

The Kingston Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Kingston, RI 02881

Annual Report
July 2013 – June 2014

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey,
You are welcome here.

Mission Statement of the Kingston Congregational Church

“We are a Christian Church that supports each person's spiritual journey
through the communal pursuit of worship, learning, and service.”

(Voted on and approved by the Congregation on April 27, 2008)

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Annual Report of the Senior Pastor, 2013-14

Commitment and Conversation

As I consider this year in the life of our church, I am impressed by the thoughtful devotion with which we have addressed the challenges of being a church in the twenty-first century, challenges we share with most other churches, and ones peculiar to our congregation. I am most grateful for all the varied ways we continue to work together, with mutual regard and respect, with appreciation for the great heritage we share in this church, and with hopeful confidence in the future.

The most important achievement of the year, I believe, was our continuing, ever-renewing **commitment to fostering the beloved community among us**, without which nothing we do can be sustained over the long term.

In one of my first sermons at KCC, I urged us to recognize that, in churches, *criticism never accomplishes anything*, and always, *always damages the church*. Congregations are unique social gatherings, ones in which we are uniquely vulnerable to slighting or hurtful comments. So it is always *the first order of concern* for churches to create and preserve spaces of *emotional sanctuary*. And although no church does this perfectly, **we are, for the most part, maintaining such a sanctuary among us**.

The key to our future, to everything we do, is conversation, talking with each other, taking the time to exchange perspectives, listen with care, and nurture relationship. American society has become a culture of “feedback,” usually meaning one-way communication (sometimes even anonymous communication) in which one party expresses his/her opinions to another person more or less unilaterally. In churches, such one-way **talking to** must be replaced by two-way **talking with**. And as I observe our interactions, in board meetings, in groups, and in one-to-one interactions, I am encouraged to see one-way “feedback” being replaced by **respectful and helpful conversation**.

Moreover, we are gradually **becoming more mutually affirming** in our interactions, more expressive of our support for each other and of our gratitude to each other. **A strong and vital church is a happy church**, one in which people feel appreciated and valued, because the church *actively expresses appreciation and valuing*.

The ability of individuals and groups to accomplish things, to get things done together, is another key component of happiness –and thus of strength in vital churches. **And this was a year of significant accomplishment for our boards and committees and for our staff and officers, with results that were obvious to all who paid attention to our weekly life together. It was also a year of significant accomplishment for our Choir and music program, and for our Church School and C.E. program, including our Confirmation program and Youth Groups**. Participation in the life of a church is always an education in patience, because churches by their nature just take time to get things done. But, by exercising patience and perseverance, we got a great deal done in this program year and we have much to celebrate! **We**

owe grateful thanks to our staff, to our officers and board and committee chairs, and to our other devoted leaders for their special contributions.

Finally, we know that an engaging fellowship life is a key feature of the happiness of any church. We saw many expressions during the year of our mutual regard for each other, but surely nothing was more encouraging than the warm and well-attended fellowship events of the year. The beloved community, shoulder-to-shoulder in Fellowship Hall, breaking bread and sharing soup together. And there were our beautiful and gracious receptions, and our great coffee fellowships, with all their good food and good humor and warm welcome. What blessings we have been to each other, as we steadily weave the bonds of affection among us!

We also began to face key challenges that lie ahead, most notably in our church attendance. In March, in a special worship service, I presented data on average weekly church attendance over the past decade among comparable churches in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The numbers show **sharp declines** in average weekly attendance for most of them, including a **40% decline in worship attendance at KCC over the last decade.** We have had a modest increase in attendance over the last couple of years, but we should not take undue confidence from that. From my conversations in board meetings and with individuals, I can report to you that our people are taking this concern seriously and I believe we will begin, in the fall of this year, a sustained and serious conversation about how we may address this major problem in the years ahead.

As I did in my report for last year, I want to thank all of you for your kindness to me, as I continue to learn how to be the best pastor I can be to this community of faith. Please hold me in your thoughts and prayers, as I will hold all of you in mine. And let us look with gladness to the future God has for us as a people of faith in Kingston and far beyond.

Respectfully submitted

Rev. Dr. L. Weldon Palmer

President's Annual Report July 2013 – June 2014

Another year has quickly passed by and I reflect on how our church community has evolved. Reverend Palmer has led us through his second year as our pastor with many heartfelt messages to center us in our busy lives.

Our boards and committees continue their hard work including several significant milestones. Our new website is up and running and a Facebook page has been created to keep all of us up to date with church gatherings and activities.

The first phase of our revitalization project is just one signature away from becoming a reality. The Board of Trustees is always on top of the structural needs of our fine church house. Thanks to the work of the Fellowship Board, we continue to come together as a church community through events including Soup Sunday, Progressive Supper, and a church cook out.

The Membership Board has been keeping watch over our ever changing congregation. New members have been joining and the Membership Board has created a “friend for new members” program to welcome newcomers to our church community. The “shepherding” program looks after members we haven’t seen in a while.

The Board of Deacons continues to guide a well-orchestrated worship service and welcoming coffee hour. The holiday seasons are particularly action packed and their efforts are appreciated far and wide.

The music that uplifts our services is likely among the best in Rhode Island and we owe a debt of gratitude to Enrico Garzilli and the Music Board for their unwavering dedication to our weekly worship services.

The list goes on with the work of our Treasurer and Finance Board in developing a more efficient way to keep track of our church finances.

Our church staff including Shirley Schock, Andy Cournoyer, Enrico Garzilli and Alice Babcock have all been hard at work with all things KCC. The Board of Christian Education along with Alice has done an exemplary job with our most important portion of our congregation, our children.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to have worked with so many fine men and women of our community and am very excited about our future. I will continue to be involved with our fine institution and hope that all of you can find a way to offer your needed talents.

Respectfully,

Mike McMahan

Annual Report from Board of Deacons July 2013 - June 2014

Board Members:

Craig Urian (Chair), Maureen White , Tom Heald, Jan Kraus, Wayne Lee, James Findlay, Michael Wakefield, Norma Hagist, Christi Saurette, Tracy Heffron, Beth Asher, Bradley Trodson

The monthly meetings this year were predominantly standard review regarding the spiritual health of the church, worship services and discussions regarding upcoming events. One theme that did thread its way into a handful of meetings was the topic of “Church Attendance” which will be continued into the next year. Two members did resign from the board during the course of the year for various reasons but none that would warrant concern regarding the Board.

The decision was made again to go with a single Christmas Eve service at 5 pm and a single Easter Sunday service at 9:30 am. A Tenebrae service was held again the Thursday before Easter where discussions were held regarding moving the time of this service to a later time and to consider a Sater Supper prior to the service. Discussions will be held again in 2015 regarding trying to increase the level of participation of this special service.

As the church year started in the summer month of July 2013, the following individuals were asked to lead worship service during Rev. Palmer’s vacation and study break: Bill Bartels, Mark Tortolani, Sharon Key, Meera Viswanathan, Mike McMahon and Alice Babcock. At the Sundays after Christmas and Easter, which are typical times for pastors to take time off, Tom Butcher and Frank Lenox led worship services.

The Board wishes to say THANK YOU to all of the KCC community as our strength is our helical support of each other.

Respectively,

R. Craig Urian
Chair of the Board of Deacons, Kingston Congregational Church

Board of Music Annual Report July 2013 - June 2014

The members of the Board of Music this year were: Helen Behrens, Joanna Burkhardt, Todd Gregory, Gary Harlow, and Mark Tortolani.

The Music Board met on August 21, 2013, November 20, 2013, January 19, 2014 and February 27, 2014.

An Eon Synthesizer was added to our speaker system this year so the service can be heard in the choir loft.

The instruments were tuned as needed during the year.

The Christmas concert was held on December 8th.

The Board approved the Garzilli lecture series in Music History proposed for the fall of 2014 and sent the proposal to Council where it was also approved.

New sheet music was purchased for the use of the choir.

Enrico composed an original piece of music for the church which was premiered on Pentecost Sunday.

We are blessed to have Dr. Enrico Garzilli as the Director of Music. He has provided us with exceptional music, both instrumental and voice. He has rehearsed and led the choir. He has found exceptional guest artists who have played on many occasions during the past year.

Many guest musicians shared their musical talents during the past year, including: Martha Hartman, Phyllis Whitehead, Canna Falby, Margaret Clark, Katie Grueb, Michael Karikas, Stephen Grueb, Jenny Collins, Sharon Key and Gina Seraichyk. Many thanks to these musicians and all others who offered their musical talents to us this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna M. Burkhardt
Chair, Pro Tem

Annual Report 2014 Music Director/Organist

I very much enjoy being organist and music director here at Kingston Congregational Church. I believe this past year again has truly been a wonderful musical and worshipful experience.

The Senior Choir has been excellent in its dedicated contribution to Worship. The repertoire of anthems for the choir consists of the best available music from the past as well as new musical texts.

The Senior Choir continues to meet every Thursday evening to prepare for Sunday Worship. I deeply appreciate their great contribution to Worship. Easter was truly wonderful with Trumpets, Timpani and Violin. We were fortunate to have Jenny Collins play trumpet and Todd Gregory play percussion for several services this year. This Pentecost, the choir again performed with Manuel Morales, a terrific trumpet player from URI. The choir performed a piece, *Creator Spirit*, which I wrote for them, the Board of Music and the entire Church. One of the highlights of 2013 was the Christmas talent show. Many in the congregation and in neighboring churches were very generous with their talents.

On a personal note, I have continued to compose music for both Concert performances and Services. I have also continued to conduct the South County Chamber Singers. On Palm Sunday, we performed a magnificent repertoire of classical and contemporary choral pieces at St. Francis Church in Wakefield. In November of last year, we performed a concert of Broadway tunes at the Lilypads in Wakefield. Several members of our choir regularly sing with the Chamber Singers. One of our very dedicated sopranos, Margaret Bradley, is the president of the organization.

I would like to thank Mark Tortolani and Joanna Burkardt and the Music Board for their excellent leadership. Their help, advice, and encouragement have been invaluable. I would also like to thank Diana Geisler and Grace Woodward who have provided very much appreciated service as choir librarians. And, finally, to all of you I express my gratitude once again for your support, encouragement, and inspiration.

Respectfully submitted,
Enrico Garzilli

Trustees 2013 / 2014 Annual Report

Board includes: Chairperson, David Remington; Members: Clark Bridgman, Eric Widmer, Steve White, Mark Tortolani; Ad Hoc members: Pat Cox, Audrey Hallberg and Brian Nelson

This year has had its challenges, as a lot more happened behind the scenes that was not of the board-and-nail type of noticeable changes. We thank the staff whose professionalism and patience help make this Board's work possible: Shirley M. Schock, Andy Cournoyer, and Rev. Weldon Palmer, as well as Treasurer Doug Kraus. The Trustees sadly and regretfully accepted the resignation of Board member, Mark Tortolani. He will be remembered for his enthusiasm and his many accomplishments as a member of this Board.

- We spent a lot of time working out the details of the Rejuvenation step one.
- Finished Pew Cushion project by Pat Cox and Audrey Hallberg.
- We've dealt with vandalism, causing us to repair a ceiling in a classroom from water damage and repaired partitions in the men's room.
- Made some repairs to the Steeple clock and determined it would need a professional bell/clock repair person.
- Worked with Doug Kraus to save money on fire safety by combining services from three companies to one.
- Switched trash hauler companies.
- Organized Blue Jean Sundays.
- Had the annual fire drill.
- Worked out with Andy's and Dave Cox's help what doors didn't latch properly and repaired them.
- With Brian Nelson's help started saving on our energy bills, and started a fundraiser for the Church.
- We had rugs cleaned in the Sunday school classrooms and in the Fireplace Room.
- Thanks to volunteers we had the gardens cared for during the summer months.
- We'd like to thank Gordon Johnson, Lori Ann Hiener, and Brian Nelson for helping with the annual Trustee's Cook-out for the Kingston Fair, at which we earned \$340 dollars and made many more friends.

Treasurer's Report July 2013 – June 2014

There are two reports, a Balance Sheet and a Treasurer's Report.

The "Balance Sheet" is a report of where KCC has its money. On any balance sheet the assets must equal the funds plus any unpaid liabilities. The church pays its bills weekly and for the most part does not have any unpaid liabilities except moment to moment in any reporting cycle. The Operating Fund is a moment to moment snap shot of money without any claim. This amount goes up and down. It represents what KCC had been calling the "reserve" Where the reserve was calculated by subtracting claims from the assets. In the past this number was upwards to \$30K to 45K or 2 to 3 months expenses. Now this number has been shrinking as, overtime we have over spent the budget and have not received all pledged contributions. On this report, I attempted to create a "fixed" reserve. I am recommending that the Finance Board try and grow this to at least a 2 months expenses and leaving the Operating Fund to float with about 1 month reserve.

The second report is the "Treasurer's" report. This report represents income and expenses. I include for interest purposes some funds which are managed by boards, such as Missions and Potter funds, where these funds are designated as in-and-out funds. I am creating a fund for each board specifically for this purpose. In these cases money is collected and then paid out and any small balance maybe kept year to year.

This year, closing June 30, 2014, KCC only collected about 90% of pledged income. The budget YTD was expected to be \$2,500 over because of additional money approved by Council. But the year will end with a deficit of almost \$4,559.

It has long been the theory that a church's operations should be supported solely by pledge income. That has not been the case for a long time; we have used approximately \$50k/yr (4-7%) of endowment to subsidize running the church. In part this is what the endowment was created for. The other major use of an endowment is capital improvement.

I would like to thank all the assistant treasurers past and presently Tom Brillat and Mike Lockwood, as well as the Finance Board.

Board of Finance Annual Report July 2013 to June 2014

The Board of Finance regularly met during the year to discuss its assigned mission to oversee all the financial matters concerning the Church. Jeff Richardson was the chair of the board. The other members of the board are Dick Geisler, Ken Kermes, Jim Ross, Steve White and Doug Kraus, who holds the position of Church Treasurer. The secretarial duties rotate for each meeting.

The Board of Finance supervises the Investment Committee, and wants to thank them for a great job of investing the endowment and growing the endowment. The Finance Board's primary goal during last year was to draft and propose a budget for the Church for the new fiscal year. The 2014-2015 Budget was particularly challenging because the other Committees and Boards wanted to expand their missions and grow the church in many different ways. Unfortunately, the pledging for the next fiscal year has dropped significantly in the range of \$20,000 and will hamper the Boards and Committees plans for the future. The Finance Board is very concerned about the short term budget shortfall because of lowered pledging and also worried about the

long term financial health of the church due to the aging demographics of our church family. The Finance Board recommends that a strategic planning committee be created to look at the issues of both long and short term financial health of the church with an eye toward the operating budget and the need for physical maintenance to the church buildings.

The 2014-15 Fiscal Year Budget was delivered to the Church Council where it was reviewed and delivered to the Congregation for its vote. The 2014-15 Budget was approved by the Congregation during the spring quarterly meeting but had approximately \$25,000 shortfall in it. Given the current state of pledging, we anticipate that over this current fiscal year the budget will have to be revised and cut significantly in the near future.

Submitted by,

Jeff Richardson, Chair

Board Members: Jeff Richardson, Chair; Dick Geisler, Ken Kermes, Jim Ross, Steve White, Doug Kraus, Treasurer

Investment Committee 2014 Annual Report

The Investment Committee met 3 times during the 12 months ending 6/30/14. On June 30, 2013 the Endowment portfolio had a market value of \$1,222,437. During the fiscal year, \$0 in gifts and bequests were added and \$52,218 was distributed for support of Church operations for a net outflow of \$52,218. The market value as of June 30, 2014 had risen to \$1,377,413. For the 12 months ending 6/30/14 the Endowment had a 17.3% annual rate of return. This was slightly more than the Vanguard Balanced Index Fund performance of 16.4%. At fiscal year-end the portfolio held a mix of 10 index mutual funds and ETFs, with an approximate portfolio weighting of 79% equity, 20% bonds and 1% cash.

The Committee recommended, and the Trustees and Church Council approved that 4.5%-5% of a 7 year rolling average be used in 2015 to support the general operating budget.

The Committee continues to recommend the future adoption of a spending policy more in line with UCC recommendations that not only supports the operating budget, but provides for capital improvements as well as ministry and mission beyond the general operating budget of KCC. It is hoped that this spending policy could be phased in over 5 years.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Baker, Secretary

Members: Tom Butcher, Jim Elliot, Dick Geisler, Ron Stevens, Ernie Torres
Ex Officio members: Doug Kraus, Jim Aukerman

Board of Stewardship 2013-2014

The KCC Board of Stewardship began planning the annual Stewardship campaign back in the fall of 2013, as we decided on our key dates, our major themes, and considered who within the church might join us to present the campaign to the congregation. Our campaign theme, “Surprising Gifts”, was adopted from the national UCC web site, and as a board we discussed needed next steps in our church’s development, building on the growth we’ve seen in the past few years. The graphic for the “Surprising Gifts” theme, a set of young growing bean plants in clay pots, reinforced this theme for us in an inspiring way.

The campaign kicked off, as has typically been done in past years, with our Stewardship Brunch, featuring great quiches and baked goods put together by Sharon Davis and Ann Lenox, and highlighted by a talk by this year’s campaign honorary chair, Bill Bartels. Like last year, our Board decided not to organize a visitation campaign, based on input from the pastor based on the activities of our flourishing Membership board; therefore, the primary contact of the campaign with all KCC members and friends was through our solicitation letter.

As has been reported in Congregational meetings and via the Spire, the Stewardship campaign totals are less than the past few years. As of mid-July, we have received 122 pledges for a total of \$215,600, well short of last year’s totals of over 150 pledges and about \$245,000 in pledges. An additional note is that over two dozen past pledgers have not responded this year; and most of those folks are still active in the church. Contact is being made with those people slowly over the summer, but it seems clear that the expected income to the church from the Stewardship campaign will be below the amount expected for budgetary purposes, meaning that the budget may have to be revisited.

We are very thankful to our members and friends who support KCC however they can! We are especially thankful for the many new and increased pledges we received this year, and we note that it is not uncommon for people to have to cut back or stop pledging based on their life circumstances.

Anybody with ideas or comments regarding the Stewardship campaign should provide them to any of the board members, so we can further improve next year.

Sincerely yours,

The KCC board of Stewardship: Sue Kermes, Chris Little, Karin Aukerman, Ann Lenox (working chair), and David Cann (chairperson)

Board of Membership Annual Report July 2013 – June 2014

The Board of Membership was created as the result of Bylaws Review/Update process that was completed in 2011. The Board's initial Priority Areas were: 1) Attracting people to KCC; 2) Welcoming Visitors; 3) Implementing a New Member Process; and 4) On-going Support for Members. These four considerations continue to be the focus of the Board.

During this year, the Board initiated and has worked on multiple items:

- 1) Church Directory. The new Directory was completed and distributed in the fall. A very special thanks to Clare and Charley Sweeney who coordinated and facilitated the project. We will be doing a Supplemental Update in the spring of 2015 so we can include New Members and those who were unable to participate last year.
- 2) Website Redesign. The new KCC Website was launched in the fall of 2013 and has been well received by Church members and others. A special thanks is extended to Bill Bartels for his efforts in finalizing the launch and in updating the site on a regular basis. Also our appreciation to Cathy White for input regarding the technical components. Once launched, the Board and Rev. Palmer had considerable discussion about the inclusion of a Facebook page on the site's Home Page. Initially the Board approved a "Closed Group" page (KCC Members only) which Rev. Palmer, in turn, developed and implemented. Subsequent feedback and discussion led to the approval of an "Open" Facebook page. This "Open" page will be developed and implemented in September 2014. Rev. Palmer will be the initial Administrator/Monitor of the Page.
- 3) Welcome Table. A Welcome Table is present in Fellowship Hall each Sunday, staffed by two volunteers who are available to answer questions and provide information to visitors. Rev. Palmer mentions the Welcome Table in his Sunday Service opening comments.
- 4) Prospective Members Meetings. The Board presents Meetings (after church) two to three times per year for individuals who want to learn more about KCC and who may be interested in becoming members. In turn, Rev. Palmer, in conversation with these individuals, sets dates for them to join the Church during a Sunday Service.
- 5) "Friends" for New Members. Implemented in 2012, this initiative is intended to provide New Members with a personal contact if they have any questions about Church happenings or ways to get involved in Church activities. Board Members are assigned to New Members upon their joining KCC. The Board Members make contact with New Members and offer to meet with them. A "New Member" information packet has been developed that is provided at the time of this meeting. In turn, Board Members will follow-up with the New Members on a periodic basis through the first year.

- 6) Name Tags and Holder. The Board periodically reminds people to wear their Nametags. Order forms are available on the Harvest Table. With the construction assistance of Dave Cox, a Name Tag Holder was placed in Fellowship Hall.
- 7) Shepherding Program. With the interest in keeping in touch with Members who “are not seen in church for a while”, the Shepherding Program was initiated with the guidance of Rev. Palmer. A Board Sub-Group, led by Connie Fitzelle and Loretta Shaw, meets periodically to identify Members who “have not been seen”. In turn, they make a phone call to that Individual/Family, just to touch base. This outreach has been well received by those who have been called.

Board Members: Tom Butcher- Chair, Susan Bogue, Susan Eriksen,
 Jim Findlay, Connie Fitzelle, Jaime Nelson, Andrea Richardson,
 Loretta Shaw (Registrar)

KCC Membership Report July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

Members as of July 1, 2013 **463**

Additions:

Confirmands	6
New Members	11

Total Additions: **17**

Losses:

Death	5
Transfer	1
Inactive by Request	3

Total Losses: **9**

Members as of June 30, 2014 **471**

Baptisms	1
Marriages	1

Date

Baptisms

Caelyn Christina Olsen Ross	August 4, 2013
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Marriages

David Kiser and Jennifer Thompson	May 25, 2014
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New Members

Gerri Davis	February 23, 2014
Erica Estus	February 23, 2014
Todd Estus	February 23, 2014
Cindy McDonald	February 23, 2014
Jo Ann Pillar	February 23, 2014
Ann Chaput	June 8, 2014
Al Curnow	June 8, 2014
Kate Curnow	June 8, 2014
Carol Kinsley	June 8, 2014
Evan Preisser	June 8, 2014
Carol Thornber	June 8, 2014

Confirmands:

Allison Gallagher	May 11, 2014
Hillary Gallagher	May 11, 2014
Brian Lockwood	May 11, 2014
Timothy Sheehy	May 11, 2014
Connor Steere	May 11, 2014
Joel White	May 11, 2014

Deaths

Connie Pike	non-member	September 29, 2013
Raymond Guth		November 8, 2013
Philip Wilson		December 8, 2013
George E. Moore Jr.		January 12, 2014
Nina Gowell		February 26, 2014
Frederick Smith	non-member	May 26, 2014
Carolyn Bradley		June 6, 2014

Respectfully submitted,

Loretta H. Shaw
Registrar

Board of Mission and Social Justice July 2013 - June 2014

Mission Projects:

We continued **Mission One** from July to Thanksgiving to address hunger in Rhode Island by collecting weekly donations of healthy food, delivered alternately to **Jonnycake Center** and to **South Providence Neighborhood Ministries**. We collected and delivered fresh produce for Jonnycake Center's weekly "Farmers' Market." This year we encouraged the donation of SCRIP grocery gift cards.

SCRIP – We encouraged the donation of SCRIP cards for grocery stores in lieu of or in addition to weekly and monthly food donations. Not only do Jonnycake Center and SPNM really appreciate the flexibility afforded by these cards, but also our Mission Board receives 25% of the funds realized by KCC through SCRIP each year. These funds help us provide additional support to local agencies addressing basic needs for such things as food, shelter, and heat.

Offered **nonviolence training** for interested members of the congregation. The leaders were the Rev. Sharon Key and Sue Davis, co-chair of the Mission Board. Both had trained in URI's Kingian Nonviolence Program.

Helped with **school supplies** for local families in need (requested and coordinated by school social worker Christi Saurette).

Thanksgiving and Christmas – collected Thanksgiving and Christmas food and provided a Christmas Giving Tree for SPNM and for local families, with Christi Saurette coordinating the local family effort.

Emig Lecture – focused on our continuing commitment to Haiti. Cindy McDonald and Rev. Daehler Hayes reported on their January trip to Haiti and invited KCC participation in the Haiti Egg project.

We participated in the URI walk to benefit **South County Habitat for Humanity** and contributed to Marah Holland's **Bike and Build** volunteer effort. We were also represented at the organizational meeting hosted by the URI chaplain for Habitat's **Faith Build**.

Promoted **Haiti Egg Project** – funding to provide an egg a day for Haitian children. This Easter project, coordinated by Cindy MacDonal, should become an annual effort.

Helped to coordinate and participated in the Franz Hayes Memorial Mission project—continuing to help with South Kingstown Land Trust trail work at Biscuit City.

We promoted and participated in the Strawberry Social, a fund-raiser for Welcome House.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

We allocated our budget funds to Jonnycake Center, South Providence Neighborhood Ministries, The Center for the Study and Practice of Peace and Nonviolence, the RICUCC Haiti Taskforce, South County Habitat for Humanity, Thundermist, and helped with heating during this challenging winter. We used our SCRIP funds for additional financial assistance to South County Habitat for Humanity. We promoted and managed special collections for Blankets+, Christmas, and One Great Hour of Sharing.

COMMUNICATION:

Through articles in *The Spire* and in Sunday *Bulletins*, and in Deacons' announcements, we continued to keep the congregation informed and to encourage church-wide participation in mission projects.

Our budget request for FY 2014-15 was, once again, developed by identifying areas of concern – Housing, Hunger, Health, Peace and Nonviolence, and a special focus on the environment. We continued our long-term commitment to South Providence Neighborhood Ministries, retaining a line item for them.

Christi Saurette stepped down from the Board mid-year, but continued to help with Mission projects. Cindy McDonald and Erin Trodson joined the Board. Sue Davis and Susan Berman stepped down from the Board as of June 30, 2014.

Mission Board FY 2014: Susan Berman, co-chair /secretary; Sue Davis, co-chair; Doris Findlay, treasurer; Cindy Buxton, Tina Letcher, Cindy McDonald.

Board of Christian Education Annual Report July 2013 - June 2014

The CE Board had another successful year with our Church School Program and our Adult Education. The members of the Board included Barbara Hart, Michael Salvadore, Meera Viswanathan, Frank Lenox and on a short term basis Prentice Stout and Pamela Lezaeta.

It was a busy year! Here is a summary of our work:

Church School:

Leading the Sunday School was our Church School Director Alice Babcock. An open house was held on September 9, 2013. Alice recruited teachers and volunteers to support the Sunday School program which had enrollment of 50+ children and average attendance of 32. A strong volunteer group was developed this year. All teachers and volunteers completed background checks, keeping KCC in compliance with our Safe Church Policy. The Board also reviewed our current curriculum after obtaining feedback from teachers and other churches and elected to stay with Gather Round curriculum. The Board also supplemented the third grade and higher curriculum with “Finding Your Way Through the Bible”, which teaches about the structure and organization of the Bible.

Tom Holland, long term Nursery volunteer decided to “retire” at the end of 2013. The CE Board recognized Tom for all his service with a reception in December.

Alice, in conjunction with Patti Steere, coordinated the Christmas Pageant this year. Once again it was a huge success!

The Haiti Easter project led by Cindy McDonald was an interesting and educational program for our children.

Children’s Sunday was June 8th. A teachers’ appreciation brunch was held for over 35 volunteers.

Bibles were given to all 3rd graders.

Graduating seniors (5) were recognized and gifts (music and iTunes card) were given to each senior.

Adult Education:

A non-violence program was conducted in September. Also, Jean Miller led a Bible study during Advent.

Communion for Children:

Weldon presented a Family Communion Workshop for those families with 3-5 graders that want to partake in Communion.

Safe Church Policy:

Alice attended a Safe Church workshop and updated the Board on practices of other Churches. The CE Board continues to update and amend the KCC policy to ensure that all members of the congregation are safe. Once a final draft is completed of the recommended changes, the Board will have an attorney review the policy and lastly send it to Church Council for approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Hart, Chairperson

Church School Annual Report July 2013 – June 2014

It has been another very busy and successful year for the church school program. During the summer of 2013, a special time was held for the children of the congregation. Each session was led by volunteers from the congregation with an average attendance of 6 -8.

The theme of the summer was Taking Care of the Gifts That God Has Given to Us.

Teachers for this year:

Nursery	Nancy Gardner and Tom Holland (retired in December)
Pre K / K	Andrea Richardson and Lori Ann Hiener
Grade 1 /2	Susan Eriksen and Kileen Urian
Grade 3/4/5	Michelle Davis and Sarah Simeone
Grade 6/7/8	Christy Sheehy and Mike Coffey

Volunteers from the congregation were recruited to serve as classroom assistants. This provided additional supervision for the children while providing the opportunity for teachers to attend worship service. It also provided an opportunity for adults in our congregation to be part of our exciting Church School Program.

For the 2013-2014 school year, the Board chose to use a UCC curriculum titled “Gather Round”. This curriculum provided students with their own individual workbook as well as a resource guide with many different activity options for teachers.

Each week, the worship bulletin included an edition of Church School News which included a summary of what the children were learning in Church School as well as follow up activities that could be done at home. Other information and announcements were also included.

The annual Christmas Pageant was presented by the Church School children on December 15, 2013 as part of the worship service. This allowed many children to participate.

Following her first mission trip to Haiti, Cindy McDonald assisted the children of Church School to participate in a church wide fund raiser to assist the children of Haiti.

Recognizing the importance of Communion, the students in grades 6/7/8 remained in church for the entire worship service on Communion Sunday. All other children attended Church School classes and were given the opportunity to return to the worship service to participate in Communion. Weldon facilitated family Communion conversation for anyone who wanted a deeper understanding of the tradition and practices of Communion.

The school year concluded with the children conducting the Worship Service on June 8, 2014. Each class participated in a variety of ways including a presentation of a highlight of what they learned throughout the year. A brunch followed the Worship Service to honor the teachers and volunteers who lead the activities each week.

As Church School Director, I attended meetings of the Rhode Island Chapter of New England Association of United Christian Educators including the annual retreat held in May.

Respectfully submitted,
Alice C. Babcock, Church School Director

Board of Fellowship Annual Report 2013/2014

This was a new year for the Board of Fellowship with almost a completely new roster of Board members including incumbents Mary Daly, Brenda Yonkoske and Tracy Heffron and new comers JoAnn Pillar, Maureen White, Erin Trodson, Sarah Simeone and Paulette Osterman.

We adopted a new strategy this year – holding almost all events at the church immediately following worship. With this approach we are hopeful that we are reaching more new members or interested visitors to attend our events. At first blush it appears to be working as all events attracted 80 to 100 guests per event – and a high degree of spirited interaction.

The Board hosted:

The annual Advent Wreath Workshop in the Fall

Three Soup Sundays

Progressive Supper in the Spring

Backyard Barbeque in early Summer

We are looking forward to creating an equally welcoming environment of fellowship and camaraderie in the coming year.

Respectfully,

Mary K. Daly

Board of Fellowship Chair

Annual Report- Flower Committee July 2013-June 2014

The Flower Committee continued its weekly responsibilities of organizing the ordering of the floral arrangements by request and distributing the flowers in the sanctuary to those named in prayers. Each donor is required to pay \$50 for the arrangement. The payment is usually made by leaving a check in the collection plate or by mailing it to the office. The cost of the weekly arrangement is \$50 and our relationship with Kenyon's Florist continues to be positive. For the summer of 2013 the flower committee placed a green plant on the altar and did not provide weekly services. For the summer of 2014 the flower committee will once again provide a green plant for the altar. The committee is also implementing the Carry In/Carry Out Summer Flower program. This will allow individuals to either bring in their own flower display or call Kenyon's themselves to request an arrangement. If they chose to call Kenyon's they will be billed directly \$50 for the arrangement.

The Flower Committee decorated the sanctuary and church for Christmas with our traditional garlands and wreaths for the first Sunday of Advent and the poinsettia display at the altar for Christmas services. A total of 26 plants were ordered at \$15 each (cost of \$11 from Boy Scouts) and those that were not taken by purchasers were distributed to others and to shut-ins. This year the committee did the display with both red and white poinsettias.

The Flower Committee decorated the sanctuary for Easter with a display of lilies. Many encourage us to consider alternating a display of tulips and daffodils, and lilies in future years. A total of 22 plants for Easter 2014 were ordered at \$15 each (cost of \$11 from Boy Scouts) and those that were not taken by purchasers were distributed to others.

Total costs for the Flower Committee for July 2013 - June 2014 were \$3024.23 and total revenue was \$3,054.10 resulting in a gain of \$29.87 for KCC. Following a reported loss last year, the committee has been tracking payments with positive results.

Going forward the committee continues to consider new ideas and ways to increase efficiency and promote the floral activities of our church.

Respectively submitted,

Patti Steere, Co-chair; Jessie Kenyon, Co-chair; Erica Estus, Beth Curtis, Jee Lee, Michelle Little, Lynne Broderick, Jaime Nelson, Lora Hahn- Schubert

Congregational Society in the Pettaquamscutt Purchase
Report of the Cemeteries Committee
May 14, 2014

Background - The Cemeteries Committee supervises three cemeteries: Old Fernwood and Tower Hill belong to the Society, and the Peckham Family Cemetery belonging to that family. The Tower Hill Cemetery, on the site of the first church building in the history of the Kingston Congregational Church, had its first burial in 1719 and in 1944 the last one, Bernon E. Helme. Although inactive since then, it is still available for use. The Peckham Family Cemetery is restricted to use by members of that family, but is cared for by our committee in accordance with an agreement made with the late Dorothy Peckham who contributed \$5,000 to our endowment for that purpose. Old Fernwood is divided into two parts: the original section was given by Elisha Reynolds Potter in 1826 for use by members of this Society and of the church, and by people living within one mile of the church or of the cemetery. The extension of Old Fernwood, landscaped in the 1960's and put into use in the 1990's, was given by Herbert J. Wells in 1927 for use by members of this Society and of the church and their families.

2013 - 2014 Report - Chris Faella, caretaker for New Fernwood Cemetery, is employed to cover the routine maintenance at Old Fernwood and the Peckham Cemeteries. Ann Ross, a member of our committee, tends to the entrance. Tracy Heffron and Patricia Moore trim and advise on the many shrubs and trees. Scott Wallace continues to provide maintenance at the Tower Hill Cemetery.

Continuing major pruning and cutting of the trees and shrubs happened this past year due to storm damage. We have not heard a report yet from Applied Bio Systems who were hired in 2012 by DOT to check the health of the amphibians living in the wetlands next to the road and cemetery. The Cemetery Committee has also still not received a reply from DOT to their request on the 138 project "to walk the cemeteries" this spring. Concerns have been raised as to how the road project will affect both Old and New Fernwood.

During the past year (May 2013-April 2014) the following interments took place: Carol Shilling who died on January 28, 2013 (interred October 22, 2013), Nina F. Gowell who died on February 26, 2014 (interred on March 18, 2014) and Barbara Woodbury – died on April 9, 2014 (interred in Spaulding family lot on April 26, 2014).

Our desire continues to have the cemeteries in every respect places of honor to the dead and of comfort to their relatives and friends. Lots remain available in both cemeteries with contributions to the endowment fund. Rates were raised on September 1, 2007 to \$600 for non-members and \$450 for members. Reservations may be made for future use, and a number of families have elected to have monuments placed on their lots even many years in advance of actual use, thus easing the burden on the family at a time of great sorrow. All reserved lots continue to be held in ownership by the Congregational Society in the Pettaquamscutt Purchase.

Respectfully submitted: Ann Ross, Jim Ross, Elizabeth McNab, Richard Shaw, and Jane Skogley

