Wooten, Kiersten Corwin, Peyton LaCombe and Otis Pike the children and youth gave new meaning to some ordinary symbols of Christmas.

AJ Walker, Shelly Walker and James Wooten have brainstormed some ideas for a letter to Bill and Melinda Gates, asking for funds for our church from their foundation. James is drafting the letter, which will also include pictures from the car wash and the grocery shopping.

Lenten banks will be handed out during the service on February 7 and collected at the end of Lent. Proceeds will be used to purchase groceries for those in need and to address other needs of the LICC Food Pantry.

Confirmation class will continue to meet every other Sunday with James Wooten. Pastor Sean also hopes to find a time when he can meet with the youth and their parents. Welcome back to Kiersten Corwin! She has rejoined AJ Walker and Matt LaCombe in the Confirmation class.

~ Ginger Duvall

~ BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS ~

The year 2015 was an incredible year in the life of our church. The year began with us trying to determine what was going on with the east wall. We hired Steward Preservation to do a building assessment and investigate the east wall problem. The report was not good. Three of the main trusses holding up to roof had failed and the wall was leaning badly.

We hired Tim Rielly to come up with an engineering plan and RC Construction to do the work. The day the work was to begin it was determined that the wall had moved significantly in the previous few days and the roof was coming down. The entire building was in danger of collapse and had to be shored up with cribbing. Luckily and with God's help the building was saved.

As the work progressed more structural damage was revealed. The project was growing as the weeks progressed. As it turned out, the entire ceiling had to be removed, new ceiling joists installed and the three main trusses reinforced with steel plates. The walls had to be pulled in about a foot and the roof jacked up about 9 inches.

With all of that movement, the roof sheathing and shingles were no longer secured to the rafters. We had no choice but to remove all of that as well, and to install new sheathing and new roof shingles. The entire restoration took almost 7 months. I can assure everyone that we will never again have to worry about structural issues in the sanctuary.

Our hope and prayer was to have all of the work done by Christmas Eve. Every one of our contractors shared the same dream. They all worked hard to get it done. The last month workers were there 7 days a week. We could here the sounds of construction during our Sunday Service. In the end, construction was completed on Dec 22nd. Volunteers from the congregation were there on the 23rd to clean and decorate for Christmas.

Our Christmas Eve service was incredible. The joy of the season, the joy of being back in our beloved sanctuary, what a Christmas gift from our Lord.

Submitted by
~ Ron Blake

~ FELLOWSHIP/SOCIAL ~

Coffee hour after church is a time to relax and visit with fellow worshippers. Volunteers are always needed to provide something to eat and prepare coffee (store bought goodies are fine). The signup sheet is on the kitchen door in the fellowship hall.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The women of the Prayer Shawl Ministry continue crocheting hats and scarves for Maureen's Haven. The group meets each Thursday at a different member's home and share fellowship and fun. Come join us for the fun and needlework. Contact any of us to find the location.

The group includes, Jane Jones, LuAnne Seaman, Nancy and Sandy Daniels, Bunny Burns, Barbara Parsons, Fran Nill, Pat DiScioscia, Ginger Duvall and Marion Stark. A big thank you goes to Judy Blake who can't attend our weekly get-togethers, but makes beautiful pieces.

~ Marion Stark

LADIES NIGHT

The women of the church meet on the last Thursday of each month. This is an informal get together and the participants vary from month to month. It is open to all and is a wonderful opportunity for us to get to know each other. If you would like to join us, please let Deedee know by phone (631 369-9379) or by e-mail (deedeenewc@aol.com).

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND EVANGELISM

Most of the work of this Deacon Committee has been to promote the fund raising events for the Capital Campaign Committee. WLNG has been a vital outlet for advertising our Classic Rock Concert, Dark Horse Tavern Brunch and our Indoor yard sale. WLNG has agreed to air the drawing of the cash raffle, live on air on April 1st, Radio reminders as to save the date, April 24th, for our Raise the Roof concert at the Suffolk Theatre are also aired frequently. Newsday, Dan's Papers and the News Review Group have also publicized the aforementioned events. We are becoming a force to reckon with on Facebook thanks to the support of Kenyon Conrad and Nancy Repp. Even if you are not on Facebook, you can Google our page by entering First Congregational Church of Riverhead Facebook in the search bar. Please check our web page for a list of current events as well as a link to the CBS coverage of our Christmas Eve Service. If you do not have Internet access, please speak to someone on the committee. (Sandy Gruner, Jane Kulesa, Jane Joerchel, Bunny Burns or Pastor)

The evangelical piece of the Committee occurs every time we gather to share fellowship or work together to achieve our Capital Campaign goals. Promoting our church through the media outlets and inviting others to share in church activities is an evangelical exercise. This will be further enhanced by the Journal Committee as they go out into the community to tell our story and ask for their support. The journal will be handed out at the April 24th event. (See description of the event elsewhere in this edition)

Copies of Pastor Sean's sermons are available in the church office. Please see him if you would like a copy. Audio copies will be available online once the sound system in the sanctuary is functional. We also hope to update name tags and encourage people to wear them on Sunday.

~ Sandy Gruner

Happy Third Anniversary to Pastor Sean. Sunday January 10th marked the third year Pastor came to us as our full time , settled Pastor. Thank you, Pastor Sean, and we look forward to many more years together.

❧ THRIFT SHOP ❧

The Thrift Shop had a fairly good year. Bad weather in February forced use to close on a few occasions. With all the construction going on over the summer we also lost the access to Main Street. Because of this our revenue was down over the previous year. I would like to thank all of our volunteers for their time and efforts. Without your help we would not succeed.

Submitted by
Ron Blake, Manager

❧ VISITATION ❧

During the year our committee continued its work of visiting those who were confined to home, or in the hospitals or nursing homes. We mailed out cards and brought small gifts and/or food for seasonal holidays. As a congregation all of you have also been a very important part of this committee, helping out when assistance was needed.

This was especially true when Pastor Sean was seriously injured with a fractured heel in early September. Unfortunately, this type of injury requires a long time to mend, and imposes all sorts of restrictions on the injured party. Many of you stepped up to help out with visits, food, transportation, and cards and phone calls to cheer him along. Thankfully, God has been good, and Pastor Sean continues to make great strides toward a full recovery.

While Pastor Sean was still in the early stages of recovery, our Church Secretary Nancy Daniels suffered an injury to her knee and leg, which also required considerable time to heal. Again, as a church, many stepped up to help Nancy, not only in her home situation, but also to help keep the church office afloat. Thankfully, Nancy, too, continues to heal.

Sadly, during the year, several of our older members left us to go home to the Lord. Mim Hitchcock, who served this church in many different capacities, died in June. And in August, Pat Tormey, who for so very long was a pillar of this church also died. Pastor Sean performed both funerals. Maxine Turns, who for many years worked in our thrift shop also passed away during this past year. All of these wonderful ladies are and will continue to be greatly missed.

For the committee,

Janet Sanford

❧ BREAD & MORE I.N.N ❧

The soup kitchen continues with its affiliation with The Interfaith Nutrition Network to serve the community with a full hot dinner 3 evenings a week on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at 530 PM ... no questions asked. Each night has a dedicated crew of volunteers that arrive in the mid afternoon to set up and prepare, later to serve and clean up. The numbers served can be anywhere from 50 to 100 a night. Financial support is received from many sources ... grants, local churches and service organizations ... and many regular individual donors. Heartfelt gratitude is often expressed by the guests for these special meals.

~ Deedee Newcomb
Liaison, Soup Kitchen to Church



~ FUND RAISING ~

"RAISE THE ROOF"
FULL BRUNCH BUFFET

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2016

9:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.

\$20.00 adults

\$10.00 children under 10 years

Under 4 years: free

THE DARK HORSE RESTAURANT

1 East Main Street

Riverhead, NY 11901

**Tickets may be purchased by
calling Jane Joerchel at 631-727-6160**

or

at church on Sundays

or

at the door of The Dark Horse on January 24, 2016

**All proceeds go to the benefit of the First Congregational Raise the Roof
Campaign**

Many thanks to the generous contribution of the The Dark Horse Restaurant

~ FUND RAISING ~



Gift baskets are needed for April 24. One basket can be put together by a group of people. There is no need for one person to feel the need to put together an entire basket. Everyone needs to start collecting gift cards and/or basket donations a bit every week. This way it won't hit wallets as hard. Donations and baskets go to Carol Gorman – 369-2877. THANK YOU!

MISSION REPORT

At the May Suffolk Association meeting our church was again recognized as a “Five for Five” church, meaning we had donated to all five missions during the previous year. We have done so again in 2015 participating generously with our giving. The amounts were as follows:

March	One Great Hour of Sharing	\$113
May	Strengthen the Church	\$28
June	Covenant Share	\$194
Oct.	Neighbors in Need	\$229
Dec.	Christmas Fund	\$261

In addition to our five designated mission projects we have also added a few more regular contributions to various local causes. In February for Super Bowl Sunday we collected \$113 as well as 24 cans of soup for our Bread and More Soup Kitchen. During Lent there was a total of \$700 from our Lenten banks taken in. Our Sunday School children used a portion of this to shop for food for the LICC food pantry and the remaining funds went to LICC to use as needed. We gave \$300 to the Riverhead Clergy council for their continuing work in our community.

In the fall we again participated in the local crop walk, bringing in about \$700 from our church. The overall local area collected around \$2300, some of which will be returned to our local programs to feed the hungry. As a result of the 2014 Crop Walk our Bread and More Soup Kitchen received \$444.00. A second mission project for fall combined with our Sunday School was the college kits. The congregation was very generous in giving snack foods, stationery items, and personal care items, which were then packed up in boxes by the Sunday School and mailed out to our six college students, along with a hand-written note from the children.

At Christmas time, we continued the tradition of providing gifts for one of our soup kitchen families. Names were selected from a “Giving Tree” and appropriate gifts were brought in to be distributed.

2015 was an especially difficult year for our beloved church with the near total collapse and subsequent restructuring needed. We are still in great need of major funding to cover these monumental expenses, and yet we were still able to give generously to others through our mission programs. Thank you all for your continued support.

For the committee,
~Janet Sanford

LONG ISLAND COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Exerpts from their newsletter:

EXPANDED SERVICE HOURS AT THE LICC IN RIVERHEAD

We have expanded the hours for our Riverhead food pantry (which is now located at 220 Roanoke Ave. #3 @ 2nd Avenue). People are now welcome to come for food Monday through Friday, 9:30 to noon and 1:30 to 4:00. We are also no longer limiting how frequently guests may come for food at any of our locations. Want to help us to assist more people? We could use additional volunteers in Riverhead. Please call Carolyn Gumbs at 631-727-2210 if you can lend a hand.

OFFICE COORDINATOR SOUGHT IN BELLPORT

Office coordinator needed three days a week (10-3pm). Must be experienced in office responsibilities, computer programs, and processing payroll, all w/attention to detail. Willingness to learn and work with various people. Good command of English and written skills. Send resume and a cover letter to Bellport United Methodist Church, PO Box 460, Bellport 11713, 631-286-0525, bellportumc@optimum.net

CONFERENCE ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING JAN. 22

THE LONG ISLAND COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL ABUSE & FAMILY VIOLENCE

On January 22, LICSAFV will partner with True North Church in hosting an important conference, “Human Trafficking, Sexual Exploitation in our Own Backyard” in Bohemia. Human trafficking has made sexual slaves of young children within our own communities -a multi-billion dollar industry exploiting children and adults for sex and labor, secretly, yet in plain sight before our noses. The conference will feature two survivors sharing their stories, representatives from local agencies that serve survivors, Homeland Security, Cyber Crimes and other crime fighting arms of government.

To register for the Jan. 22 conference please visit

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/licsafv-presents-human-trafficking-sexual-exploitation-in-our-own-backyard-tickets-19303578523>

For further information please email Holly Beck at licsafv@optimum.net or hbeck@ibfcs.org or call 631-691-7080, press 1 then 6 and dial ext. 516302.

~Holly Beck and Herb Cohen, Co-Chairs

☞ SOME CHURCH CALENDAR ITEMS ☞

- Dinners. Every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 5:30-7:00pm: *Bread & More/INN*
- AA. Every Tuesday and Friday, 7:00pm and Saturday, 8:00am (*English-language meetings*)
- ALLEY CAT THRIFT SHOP: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 - 2:00, Saturdays 9:00-1:00
- Bible Study, Friday mornings 10:00-11:30, Fellowship Hall. Beginning February 4
- Brunch, Sunday, January 24 Raise the Roof fund raiser, Dark Horse Restaurant, 9:00-1:00
- Annual Meeting. Sunday, January 31 after church in the Fellowship Hall
- Ash Wednesday, February 10 Service in our sanctuary, 7:00pm

First Congregational Church of Riverhead
103 First Street
Riverhead, New York 11901

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

