

MEMBERSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Annual Report 2009

In 2009, the Membership-Fellowship Committee continued its mission to reach out in service and fellowship to church members, particularly new members, encouraging them to become active participants in the life and worship of First Church. Toward this end, we sponsored five Inquirers Classes, led by Jon Walton and our pastoral staff, bringing our total membership to over 1,200. Joan Ryan, who faithfully organizes and attends these sessions, was assisted by various members of the committee, as well as Sorrel Alburger, as photographer.

The Membership-Fellowship Committee sponsored many events during the year with food preparation by Jackie Fike and her Food Committee. Among these were five Inquirers' Brunches, the Annual Meeting Brunch, Soup & Song, Easter Breakfast, and the Welcome Home Picnic. These events were well attended and we are grateful to Jackie and her helpers for their dedication to the idea of encouraging fellowship by preparing and sharing meals together.

The Deacons joined us in hosting some of the summer cookouts this year which were attended by an enthusiastic group ranging from toddlers to our 60 Plus members. Meg Harper's Qi Gong classes have continued to grow and flourish and have now settled in as an ongoing church activity. The monthly Fellowship suppers following vespers continue to be a welcomed opportunity for worship and fellowship.

We added two new events in our outreach to new members and families this year: the First-time Expectant Parents' Get-together and the Reception for New Members. We were encouraged by the response these received and the committee plans to continue them next year.

For the past several years, the largest age group among our new members has been young adults and this has added a new dimension to our outreach. Under the guidance of Sarah McCaslin, a subcommittee of the Membership-Fellowship Committee was formed to speak to the needs of this demographic, now known as First Forward. They have developed a mission statement and hope to deepen their relationship with First Church through collaborative activities and programs. You will be hearing more about them as they develop and grow.

As I come to the end of my two-year term as chair of the Membership-Fellowship Committee, I would like to personally thank: Tony Feliciano and his staff for endless setups and all around helpfulness; Lisa Polite and Mia Alvar for their computer expertise and generous assistance in all things; to Sarah McCaslin, who met with us monthly and graced us with her spiritual guidance and sage advice; and finally, to the members of this stellar committee who brought enthusiasm, humor, creativity, and purpose to every single meeting and event. My deepest appreciation to one and all. It has been a privilege and a joy to serve as your chair.

Committee Members: Buffy Barton-Davis, Malcolm Crawford, Jackie Fike, Ion Freeman, Suzanne Greene, Paulette Griefen, Donna Hurley, Rebecca Johnson, Kyongsoo Noh, Joan Ryan, Barbara Sherman, Leslie Smith, Ryan Tirre; and a special thank you to Martha Ferry, our secretary, who so efficiently tied it all together for us.

Charlotte Wallace, Chair

