

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

12/2 Advent Workshop
 12/4 Adult Faith~ 6:20
 12/5 Deacons~ 6:30
 12/6 Project Linus ~ 10:00
 12/8 Santa Breakfast ~8:30
 12/9 CE~11:30
 12/10 Finance ~ 7:00
 12/11 Adult Faith~ 6:20
 12/12 KIT~ 12:30
 12/16 Mission
 12/18 Blue Christmas ~ 7:00
 12/19 Council ~7:00
 12/20 Project Linus ~ 10:00
 12/21 Contra Dance
 12/24 Christmas Eve
 4:00 Pageant
 7:00 Choir & Candle
 10:00 Music & Candle
 12/25 Merry Christmas!
 12/28 Spaghetti Supper ~5:30

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Child of God,

A long-time member wrote in last month's newsletter, "Our church will never be the same. We are grieving. We are broken. We have now heard from all sides, we have voted and decided we will support Pastor Deborah, so now is the time to come together."

There are many of you who have continued your participation in the life of the church, attending worship on Sunday morning. There are many of you who have not come to church since the vote. I want to be clear: the vote was about my employment, it was never about your membership status. As a church in the United Church of Christ, we acknowledge that we will not always agree on everything. I have said that and I believe that. I think and hope that you do, too. The hard part for all of us is accepting decisions that don't go our way.

The decision was made for me to remain pastor of First Parish Church. The vote did not mandate that if you signed the petition or if you voted for me to leave that you must now leave. Indeed, there are some who are so certain of my unsuitability for this church that they feel they cannot come back – but that is their choice not my desire. I have, from the first inkling of conflict, stated that reconciliation was my goal. This is still true. But reconciliation is not about me doing what you want or about you doing what I want. Reconciliation is about mutual care and understanding; it's about listening deeply to the wounds of the beloved Other. It's about figuring out how to move ahead together despite an unresolved disagreement, and committing to that path forward.

If you are one of the people that signed the petition for my employment to be terminated, or even if you voted for me to leave this place, please know that if you want to move forward with us, you are most welcome to come home! We hope you will. Let's move forward together. Let's work together on those things that we have talked about for five years. Let's improve the way we communicate.

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



From the Pastor's Desk Continued

Let's improve the way we structure ourselves. Let's work together in kindness and in compassion. We can all do better.

We enter a most sacred season. This is when love was born. This is the season of hope and peace and joy and love. Let us enter it together.

God's peace be with you all,
Pastor Deborah

From the Moderator of Council

Church Council typically meets the third Wednesday of the month. We receive input from the various Boards represented on the council. Pastor Deborah submits a monthly report as well. Minutes from our meetings will be made available on the church website and will show as a link from the newsletter. We welcome any parishioners to attend our meetings to provide their input on any subject matter we are discussing.

We have spent significant time lately reviewing the budget. It is a challenge to provide a balanced budget every year. The majority of our income comes from pledges by members of the church. We are trying to better communicate with the church members by holding informational meetings after church. The next meeting is scheduled for December 9th. We value your input, so please try to attend one of the meetings. The budget this year is increasing from last year due to two significant items. We have to start paying back the mortgage we took out to cover expenses of constructing the connector and repairing the sanctuary. The other major increase is money to cover a sabbatical for Pastor Deborah. These two items, along with the normal increases in expenses, increase our projected expenses by a significant amount of money.

We also have spent some time reviewing what changes we should make as a church to prevent another pastoral recall meeting. Rev. Richard Slater, the associate conference minister, met with us. He will be meeting with a task force of 10 members to develop a plan for the future.

We will also spend some time next year looking at the By-Laws of the church. If you have any interest in being a part of this committee, please let me or a council member know.

There are many positive things going on at the church. We have a lot of youth participation in weekly Sunday School, youth groups etc. Bible and book studies are very well attended. We have many projects to participate in at the Advent Workshop. Our Mission Board has been very active with Thanksgiving baskets and the Angel Tree. Your generosity to both these projects has been awesome.

Thanks for all that you do.

On behalf of the Church Council, Fred Merrill

Council

Council Met on November 19. Here are some highlights from the meeting.

Our Clerk, Linda Webber, presented the minutes from the October meeting. A few points to keep in mind from last month:

- Even though pledge income is a little behind plan, 2018 budget should be OK by year end;
- For 2019 budget, 3% raise recommended for staff, but not for Pastor Deborah, and increase of hours for administrative assistant; Pastor Deborah's contract calls for her to take a sabbatical in 2019 and personnel recommends, for financial reasons, one month rather than the three months included in the contract; in August 2019, the meetinghouse construction loan converts to a mortgage and will require monthly payments; the last item being the biggest add to the budget; income goal including pledge and plate for 2019 is \$238,000;
- A meeting, open to all, was scheduled for October 28 to inform the congregation about the 2019 budget issues and answer questions;
- A lengthy discussion about the pastoral recall meeting resulted in the beginning of a plan for our church to move forward;
- Meetinghouse rehabilitation still moving forward, if slowly, plan in place for installing bricks around the flagpole;
- In her report, Pastor Deborah gave us this quote from Albert Einstein, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.", along with a list of things to think about doing as a congregation moving forward.

Our treasurer, Becky Fleury, presented the financial reports, and nothing much has changed from last month. Pledge income is still behind plan, somewhat to be expected given the recent effort by some to remove Pastor Deborah.

Last month's open meeting about the 2019 budget was not especially well attended with few questions. The question was raised of whether to do another one. Council decided yes, and a meeting is scheduled for December 9.

Paul Lindemann reported that good progress is being made on the meetinghouse tower.

Pastor Deborah presented a report that included updates on worship, wonder Wednesday, the music program, adult faith formation (connecting the current reading of the book of Acts to our church's modern issues), her study leave that focused on the history and use of labyrinths as a spiritual tool, an Advent challenge to council, and miracles, using Jack Leonard's recovery as an example.

At roundtable a discussion ensued regarding church bylaw changes to avoid the kind of unpleasant situation recently experienced in the effort by a group of church members to remove Pastor Deborah. Ultimately that effort was unsuccessful. The council discussion did not result in any definitive action. There is however a group now working with Richard Slater, our Associate Conference Minister, to help our entire congregation to move forward as a much healthier church. And I hope to very soon see a proposal from the Personnel Board with regard to church bylaws as they relate to a pastor's call agreement and the employee handbook.

Council (Continued)

All this just brings me back to my favorite singer/songwriter, Bob Dylan. In a song titled "Tangled Up In Blue", one of the final lines is "The only thing I knew how to do was to keep on keepin' on". Good advice I think. Just keep putting one foot in front of the other, listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit. And again in another song called "Pressing On", Dylan sings:

Shake the dust off of your feet, don't look back
Nothing now can hold you down, nothing that you lack
and the chorus:

Well I'm pressing on
Yes, I'm pressing on
Well I'm pressing on
To the higher calling of my Lord

Blessed Be.

Submitted by John Bartel on behalf of the church council

Board of Stewardship

Greetings from the Stewardship Board of First Parish Church.

As happens every autumn, we, the members of First Parish are faced with the task of reviewing the proposed budget for the upcoming year. This year we have tried something new. Pledge cards have been available on Sundays conveniently placed throughout Currier Hall. Pledge cards can also be picked up in the church office anytime. It is our hope that each of us will get involved in the budget review process by studying the outline, asking questions and offering helpful suggestions. The first information session was held on Sunday October 28. Our Treasurer presented the first draft of the budget outlining our financial requirements for 2019. An additional question and answer session will be held on December 9.

It is now time to pledge our financial support to sustain the activities of the church. Our challenge is to generate funds adequate to meet the new loan payment as well as to preserve our commitments to mission, the upkeep of the church property and personnel. After prayerful consideration, each of us will resolve to pledge an amount appropriate to each family's situation. At that time a pledge card will be completed. Please return this card to the Financial Secretary by placing it in the offering plate, delivering it to the church office, or mailing it to PO Box 114, East Derry, 03041.

We are confident that our goals can be accomplished with God's help and the support of our members. With pride in the church and its long history in this community, we can enter our 300th year with great joy and celebration.

Submitted by Joyce Pope on behalf of the Board of Stewardship

Board of Christian Education & Adult Faith Formation

Advent Workshop

Kick off the Advent season in style with this year's Advent Workshop is Sunday, December 2nd, 2018 following worship. This is a family-friendly and intergenerational event for everyone. We will have all the supplies for you to make some wonderful new projects including candy cane swirl and orange spice cider soaps, fun ornament crafts, sugar scrubs, scented sachets and Yule Logs (only three spots left). In addition to great food for all participants to enjoy prior to crafting.



Christmas Pagaent and Rehearsals



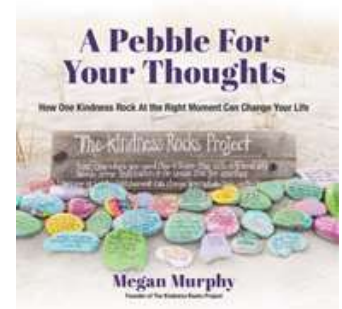
Attention all parents and Christmas Pagaent performers! We are very excited to have you all participate in this year's extra special Christmas Pagaent! We'd like to remind everyone the importance of regular Sunday school attendance throughout the month of December as our rehearsals, advent lessons, and costume fittings will be taking place. Thank you for your participation and dedication! **December 23rd will be the final dress rehearsal followed by a birthday celebration for Jesus including food and refreshments for all involved from 12:00 - 1:30 pm.**

Common Cathedral - City Reach Boston

Signups for City Reach 2019 have begun! If you are 14 years old and up, you won't want to miss this experience of a lifetime! Please use this link to find out more about this incredible urban outreach program throughout the country:

<http://commoncathedral.org/cityreach/>

Anticipated participation dates are March 8th -9th



Kindness Tree, Prayer Wall, & KINDNESS ROCKS PROJECT

January will commence the start of the Kindness Tree and Prayer Wall creation plans, as well as, regular kindness rock painting opportunities to contribute to our local communities. Please keep a look out for those dates in the future. We look forward to spreading kindness and inspiring connection throughout our communities!

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions



Thanksgiving Baskets: For many this is the hardest time of the year to get through and the time in which many of us need a helping hand. Each year the Board of Christian Outreach and Missions receives a list of names of people who need some extra help managing the holidays. Recipients are recommended to us through a number of organizations such as the Derry Community Caregivers, The Upper Room, and by word of mouth.

The Board of Christian Outreach and Missions would like to thank you for your generous donations of food and money to provide Thanksgiving meals to those who were in need this year. Your generosity was able to provide Thanksgiving to 16 families and 10 individuals.

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. Mission members will have a table set up after service on December 2nd and 9th where you can select gifts from the Angle Tree. There will be further instructions provided at the Missions table. Gifts must be delivered to the Church no later than the morning of Saturday, December 15th. Missions will be organizing and bagging the gifts from 10 to noon on the 15th. Thank you in advance for your contributions.

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.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose lower-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care. Envelopes will be available in the bulletins throughout December.

Zimbabwe Container Update

The shipping container filled with supplies from New Hampshire Churches to our respective sister Churches in Zimbabwe was sent Sept 2017 made it to Beira via ship and to Mutare, Zimbabwe ZIMRA station via truck, last November on schedule. The "resignation" of President Mugabe, subsequent volleying for



power, concern about the contents of humanitarian containers "buying votes" in the poor rural areas, and general government ineptness has caused the container to sit there for 11 months. Paperwork has been submitted repeatedly and then "lost" and an "incentive" is sought to process new paperwork more quickly, etc. We recently heard that the container was off-loaded into a storage unit in Mutare and we are hopeful that this means the shipment will soon be cleared.

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions continued

Food Basket Program:

The Food Basket program is a vital part of our Missions work as a Church of Christ. The food basket is kept outside of Currier Hall. The food from the food basket alternates between the Derry Food Pantry and the Upper Room, both important programs supported by your missions 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.

For more information about the First Baptist Church Food Pantry you can visit them on their website at: <https://www.fbcfoodpantry.org/>. Here is a list of their most needed items:

Fruits & Vegetables	Protein Items	Mixed Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetables (canned) Fruit (canned) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peanut butter Canned meats (i.e. tuna, chicken) Baked beans Fresh/frozen meat (when available) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mac and cheese Canned meals (i.e. ravioli, spaghetti)
<p style="text-align: center;">Grains & Cereals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pasta Rice Breakfast cereals and bars 	<p>Drinks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milk (shelf milk) Juice 	

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 that received your support last month:

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

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 needs 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 Irma Relief*. The Missions board will send the donation to its destination in the most efficient way.

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions Continued

The 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, Sharon Hartmann

Board of Deacons

Diaconate News

The Diaconate is busy getting ready for the Advent season. The time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of our living savior Jesus Christ. We would invite all of you to join us. We can use your help with all aspects of our worship, readings, decorating, lighting candles, singing or playing bells. If you feel you would like to participate in any way please reach out to any Deacon.

December 2nd	1st Sunday of Advent
December 9th	2nd Sunday of Advent
December 16th	3rd Sunday of Advent
December 18th	Blue Christmas Worship 7:00 p.m.
December 23rd	4th Sunday of Advent
December 24th	Christmas Eve
4:00 p.m.	Christmas Pagaent (Please talk to Christine Lehoullier or a member of the Christian Education Board if you would like to help)
7:00 p.m.	The Senior Choir will be singing with a candle lighting ceremony.
10:00 p.m.	Special Music and a candle lighting ceremony.

Poinsettias will be used to beautify our services on the Sunday of December 23rd and Christmas Eve. If you have purchased any Poinsettias please take them home after the Christmas Eve service that you chose to attend.

We are sorry to have Harry Handy resign from the Diaconate Board this month. We appreciate all of his service to our church.

The Diaconate wish you all a wonderful Advent Season filled with wonder. Hop , Love, Joy, and Peace to all of our friends. Merry Christmas!

Your Diaconate,

Cindy Pingree, Julie Turner, Diane Dunn, Jo Worthen, Ryan Lehoullier, Carol Bates, Sue Lindemann and Diane Breedon.



Task Force- Moving Forward

THE TASK FORCE ON MOVING FORWARD

Our church is going through a difficult time. Some members feel alienated. Others feel disrespected or hurt. No one likes the tension that exists, and one thing everyone agrees on is that our church community is broken and needs mending.

A Task Force has formed to come up with a proposed approach for how we can all work toward greater harmony, and become the church we aspire to be. Some of the 9 members were invited by the head of council to join; others volunteered to be part of any effort to help heal the church and were added. The 9 members of the Task Force, in alphabetic order, are:

Randy Brown Randybrown1119@gmail.com	Beth Hunter Beth.hunter2@comcast.net	Deborah Roof pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org
Steve Davis wonalancet@gmail.com	Alan Pawl apawl@comcast.net	Melanie VanSteensburg mvansteensburg@gmail.com
Anne Engelhardt annehardt@comcast.net	Cindy Pingree Cinpin24@comcast.net	Cathy Zylinski czylinski@hotmail.com

We held our first meeting on Thursday, Nov 15, with the Reverend Richard Slater, associate conference minister from the New Hampshire Conference of the UCC, as our facilitator. After an opening prayer and devotional (Romans 12: 3-18), we discussed the following topics:

- Review of our church's history of poor communication and conflict
- Discussion of "who is God calling us to become"—a loving community, united in a common God-inspired purpose
- What is the Task Force being asked to do in the process of responding to God's call—develop guidelines for communication and showing respect for individuals' viewpoints and concerns; come up with concrete ideas for consideration by the church at large
- The need to incorporate the thinking of others outside the current Task Force on the best way to move forward.

The discussion touched on many issues, including the need for us all to be willing to compromise, to be willing to try approaches and ideas that might not be our own first choice, to not "draw lines in the sand." And the need for the Task Force itself to model this behavior.

One goal of this Task Force is to be as transparent as possible, and to get as much input as possible from the congregation. After each meeting, we will inform the council and the congregation about the topics that were discussed. We urge everyone to share their thoughts with us about how our church can become the church that God is calling us to be. You can do this by talking directly to any of the Task Force members, or by emailing any or all of us at the above addresses. As the process develops, there will be many opportunities for you to participate even more directly in building the cohesive community of faith that we seek to become.

The Moving Forward Task Force

Covenant

Covenant – what is it? And why it covenant important?

As members of the United Church of Christ we are a covenantal church. What does that mean? Covenantal behavior is an integral thread in the weave of belonging to the United Church of Christ. Some folks in our church will speak about the importance of being "congregational". Whereas this is true, it lacks an important perspective that is a key identifier of the United Church of Christ, our denomination.

The Installation of a Pastor “is the liturgical celebration of the covenantal relationship among the ordained minister, the local church, the Association, and the calling body if different from the local church. Upon request from the local church and the ordained ministerial partner, the Association participates in planning the installation service in cooperation with the other partners in the covenantal relationship.” (From the Manual on Ministry “Perspectives and procedures for Ecclesiastical authorization of ministry” page 7)

“We are a church shaped by Covenant. Covenants differ from contracts. A Covenant does not dissolve automatically at the point that the parties disagree or experience discomfort, or when change occurs....that dynamic tension between autonomy and covenant are at the heart of what it means to be the United Church of Christ. Therefore Covenant means that each setting of the Church agrees to be held accountable by the others, and each agrees to allow its individual identity to be shaped in part, by its relationship to the other settings of the United Church of Christ....All member churches and individual members of the UCC denomination need to understand that local autonomy “in a covenantal polity is neither absolute or self-generated”, but carries with it accountability to others in the covenant.” (From the UCC Manual on Church Volume 1, Draft 2, October 2006)

As a church body we are covenantal, as well as congregational, as well as Christian, as well as evangelical, as well as reformed. The sheer historical reality of our important four forebears demands that we come together more than legally through a contract which is based on law and oftentimes built on fear. We have - and must - come together through covenant which is based upon God's grace and built of God-given love and trust.

Those who did the hard work of establishing the UCC as a denomination included the biblical and foundational work of covenant building. Our relationship with God is covenantal. A pastor covenants with the local church and affirms a “call” not a “contract”. The local church covenants with the Association. Churches and Associations covenant with their partners in ministry. Our identity as members of the UCC is rooted in being people of the covenant: a promise and agreement, holding fast to the Presence of God, as an intimate partner in the relationship.

Covenantal relationships are sacred because God is a full participant in the promise. As we grow in love and faith, let us seek to also grow in our understanding of what it means to be a covenantal church.

Submitted by Pastor Deborah

Adult Faith Formation

We will meet twice more on Tuesday evening from 6:30 to 8:00 to continue reading the book of Acts. Join us on December 4th and 11th.

Music Ministry

Music Ministry News for the Advent and Christmas Seasons

If you like to sing Christmas music and have Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings available, **you are invited to join the Choir** for the month of December! No experience is required, just the ability to carry a tune. See me after worship or send me an e-mail at glineallen@mac.com if you are interested and/or have any questions.

Don't forget to arrive at **9:45 a.m. each Sunday in December for a time of singing Christmas carols!** As Advent is the season of preparing for all that Christmas brings, we will prepare our hearts and teach our children these beloved carols, particularly since our secular culture takes care of teaching them "Frosty the Snowman" and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." I look forward to nurturing in our children the nativity focus of the season with you.

The Choirs at First Parish Church are preparing for Christmas this month with the hope that what we offer musically in worship will help you to welcome the Christ Child into your lives in meaningful ways. The Hand Chime Choir, the Sunday School children, and the Choir, along with some special guest musicians, are all preparing to offer you their favorite carol arrangements throughout December. We will be singing Advent hymns in worship this month, and as Christmas Day gets closer, we'll sing some favorite carols as we move toward our services of Christmas carols on Christmas Eve.

May you be blessed with the gifts that waiting brings in this season of anticipation.
Debbie Gline Allen,
Interim Director of Music Ministry

Vision Board Workshop

Create your own **2019 Vision Board in a Workshop** - **January 1** from 9:30 to 2:00 in Currier Hall

Liz Greenberg, Soul Collage® Facilitator, will offer a workshop assisting you to put your vision into images by creating your personal vision board for 2019. Liz will include Soul Collage® techniques and will provide thousands of images to choose from. You may also bring specific images that you hope to incorporate, as well. Liz will lead you in a centering exercise to focus your energy and then she will assist you in creating a vision board that is all about you and your vision for 2019. The tuition is \$25 to cover the cost of supplies. Please let Pastor Deborah know if you need help with tuition. No one will be turned away. If you are willing, please bring one sandwich, cut into quarters, that will be shared. We will put the quarters on a platter and mix and match for fun! Coffee and tea provided. Please email Liz to sign up- lizgreenberg26@gmail.com

Diaconate and Liturgical Arts and Design

Over the last few years we have worshiped in Currier Hall. The Diaconate has attempted to create a sacred atmosphere and provide an opening for God's Presence. We have worked hard to provide a reverent ambiance. We also are working hard to respect and honor our traditions all the while introducing new ways of worship.

This Sunday – Advent 1 - we share with you a new Advent Wreath, which is also a part of our history. The wood is from the belfry in our steeple that is going through restoration. It is rustic with all the many marks showing our history and the strength of our forefathers. It has ax marks where this piece was originally cut. Also, it has signs of Powder Post Beetle damage that made this piece unable to remain in our steeple, but suitable to be used in another manner, our new Advent Wreath.

With gratitude to Arron Sturgis who took the time to create this sacred piece, I hope you will take time to come forward after worship this Advent to see this beautiful part of our history up close.

Blessings, Diane Breeden
Diaconate and Liturgical Arts and Design



Volunteer

VOLUNTEER TODAY!

December is a great time to volunteer your time & talents to church. A Christmas present to FPC that does not cost money!

Will you join our many volunteers who help to make church run smoothly?

Diaconate, Stewardship, Facilities, Community Life as well as many other opportunities are available to show appreciation for all our church means to you.

Explore, investigate: Speak with any board or committee member for information about the group you want to join. Check out the description in your by-laws. Speak with Staff. Contact Nominating members: Beth Hunter, Karen Wilson, or Melanie Van Steensburg

Thank you for your service!

Bricks, Bricks, Bricks!

Update On the Memorial Bricks for the Welcoming Garden.

I'm reminded of a post-it-note that says "if you want to make GOD laugh, tell him your plans" The plans for the Memorial/Welcoming Garden were progressing well. We sold enough bricks (about 45 plus 10 large bricks), enough to start Phase One around the flagpole. They were ordered and arrived on site in time for our Veterans Day weekend installation.

It's important to note that sales continue and we have another 10 or more ready for ordering.

The Cobban guys (Alec and Alex) came the weekend of November 3 and scooped out the 10 x10 area, added the base of 4" of sand and we were ready for the installation. It looked great. Then it rained for a few days and the sand swelled filling the space and we were not able to place the bricks on Veteran's Day weekend. So a short postponement: Except it snowed. In early November! Really!! So our plans have changed. The installation will not be done by April 1 due to the anticipated winter which isn't usually over before April 1. The bricks have been stored until spring.

The four benches which will be inscribed according to the direction of the buyers will be ready for installation on or about April 2, 2019.

Now we appreciate the loveliness of the white stuff and the cold air as our New England winter takes over. Blessing to you all. More news to come as we continue our PLANS.

Submitted by Nancy Murdock

Worship Service Highlights

December 2nd ~ Communion

Please write out your announcement to be read by Pastor Deborah

December 18th ~ Blue Christmas

A quiet reflective service for those of us who are grieving, lonely, sad, not feeling particularly festive or just in need of a time of quiet in the busy-ness of the season

December 24th ~ Blue Christmas

4:00 Christmas Pageant

7:00 Candlelight & Choir Service

10:00 Candlelight Service

Holiday Connections

Christmas is fast approaching. Some of you might like to invite a FPC member/friend or two to join you as you celebrate the holiday. On the flip side, maybe for a myriad of reasons you might like to be on the receiving end of another's hospitality. Either way, if you would like to be the host or guest this Christmas, please let Barbara or Brian Williams know, and they will try and make the connections. You can call them at [603-432-3530](tel:603-432-3530) or e-mail Brian at willibi1910@gmail.com.

CHRISTMAS TO-DO-LIST

- ^{BE} ~~buy~~ presents
- wrap ~~gifts~~ <sup>SOMEONE
IN A HUG</sup>
- send ~~gifts~~ ^{PEACE}
- ^{DONATE} ~~shop~~ for food
- ^{BE} ~~see~~ the lights



First Parish Church
 47 East Derry Rd, East Derry
 603-434-0628
www.fpc-ucc.org

PANCAKE BREAKFAST with SANTA!

Saturday, December 8th

8:30am - 11:00am

\$10 adults/ \$5 ages 3-8/

Free for 2 & under

Take a photo as Santa visits your table!

Crafts & games for children!

Raffle prizes for all ages!

**Enjoy pancakes, bacon, fruit, OJ,
 milk & coffee!**

Proceeds to benefit

Friends of the Meetinghouse

www.facebook.com/fpcucc

Contra Dance- Holiday!



Contra Dance, December 21st- 8-11pm

**Join us for Line Dancing meets
 square dancing! Holiday Themed!**

Introductory Workshop starts at 7:30

No partner is necessary and all dances are taught

**The monthly band is JumpStart and includes
 Paul Lizotte- fiddle; Victor Troll- piano; Gene Albert- bass.**

**The caller this month is Don Heinold and featured musician is
 Julie Metcalf -fiddle.**

Scripture Readings

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

December 2nd

Luke 21:25-36
Jeremiah 33:14-16
Psalms 25 1-10
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

December 9th

Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

December 16th

Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

December 23rd

Micah 5:2-5a
Luke 1:46b-55
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

December 24th

Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalms 97
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

December 30th

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalms 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

Worship Schedule

Deacons of the Month:

Sue Lindemann, Ryan Lehoullier

Ushers & Greeters

December 2nd

Ushers: Diaconate
Greeter: Verna Elwell

December 9th

Ushers: Ken Gould, Dee Deranian,
Nancy Berry, Michael Bryan
Greeter: Maury Davidson

December 16th

Ushers: Stanley Gorgol, Holly Gorgol, Tom
Cooper, Andrea Cooper, Michael Bryan
Greeter: Tom Cooper, Andrea Cooper,

December 23rd

Ushers: Dusty Patrick, Verna Elwell, Joan
Crimlisk, Michael Bryan
Greeter: Beth Hunter

December 30th

Ushers: Brian Williams, Margie Ives,
Michael Bryan
Greeter: Liz Greenberg

First Parish Congregational Church

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

Office Hours

Monday: 9:00-3:00
Tuesday: 9:00-3:00
Thursday: 9:00-3:00
Friday: 9:00-3:00

Check us out on the web

www.fpc-ucc.org

**Senior Pastor and Teacher
The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof:**
pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org

Michelle Guerrin:
officemgr@fpc-ucc.org
[603-434-0628](tel:603-434-0628)

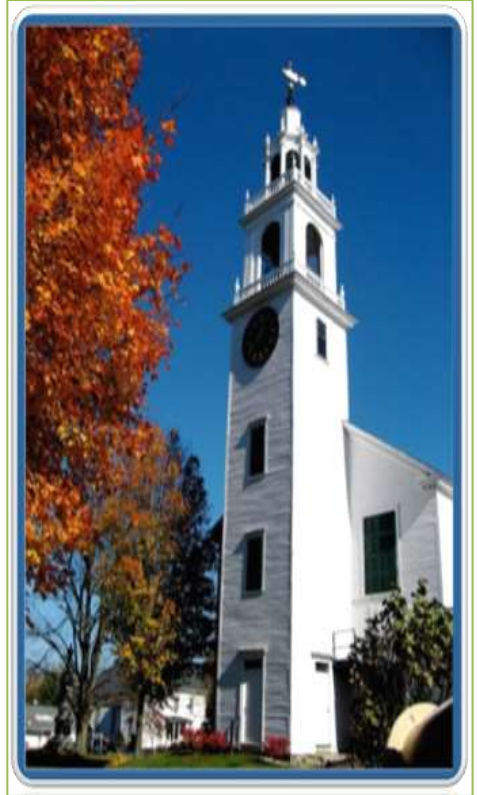
First Parish Congregational Church, UCC

You are most warmly invited:

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