

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

February 4, 11, 18
Adult Faith Formations ~ 6:30
February 4th
Facilities ~ 7:00
February 9th
Breakfast ~ 7-8:30
Christian Ed ~ 11:30
Fundraising ~ 11:30
February 12th
K.I.T. ~ 12:30
Wonder Wednesday ~ 7:00
February 14th
Happy Valentine's Day
February 17th
Mission ~ 6:00
Finance ~ 7:00
February 19th
Council ~ 7:00
February 21st
Contra ~ 7:30
February 22nd
Prepared to Serve ~ 8:00
February 25th
Facilities ~ 7:00
February 26th
Ash Wednesday Service at 7
February 28th
Spaghetti Supper ~ 5:00
February 29th
Kindness Rocks ~ 10-2

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Child of God,

Every year in January we have an Annual Meeting. The Annual Report is handed out and accepted. (Just like this newsletter, it is available on the website.) We discuss and vote on serious issues that affect everyone in the church. This year I wonder how many of you noticed what I noticed. Did you hear the financial report that in spite of being way behind in finances most months of 2019, we ended with a surplus? Did you read the reports about the generosity of our Mission giving? Did you see how much the Christian Ed Director is doing and the amazing work of our Christian Education program? Did you read the Choir Director's uplifting report about making music in our midst?

My friends, we have so much to be grateful for! Truly!

2020 has begun and we are off and running!

February is Black History Month. We (Joan Virga and I) have put together quite a line-up of music for February. In addition to the regular Sunday services, we will also offer one Wonder Wednesday service on February 12 and Ash Wednesday service on February 26.

The African American influence to church music is undeniable and astounding. Be ready to hear familiar tunes, as well as new ones. **Mark your calendars: On Sunday, February 9** we will have with us the gracious and abundantly talented Peggo Horstmann Hodes who will lead us in a service honoring the African American Spiritual. Peggo will sing, she will teach and she will direct us in the music-filled worship service.

The Wonder Wednesday service has been around for nearly two years. We gather together and we sing a lot! We share and we pray

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

what is on our hearts. This has become a safe haven for many of us because we gather in faith and we have come to trust one another. No paper, no frills, no lectures - just faith-based sharing and the presence of the Holy. Everyone is welcome to this spirit-filled gathering.

Ash Wednesday comes early this year. We will begin our journey to the cross on February 26 by remembering the reality that "from dust we come and to dust we will return." This service is a sacred reminder that we are mortal. Our lives have beginnings, journeys and will end one day. In the meantime, we seek God and God's Presence in our lives.

Our Adult Faith Formation class began on the 14th of January. We are reading a book by Anne Robertson, Director of the Massachusetts Bible Society. It's called Exploring Justice. There are nearly 20 of us who wrestle with the balance between biblical teaching and cultural norms: how do ancient laws inform our modern way of life? Or don't they? It is very powerful! I would recommend the book to anyone and everyone who is interested in "how we got to this place?"

Reading a book that explores justice issues raises one's awareness to all kinds of justice issues. For example, January 27 was International Holocaust Remembrance Day, commemorating the tragedy of the Holocaust and the horror of man's cruelty toward their fellow human beings. This attempted genocide resulted in the torture and deaths of 6 million Jews and 11 million others by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. The frightening thing is that it happened in an orderly society where no man-made laws were broken.

In the midst of that horror were many heroes. One such hero was a family by the name of Ten Boom. They saved more than 800 people who would have perished in camps like Auschwitz. Corrie Ten Boom grew up to become a great writer. She reminds us of this: "The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something, and enter God's realm where everything is possible. God specializes in the impossible. Nothing is too great for God's almighty power. Nothing is too small for God's love."

Whatever you are worried about? It isn't impossible in God's hands. It isn't too great and it isn't too small. Say a prayer and let God handle it. But be sure to listen, in case God's answer is inviting you to step up, to speak up or to show up! God's funny that way.

Never forget.

I continue to thank God for you and for First Parish.

Peace and all good,

Pastor Deborah

Save the Date- Monday March 2nd

Dining for \$\$- Fody's Tavern- Derry!

Details to follow...

Christian Education/Adult Faith Formation



Prepared to Serve

Enjoy a day of refreshments, exhibits, worship, workshops, fellowship, lunch, and lasting memories. Online registration will close on February 12, 2020 at 11:59 pm. The online registration fee is \$40/person. Individuals registering after the close of online registration will need to wait until the day of the event and register on-site. The "Day of" registration fee is \$55/person. Financial assistance is available if needed, please contact Christine Lehoullier.

[Download the event brochure](#) to see a complete listing of all the workshops and presenters.

(Note: new workshops have been added since the brochure was printed. Be sure to review these new options offered in Blocks: A18, B17, B18, C17, D17, and D18)

Register now at: <http://www.cvent.com/d/7hqvbm>

Child Care for Prepared to Serve: My apologies for the miscommunication, if you require childcare in order to fully participate in this event, we ask that you make your own arrangements. The NH Conference is prepared to provide financial assistance. Please contact Ann Desrochers at 603.715.9526 or via email at adesrochers@nhcucc.org for additional information.

Horton Center



Opening Work Days

May 15th-17th, Fri to Sun Campers Age 16 & Older
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. Folks are invited to come up for the day or come for a few days to spruce up the camp. Youth 16 years and ... [Read More More Info...](#)

Don't forget to take a look and plan ahead for all the other incredible camps Horton Center has to offer throughout the summer. They are offering a Groundhog Day Discount!



Will Punxsutawney Phil see his shadow on Groundhog Day this year or not? If Phil sees his shadow and goes back into hiding for another 6 weeks of winter, you can take \$30 off a full week of camp! If Phil doesn't see his shadow, winter is over and you'll only get \$20 off...

But then again, winter will be over! Starting this Sunday, just click the Groundhog Day button at checkout to get the discount.

Discount good only on registrations made between February 2nd and February 8th.

One week only! Don't go back in your cave and miss out!

Christian Education/Adult Faith Formation (continued)



Kindness Rocks Project Saturday, February 29th, 10 am – 2 pm

Let's leap into the year with kindness! Join us for a Leap Day rock painting event filled with kind messages and Rock Garden Designing! All are invited, tell your friends!

Calling all creative minds and committed souls, I'm looking for others to join the DerryRocks#TheKindnessRockProject Team to help out with this cause for kindness. If you are interested, come to this event and let me know! Christine Lehoullier, dawggipawzneffect@yahoo.com.

Calendar Reminders ~ Christian Education Board Meeting, February 9th, 11:30-12:20 pm, A/B Conference Room.



Mark Your Calendars for Vacation Church Camp! July 13th – 16th, 2020

We are now accepting volunteers to help with decoration assembly and planning. Sign ups can be found during coffee hour or contact Christine Lehoullier @ cedirector@fpc-ucc.org or 603-264-9261. You do not have to be present the week of Vacation Church Camp to help us out. Sign up and climb aboard for mountains of fun to be a part of First Parish Church's Rocky Railway Crew! Thank you for your consideration!

Stewardship

Gratitude...

Thank you for your stewardship support of our church ministry.

The pledge card helps us with realistic budgeting for operating expenses and our Mission assistance.

Pledge cards are available for those who have yet to make a commitment.

To date we have received 70 pledges.

With Thanks,
Margie Ives, Joyce Pope.

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

The Mission committee would like to thank Sue Brown for all her work on Missions. Her time on the board is over and she will be missed. She has been our finance person working with Becky to make sure we know what we have for funds. She is going to continue as the finance person until we get someone to do that job. We currently have 2 positions that need to be filled. If supporting local & worldwide ministries is what interests you, we would love to have you join us. We meet the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:00 pm.

Family Promise of So. NH is one of the local ministries we support monthly. They are a non-profit that works with homeless families. Families sign a contract as they enter the program. They commit to mandatory savings program, required financial & parenting classes, and necessary counseling. They are assigned household chores and must contribute positively to the community. Currently they are housed at Anne Marie house in Hudson. Family Promise must leave that location in late spring and the Board of Directors is finalizing plans on a new home.

Family Promise will be at FPC on Sunday Feb. 16 to offer a Mission Moment during our worship service. They will stay for Coffee Hour to chat or answer any questions you may have.

Your Mission Board

Beth Hunter, Melanie Pawl, Kathy Holland, Karen Wilson, Bart Wetherbee

Fundraising Committee

There will be a fundraising committee meeting on Sunday, February 9th after church in Cook. Everyone is welcome! We will be planning our first fundraising events of the year 2020! The congregation passed a budget at the Annual Meeting with an ambitious fundraising line item of \$9700. We have reserved the dates of March 13th and April 3rd for our first two events this year. At this meeting, we will be brainstorming fundraising ideas and planning for our first two events. We will need all hands on deck to meet our fundraising goals successfully!

So how can you help us reach our fundraising goals? **Come** to the initial meeting and help brainstorm—doesn't mean you will have to be on the committee! **Volunteer** to work one of the projects (donate money to defray costs, cook, bake, serve, do dishes, clean up, take tickets). Throughout the year we will need creative and fun raffle baskets. **Participate** in Dining for Dollars events and invite friends and family to join you. **Participate** in the Hannaford gift card program regularly (see below for description).

Hannaford grocery gift cards can be purchased or reloaded each Sunday following services. Any amount, between \$5 and \$500 can be loaded on your card at one time; 5% of your grocery purchases goes to the church budget. We must have a minimum order of \$1000 each week to earn this benefit. 5% of \$1000 weekly equals \$50 income for the church—with very little effort! Checks or cash are accepted. I'm trying to expand the participation base for this program. Hannaford now has a rewards program offering cash back on store brand items. If you're curious and want to know more about the program and how it could work for you, see Liz Greenberg or email her at lizgreenberg26@gmail.com

Board of Deacons

We are excited to welcome Jack Martin and Sue Brown to the Board of Deacons. We have two vacancies still so if you would like to help with worship planning, please talk to one of us about joining our team!

Our Board prays for our church and its members; we prepare and serve Communion; we assist the Pastor at Baptisms and we do all of the “behind the scenes” duties in order for worship to take place. And we have a lot of help, too! We are so grateful to Michael Bryan for all that he does and we pray that he gets back on his feet soon!

We will continue to read from Mark’s Gospel following the Narrative Lectionary during the month of February, which is also Black History Month. You will hear about many of the contributions to church and church music made by African Americans.

Join us for Wonder Wednesday on February 12 at 7:00. We gather to sing and pray and praise our God together. It is an uplifting and hope-filled time of gathering in God’s love. On Sunday, February 16 we will celebrate Boy Scout Sunday with members of Troup 405.

We end the month of February by beginning our sacred season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is February 26. As is our custom here at First Parish, we will gather to eat at 6:00 and then move into a worship service at 7:00. **This year we are going to promote an “old-fashioned” pot luck supper.** No sign-ups – just show-ups!! That’s right. We hope that you will join us. Bring with you something that you can share with 5 or 6 people. If everyone does that, we will have more than enough to eat! Please arrive 5 or 10 minutes early to prepare what you’ve brought to share.

Remember that our church is the people. When we gather together we are united as one church family. Where we gather is our sanctuary and that is where we stand on holy ground.

God’s Grace Be Upon You!

Sue Lindemann, Diane Breeden, Brian Williams, Rachel Cobban, Jack Martin and Sue Brown

A Service of Hope and Healing



February’s Wonder Wednesday will be a service of light and love on February 12th at 7:00pm

We live in a time of much brokenness,
conflict and chaos.

In the words of Dr King: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

We will express our brokenness and give it up to the One who makes all things new.

A Letter from Diana Sweeney

Dear Friends,

Much has happened since I first accepted my call to ministry in May of 2016. That year, you and I entered into a sacred covenant. You voted to accept and support me as a MID (Member in Discernment) and I promised to go forward with your blessing and with God to do everything in my power to discern that call. From where I stand, and just in case you are wondering, I feel we have both done a pretty good job of upholding that covenant! Several of you have been asking about my progress, so I thought it might be time to bring you all up to speed on where I am on this crazy, blessed journey.

In March of 2017, I met with the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Rockingham Association (COCM). The COCM is the oversight committee that monitors and guides the MID's through the discernment process. On March 9, 2017, the COCM voted unanimously to approve my (MID) status and support me on my journey toward ministry. At that time, the COCM advised that I begin coursework right away.

Much like several other MID's I chose to answer God's call later in life and as a second vocation. Thus, my path toward ministry looks a bit different from the traditional path of "full time student attending seminary" and, as you can imagine is much slower. The UCC is well aware of the challenges we face as "church" today and that the way we "do church" is changing. They are also aware that seminaries are on the decline while alternate paths to ministry are beginning to rise up. Thus, they have revised the guidelines and educational requirements (Manual on Ministry "MOM" and Marks of Ministry) to accommodate these alternate paths while maintaining and adhering to the sacred call and traditional values of what it means to be a minister in the UCC. Each COCM is currently in the process of unpacking the revised manual and reassessing their processes to help guide the MID's through the ministry process. In the meantime, many of the state conferences and/or regional conferences either have developed or are in the midst of developing alternative "schools" and "programs" to assist students who are not able to take the traditional "seminary" track toward licensed / authorized ministry. These schools, in turn, work directly with local COCM's in guiding students (MID's) with regard to the vocational aspects of ministry.

I met with Pastor Deborah and a few other clergy to assist me in finding an educational path that would fit my schedule *and* my budget. Because the NH UCC does not have a "school of ministry", I chose to work with the New York School of Ministry (NYSOM). NYSOM works very closely with the UCC with regard to Marks of Ministry and other vocational guidelines and they are one of the forerunners with regard to the new MOM and Marks of Ministry. They offer a variety of web--conferenced courses, where participants interact with their instructors in real time and are in conversation with peers "face to face" from their home computers. My experience with their professors and the classes has been enlightening and very exciting thus far.

Currently, NYSOM offers two programs: The Christian Leadership Program and the Ministry of Word and Sacrament Program. The Christian Leadership program is a pre-requisite to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament Program. The first requirement is to complete twelve 20-hour courses, offered in a 3-year rotation. To date I have completed five of those twelve courses plus an elective in Family Systems and Pastoral Leadership.

Diana Sweeney continued..

Here are the dates and results of the courses.

Course	Date	Grade
Family Systems and Pastoral Leadership	November 2016	A
Foundations of Pastoral Care & Counseling	December 2017	A
Introduction to New Testament I	January 2018	A
Introduction to New Testament II	April 2018	A
Introduction to Old Testament I	December 2018	A
Introduction to Old Testament II	January 2019	A-
Introduction to Theology	December 2019	A-

In addition to the coursework, I will need the following*:

- Eighteen meetings with a mentor for discernment conversations. (I have had two so far– which is “normal” at this point. There will be more meetings as I get closer to completing the program)
- Completion of Boundary Awareness Training (to date I have completed both Basic and Advanced trainings)
- Attendance at six learning events.
- Completion of one year of supervised ministry. At least six months of this ministry must be of a pastoral nature in a local church setting. Supervised Ministry must take place in a setting other than the participant’s home church.

**These items to be reviewed by the local COCM and may be adjusted once they unpack the new MOM and reassess their process.*

The COCM continues to work closely with NYSOM monitoring my coursework and progress in the program. Each year I am required to meet with them (COCM) so they can assess my progress and then vote either to continue or discontinue supporting my MID status. I met with the COCM Chairperson and my mentor in April of 2019 and have been approved for continuance as a MID in the Rockingham Association. When I met with them in January 2020, they recommended that I pursue Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at Holy Family Hospital in Methuen. CPE is a program of guided Chaplaincy training equaling 400 hours. The cost will be \$900 and I hope to start this in September. It will be a 9 month program.

In closing, I extend my deepest gratitude to all of you, my beloved church family, Pastor Deborah, our church council, and our Diaconate, for your continued support, love and encouragement as I stumble around in the wilderness; wrestle with text and polity, and continue to discern where God is leading me. If any of you have questions or wish to chat a little more, please feel free to reach out to me.

With Heartfelt Gratitude, Your Sister in Christ,



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

Special Activities on February 9th

February 9 will be a celebratory day at First Parish – with lots of activities!

Come to breakfast in Currier Hall! A group of Kitchen Angels will offer breakfast from 7-8:30! Eggs, Pancakes, French Toast, Bacon \$5 per person. Proceeds to the Church and our Missions.

Special Guest Peggo Horstmann Hodes will be our guest musician for worship. She will sing, teach and lead us in many Spirituals from the African American Tradition.

Tours of the Meetinghouse after worship! Come and see!

I, Too

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I'll be at the table

When company comes.

Nobody'll dare

Say to me,

"Eat in the kitchen,"

Then.

Besides,

They'll see how beautiful I am

And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

(Langston Hughes, "I, Too" from *The Collected Works of Langston Hughes*. Copyright © 2002 by Langston Hughes. Reprinted by permission of Harold Ober Associates, Inc.)

Langston Hughes was a central figure in the Harlem Renaissance, the flowering of black intellectual, literary, and artistic life that took place in the 1920s in a number of American cities, particularly Harlem. A major poet, Hughes also wrote novels, short stories, essays, and plays. He sought to honestly portray the joys and hardships of working-class black lives, avoiding both sentimental idealization and negative stereotypes.

Scripture Readings

Readings are from the Narrative Lectionary for Sundays and Festivals – Year 2

February 2nd - Communion Sunday

Jairus' Daughter Healed

Mark 5: 21-43

Psalm 89: 1-4

February 9th – Black History Month Sunday

Death of John the Baptist

Mark 6: 1-29

Psalm 122

February 16th – Mission Moment- Community Caregivers & Boy Scout Sunday

What Defiles?

Mark 7: 1-23

Psalm 51: 1-3, 6-7

February 23rd - Transfiguration

Mark 8: 27 – 9:8

Psalm 32: 1-5

Worship Schedule

Ushers & Greeters

Weekly Usher – Michael Bryan

February 2nd:

Ushers: Deacons

Greeter: Tom “Woody” Woods

Lay Reader: Rachel Cobban

February 9th:

Ushers: Brian Williams, Margie Ives

Greeter: Carol Guerrin

Lay Reader: Jack Martin

February 16th:

Ushers: Dee Deranian, Nancy Berry

Greeter: Shirley Dickason

Lay Reader: Sue Lindemann

February 23rd:

Ushers: Stanley Gorgol, Holly Gorgol,
Tom Cooper

Greeter: Jean Brodeur

Annual Report, Financials and Bylaws available Online

<http://fpc-ucc.org/boards/annual-meeting/>

**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
Wednesday: 9:00-3:00
Thursday: 9:00-3:00
Friday: 9:00-3:00

Check us out on the web

www.fpc-ucc.org

**Administrative Assistant,
Michelle Guerrin:**

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603-434-0628

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

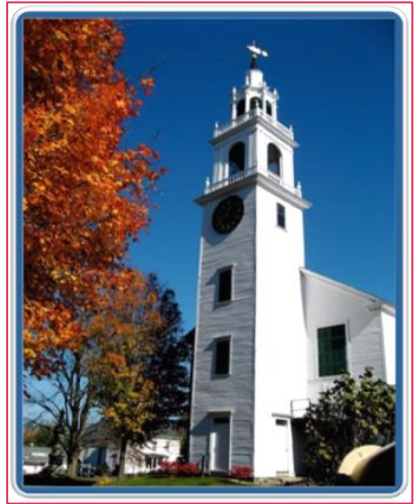
First Parish Congregational Church, UCC

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
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