



Exciting Times at First Church...



Pastor Andrew began the New Year by challenging us to spend time each week alone with the Lord. This may be just a couple of hours in a hectic schedule or, at times, setting aside even a half day for Scripture and prayer. What a great pattern to for the new year. Pastor Andrew has started a sermon series in the Book of Mark that will bring us well into the Lenten Season, helping to strengthen our faith. We are enjoying his challenge.



New Members...

A new member class started at the first of the year and on January 25th we installed eight new members. What a delight to have James and Abby Cassell, Dan and Lois Frasier, Michael and Ramona Hendrix, Ian Fitch and Leslie Van Volkinberg become members of our church body.

They were welcomed by Pastor Andrew and all of the congregation had a chance to personally add their greetings at the end of service.



Moving in ...

The James family has been extremely busy these last few weeks as they made preparations to move into the parsonage. They want to thank everyone who helped in so many ways. They are happily settled now, and appreciate that their parents were terrific hosts for Luke and Wesley, freeing Andrew and Becky to concentrate on getting settled. It seems to have worked out very well, and ahead of schedule. Pastor Andrew even asked Mike Haddad to preach on the 18th to take a little pressure off. Nice presentation, Mike! We look forward to more opportunities.

We've been hearing praises also for Mike Haddad and compliments to the Worship Band of late. They are shaping up to be a smooth, energetic team. Your suggestions are welcome! We're glad to see **Dan Moniz** return to the drums after his accident last fall. Dan and Sue were also able to spend several days in the sun in Dominican Republic in January. Congratulations are in order for Dan as he recently opted for early retirement after many years of service with Verizon, and former parent companies. All the best, Dan!



I cannot express how excited I am to know that **Patty Chick** is our new Sunday School Coordinator. Her experience in education and long time commitment to FCCB make her an excellent person for this leadership role. Thanks for all the great work for so many years from Elizabeth Kuczun. We are truly blessed to have such servants in our midst. We are always on the lookout for additional teachers for our young ones. Currently, we could use volunteer help -

- Grades one to six teaching help
- Nursery during Sunday School
- Nursery during Sunday morning services (contact [me](#) or [Patty Chick](#))
- Chaperoning Youth Meetings and events if you are more comfortable with older kids (contact [Mike Haddad](#)).

On Saturday, January 24, the **elders** met for an afternoon retreat to plan for the Annual Meeting and the year ahead. Much of our discussion came from the assessment that you all participated in months ago, with the help of Interim Pastor Ron Sylvester. Lead Elder, Taylor Robinson, will be sharing these results with you. The elders feel confident and excited as we begin the new year. Pastor Andrew is off to a fine start.

ANNUAL MEETING 2015

Annual Meeting, Friday, January 30th, had a wonderful turnout in spite of difficult weather. The night began with a moving Lord's Supper administered by Pastor Andrew. All minutes and budgets were approved. Pastor Andrew gave an outline of future possible activities and ministries, and feels God's love and passion for ministry at First Church. Each of our elders provided further discussions in addition

to their written reports. Also...

Thanks were given to Elizabeth Kuczun for her years of dedicated service as Sunday School superintendent. She was quick to thank everyone for their cooperation and help during her tenure.



New elders John Noyes and Rick Haywood were approved.



We do give thanks for **Tom Cable** and **Doffy Falk** as they rotate off the board for their faithful service. (As you can see we also gave some primroses for Doffy's kitchen window!) Tom has led our financial team with great integrity and knowledge, while being a most faithful servant. We will miss his insights and sincerity of purpose. Likewise, it is impossible to replace the wisdom and experience that Doffy has brought to us. I refer to her as the "Institutional Memory" of FCCB. Her ownership of Body Life and Membership has been extraordinary in every way. Somehow, I think we all expect that Doffy's enthusiasm and servant heart will still be evident in the days ahead. May God continue to bless Tom and Doffy!

Youth Super Bowl Party...



Mike Haddad reports...What an amazing Super Bowl Party. Here are some of the youth group enjoying food, fun, and fellowship as we endured the ups and downs of Superbowl 49 together. Even though not everyone was a true Patriots fans it seems that more fans may have been made in the process. We even enjoyed throwing around a deflated football as a way to make light the accusations against our home team. We had a great time, particularly with parents joining us. As a Youth Group we look forward to having even more family events with the congregation in the next months. We'll keep you posted!

If you missed **Paul Sidmore's Moment for Missions** on January 11, there were some impactful stories of his recent China visit. Clearly, God is working in Paul's life and the connections that have come about in these last few weeks are most exciting. Paul would appreciate your prayers for the couples he referred to and for Ade, and his awareness of Christ in his life. Pray also for the church of 35,000 that Paul talked about. Since then, Paul has hosted visitors from China for meetings here at home. Pray that God will be glorified in all these situations.

Outreach brought us **the Shelton's** for coffee hour on January 25th. Mike shared experiences of their work over the years. Joanne and Mike will soon be returning to the field after having enjoyed nearly a year long furlough back in the states. Included in his remarks was a video of their oldest daughter, Grace, sharing her testimony. What a marvelous family! Keep Team Shelton and their needs in prayer!



Thanks to the Cable family for their hard work helping to organize the Food Pantry just after the holidays. The **Food Pantry** continues to serve well and gain the support of others outside of our church family. Praise God!



Christina Clark is heading up an effort to minister to the community with free **parent/ child playgroups** for children, birth to 5 years old plus their caregivers here at First Church. The program, held Monday mornings now until March 23rd is headed by Christina, run by the Coordinated Family Community engagement (CFCE) program and available to residents of Peabody, Danvers, Beverly, Topsfield, Middleton and Boxford. If you know someone who could benefit, have them register on line at www.cfceofthenorthshore.com or call 978-536-6543. Here's a link to their [poster](#) with more information.

Thanks to all who supported the **Red Cross blood drive** January 30th, when 13 units of blood were collected on a snowy day. This was meaningful in a week where 100 drives were cancelled in the area due to weather.



Pregnancy Care Center Baby Bottles have been distributed and are due, Sunday, February 8th here at First Church. If you didn't pick yours up yet, they are available at the church office. This annual reminder of the PCC's good works is also our opportunity to donate to a worthy cause we've supported since PCC began its ministry.

Looking ahead...



World Outreach Week is an annual March event for First Church that always has an impact on us all. This year's theme is: "Across the Street - Across the Sea. Who Will Go?" Paul Sidmore and his team have developed a wonderful week of events, culminating with the concert by an African Choral Group. You will not want to miss a minute of WOW!

Calling All Men!

Pastor Andrew would like to gather with FCCB men to chat about men's ministry. So it's pizza, pizza, pizza on Tuesday, **February 10th from 6:30 to 8:30 pm** in the FLC. We'll talk about what we've done in the past, an assessment of the present and a look to what you'd like to see in the future. Please RSVP [Pastor Andrew](#) and tell him you're coming so he'll know how much pizza to order!

Calling All Women!

And don't feel left out FCCB women...it's time to appreciate all that has gone on for women at FCCB, but also a great opportunity to hear your vision. Pastor Andrew and Becky have set aside **February 17th from 6:30 - 8:30 pm** in the FLC. We'll come up with a yummy menu so put the date on your calendar and [let Andrew know](#) you plan to attend.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the **baby shower for Mike and Norma Haddad** on March 1. Please see Doffy Falk or Christina Clark for details.



Stop Hunger Now food packaging event is scheduled for Saturday, March 28 and funds are needed to be able to bless this wonderful organization as we have in the past. You can donate [here](#), or simply write a check to FCCB with *Stop Hunger Now* on the memo line. To be able to come close to our success in the past we need at least \$2500, or more. Please pray about your commitment.

The youth group will be "*retreating*" to Camp Berea in just a couple of weeks. **Pray** for their experience, and leaders Mike and Norma, along with Chuck Wood and Susan Humerian. Youth retreats often result in young people being drawn closer to the Lord, while enjoying the company of other believers and seekers.

And while you are praying for our youth, please bring to the Lord

Elisabeth and Bill Meyer as they cope with Elisabeth's respiratory illness and a recent broken pipe that has wrecked havoc with their home situation. the **Don Behrens** family as Don passed away last weekend in Florida. The family plans a memorial service this spring.

Reid Smith and his ongoing treatments and **Deb McGill**.

Blessings,

Rick

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. II Cor. 13:14

STAY CONNECTED

