

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.

Come visit us! Worship is at 10 am.



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Child of God,

We enter Lent, a sacred time in the church year when the church encourages us to pray more, to give alms and to fast. In other words we take time to attend to our spiritual bodies, attend to the body of Christ through our financial gifts to God's mission and attend to our physical bodies. Traditionally Lent has been a time to "give something up." Giving something up for 40 days is the least that we can do for a God who gave up his only begotten Son so that we might enjoy eternal life. It is the least we can do.

What more could we do? I mean, let's say that we do manage to pray more. We could start every day with a gratitude prayer. **And** let's say it's easy to give \$10 more than we thought we would give to the church. Fasting is probably the hardest one. Maybe that is how the whole "giving up chocolate for Lent" got started. Fasting is for monks and medieval nuns, after all.

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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 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England

Upcoming Events

Wednesday Nights:

Supper and Worship Service

March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29

~ In Currier at 6 and 7 pm

Tuesday Nights:

Exploring the Bible

March 7, 14, 21 and 28

~ In Cook at 6:30 pm

Sunday, March 19

Congregational Community Update

~ In Currier at 11:30 am

THIS IS NEW! Come hear what's happening at First Parish - each of the Boards and Committees will share. Bring your questions.

SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 9 at 4 pm

Songweavers Concert here!



From the Pastor's Desk Continued

So what then? We will pray more, give \$10 more to the church each week. (By the way, if everyone did that our church would be \$6000 better off by Easter. That's just ten dollars! Take the \$10 challenge. See the instructions below.) And we'll give up chocolate or scotch or whatever your guilty pleasure is. Give it up! Just for 40 days. Would your quality of life improve? How much? Would you even notice? Well, like I said. The church would be \$6000 to the good. Seriously. I challenge you. I'll do it if you do. Add \$10 a week to your offering. Mark on it "Lenten challenge". Let's see who will take me up on this challenge? I've told you that I'm doing it. You let me know that you're going to join in.

Pray. Give. Fast. 40 days. It is the least we can do.

Peace,

Pastor Deborah

Finance Committee

How are we doing?

Financial Report as of 1/31/17	Received	Budgeted
Pledges to date	\$16,011	\$16,000
Plate offerings to date	\$23,256	\$28,000

Submitted by Joyce Pope on behalf of the Stewardship Board and Finance Committee

\$10 challenge

What costs \$10? Two fancy coffees at Starbucks. A big mac, a large drink and a large fries. In our society, almost everyone can find \$10.

Take the \$10 challenge this Lent. For six Sundays.

Add \$10 more to your weekly offering this Lent. Be sure to mark the envelope \$10 Lenten Challenge.

Take the challenge!

Board of Christian Education



We are off to a great start over the past two months! The kids are having a great time with our rich and exciting Lectionary-based curriculum packed with exciting stories, science experiments, arts and crafts, animated video storytelling, movement songs and active games. With gratefulness, as always to our workshop leaders, we couldn't do this without you!

Lenten Wednesday Worship Childcare

During our Wednesday night worship series during Lent, childcare will be available in John (rainbow room, where we normally have class) for families with children. Please sign your children in after dinner between 6:45 and 7:00 pm.

BOOK FAIR

Christian Education will be hosting a Book Fair from March 12-March 26 Sponsored by the Sparkhouse Family. Help continue your family's faith during the week with these faith and fun filled educational resources. Our Church will also receive free educational resources for all to utilize by hosting this event.

Special savings for your families.

All Sparkhouse Family titles can be purchased you will receive up to 50% off AND free shipping on all resources whether they are displayed at the fair or not!

A chance to win!

A family in our church could win \$200 cash AND win your church a free year-long subscription to [Frolic Online](#). Frolic Online gives churches the tools to reach young families through monthly E-newsletters, parent/child classes, and more!

Earn rewards.

Earn a percentage of net proceeds from your Book Fair sales as store credit at <http://wearesparkhouse.org> or <http://augzburgfortress.org>.

Thank you to all who participated in this year's NHC-UCC "Prepared to Serve" Day of Education!

We are so very grateful for the 13 people who participated in the "Prepared to Serve" Day of Education event this year. With over 500 participants in attendance, this was a major event in the life of the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ. We are all so excited to share in everything that was learned and shared during this event!

Board of Christian Education Continued

Registration Has Begun for Horton Center

Located on top of Pine Mountain near Gorham, New Hampshire, Horton Center is a beautiful camp run by the UCC. Registration opened on January 28th, and recruitment has already begun for camp counselor positions! The 2017 season opens with:

Opening Work Days

May 25th-28th, Thu to Sun

All Ages!

Help Horton Center get ready for a summer of campers.

Please call or email to register for this session.

Help Horton Center get ready for a summer of campers, grades 7+ and adults. For more information - or to register for camp - go to www.hortoncenter.org. Paper registrations are available by calling 603-545- 9660. Partial scholarships toward camp tuition are available through the CE Board. Please let Pastor Deborah and Christine Lehoullier know when you have submitted your camp application, and we will ensure you receive our FPC scholarship. There is also tuition assistance available through Horton Center - you must turn in your application by May 15th.

Community Happenings

Oscar-nominated Documentary Screening -"The White Helmets"

Sunday, March 5, 2017

The Syrian Refugee Mission Group invites you to view a screening of "The White Helmets" at South Congregational Church, Concord on Sunday, March 5th from 2:00 -4:00 PM. This documentary highlights the extraordinary courage of the Syrian Civil Defense, a volunteer corps which acts as first responders in the Syrian civil war, now in its 6th year. The White Helmets were nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize and the documentary is nominated for an Oscar. Discussion will follow the 40 minute film. A free will offering opportunity will benefit our two NH resettlement agencies, Ascentria and the International Institute of New England. You can view or register at events@nhcucc.org

Racial Justice Mission Group invites you to a screening of "13th"

Thursday, March 9, 2017 - 6:00 PM

Join the RJMG for this powerful documentary by acclaimed director, Ava DuVernay (of Oscar-nominated film Selma fame) chronicling how our justice system has been driven by racism from the days of slavery to today's era of mass incarceration. Learn more at <http://www.nhcucc.org/Documents/WeeklyNewsDocuments/RMJG%20-%20promo%20for%20%2013th-2.pdf>

Board of Personnel

The Personnel Board is looking for someone to fill the facilities maintenance position. If you are interested in applying for the maintenance position please contact Pastor Deborah. It will be 10 hours per week at \$14.00 an hour. Also, a big thank you to Rod Hunt for helping out in the meantime.

Board of Stewardship

Last fall, as part of our annual pledge drive, we published a narrative budget. In producing this document, we hoped to communicate all of the wonderful, exciting things that happen around First Parish because of your generous pledges.

Let's take another look at one piece of that story, "Worship and Prayer".

A little more than twenty-five percent of our church budget is dedicated to the category of worship and prayer. That amounts to something in the neighborhood of sixty-seven thousand dollars. Thank you for your generosity.

What specific activities and opportunities are offered to us in the area of worship and prayer? The list is long.

- Our joyful Sunday morning worship services;
- The sacramental reverence of communion and baptism;
- Anticipatory Advent activities and Celebratory Christmas services;
- Solemn Lenten and Joyful Easter services;
- Weddings and memorial services;
- Prayer services in times of crisis.

Gratitude is the word that comes to mind. Gratitude for the inspiring sermons of Pastor Deborah and the uplifting music provided by the choir and accompanist led by our music director on Sunday morning. And let us not forget the children's choir and hand chime group. Once a month we are reminded of Jesus' message of love in the sacrament of communion and periodically we are blessed to witness the baptism of new followers of Christ. Blessed indeed.

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Board of Stewardship Continued

Christmas is now in the rear view mirror. Did you get a chance to attend one or more of the Christmas Eve services? Did you participate in any of the Advent activities? How about the Christmas Day and New Year's Day worship in the round services? Wasn't that fun?

And now Lent is approaching. There will be special Lenten services offered each Wednesday evening beginning on Ash Wednesday, and wrapping up with Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Put those dates on your calendar now! And finally Easter Sunday arrives to celebrate the joy of the resurrection of Jesus.

Have you had an opportunity recently to attend a wedding or memorial service conducted by Pastor Deborah? Her ingenuity and creativity make each of these events incredibly unique. Solemn of course, and joyful and uplifting as well.

And if world and national events or a congregant's personal situation calls for it, Pastor Deborah will bring us together in prayer.

Worship and prayer at First Parish is pretty awesome. And it all happens because of your generous pledges and your personal involvement. Paul writes in Colossians 3:14-17:

***14** Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. **15** And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. **17** And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Blessed Be.

Submitted by John Bartel on behalf of the Stewardship Board.

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

Food Basket Program: The Food Basket program is a vital part of our Missions work as a Church. The food basket is kept outside of Currier Hall where services are now being held. The food goes to the Derry Food Pantry and the Upper Room, both important programs supported by your giving. If you have donated canned goods or other food items to this program in the past, thank you. If not, please consider dropping off items in the food basket on Sunday, or anytime the Church is open. Donations are desperately needed and always appreciated.

Missions has accepted a challenge from the Choir to match donations to the Food Pantry. We are in the process of working out the details. Please stay tuned for more information as there may be other challenges in the works for other programs going forward which may involve the Congregation.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)

One Great Hour of Sharing is an offering that makes the love of Christ real for individuals and communities around the world who suffer the effects of disaster, conflict, or severe economic hardship, and for those who serve them through gifts of money and time. Today, projects are underway in more than 100 countries, including the United States and Canada. While specific allocations differ in each denomination, all use their One Great Hour of Sharing funds to make possible disaster relief, refugee assistance, development aid and more. Offering envelopes will be available throughout Lent (March 1 – April 16 (Easter Sunday)). A gift to One Great Hour of Sharing enables the church to share God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief to those affected by natural disasters, provide food to the hungry, and helping to empower the poor and oppressed.

March Mission Moment:

On March 12th Missions will be hosting the Community Caregivers. There will be a Loaf & Lad (bread & soup) in Currier for those wanting to stay after service to learn more about this import program.

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 receiving monthly Mission support:

Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM) \$350	Derry Friendship Center \$100
Sonshine Soup Kitchen \$600	Family Promise \$100
First Baptist Food Pantry \$100	Pastoral Counseling \$100
Community Caregivers \$100	Upper Room \$100
Pastor Discretionary Fund \$100	

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

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. If you would like to support this mission, there is a wish list below. Items can be placed in the container at the Missions table outside of Currier Hall (where the services are currently held), and someone from Missions will deliver them to Liberty House.

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 VanSteenburg

Firm Foundation of Worship, Education and Prayer

Luke 10:29: "And who is my neighbor?"
Getting to Know Our Neighbor

LENT begins on Wednesday, March 1, when we observe **Ash Wednesday**. We will enjoy a simple supper together at 6 and then there will be a Communion and Imposition of Ashes Service at 7:00pm. Each week thereafter we will have supper at 6 and a service at 7. The theme this Lent is "Getting to Know our Neighbor". To that end, each week we will have supper together with a variety of foods, not always soup. What does our neighbor eat? Sometimes they eat Lasagna and sometimes they eat breakfast for dinner! This Lent we won't be giving something up, but rather we will endeavor to get to know one another better!

AND each week there will be a service at 7 in the tradition of a different denomination. Here is the schedule: March 8 - Lutheran; March 15 - Episcopal; March 22 - Methodist; March 29 - Presbyterian; and April 5 - Baptist. We are hoping to accomplish two things with these services: one is education and the other is a worshipful experience. Some people just want worship and don't want or need to understand why it is what it is and what makes it different from another service. We want to honor those people. Some people want to know how a tradition came into being, why it is what it is and how does it relate to what we do? We want to honor those people, too.

SO our plan is to have a worship experience ready for all who attend. The worship experience will end and we will transition into a conversation/discussion of what just happened. During that transition time, people can leave quietly if they so choose. Each worship service will last 30-35 minutes. Each post-worship service conversation will last 20-30 minutes.

UNDERSTANDING our neighbor is one of the first steps toward love and harmony. Learning differences and learning about why we do what we do are very important steps toward understanding ourselves - AND our neighbor.

DON'T give anything up this Lent! Rather, JOIN us on Wednesday evening. "Won't you be our neighbor?"

OUTSTANDING WOMAN RECOGNITION

Every church has someone who seems to be the “backbone” of her church. You know... the ones who are in the kitchen, organizing the rummage sale or the bazaar, working in the food pantry or soup kitchen, stuffing the envelopes or folding the newsletter, filling in for the secretary, and staffing the serving line at all the receptions. They are the ones who dust and clean out the refrigerators or just pitch in where needed. They also take their turns in holding church offices as deacons and Sunday School teachers; they serve on the Boards of Missions, Stewardship, Trustees, and Women’s Groups; and they organize prayer groups and/or study groups, etc.

At every Spring Gathering we like to recognize these wonderful women for their faithfulness and dependability. There is a nomination application form below for you to nominate one of your own. Please write a brief statement of why you feel she should be recognized.

At the next Spring Gathering, we will honor some of our outstanding women who live their faith every day in their churches and communities, but we need your help to identify them.

Please mail your nominations by March 10, 2017, to **Dot Pitman**, 12 Maple Knoll Drive
Tel: 603-465-7672 E-mail: vpitman@tds.net Hollis, NH 03049

Please mail early; do not wait until the deadline!

APPLICATION FOR OUTSTANDING WOMAN RECOGNITION

I/We _____

of Church _____

Address _____

would like to recommend _____

Her address: _____

from my/our church to be recognized at the NHCUCC Women’s Fellowship Spring Gathering.

Will this person be able to attend the Spring Gathering on March 25, 2017, at the Keene Congregational Church (UCC) in Keene? Please circle: Yes / No

Please give a brief summary of why you recommend this woman— Use a separate sheet.

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Plymouth Congregational UCC ONA Celebration - Honoring 25 years of commitment to diversity and Plymouth Congregational UCC's pride of being the first Open and Affirming UCC church in New Hampshire. And further honoring all NH Churches with the same commitment. We are asking each ONA Church in NH that wishes to participate, to select an art piece made by a member of their congregation on the theme "**In Praise of Diversity**".

In Praise of Diversity - An Art Exhibit will be held Saturday, April 29th 2017 to June 30th 2017. Opening Reception will be Saturday April 29th 2017 at 4:30 pm followed by a late supper for the artist.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Entry Deadline April 1, 2017

Drop off: April 22-24, 2017 (9 am - 12 pm)

Opening Reception: April 29, 2017 at 4:30 pm

Supper for Artists following Opening Reception

Show ends: June 30, 2017

Pick up: July 1, 2017

Entry forms are available in the church office. They must be turned in by April 1, 2017 to **Plymouth Congregational UCC POB 86, Plymouth NH 03264**

Scripture Readings

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

March 5th – 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gen 2:15-17, 3:1-7
Ps 32
Rom 5:12-19
Matt 4:1-11

March 12th – 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gen 12:1-4a
Ps 121
Rom 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17 or Matt 17:1-9

March 19th – 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ex 17:1-7
Ps 95
Rom 5:1-11
John 4:5-42

March 26th – 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Sam 16:1-13
Ps 23
Eph 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

Worship Leadership

Deacons & Lay Readers

Deacons of the Month

Julie Dubisz and Joanne Worthen

March 5th: Ryan Lehoullier

March 12th: Joanne Worthen

March 19th: Julie Dubisz

March 26th: Cyndi Gray

Ushers & Greeters

Weekly Usher – Michael Bryan

March 5th: Ushers: Diaconate

Greeter(s): Verna Elwell and
Shirley Dickason

March 12th: Ushers: John Bartel, Kevin Gordon
& Diane Gordon

Greeter(s): Becky Fleury

March 19th: Ushers: Ken Gould, Brian Williams

Dee Deranian & Shirley Dickason
Greeter(s): Lisa & Wayne Hall

March 26th: Ushers: Stanley & Holly Gorgol,
Tom & Andrea Cooper

Greeter(s): Diane Breedon

First Parish Congregational Church, UCC

Church Office Hours:

Tuesday-Friday
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

You are most warmly invited:

10:00 am Sunday Worship & Church School
11:00 am Coffee Hour

Check us out on the web or call our office:

www.fpc-ucc.org | 603-434-0628

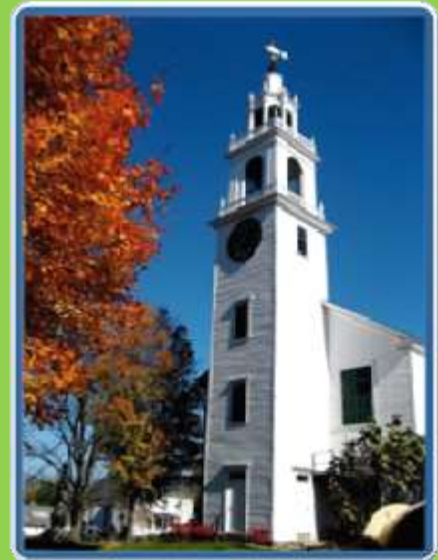
Email our Administrative Assistant, Hannah Collier:

officemgr@fpc-ucc.org

Email our Senior Pastor and Teacher

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof:

pastordeboraah@fpc-ucc.org



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