

Dear Members and Friends,

January 26, 2012

Last fall the Stewardship Committee introduced the 2012 *"Count Yourself Blessed"* pledge campaign and we heard Church members share heartfelt examples of how they have been blessed by God leading up to pledge Sunday in November. Since that time, we have all reflected upon our blessings in life and pledges have been submitted from 67 individuals or families, summing to \$117,750. Thank you for those pledges; it keeps our Church Mission alive! It is time to finalize the 2012 Budget so please join us for:

A Call to Meeting of the Congregational Church of Burlington on January 29th immediately following service. The purpose is to review and act on the 2012 Proposed Budget as presented by the Business Committee. Additionally, to approve the members of the 2012 Nominating Committee.

Here are some things we can share to help you prepare:

- Please review the information that follows and the enclosed 2012 Proposed Budget.
- This proposed budget reflects a modest 2% increase over 2011.
- We anticipate a need of \$154,000 in pledge income to balance our 2012 budget as opposed to \$150,000 for the 2011 budget.
- We anticipate an approximate \$24,000 pledge income shortfall for the 2011 budget.
- While the General Fund has historically covered pledge shortfalls, there is not enough money to cover the pledging gaps going forward. This will be explained by our Treasurer at the meeting on Sunday, January 29th.
- The Business Committee has cut expenses to minimal levels, only "Very Difficult" and/or "Unacceptable" cuts are possible.
- While the "Give \$5 More per Week" campaigns of the past have not worked, we feel our plan Sunday will work if those who are blessed in these difficult times make the commitment to all our Church represents.
- We ask that all members increase their pledge giving, and if it can average a 20% increase, we can offset the deficit.

Rev. Taylor reminds us that *"our Biblical Faith tells us that we should give back the first fruits of our labor to the God who has blessed us, and not what we can spare, or what is left over."* Our Church needs to have each member support the budget so that it can be balanced and self-sustained. Therefore, we ask that each member look within his or her own heart and ask "How much do I love my Church and how can I help?"

The first way is to attend this very important meeting and support the presented budget as well as learn how as a Congregation we can increase our pledges to meet our 2012 plan. We are all at different stages in life, but if you *"Count Yourself Blessed"* take action today so our Church can remain strong and vibrant.

Yours in Christ,

Paul Cornish
Business Committee Chair