



## Pastor Andrew Welcomes 2015

Becky and I want to thank you for your welcoming arms as we concluded 2014 in our new church home here at First Church. We are overjoyed at what God has done through you. We are looking forward to moving into the parsonage in the next couple of weeks, and be firmly planted in the tri-town area. As I think and pray about our spiritual journey together over the next months, I am drawn to your desire to cultivate an intimacy with Christ. We'll take a look at Jesus' ministry through the Gospel of Mark. I marvel at His amazing love and grace and His desire to enfold us in His arms as we look to be His presence in our day to day lives. Join us Sundays at 9:00 am for our broad variety of classes and then our worship, enlivened by James' and Mike's worship leadership. If you aren't an official FCCBer, come to our Membership class on the 11th and 18th and learn more about what makes FCCB tick!

## Happy and Blessed New Year to you!

Looking back at December, what a great way to end one year and begin a new one here at First Church with Pastor Andrew and family permanently a part of our church family and history. We'll take a broad look at the year 2014 at our Annual Meeting Friday, January 30, so put it on your calendar. We'll have positive reports and inspiring information plus look ahead and discuss our needs as the body of Christ here at First Church Boxford. More information is below.

## December 2014...

The Christmas Fair... got the Advent Season started on December 6th. There was the annual week long prep of greens and cookie gathering as over \$800 was raised for our Outreach Ministries. Thank you, Molly Edwards and her efficient, happy crew (here are a few of them taking a quick break to pose for the camera).



## Family Night...

kicked the Christmas spirit into gear with a Christmas Carol sing on the 17th. We had a record turnout as the FCCB Christian Ed and Worship committees engineered the evening chock full of delicious Christmas themed eats (thank you Elisabeth Meyer and crew) along with outstanding music performances and all out carol sing. Thank you to Elder Gerri White, Choir Director James Cassell, AV maestro Carl Kuczun and all the musicians. Family Night will resume on January 21. See you then!

### Christmas Decorations...

were provided by the Altar Guild, led by Norman Rushton. Evergreens and candlelight provided just the right touch. And I hope you checked out the creche scene in the FCCB hallway, knitted by Erna Kaiter (Peter Kaiter's mom). I believe the phrase is, too cute for words (so we included a picture).



### Sunday, December 21

morning service was a treat beginning with Gerri White and Becky James in duo at the piano, accompanying the choir in a moving rendition of "Angels From the Realms of Glory" that brought a spontaneous round of applause. "In the Bleak Midwinter" was performed by Abby Cassell and Becky James



using their amazing musical gifts to praise God. After Pastor Andrew's compelling message highlighting "Joseph" we all sang the "Hallelujah Chorus", a moving and enjoyable participation that brought smiles and Advent Joy.

That night, Boxford Illumination, a longstanding community tradition, began with a bonfire in the center of the village. As the embers began to die down, the Christmas Carol Sing began at our parsonage. With candles lit in the windows, Pastor Andrew, Becky, Luke and Wesley greeted the singers. A number of us joined in as the carolers moved from house to house, finishing at the Holyoke French Historic Home for refreshments. It was a great opportunity for Pastor Andrew to greet and meet a number of his new neighbors.

"The Father's Gift" followed the Illumination. A big thank you to Christina Clark, who arranged some lovely refreshments and Christmas cookies following the program, and to Rolan DeLoach and Myra Denton for their contributions.

### Christmas Eve...

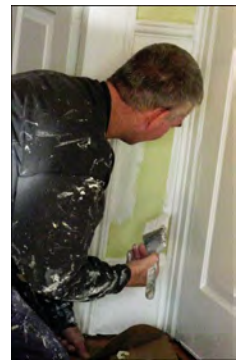
is always special at First Church. More than 200 attended the two services, starting with the Family Service at 7:00 pm. A Christmas tableau included costumed children of the church helping to bring the Christmas story alive. Youth Minister Mike Haddad led a children's sermon, and Pastor Andrew provided a very personal witness, with the service ending in candlelight. The 11:00 pm service included a wide spectrum of our church family providing lessons on the familiar story, as well as traditional carols. The rain let up in time for our traditional Joy to the World on the front steps of the church in candlelight.



### And into 2015...

The painters are finishing up and the James family is hoping to be officially in their new Boxford home (aka the parsonage) by January 18th. Keep all of them in your prayers, as we complete our "Repair to Prepare" work. Nearly \$25,000 has been

raised but the entire project will amount to \$55,000. The results are magnificent and most importantly, safe! Please don't forget to pray for God's guidance as to a donation to this fund. A check with "parsonage" in the memo line can be placed in the offering plate or sent to First Church.



The Food Pantry continues to be vital to those in need in the Boxford area, and Susan Humerian and Leslie Olson want to thank you all for your gifts plus the support of the West Boxford Grange this year. We have bags full of supplies waiting to be shelved and given to those in need. We'll keep you posted on specifics, but the usual daily requirements are always needed. Thank you!

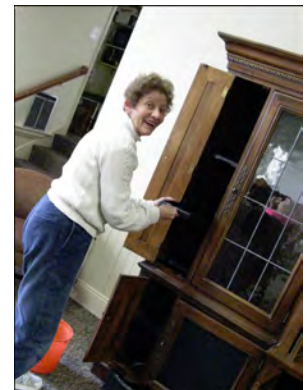


Remember to keep our college students and young professionals in your prayers, as they were home for the Christmas Season. Special best wishes to Tom Kuczun on his recent engagement and upcoming wedding in October.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry headed by Ann Johnson has received some very moving responses from those touched by the ministry. If you are not yet involved, talk to Ann about how you might serve in a meaningful manner in 2015.

We are also excited for Mike and Norma Haddad as they look forward to the birth of their child early in 2015. Our past month was not without losses, unfortunately. The Cable family have purchased a new home in Bradford where they settled just before Christmas. Tom, Amanda and the boys have been stalwarts of our FCCB ministry, with Amanda a great strength in youth, children's and VBS ministries during the last several years and Tom as our financial leader on the elder board. We will miss them terribly, as the family worships closer to their new home.

The Coggin Room is getting a face lift. Thank you Norma Rushton and team for sprucing it up, putting photos, plaques and a working clock back on the wall, as well as the forest scene oil painting, created by Mike Jacopile some years ago. Quite an artist! We also are admiring the new "hutch" that will house the TV and other Coggin Room items. Gini Havey is giving it a good cleaning for this Sunday's use. Thanks to the Frasier's and team for transporting the large (and heaaaavvvvy) unit here last week.



Annual Meeting...

is January 30th. The elders are on retreat early in January to begin plans for an industrious year, as well as final preparations for the Annual Meeting. Note that reports are now due to Nancy ([office@firstchurchboxford.org](mailto:office@firstchurchboxford.org)) for the Annual Report.

Welcome back, Paul Sidmore, from three weeks in China! Here he is mugging with fellow believers on a busy street. We want to hear all about it. Our Elder of Outreach is busy at work planning some Mission Moments, and getting ready for World Outreach Week in March but he will share his experiences with us soon. He's also on track to continue the Men's Class on Sunday mornings.



Speaking of Classes on Sunday morning...

We have a great lineup for the new year highlighted by a Membership Class

beginning January 11 during the Sunday School hour, lead by Pastor Andrew and assisted by Elder of Membership Doffy Falk. We already have a number of people signed up but it is not too late to become involved. See Doffy or Pastor Andrew for more information. Plus Taylor and Michelle Robinson will begin a new series entitled Resolving Everyday Conflict from Peacemakers, Scott Winslow will take DivorceCare another step and Rolan DeLoach will continue his Colossians series. Mike and Norma Haddad will be leading the high school class and there are classes for grades one through six. Thank you to all our teachers. We appreciate you - your time, effort and heart to encourage our walk with Christ.

### Stop Hunger Now

is on the docket for March 28th. It is amazing how quickly that will be here! Volunteers and donations for the ingredients are needed. Many have already pledged, or given to the cause, but we have a way to go. [Donate](#) on line with a link from the church website. As little as 29 dollars means one hundred meals!

With our new enthusiastic and energetic pastor at the helm, let's pray for a great start in 2015, and a year filled with people coming to Jesus through our ministry here in Boxford. In His name,



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

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