

THE PROSPECT TOWER

Prospect United Methodist Church

A Growing Christian Community of Faith in Action

November 2008

Vol. 69, No. 8

From the Pastor's Pen

Dear Friends and Members of Prospect:

As you surely know better than I, there are some terrific people in our church. Facing major crises and shaky finances right out of the shoot with a brand new pastor, the leaders of Prospect Church are not only rising to the task in their assigned areas of responsibility, but are volunteering to help each other and to serve on new short-term task forces. I am truly inspired by their love for Christ and their devotion to making Prospect Church the best church it can possibly be.



For example, among the new task forces begun is the Strategic Task Force. This group — comprised of chairpersons of Church Council, Trustees, Finance, Pastor-Parish, lay leaders, treasurer and financial secretary — keeps an up-to-the-minute eye on the most critical parts of our church's functioning and helps coordinate efforts. If our church had a "Situation Room," this group would be in it!

Speaking of critical situations, facing the financial challenge for 2009 requires that we have a successful as possible stewardship campaign this fall. Who would do this for us, we wondered? Thanks be to God, Chris Wilson – who is as busy as any person in the church or city – stepped forward and agreed to lead us. You will soon be hearing from him asking for your pledges to our church's ministry in 2009.

The Nominating Committee has also begun filling other leadership positions. Are you available to help? Is there an area in the church that you believe you could lend some time? Maybe there's something you've always wanted to do but were never asked. If so, call or e-mail me (pastorpumc@snet.net). We'll do our best to match you with a present need.

See you in church,
Pastor Dennis

Prospect United Methodist Church

Founded 1834
99 Summer St., Bristol, CT 06010

The Rev. Dr. Dennis Winkleblack
Transitional Interim Pastor

Rev. William S. Barnes,
Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Albert H. Scholten
The Rev. George E. Harris
The Rev. Alan J. Krauss
Ministers in Residence

Heidi Flower,
Director of Music & Organist
Graceann Grindal,
Assoc. Organist & Director
Amy Kelley, Chapel Organist

Karen Burke, Secretary
Earl Struble, Sexton

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tion necessary for the Church Secretary.)

Website:
[http://www.gbgm-umc.org/
prospect-ct/index.htm](http://www.gbgm-umc.org/prospect-ct/index.htm)

■ COMMEMORATIVE ITEMS AVAILABLE



Several commemorative items with images of Prospect Church are available for purchase from members of the History Committee.

The original ornament is \$15 (only a limited number are left). The newer shadowbox-style ornament is \$20. Both were designed by late Bristol jeweler Max Rabin.

A framed print of the church as seen early in the 20th Century is newly available this year. The prints, which also show the former parsonage, are \$20.

Please call Marge Herold (582-5312), Kathy Dube (585-1373) or see Vivian Brackett on Sunday mornings if you are interested in these items.

■ HOW TO REACH THE PASTOR - KATHY DUBE

Since our new pastor, the Rev. Dennis Winkleblack, serves Prospect as both “transitional interim pastor” and the New York Conference as assistant to Bishop Jeremiah Park, the SPR Committee decided it would be helpful to church members and friends to know the pastor’s availability and how to reach him and contact the church office.

Pastor Dennis serves Prospect on a ¾ time basis and the remainder of his time is spent serving Bishop Park. He was assigned to Prospect to help the church build a reliable foundation for the future in terms of leadership, finances and morale. He will be here for certain until next summer (2009) and possibly until the following summer, until factors determine the time is right for a new pastor.

If you need to reach Dennis, try the church first (582-3443), the parsonage second (582-3336) or his cell phone third (203 520-5969). If Dennis is unavailable, and the need is urgent, he will contact either Rev. Bill Barnes, our pastor emeritus, or another pastor in the area.

The church office is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m. to Noon. Messages left on the answering machine are generally answered the following morning with the exception of Fridays. Messages left on Friday may not be returned until Monday morning, so if you have an emergency, try the parsonage next.

■ UNITED METHODIST MEN

PUMC Men’s Fellowship is sponsoring a trip to see the Hartford Wolf Pack vs. Lowell hockey game on November 21st. Tickets are \$14 per person which includes a soda, hot dog or slice of pizza. Children can get free face paintings. We will get great seats. Payment is needed by November 9th. Sign up in Sessions Hall. See Bill Thibodeau or Lang Ashworth for payment.

Fellow members and Friends of Prospect United Methodist church:

I write you as the newly hired Stewardship Chairman. Our church is at a crossroad financially. Historically, we have held pledge campaigns, which have never fully funded our budget. Fortunately, the members who have gone before us have left us the resources to fund these shortfalls and meet the obligations of our budget. This backstop has occurred for the last 30+ years. It is a great testimony to the faith and action of the members of our church. Unfortunately, this backstop masked a significant problem. We were not raising enough financial support to operate our church.

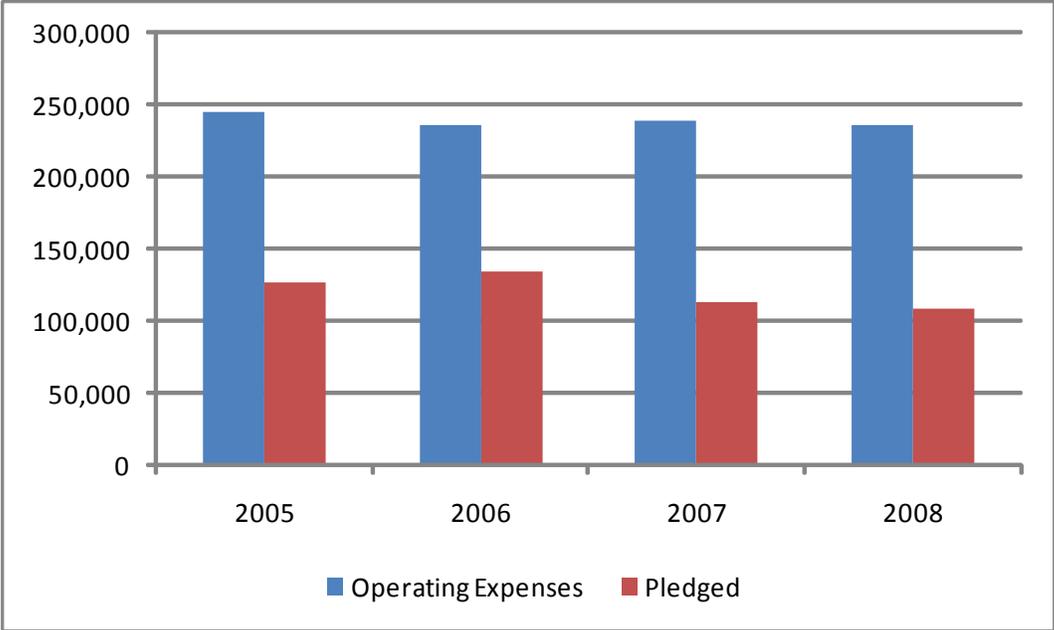
During the past 18 months a couple of events have caused this strategy to be one we cannot continue. First, the financial markets and the credit crisis have reduced the value of the Portfolio, which the trustees used to make up the shortfall. Secondly, we repaired and replaced our roof. While this was certainly necessary, it used up the balance of our unrestricted reserve. Our hope was that we as a church would pay ourselves back and we would be financially stable. Unfortunately, the credit crisis came and our portfolio has seen a reduction like most of us have sustained personally.

So here we are today. Our budget typically is about \$225,000. There are no extras in that number. It includes maintenance of our building, hiring a sexton, secretary, music personnel and our Pastor, apportionments and a small amount for programs. The Finance Committee has done an excellent job of monitoring and administering the budget. But our real problem is we do not receive enough financial support from our members. That is very hard for me to say, but if we are to continue as a church in the fashion that we have conducted business in the past, we all must support our church in a more significant manner.

I estimate that we have approximately 100 members pledging to the church. The total sum pledged is around \$110,000. We earn approximately \$25,000 on our investments. So we are left with \$135,000 to pay for a budget of \$225,000! Something has to change! I am suggesting that everyone who pledges to the church consider giving another \$10 per week. That will increase our pledge income to approximately \$160,000. That amount along with the income from

the investments will give us about \$185,000. We will still have to ask the Finance Committee to make some significant cuts. I have asked the Finance Committee to prioritize all spending in the church. This will help us decide what to fund and what not to fund in the next year.

Budget Vs. Pledge



I believe we are looking at a new environment at Prospect. If we want our church to continue as it has in the past, we all must assume our faithful responsibility and support it financially. We all will need to assume some of the maintenance responsibility of the church. We all will need to become more involved. If we sit on the sidelines and expect others to do it we will begin the process of decline. However this does not have to be a negative process. It can be an opportunity for all of us to continue the legacy that was left to us by others.

I acknowledge these are difficult financial times. The future of this church is at stake. I hope over the next several weeks to communicate with you some more about the strategies we all can take to put us back on solid financial standing. Please prayerfully and thoughtfully consider increasing your pledge by \$10 per week. If we all do this we can begin the process of stabilizing financially.

Chris Wilson
Stewardship Chairman

NOVEMBER AT A GLANCE

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m.	Chapel Service
10:00 a.m.	Sanctuary Service
10:00 a.m.	Church School
10:00 a.m.	Nursery School
11:00 a.m.	Fellowship

MEETING SCHEDULE

November 1	Men's Group breakfast
November 1	Women's Group – Westbrook Outlook
November 2	MYF 4 -6 pm
November 4	National Church Development 7 p.m.
November 6	Charge Conference 7 p.m.
November 9	Worship Committee in parlor, 11:15 a.m.
November 16	MYF 4 – 6 pm, Consecration Sunday
November 17	SPR 7 p.m.
November 18	Church Council 7 p.m.
November 20	Outreach 6:30 p.m.

EVENTS

November 8	Harvest Dinner
November 15	Women's Group - Women Only Fair*, Sessions Hall 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
November 21	Men's Fellowship trip to see the Hartford Wolf Pack
November 30	Potluck

*The Women's group is planning to have a breast cancer awareness display, therapeutic massage demonstrations, a pampered chef display and other items of interest to women at this first time event. The cost will be \$2 per person and will be open to the public.

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

Prospect United Methodist Church is hosting the annual Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve service this year, Wednesday, November 26th at 7:30 p.m. Singers and Ringers from St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Asbury, Bristol Baptist and First Congregational Church will join with our own choirs to perform beautiful songs together. Organists and Choir directors from each church will be leading the choirs and congregation to "raise the song of harvest-home". Area Clergy will all be taking part in this wonderful evening service of worship, song and thanksgiving!



■ COMING SOON: COVENANT TO CARE CHRISTMAS PARTY

The party offers foster youth a chance to experience the magic of Christmas. If you take a look behind the scenes of this massive holiday party, you'll see a lot of work from volunteers. So please consider joining in on the fun by volunteering your time and talent. It is a very rewarding experience.

Be on the look out for sign up sheets for party helpers (set-up crew, crafts, parking log, parent's room, kitchen, guides, clean up crew).

Donations of the following will also be needed:

- juice boxes
- long plastic tablecloths (red, white, or green)
- grease resistant dinner plates
- paper bowls
- plastic spoons
- napkins

**PROSPECT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
99 SUMMER STREET
BRISTOL, CT 06010
Dated Material - Please Do Not Hold**

**Non-Profit Organization
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Bristol, CT 06010**

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