

York Association Semi-Annual Meeting
October 26, 2008 at First Congregational Church of N. Berwick

The meeting was called to order on a fabulous fall day with prayer at 3:01 p.m. by the moderator, the Rev. Douglas Nielsen. The business is placed in the context of worship, because all of life is worship. The roll was called and there were 50 present from 17 churches. We then joined in a call to worship, hymn, prayer of confession and words of assurance, focused on Reformation Sunday.

Joys and concerns: The **Wells Church** has a new dropped ceiling, and soups' on ministry is averaging 100 every Wednesday, at no cost to them. **First, Kennebunkport**, has called a new pastor, the Rev. Derek White, starting Dec. 7. **Acton** has been without a pastor for five months while their pastor has been treated for non-Hodgkins lymphoma. The church now has the Rev. Peter Mercer as acting minister. **Alfred Parish Church** put a new roof on their former caretaker's home. The Rev. **David Avery** will be retiring after 36 years at Eliot UCC. **S. Berwick** has a functioning Church Growth Committee. **First Parish Saco** voted to divest themselves of the remaining fire fund, giving to twelve different charities, one each week. In November Saco youth will go to Washington DC to participate in the tent circle on behalf of the people of Darfur. **Alfred Parish** took their youth to a joint youth group in Sanford. **Christ Church** hosted a concert by a children's choir from Uganda, and raised money for children in Uganda. The Rev. **Jeff Gallagher's** son Jacob has had major open heart surgery and is recovering. **First Congregational Buxton** had the first meeting of a joint youth group with **North Congregational Church**, which has received a new space in the parish house.

Treasurer Ray Dupee presented the **treasurer's report**, showing a deficit for 2008 of \$1313 so far in 2008. Two churches did not make contributions this year. Almost \$50,000 has been spent on missions during the year, in addition to the buckets sent to Honduras. The proposed budget for 2009 is \$3,135, including a per capita dues increase to \$.75. It was moved and seconded and unanimously voted to accept the treasurer's report and adopt the proposed 2009 budget.

The Association agreed to allow the Moderator and Executive Committee appoint a **nominating committee**.

Three churches contributed through special offerings to the **In Care Assistance Fund**: the Congregational Church of West Newfield, the First Congregational of Buxton, and Christ Church. Those present contributed \$309 in the offering toward the work of the association.

Bruce Burnham reported that **mission trips** have gone from York Association since 2004. Trips are planned for March and August of 2009. The August trip will help with

distributing **AMIGOS** buckets, which contain food for school lunches. Costs for transporting the AMIGOS container have risen by 300% since the program began. AMIGOS was begun as a seven year commitment, and we have completed five. About 20 are signed up for the New Orleans mission trip Jan. 24-31. About half of the Association churches have sent people on these mission trips. Bruce said it is an eye-opening and heart-opening experience to travel on one of these trips. **Daisy's Children** is attempting to help children who are hungry and are in need of medical care and education. The web site is www.daisyschildren.org.

The moderator cited Zechariah as a prophet of hope. He said that raising the fellowship dues was a response to God's faithfulness -- the Conference is exploring a **new church start**, perhaps in York Association. Martha Hoverson and Bill Walsh attended a new church start conference in Atlanta, and are present with us today.

The Rev. Pat Smith presented the **Church and Ministry Committee** report and thanked the Committee and the Rev. Susan Craig in particular.

The Rev. **Susan Craig**, the associate conference minister, asked that we think of Maine Conference as a group that seeks to be in ministry and support with us. Annette Mott, the resource center director, will leave as resource director, and Anne Hodgeman will take over. The resource center includes resources for helping with church budgets. David Gaewski will return from sabbatical Nov. 1. His wife, Sueli, was diagnosed with breast cancer, and has had successful surgery. Nov. 13 10-3 - clergy advent retreat in Belfast. She spoke of her experience at the National Youth Event. She also said the Coordinating Council recognizes that the economic times are not good for buying or selling property. An architectural firm is making recommendations for conference facilities, at a cost of \$7500, for which the Conference is soliciting donations. We closed singing *God of Grace and God of Glory*, and enjoyed fellowship time and a delicious spaghetti dinner prepared by the North Berwick Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Franklin Anderson, Scribe