

# 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.

## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Child of God,

What an amazing Annual Meeting we had on January 28! It was a joy to see so many people!

Thank you to Linda Webber and her team for a great lunch!

Thank you to Moderator Fred for your calm leadership.

We had great discussions. Everyone who wanted to speak got to speak. Everyone listened to everyone else. Everyone then voted their conscience.

As I pointed out in the morning worship service, the authority to make decisions lies in the majority vote. That is what we did. We each decided our own mind. We each voted. The votes were counted. There was a majority vote. A decision was made.

This is not about winning and losing because there are no losers. We all "win" because of this sacred governing practice.

It is my fervent prayer that everyone understands this overarching wisdom. We have an wonderful structure that governs our path when we abide by it.

The Treasurer and the Finance committee did an amazing job. First, there was the presentation on January 7 and then the presentation at the Annual Meeting. They presented the numbers they had to work with. These faithful people do not "make up" these numbers. It takes money to provide a ministry presence. The money comes from the contributions of the membership.

## Upcoming Events

February 6<sup>th</sup>  
Exploring the Bible ~ 6:30

February 7<sup>th</sup>  
Deacons Meeting ~ 6:30

February 14<sup>th</sup>  
K.I.T ~ 12:30  
Soup~ Currier 6:00  
Ash Wednesday  
Service ~ 7:00

February 15<sup>th</sup>  
CE Board Meeting ~ 7:00

February 18<sup>th</sup>  
Mission Meeting ~ 11:30

February 21<sup>st</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>  
Soup & Service ~ 6:00

February 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Spaghetti Supper ~ 5:00

### 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*

**Pledging** is the tool we use to guess what our income will be. **Pledging** is crucial to making informed decisions. And with 300 members, we receive fewer than 100 pledges. On a "level-funded" budget, i.e. no raises or additions to speak of in any one line item, we were "short" approximately \$13,000. With a budget that held raises for the staff, 5 extra hours for the CE Director, some minor increases to a couple of programs, we were "short" approximately \$30,000.

A member of the congregation stood up and said something along these lines: "There are 80 people in this room. If half of us - just half of the people here - could pledge **\$16 a week** (if you already pledged, that would be in addition to your first pledge), we would be able to fund the larger budget, the one with raises." She went on to boldly say, "I will do that. I will increase my pledge \$16 per week." I was so impressed and so taken by her act of courage and generosity - and the fact that this is New England and Yankees don't disclose financial decisions in public - that I was motivated to stand up and say, "I will to!" Another person said, "I'll raise my pledge \$25/wk." Another family said, "We will raise our pledge \$20/wk." Someone said, "We will pledge \$64/wk." Someone else said, "I will pledge \$20/wk." And yet another person said, "\$20/wk." And yet another person said, "\$20/wk." It felt like the feeding of the 5000! It was exhilarating and amazing! I could hear the angels singing "Surely God is in this place!"

Feel free to check the math. That's 8 people (out of 80) and we raised enough for the "level-funded budget." Someone then made the motion that we add the 5 additional hours for CE, trusting that others would follow suit. And someone asked, "Should we have another congregational meeting soon and give other people in the room time to do some math at home and perhaps raise their pledge?" The Moderator indicated that that would not be necessary, that their pledge would always be gratefully received, and that the Council can act on behalf of the congregation between congregational meetings.

Numbers are not always easy for non-numbers people. One member got up during the meeting and expressed how confusing this budgeting process can be. I understand. Believe me, I do. What more can we do? I really appreciated the meeting earlier this month. Clearly it was not enough to raise the total level of understanding. Remember that Finance meetings are open. Council meetings are open. You are welcome to attend. If you can think of a way to provide a better understanding to more people please let your leadership know. I, myself, have a decent understanding of the ins and outs and would be happy to sit down with folks to assist people to better understand. If you can think of a better way of providing information, please let your leadership know. Help us to find a solution and provide a greater understanding to more people.

Thank you, one and all, for participating in the life of the church here at First Parish. We are the hands and feet of Christ. May we continue to work faithfully in service to God!

Know that I thank God for you,

*Pastor Deborah*

## *Adult Faith Formation: Prepared to Serve*

### **Prepared to Serve – February 24 at Pembroke Academy**

The New Hampshire Conference of the UCC offers a day of education. Over 500 people come together on one day to worship together, and to learn more from one another about how to be better disciples in God's will. There are all kinds of conferences for every kind of aspect of ministry.

In order to register for the day, go to [www.nhcucc.org](http://www.nhcucc.org) and look for the Prepared to Serve registration materials. It's best to register right away because popular workshops get full fast!

At this year's Prepared to Serve day of education, Pastor Deborah will be presenting the following seminar: **"Fun and Faith on Your Journey to Generosity! Let's Debunk Some Money Myths!"** And here is the description: "Talking about Money is stressful!" This is one of the many myths we will consider in this interactive workshop about Biblical Stewardship. Being a good steward isn't always about money anyway. It's also about having a spirit of generosity. Are you generous in hospitality? Do you smile and greet strangers? Most people think they do all the while visitors often do not return after visiting a church because no one spoke to them! Jesus gave us 6 direct commands that start with feeding the hungry. We take that one really seriously – but what of the others? What does God's economy look like: a steel trap or a revolving door? Come if you dare. We are going to talk about money!"

**Pastor Deborah would like your help. If you would be willing to come to a "dress rehearsal" of this presentation either Wednesday, February 21 at 11:00 or Tuesday evening, February 13 at 6:30. Please RSVP to Pastor Deborah at [pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org) if you want to attend.**

Liz Greenberg will also present at Prepared to Serve an **Introduction to Soul Collage.**

"Immerse yourself in a fun, inspiring, and intuitive time of creativity – playfully creating small collaged images for a deeper self-understanding. You will begin to create your own deck of SoulCollage® cards and practice reading them through a self-exploration process led by a trained, compassionate Facilitator. SoulCollage® cards can provide meaningful insights and guidance for your life's journey. SoulCollage® is easy to learn and requires no previous artistic skills and you will take home at least one completed card and hopefully a love of this creative process.

SoulCollage® is a creative fun tool for easy, artful self-expression. It was developed by Seena B. Frost, M. Div, MA. Using intuition and imagination, you create your own collaged cards in which each card reflects a different aspect of who you are.

The cards are made from simple materials: Magazine images, scissors, glue, and mat board. Best of all, it is a creative process that is truly accessible to everyone, even people who feel they have no artistic ability.

This introductory workshop includes all the materials you need to complete your own cards.

If you're looking for a fun, playful, and experiential workshop at Prepared to Serve, this is the one for you!

## Board of Christian Education

A note from the Christian Education Director:

I would be remiss if I didn't express how greatly appreciative and hopeful I am that I am now able to serve the Church in my position as Christian Education Director an extra 5 hours a week! I will continue to strive for excellence and growth in our quest for Faith Formation for all within our Church and beyond!

Brightest Blessings,  
Christine Lehoullier



### Parents and Caregivers,

There will be no Sunday School on Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, however, the Nursery will remain in operation as usual.



The Christian Education board meeting for the month of February has been moved to Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 pm in the Cook Conference Room. Refreshments will be provided.



**Caregivers and Parents:**  
Childcare will be offered on Wednesday evenings during our Lenten services beginning Ash Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. The children will have a fun and enlightening Lenten activity planned for each evening.

***Thank you all who help spread the warmth by donating to our City Reach collection drive!***



**City Reach Participants *must have their medical forms filled out in order to participate in the program March 9th and 10th.*** Please see Christine Lehoullier to receive your form or check your e-mails for the scanned version of the form you can print and fill out from home if you are able. Information regarding the program has also been emailed to you if you are signed up to participate.

## *Board of Deacons*

February is Black History month. Each Sunday we will highlight a person of color who has had an impact on American culture. We are grateful for their courage and their example.

We will be celebrating "Scout Sunday" on February 4th. We encourage scouts of all ages to wear their uniforms and join us in the service.

On February 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm we will be having an "Ash Wednesday" service beginning the season of Lent. There will be a simple meal of Soup and Bread at 6:00 pm before the service.

On the next six Wednesdays after, we host an evening meal and then provide a service for the Lenten Season.

Lent 1- February 21st	Lent 4- March 14th
Lent 2- February 28th	Lent 5- March 21st
Lent 3- March 7th	Lent 6- March 28th

On March 29<sup>th</sup> we will be having a service for "Maundy Thursday". There will be a simple meal of soup and bread before the service.

A group is getting together to plan the meals please let us know if you would like to help.

We would like to encourage everyone to come to any or all of the lenten programs. There are 46 days from Ash Wednesday until Easter. (40 not counting Sundays)  
The 40 days represent the days Jesus Christ spent in sacrifice and withdrawal in the desert.

Here are a few ideas of things you might like to do for Lent:

- 1) Serve others- volunteer your time, give to a charity, feed the hungry
- 2) Give something up- give up sugar, kick a bad habit, give up gossiping/ fear or anxiety.
- 3) Pray your day- pray for those in the news, pray for your coworkers, pray for the sanitation person, pray for those in traffic.
- 4) Be still and listen for God's still voice.
- 5) Clean something, get things in order.
- 6) Forgive and seek forgiveness.
- 7) Fasting

These are just a few ideas, I am sure you can think of many more. Peace be with you all!

Your Diaconate, Joanne Worthen, Cindy Pingree, Diane Dunn, Diane Breeden, Julie Turner, Ryan Lehoullier, Harry Handy, Sue Lindemann, Carol Bates

## Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

**Family Promise:** The Board of Christian Outreach and Missions voted to replace Family Promise of Rockingham County, which ended last year, with Family Promise of Greater Nashua. Family Promise of Greater Nashua serves homeless families in the Nashua area, including Derry. It's a permanent facility, and can house up to 8 families at a time, relying on its small staff and many volunteers. In 2016, it provided temporary housing and meals to 57 people in 18 families. Families were in the program for about 9 months on average, and could attend classes provided on parenting, job search, and financial management. The program continues to provide guidance to the families after they leave the program, to help them remain independently housed. One year after leaving the program, 16 of the 18 families served were still in their own homes or apartments.

**Zimbabwe Delegates:** Delegates from Zimbabwe will be visiting New Hampshire from October 12<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>. The number of delegates is typically limited to around 12 and currently all delegates have a host Church. We have put our name on a waiting list in the event that a delegate cannot obtain a Visa, which sometimes happens, thus creating a vacancy. If you would like to participate in hosting a delegate or helping in transportation or other ways in the potential event we are called to do so, please speak to a member of Missions. We will also be talking with the Churches that are hosting delegates to see if we can assist them.

**Coffee Hour:** The Board of Christian Outreach and Missions will be hosting Coffee hour on February 11. We would be glad to talk to you if you would like more information about the Churches Missions work.

**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.

## 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

## *Restructure Committee*

By now you may have heard some talk of a Restructuring Committee to ascertain if there are ways to do our work more efficiently and more streamlined. The way we think this happens is more or less to group like committees and Boards into their "work" and to see if there are synergies that will meld some of the processes together perhaps cutting down commitment times for example and to open dialogue amongst ourselves. This is going to be a very fluid process and our next step is to visit the major Boards to seek their input. At the end of the day nothing may change, we may all determine that our governance and current structure is reliable and works well. All input from the congregation is welcome. Please feel free to reach out to us.

Committee members include: John Bartel, the Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof, Fred Merrill, Reni Harnden, Melanie Van Steensburg, Ann LaDuke, Cynthia Gray, Becky Fleury

## *February is Black History Month*

DREAM LIKE MARTIN  
LEAD LIKE HARRIET  
FIGHT LIKE MALCOLM  
THINK LIKE GARVEY  
WRITE LIKE MAYA  
BUILD LIKE MADAM CJ  
SPEAK LIKE FREDERICK  
EDUCATE LIKE W.E.B  
BELIEVE LIKE THURGOOD  
CHALLENGE LIKE ROSA  
INSPIRE LIKE OBAMA



## *Scripture Readings*

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

### **February 4<sup>th</sup>**

Isa 40:21-31  
Ps 147:1-11,20c  
1 Cor 9:16-23  
Mk 1:29-39

### **February 11<sup>th</sup>**

2 Kings 2:1-12  
Ps 50:1-6  
2 Cor 4:3-6  
Mk 9:2-9

### **February 18<sup>th</sup>**

Gen 9:8-17  
Ps 25:1-10  
1 Peter 3:18-22  
Mk 1:9-15

### **February 25<sup>th</sup>**

Gen 17:1-7, 15-16  
Ps 22:23-31  
Rom 4:13-25  
Mk 8:31-38 or Mk 9:2-9

## *Worship Schedule*

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

Harry Handy, Ryan Lehoullier & Julie Turner

### **Ushers & Greeters**

**Weekly Usher** – Michael Bryan

### **February 4<sup>th</sup>:**

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

### **February 11<sup>th</sup>:**

Ushers: Ken Gould, Dee Deranian, Shirley  
Dickason and Reni Harnden  
Greeter: Betsy McCall

### **February 18<sup>th</sup>:**

Ushers: Stanley & Holly Gorgol, Tom &  
Andrea Cooper  
Greeter: Liz Greenberg

### **February 25<sup>th</sup>:**

Ushers: Becky Fleury, Nancy, Berry and  
Verna Elwell  
Greeter: Beth Hunter

# 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)



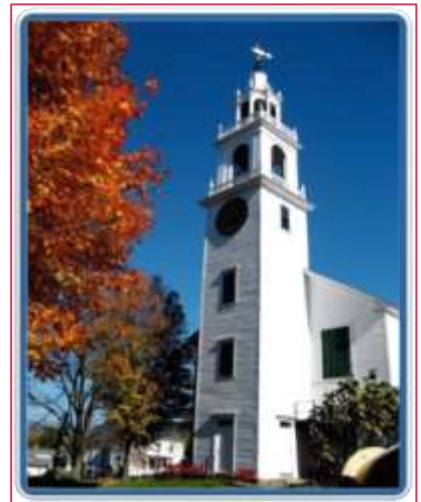
### You are most warmly invited:

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**