

# *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.

## 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*

Dear Child of God,

We find ourselves in the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> week of this modern pandemic (depending on when you started counting). We are learning so much about ourselves and about one another. I have to tell you that I am so very proud of you as God's church and the ways in which you have "stepped up" to help your neighbor, to help the stranger, to connect and to bring smiles to the faces of people you know or people you don't know. First Parish is truly a light on the hill of East Derry, shining the love of Christ and the generosity of a loving God within our community and beyond.

How many times have I read the third chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes? Countless! I don't even know how many. And yet, I know that for as many times as I have read verse 5: "a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing", I have wondered "why on earth would I ever 'refrain from embracing'?" Oh. Perhaps during a pandemic, I might need to learn how to refrain from embracing. And there has been a lot of learning!

We are busily providing virtual worship services – both Sunday and Wednesday. There is a Bible (Study) Wonder on Tuesday for Adults and there have been several Wednesday gatherings for the elementary children. We have brought some fellowship gatherings, as well. This is a new world – this "virtual" world – and aren't we lucky that we have it!

## *From the Pastor's Desk Continued*

I wrote last month about the fact that the world experiences these pandemics every 100 years or so. Someone send me some photos and information about the last pandemic. That one was called the "Spanish flu". There was a reprint of a poem that was actually written in 1869 and reprinted in 1919. See if you can relate:

"And people stayed at home  
And read books  
And listened  
And they rested  
And did exercises  
And made art and played  
And learned new ways of being  
And stopped and listened  
More deeply  
Someone meditated, someone prayed  
Someone met their shadow  
And people began to think differently  
And people healed.  
And in the absence of people who  
Lived in ignorant ways  
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,  
The earth also began to heal  
And when the danger ended and  
People found themselves  
They grieved for the dead  
And made new choices  
And dreamed new visions  
And created new ways of living  
And completely healed the earth  
Just as they were healed."  
(Author unknown)



It is incredible to think that this poem is 100 years old and yet it carries a great deal of wisdom for us today. I resonated with so many of the lines. And I resonate with the hope and prayer that our generation, too, will make new choices – based on what we've lived in 2020. May we dream new visions and create new – and healthier – ways of living in harmony with our planet and with one another. And may we find healing – for us and for the earth.

Friends, remember each day to breathe deeply and to know that God loves you and surrounds you with evidence of that divine lovingkindness.

Sending you a virtual hug,  
Pastor Deborah

# Christian Education/Adult Faith Formation



## What's Up Wednesdays

Attention students and families! Join us @ 4PM Wednesdays on our Zoom Conferences for What's Up Wednesdays! We want to know how you're doing! We'll pray together, check in with each other, sing songs, play games, and listen to stories. Weekly e-mails will be sent out with a new Zoom Conference link and reminder. If you're not on our email, let us know! Contact Christine Lehoullier @ [cedirector@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:cedirector@fpc-ucc.org) or Michelle Guerrin @ [officemgr@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:officemgr@fpc-ucc.org).



Send cards to:  
Parkland Hospital  
c/o Rosemary George  
(Write "Staff" OR  
"Patient")  
1 Parkland Dr.  
Derry, NH 03038

## Parkland Hospital Outreach

**Parkland Hospital Cards:** In an effort to help support the church's card writing ministry, students will be sent pre-stamped watercolor paintable postcards and watercolor paint sets for the opportunity to decorate and send words of encouragement to the hard-working staff and/or patients in need of an uplifting message (your choice). If you have any questions please contact Christine Lehoullier @ [cedirector@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:cedirector@fpc-ucc.org) or Michelle Guerrin @ [officemgr@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:officemgr@fpc-ucc.org). Thank you so much for your help! Truly, when we lift up others, we lift up ourselves!



## Mother's Day

Families, please check your mailboxes and e-mails for updates on how you are able to help with a collaborative Mother's Day Project that will be displayed on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> during service! If you haven't received anything by Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, please call Christine Lehoullier at 603-264-9261 or e-mail [cedirector@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:cedirector@fpc-ucc.org). You can also call the front office at 603-434-0628 or e-mail Michelle Guerrin at [officemgr@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:officemgr@fpc-ucc.org).

## *Christian Education/Adult Faith Formation (continued)*



### **Vacation Church Camp**

As we work our way through this pandemic, our kids really need the hope, reassurance, and abundance of God's love more than ever this year! **God will work through us in such a time as this.** We are watching our local conditions, as most churches across the countries are, considering back-up VCC dates later in the summer, and considering different possibilities for formatting of summer programming according to the recommendations of our local UCC Conferences.

**I am here to tell you that we will not let you down!** Where there is a will there's a way and with God by our side, anything is possible! One way or another, we will provide some spiritually uplifting summer fun available to the entire community. The Rocky Railway curriculum will fully be utilized, and all the volunteers are looking forward to having some BIG TIME FUN when we are able to return to a safer, more structured group environment together! That all being said, we will keep you updated as best as we can on any news, activities and resources available to you.



**Stay up to date through E-mail, our Facebook page and Website!**

## *Return to the Sanctuary*

In last month's newsletter we explained that you would all receive a letter with all the information that we have as we look toward returning to the Sanctuary. You should have received that information in the mail. We can happily report that donations and pledges have already started to come in. A multidisciplinary group has formed to help coordinate the actual rehabilitation timeline alongside the financial projections.

If you did not receive this letter please let the office/Michelle know. If you have received it and feel you are not in a position to donate yet please consider pledging for later in the year. Every dollar helps. And we pray that you know that we understand if you cannot give at this time. We trust you will pray with us as we work through this. We remain hopeful we can return to the Sanctuary Christmas 2021.

Submitted by: Cyndi Gray, with Anne-Marie Merrill, Margie Ives and Sue Lindemann



## Board of Deacons

Ladies and Gentlemen...Welcome to the JOY that is the flowers in May!

Stop a moment, look around and you will see them, smell them and know that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Let that joy lighten your heart. Although we have been shut in this past month (and beyond), we have done many exciting things in the church and opened ourselves to many new methods to reach out to you, our church family.

We are having church services on Sunday mornings with the power of Zoom and Facebook. Pastor Deborah has been hosting Bible Wonders on Tuesdays from 6:30-8. Thank you to Christine Lehoullier for her help. Wonder Wednesdays have taken place every Wednesday from 7-8. Thank you to Joan Virga for her help during these services.

30 palms were given out before Palm Sunday so that people could wave them during the service on Sunday. Easter flowers decorated the alter and were passed out to people the week after Easter. Our love and gratitude goes out to Diane Breeden for passing out the palms on Saturday and decorating the alter each week.

During this time Pastor Deborah has been connecting with as many people as possible. She is looking forward to nicer weather where she will be able to do porch /yard visits. If there is anything you need during this time, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rachel Cobban

Supported by: Brian Williams, Sue Lindemann, Diane Breeden, Sue Brown, Jack Martin and Pastor Deborah



**What's Up  
Wednesday -  
Weekly at 4pm  
Students &  
Families  
Zoom Invitation**

### MAY AT A GLANCE

**Bible Wonder - Tuesdays 6:30  
Zoom Invitation**

**Wonder Wednesday  
Worship, Prayer and Praise  
Weekly at 7pm  
Zoom & Facebook Live  
(This service will not be recorded.)**



## *Board of Christian Outreach and Missions*

**Trust in the lord with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5**

That quote from Proverbs is not easy to do, especially right now. Our whole world seems upside down & backwards. We want the "Stay at Home" to be over and we want to see our friends and family in person not on Facebook or Zoom. There are many people who can't feed their families and many organizations that are not able to help them. One of those local organizations is the Upper Room. FPC received an email from the Upper Room asking for help with donations of non-perishable foods. Their shelves are empty and they get calls daily from people asking for help. **Our God is good.** A gentleman from the Derry community saw our Spaghetti Supper flyer and brought us a \$500 check to help feed the people in Derry. In the weekly e-blast & during church on Sunday you were asked for food or cash gifts to help. Along with some non-perishable items you gave another \$800 to help feed those in need. The food items were dropped off at the Upper Room on Monday and the cash will be given to the Upper Room and the First Baptist food pantry. **Thank you for your generous giving hearts.**

In April the Spaghetti Supper gave "to go" dinners to little more than 100 people. We spoke to a couple who is now living out of their car and a family of 6 who were so very thankful for what we were doing. As a congregation we are blessed and are very thankful that we are able to help during these difficult times. We are currently able to continue to give our monthly gifts to the local charities we support.

Your Mission Board: Beth Hunter, Melanie Pawl, Karen Wilson, Kathy Holland, Bart Wetherbee

## *Fundraising Committee*

Even though we are not worshipping in person for church these days, we are all still buying groceries. You can continue to load your Hannaford card by sending a check to the church or dropping it in the "mailbox" in the foyer between the entry doors into Currier. Easy Peasy! As soon as Michelle has received \$1000 she will load your card and notify you that it's ready to go! Call Michelle 434-0628 if you have questions.

It's time for a **Non-Fundraiser Fundraising Activity!** Nothing to bake, no commitment to hours working in the kitchen, no raffle baskets to assemble, no tickets to buy – just think about how much it is worth to you to have made it through the first part of the year, thanks in part to a major pandemic, without being called on to work on! Please send your donation, marked Non-fundraiser in the subject line to First Parish Church, P.O. Box 114, E Derry, NH. 03041 and let's see how much we can make up from our missing fundraising activities so far this year.

As with so many other things in our lives right now, fundraising meetings and activities are currently suspended. Many of us can still reach out to support local businesses who have supported us in the past. If you can afford to do so, order takeout from restaurants who have sponsored a Dining for Dollars event(s) or given us gift certificates for raffles. Be sure to thank them for staying open to continue to serve us and for their past support for our church fundraisers!

Submitted by Liz Greenberg

## *Uplifting Thoughts*

Prayer during this time- Author unknown

May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips remember those that have no place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.

Amen.

## *May Schedule*

*These will be virtual Services using both Zoom and Facebook*

### Scripture Readings

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

**May 3<sup>rd</sup> - Communion Sunday-**

**Church at Thessalonica**

Acts 17: 1-9

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

**May 10<sup>th</sup> - Church at Corinth**

Acts 18-1-4

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

**May 17<sup>th</sup> - Faith, Hope and Love**

1 Corinthians 13: 1-13

Mark 12:28-31

**May 24<sup>th</sup> - Death Swallowed in Life**

1 Corinthians 15:1-26, 51-57

Mark 12: 26-27a

**May 31<sup>st</sup> - Gifts of the Spirit**

Acts 2:1-4

1 Corinthians 12: 1-13

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

**Daily Messages of Hope, Worship Bulletins, Christian Education Videos.**

**We are also in the process of updating all the areas of the site- so please visit often!**

## **First Parish Congregational Church**

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

### **Office Hours**

(Please call ahead to make  
an appointment)

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

**Administrative Assistant,**

**Michelle Guerrin:**

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

603-434-0628

**Senior Pastor and Teacher**

**The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof:**

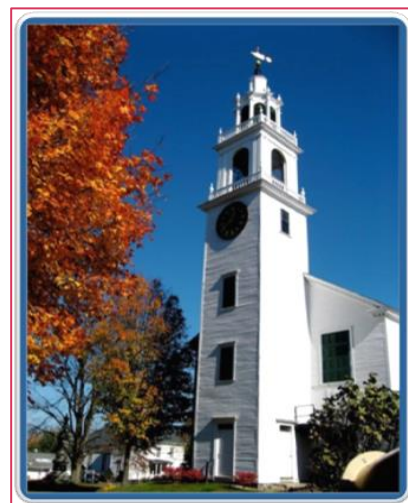
[pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org)

# **First Parish Congregational Church, UCC**

You are most warmly invited to join us on  
Facebook or Zoom at 10:00am for Sunday  
Worship & Church School

## **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***