

# First Parish Congregational Church

United Church of Christ East Derry, New Hampshire



We are a community of faith built upon a firm foundation of worship, prayer and education. In affirming diversity, we are dedicated to welcoming all people who seek the Word of God, Christian fellowship and service to others. In partnership with Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to the ever-widening community through active and loving ministry.

## Upcoming Events

January 2  
Exploring the Bible ~ 6:30

January 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Deacons Meeting ~ 6:30

January 4<sup>th</sup>  
CE Board Meeting ~ 7:00

January 7<sup>th</sup>  
Budget Info  
Meeting ~11:30

January 10<sup>th</sup>  
K.I.T ~ 12:30

January 28<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Meeting

January 26<sup>th</sup>  
Spaghetti Supper ~ 5:00

## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Child of God,

Happy New Year! 2017 was an astounding year! We had so many God-sightings, as manifested by our children's programs, our Adult Faith Formation, our special events, and the amazing generosity of everyone! As we look toward 2018, we have so much to look forward to in our 299<sup>th</sup> year of serving Christ and community here at First Parish!

The United Church of Christ has a publication entitled: "**The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Churches**". I invite you to ponder these in your hearts and may we work together to embody and embolden our presence here in Southern New Hampshire. Here are the 7 habits!

**1. Strive for excellence in service to Christ.** Effective churches are churches where people enjoy what they're doing and do it well. Give God your best whether in the care of church grounds, the soup you prepare for the homeless shelter dinner, or the hymns and anthems you sing in worship.

**2. Cultivate a spirit of innovation and experimentation.** Make the "Seven Last Words of the Church," i.e. "We've never done it that way before," a distant memory. Be open to new ideas that advance your mission. Free people to develop and try new ministries. Just remember, if you're not failing at something, you're probably not trying anything.

## ALL ARE WELCOME

"Friend, you enter this church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God. Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks upon your lips, and offer God today your love and your service."  
- Adapted from a 12<sup>th</sup> Century Church in Hampshire, England



## *From the Pastor's Desk Continued*

**3. Take the initiative to build relationships with people and groups in the wider community beyond your congregation.** Refuse to be isolated. Take to the streets, the coffee shops, library and parks of your community. Be curious about what's going on. Get involved in community events. Meet people. Introduce yourself as a member of the church. Invite people to "come and see."

**4. Accept responsibility for mistakes, learn from them, and in all things, let grace abound.** Christians aren't perfect; they are forgiven. So making mistakes is not the worst thing that can happen. Besides we often learn the most from our failures. In the end, and in the beginning, it is about God's grace, not our achievements. Cut others some slack. While you're at it, cut yourself some, too.

**5. "Always be prepared to give an account of the hope that is within you." (1 Peter 3:15)** Look for where the love, energy and life are flowing and focus on that. And recognize excuses for what they are: a sign of insufficient commitment. Be people of hope, trusting in God to find a way even when we can't.

**6. Be willing to let people go in order to stay focused on your core mission.** It is more important for your church to be clear and steady about its core mission than it is to make everyone happy. Some people may be better off in another congregation. When folks are unhappy, connect, talk and pray. If things remain stuck, let them go with your blessing, giving priority to your mission.

**7. Splash it on!** A hospice nurse told the story of bringing an elderly woman home for the final days of her life. Noticing a large bottle of perfume on the woman's dresser, the nurse asked, "Would you like me to dab a bit of that behind your ears?" "Honeys" said the woman to the nurse, "Why don't you just splash it on!" God loves cheerful givers. So spend money wisely, well and freely in God's cause.

Let's look together for ways to embody these seven habits more every year! The UCC website has so much information about doing good ministry. If you find something that you'd like the rest of us to read, feel free to submit it for publication in an upcoming newsletter.

Happy New Year! Happy 'newness' in Jesus Christ, our brother, our Teacher, our Savior.

In God's Service,  
Pastor Deborah

## *Board of Deacons*

We would like to thank Ken Gould, Reni Harnden, and Cyndi Gray for their invaluable service this past year, as they will be leaving the diaconate board.

We would also like to thank everyone who contributed to making our Advent season and Christmas services uplifting and welcoming to all.

Please notify Diane Dunn or put your name on this list in the office, if you would like to receive a new name tag. We encourage everyone to wear name tags, so we can get to know one another better.

On January 7<sup>th</sup> we will be having a communion by taking bread and then drinking for individual cups, to help keep our congregation well, in the cold and flu season.

We wish all of you a year filled with peace and joy!

Thank you, Your Diaconate: Cyndi Gray, Reni Harnden, Ken Gould, Harry Handy, Julie Turner, Ryan Lehoullier, Diane Dunn, Diane Breeden, Cindy Pingree, and Joanne Worthen

## *Membership Committee*

We hope everyone had a joyous holiday season. The Membership Committee is working with the Diaconate on a plan to help FPC members and friends make connections during the holidays. Stay tuned for more information on that. Outdoor Ministry: Dust off those snow shoes and micro spikes. They'll come in handy on our winter hikes. Contact me at [WILLIBI1910@gmail.com](mailto:WILLIBI1910@gmail.com) if we haven't yet added you to the mailing list. Submitted by, Brian Williams on behalf of the Membership Committee and Hilary Gorgol, and Paula Robinson

## *Benefit Breakfast for Jack*

Holly and I would like to thank everyone who helped at the benefit breakfast for Jack. Without the kitchen help the wonderful meals would not have been served. We served over 150 people. We would also like to thank those who baked for the bake sale table and those who contributed to the raffle baskets. With everyone's help, the breakfast was a success.

Thank you. Rachel Cobban and Holly Gorgol

## *Board of Christian Outreach and Missions*

### **Angel Tree**

Each year at Christmas time, Missions sponsors the Angel Tree program which assists families in need in providing a little more Christmas joy for their children. We had an amazing response to this year's Angel Tree outreach. Through your generous donations we were able to provide 106 gifts for folks in need. Our Congregation served 6 FPC families, including 16 children for which we gave 62 gifts. In addition, we had 22 names from 18 families from Community Caregivers for which the Congregation gave 44 gifts.

### **Christmas Fund**

The Christmas Fund Offering (formerly the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross), one of five Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ (UCC), is an important way of sharing our joy at God's renewing and life-giving grace. The Offering, which is administered by the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance of the Pension Boards on behalf of the UCC, is an expression of joy and gratitude to, and for, those who serve the church.

Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees and Christmas Gift Checks to hundreds of annuitants.

### **Missions Giving:**

The Board of Christian Outreach and Missions is thankful to each of you for sharing so generously with those in our community who are struggling. We can do nothing without your kindness. Below is our list of charities who received your support last month:

Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM) - \$350.00	Derry Friendship Center - \$100.00
Sonshine Soup Kitchen - \$100.00	Pastoral Counseling - \$100.00
First Baptist Food Pantry - \$100.00	Upper Room - \$100.00
Community Caregivers - \$100.00	Pastor Discretionary Fund - \$200.00

Please note that the amount of funds available for Missions work is what you designate on your Pledge card. You may also designate money towards special offerings throughout the year by writing Missions in the memo field of your check followed by where you want the donation to go. For example: *Missions: Hurricane Harvey Relief*. The Missions board will send the donation to its destination in the most efficient way.

# Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

(Continued)

**Liberty House:** The Liberty House in Manchester, NH has been providing a safe, supportive, substance-free housing community for more than a decade for American veterans transitioning out of homelessness. Since opening their doors in 2004, a dedicated team of staff and volunteers has helped more than 200 homeless veterans rejoin their communities and regain fulfilling, independent lives.

## LIBERTY HOUSE WISH LIST

*Donations can be dropped off at 75 W. Baker St, Manchester NH during daylight hours.*

### FOOD

- ☆ Pasta & Pasta Sauce
- ☆ Canned Soup
- ☆ Mac & Cheese
- Canned Tuna
- Peanut Butter
- Canned Chicken
- Fruit Cups & Canned fruit
- Granola bars
- Spam
- Canned potatoes
- Beans
- Canned ravioli
- Canned veggies
- Ramen noodles

### CLOTHING

- ☆ Men's shorts waist sizes (30-34)
- ☆ Men's workboots, sizes (10-10.5 preferred)
- ☆ Men's sneakers all sizes
- Men's jeans waist sizes (30-34)
- Men's and women's hooded sweatshirts
- Men's boxers small, medium and large
- Flannel Shirts
- Thermal Underwear
- Socks
- Women's Clothing

### HOUSEHOLD

- ☆ Paper towels
- ☆ Toilet paper
- 35 gallon trash bags
- Air freshener

### MISC

- ☆ Bicycles
- Shaving razors (disposable)
- Shaving cream
- Deodorant
- Conditioner full size
- Shampoo full size

### HOMELESS ASSISTANCE

- ☆ Sleeping bags
- ☆ Backpacks
- ☆ Tents
- Can Openers
- Tarps
- Blankets

Respectfully Submitted,

**The Board of Christian Outreach and Missions (BOCOM):** Joe Weaver, Sue Brown, Beth Hunter, Karen Wilson, Kathy Holland, Bart Wetherbee, Melanie VanSteensburg, and Sharon Hartmann

## *What is KIT?*

As we sat down to eat the lunch we all brought to KIT on Wednesday December 20<sup>th</sup>, someone mentioned that there are folks in the church who don't know about KIT. They don't know what it is, when it meets, who is involved and what happens during these get-to-gethers.

Several years ago, it was expressed by some of the more "senior members" of the congregation that they didn't always know what was going on within the church. Warren and Jean Pillsbury along with Margie Ives decided that they would lead a monthly get together so that folks could Keep In Touch (KIT) with each other and stay abreast of things happening around the church. The sessions developed into one of comradery and sharing of information of potential interest.

The comradery brought the celebration of birthdays occurring each month with cakes and cards, occasional sing-alongs with Caryl Carl at the keyboard or Warren Pillsbury on his wacky one-man-band instrument, Christmas readings by Marge Palmer, some brain-teaser games and always some laughter. Ruth Lee Root is always taking pictures to capture each group.

On the informational side, there have been presentations on church activities such as the meetinghouse rehabilitation projects and the Christian education program. There have been speakers from The Upper Room, the Derry Library, AARP and many other area organizations to explain their programs.

KIT meets once a month, usually on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 12:30 and lasts until about 2:00. Everyone brings their own lunch and we enjoy a variety of birthday cakes for dessert (chocolate, vanilla, lemon, orange, ice cream, store bought, homemade - it's always a pleasant surprise!).

The gathering is open to everyone. Most of us are more senior because our schedules are usually more flexible. Come when you can, stay as long as you want. Offer ideas on what might be of interest to the group. Get to know someone better.

**K I T** - It can be educational, it can be informative, it can lead to new friendships, but if nothing else it is most certainly entertaining. So, let's KEEP IN TOUCH!

Submitted by, Bill Mann

## *FPC Dining for Dollars Returns!*

We're kicking off the new year at a new location for our popular Dining for Dollars fellowship & fundraising events--welcome to Gauchos Churrascaria in Manchester! This unique dining experience offers a variety of meats hand carved to order from roasting spits.

On Wednesday January 10th from 4-9 pm, invite some friends and join us at Gauchos Churrascaria, [62 Lowell St, Manchester](#). As always, the church will earn 15% back.

Come on out to support the church and enjoy fun, fellowship, and good food with friends and family!

## *Restructure Committee*

Boards, Committees, Members & Friends - Happy New Year 2018!

**Can We Do God's Work Better?** The Restructure Committee has been meeting this fall to explore how churches function. We are reviewing many church structures. How do others get the job done? Are we doing things in ways that work best for us? The Restructure Committee members will be joining board or committee meetings soon to listen and brainstorm. Do we have the right # of: Meetings, members, volunteers, time frames, orientations, opportunities and limitations? Let's think outside of the box! What works well? What needs tweaking?

Please pray about this.

Restructure Committee members: Fred Merrill, Becky Fleury, Anne LaDuke, Rene Harden, Cindy Gray, Rev. Deborah Roof, John Bartel, Melanie Van Steensburg

## *Project Linus*

"Providing Security Through Blankets for Children"

Let's gather at church Friday, January 12, 2018 @ 10 am in AB classroom. We have fabric already cut out for 13 quilt tops. Beautiful, colorful strips for us to sew. Bring your machine, thread and water. I'll provide a snack. Please join us to knit or crochet if you don't wish to sew. All are welcome. Many hands make work more joyful. For questions please contact: Melanie Van Steensburg

## **ANNUAL MEETING CALL**

**TO THE MEMBERS OF FIRST PARISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC:**

**YOU ARE HEREBY CALLED TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHURCH ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2017 AT 11:30 AM FOR THE PURPOSE OF:**

1. Receiving the reports of Officers, Boards and Committees of First Parish Church as printed in the 2017 Annual Report.
2. Adopting a budget for 2018 and specifically address how to handle money coming in and its application to the loan for the building rehabilitation. (Should the existing amount of \$67,000 be used toward paying down the loan or used for the rehabilitation fund?)
3. Vote related to dropping inactive members from the membership list.
4. Electing persons to serve as members of Council, Boards and Committees as well as Officers of the Church.
5. Transaction of any other business that may properly come before the Congregation.

Linda Webber  
Clerk



## *Scripture Readings*

*Readings are from the Revised Common Lectionary  
for Sundays and Festivals – Year B*

### **January 7<sup>th</sup>**

Isa 60:1-6  
Ps 72:1-7, 10-14  
Eph 3:1-12  
Mt. 2:1-12

### **January 14<sup>th</sup>**

1 Sam 3:1-10, (11-20)  
Ps 139:1-6, 13-18  
1 Cor 6:12-20  
Jn 1:43-51

### **January 21<sup>st</sup>**

Jonah 3:1-5,10  
Ps 62:5-12  
1 Cor 7:29-31  
Mk 1:14-20

### **January 28<sup>th</sup>**

Deut 18:15-20  
Ps 111  
1 Cor 8:1-13  
Mk 1:21-28

## *Worship Schedule*

### **Deacons of the Month:**

Diaconate

### **Ushers & Greeters**

**Weekly Usher** – Michael Bryan

### **January 7<sup>th</sup>:**

Ushers: Diaconate  
Greeter(s): Verna Elwell &  
Shirley Dickason

### **January 14<sup>th</sup>:**

Ushers: Stanley and Holly Gorgol,  
Tom and Andrea Cooper  
Greeter: Beth Hunter

### **January 21<sup>st</sup>:**

Ushers: Becky Fleury, Verna Elwell,  
Nancy Berry  
Greeter: Carol Guerrin

### **January 28<sup>th</sup> :**

Ushers: Joan Crimlisk, Brian Williams,  
Margie Ives  
Greeter: Diane Dunn

# First Parish Congregational Church, UCC

## First Parish Congregational Church

PO Box 114, 47 East Derry  
Road, E Derry, NH 03041

### Office Hours

Monday: Closed  
Tuesday: 8:00-2:00  
Wednesday: 9:00-4:00  
Thursday: 9:00-4:00  
Friday: 8:00-2:00

### Check us out on the web

[www.fpc-ucc.org](http://www.fpc-ucc.org)

**Administrative Assistant,  
Hannah Collier:**

[officemgr@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:officemgr@fpc-ucc.org)  
603-434-0628

**Senior Pastor and Teacher  
The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof:**  
[pastordeboraah@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:pastordeboraah@fpc-ucc.org)

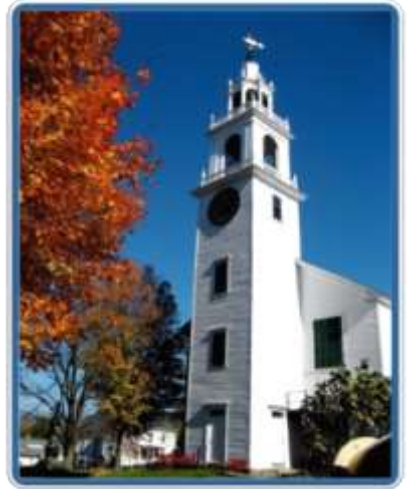
### You are most warmly invited:

9:45 am Sing-a-long – your favorite Carol  
10:00 am Sunday Worship & Church School  
11:00 am Coffee Hour

## First Parish Congregational Church History

**The oldest church** in the immediate area, First Parish Church was founded by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians in the spring of 1719. Faith was and continues to be a priority. Worship was held one day after arrival, a church body was organized in one month and a building was built in 1722. A “more imposing structure” replaced the first in 1769, and although altered and expanded through time, the main building and sanctuary remain our center of worship.

**First Parish Church** became an independent community church in the Congregational tradition about 1810 as new settlers came to the area. Through the years the church has always had a strong instinct for both survival and faithfulness. In 1973 and again in 1985, we made major commitments to educational and community ministry through the additions of Noyes Hall and Currier Hall. We joined the United Church of Christ in 1995.



First Parish Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
47 East Derry Road  
PO Box 114  
East Derry, NH 03041-0114  
**Address Service Requested**