

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 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Child of God,

Welcome to the July newsletter! Summer is here – and a very different kind of summer it is! After three and a half months of this pandemic existence, many of us are tired of words like “unprecedented” and “quarantine”! There is passionate debate over wearing or not wearing a mask. People choose a position and then defend that position vehemently. Questions about “when things will go back to normal” continue while many people are arriving at the point of view that ‘normal’ is dead and we need to mourn its loss. Struggle, change, opposing opinions, constant challenges, loss, and compassion fatigue – this is the new normal.

In the midst of all of it, we are Christ's church. “Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, all of your soul, all of your strength and all of your mind. And love your neighbor, as yourself.” The Greatest Commandment did not change. The vision and mission of our faith has not changed because of the pandemic. The ‘how’ has changed. Can we be gentler with ourselves and with one another? Hear the words of the Right Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church: “Our commitment to be an inclusive church is not based on a social theory or the ways of the culture – but on our belief that the outstretched arms of Jesus on the cross are a sign of the very love of God reaching out to us all.”

Even in a pandemic, the love of God pursues us enthusiastically. Take the time you need to be present and to be in balance with your responses and reactions to the current events of our times. Feel your feelings. Express them appropriately. Go to God regularly and intentionally. Expect miracles! Remember the story about the town where everyone gathered to pray for rain but there was just one little boy who brought an umbrella! Reading the Book of Job these last several weeks has underlined for me how often we talk to one another about God compared to how often we talk to God – either alone or with one another.

From the Pastor's Desk Continued

In the Adult Faith Formation gatherings, we have been doing a lot of reading and reflecting, which is all about the “left-brained” work of our faith. For the month of July on Tuesday evening, the adult Faith formation is going to consider “right-brained” work! I will be leading Labyrinth activities every Tuesday from 6:30 - 7pm on Zoom. These sessions are open to anyone who is interested in gaining experiences with this ancient meditation. If you have a finger labyrinth, that's great! If you do not, you may download the application “labyrinth journey” onto your phone, iPad or tablet. There is a labyrinth within this newsletter or you may go to [this link to download one](#).



THE CLASSICAL 7 CIRCUIT LABYRINTH:

The most ancient of labyrinth designs, the classical design is found worldwide. It appears as petroglyphs (rock engravings) in Spain (dating from around 2000BCE), on silver coins from Crete, laid out with rocks in northern Europe, painted on bark in Indonesia, and carved on rocks in the deserts of the American Southwest. The seven concentric (circles that circle back on themselves) circuits have variously been suggested to correspond with the seven days of Creation.

THE MEDIEVAL 11 CIRCUIT LABYRINTH in Notre Dame Cathedral in Chartres: Echoing the shape and complexity of Gothic rose windows, this labyrinth was laid in the early 13th century and is still walked by Christian pilgrims today. Walked by pilgrims as a metaphor of the journey to Jerusalem, medieval church labyrinths illustrate the allegory of Christ's life and destiny (birth, teachings, death, resurrection, ascension). This is the most frequently encountered pattern of modern labyrinths.



In order for us to come out the other side of this pandemic in the most balanced and healthy way, we need to attend to all of our feelings and thoughts about this experience. To the best of our ability, we need to process what we're going through. I pray that you will join us on Tuesday evening for our half-hour experience.

In the words of Julian of Norwich, “All shall be well. All shall be well. All manner of things shall be well.”

Peace and all good,
Pastor Deborah

Guided Meditation and Prayer Using the Labyrinth

You are invited into a time of prayer guided by the endless path of the labyrinth. As we begin, listen to the scripture reading with your eyes closed. When the reading ends, take a deep breath and begin writing at the entrance of the labyrinth. As you write, you will be forced to turn the paper in order to continue writing “on the line”. Do not think too critically about what you write. Write down the thoughts that flow – without judgement or criticism. Continue writing until time is called. You will be asked to put down your writing implement, to breathe deeply, to give God thanks and to return to the group.



Christian Education/Adult Faith Formation



Compassion Camp ~ Virtual Vacation Church Camp

First Parish Congregational Church is excited to offer this At-Home/Virtual Vacation Church Camp geared toward both preschool-aged children and K-5th graders where kids and families explore what it means to have compassion for others, ourselves, and the world.

Similar to past Vacation Church Camp programs, Compassion Camp will feature a musical opening, entertaining bible story, a fun mix of crafts and games to practice our compassion skills, physical engagement to connect our minds, bodies and spirits with God. Next, our Compassion in Action activities help campers think creatively and act tangibly about sharing our love and compassion followed by a prayerful and musical wrap-up!

For everyone's convenience, sessions will be pre-recorded weekly for five weeks and be available on or before the following dates: 7/7, 7/14, 7/21, 7/28, 8/4.

Sign up today:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080D49ADAD2DA5F58-compassion>. You can also find the link on our website and Facebook page.



We look forward to thinking big and getting creative about Compassion this summer with all of you!



What's Up Wednesdays

What's Up Wednesdays have resumed for the summer and we have added a special create and explore series! Our first week we made two different types of homemade compasses that were loads of fun to experiment with.



Look forward to joining us for some fun music, group prayers, games that will make you laugh, and fantastic Storytime together with friends!

Christian Education/Adult Faith Formation (continued)



With everything that is going on in the world, there are many resources to help families navigate through these difficult times. Debbie Allen, the Associate for Faith Formation & Youth Ministries of the SNEUCC (Southern New England United Church of Christ) has carefully compiled a wonderful resource list for talking with children about race and racial justice

To read articles for parents, see videos, find recommendation for books, and websites for both racial justice resources and coronavirus family resources, please follow these links:

RACIAL JUSTICE RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES:

<https://www.sneucc.org/racial-justice-resources-for-families>

CORONAVIRUS RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES:

<https://www.sneucc.org/resources-for-children-youth-and-families>



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### **July Adult Faith Formation ~ Labyrinth “walks”**

**Come with us on our path! Walk with us from left-brain to right-brain!**

**Tuesday July 7, 14, 28 at 6:30pm on ZOOM**

*You are welcome to join us each week, or just one.*

We are inviting you to participate in a 30-minute right brain activity.

You will NEED a finger labyrinth made out of some solid material OR a paper labyrinth. During this season of so many unknowns, let us go within – together! – and seek God's presence in this ancient way.

To receive your Zoom Invitation, please contact Michelle Guerrin,  
[officemgr@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:officemgr@fpc-ucc.org) or 603-434-0628

## *Board of Christian Outreach and Missions*

**This month we are featuring:**

### **Pinkerton Academy Homeless Program**

We have been supporting the Pinkerton Homeless program monthly for several years. We have always received thank you notes from them for our gifts.



The month of May was no different. I want to quote what Nancy Cofrin, the homeless program coordinator, wrote:

"First of all, I cannot believe that you are still donating to our program during this time when our world is in such a mess. Thank you so much. As you can probably imagine, we are answering more needs now that people have lost their jobs due to the virus." We are able to continue to support this program and other local ministries because of your generosity. I am continually amazed at how God provides, and so very thankful that you have not stopped giving during these stressful and uncertain times. So, I also want to thank all of you for your continued support of the mission board of First Parish Church. We could not give to programs like the Pinkerton Homeless without you.

Because of the generous gift that Ken Gould gave to First Parish, the mission board will receive a substantial amount of money to share with people and ministries in need. Since we, the Mission Board, are charged to prayerfully decide where the funds should go and we want to consider your suggestions, we would welcome your thoughts. Do you know of an organization that is in need of financial help in this moment? Please contact one of us.

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

**[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.**

**Please visit often!**

**[Facebook.com/fpcucc](https://www.facebook.com/fpcucc)**

**Follow us and connect with our Faith Family!**

**Enjoy Posts, learn about upcoming events, watch live videos and recorded videos**

## *Facilities Committee*

Happy Summer!

### Important Message to our Members

We ask that you refrain from entering the church without an appointment during this unusual time, where the sanitation and cleaning of our church is being planned with Servpro very carefully. We are planning cleaning to limit risk and exposure for our staff and the staff of Rig A'Tony's. Please be aware that the Currier Hall Front door will be locked at all times. We are also in the process of limiting the access through the kitchen door. Access is always available through the Parish Hall entrance with a key.

Should you need to pick up something, please follow these steps:

1. Schedule your visit with the office.
2. Limit your visit with one person if possible.
3. Enter only thru the Parish hall main entrance (not the kitchen door please).
4. Wear a mask.
5. Do not bring any pets into the facility without proper approval. (Only ADA Service Animals are exempt)

Thank you for your cooperation

The Facilities Board - Lianne Deranian, Dee Deranian, Bob Wilson, Bill Armstrong, Alan Pawl, Pat Cefaly, Jo Worthen

## *Back to the Sanctuary*

If you have been reading the E-blast, or have heard during church services, you know that we not only reached our goal of \$172,000 but went over it by \$30,000 due to some generous pledges. It's amazing what we all can do as a congregation and we rejoice in everyone's support. Because of this we have signed contracts with the Stanley elevator company and Morin construction for the exterior to the connector. Hopefully, this work will begin in the fall though the Covid19 virus has caused scheduling concerns.

As we look forward to the work of next year we will get bids for the interior and accessibility of the connector, the ceiling, walls and floor of the sanctuary. Sadly some of our previous estimates have risen due to the fact that they were rendered three years ago but we should have some idea of costs by years' end. Separately, we have the issue that the building badly needs painting. It is generally expected to be done every seven years and we are now on the ninth year. We are hoping we can come up with a plan for that as well.

Thank you all for your support. It is very gratifying to know that you are invested in this endeavor. With your continued help will get there!!!

Submitted by the Back to the Sanctuary Collaboration Group: Cyndi Gray, Sue Lindemann, Margie Ives, Anne-Marie Merrill

## Meetinghouse Preservation Update: LCHIP & Current Projects

With successful fundraising (yay!) and Council approval, we're proceeding with the two rehab projects targeted for this year.

The contract for the **Connector Exterior Project**—installing siding, windows, etc.—has been signed. Our general contractor Dan Morin (Morin Contracting Services) is experiencing scheduling chaos due to the coronavirus, but has committed to getting this work done before winter.

The **Elevator** order put on hold in 2016 is about to be restarted. We're working with Stanley Elevator now to finalize various details (some of which have changed since three years ago) to place the manufacturing order. Receiving and installing the equipment will then take 6–8 months (with hopefully no coronavirus delays).

For our grants from the NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (**LCHIP**), we finished three lingering tasks to close out our Tower and Steeple Rehab grants (\$155K total):

- We completed the **Baseline Documentation** for the Tower and Steeple. This detailed report describes what we did and captures the finished condition, to serve as a benchmark for future stewardship. Download the 60-page PDF file here: <https://bit.ly/LCHIP-Tower-Baseline>
- We wrote and issued a **press release** crediting LCHIP for their support: <https://bit.ly/LCHIP-Tower-PR>
- We had Council approve then filed with the Rockingham Registry of Deeds a formal **Stewardship Agreement** LCHIP requires committing us to take proper care of the Meetinghouse going forward.



Arron Sturgis of Preservation Timber Framing (left) and George Born, our LCHIP manager, chat in our Belfry last fall.

We also just submitted a new LCHIP grant application for rehabbing the **East Portico**, the double doors and overhanging roof facing the Taylor Library. We want to do this before painting the exterior next year. There is huge competition for LCHIP grants this year; the winners will be announced in December. Download our application to see the details: <https://bit.ly/LCHIP-east-portico>

In parallel with the above, we continue to work on planning projects targeted for next year: **Exterior Painting** of the Meetinghouse, finishing the **Connector Interior**, and tackling the huge **Sanctuary Rehab** effort. We'll share more info on these soon.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact any BAC member.

BAC: Larry Krantz, Paul Lindemann, Bill Mann

Facilities Reps: Nancy Murdoch, Bob Wilson



## Board of Deacons

The Deacons met this month and discussed the continuation of Zoom and Facebook services. Please let us know if you need help accessing these virtual services. This virus will last a while longer than any of us hoped. We want people to be connected as much as possible. If you are having any trouble please contact the church and let us help you get connected.

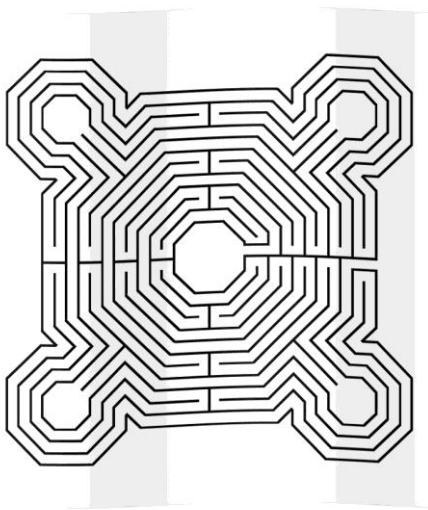
We are looking for “greeters” to help on Sunday mornings to monitor Zoom and Facebook. Please let a Deacon know if you are interested. Also if you have a prayer to lift up during joys and concerns, please type “**Prayer**” in front of your request so that it stands out and the deacon/greeter can find it easily.

On July 12th there will be an outdoor service at the church at 8:30am. Please note that there will be a virtual 10:00 service, as well. The early service will last about 30 minutes. The rain date is July 19th.

In this era of pandemic and in order to comply with safety recommendations, this service will look a little different from what we are used to.

- Any person displaying Covid-19 symptoms would be encouraged to stay home.
- There won't be any singing or use of instruments that use human breath.
- There will not be a unison prayer.
- If you need to use the restroom, only 2 people will be permitted to go into the building at any one time (or 1 family unit).
- There will be alcohol-based hand sanitizer available to use.
- We will not be shaking hands or hugging. Masks must be worn at all times.
- You will bring your own chair to sit on or a blanket to sit on. Please allow 6 feet between families.
- Children will remain with their families throughout the service and we ask that everyone remain seated.

Respectfully submitted by Rachel Cobban on behalf of the Deacons: Sue Lindemann, Diane Breeden, Sue Brown, Jack Martin, Brian Williams, and Pastor Deborah



NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL, REIMS, FRANCE



ST. OMER, NEAR BELGIUM

## *Family Promise to Start Groundbreaking on New Building*



Things have been moving quickly for Family Promise of Southern NH. FP has signed a 20-year lease for a building in Nashua – the former Infant Jesus school – to replace the current facility at Ann Marie House. While the school building is in great shape, extensive (and expensive) renovations are needed to convert the classrooms into living space and bathrooms. Once it is completed the building will house 24 families, a substantial increase over the 10 families that the previous facility at Ann Marie House could support. Unfortunately, the need is likely to exceed even that higher capacity once the temporary restrictions on eviction of tenants for nonpayment of rent during the pandemic are rescinded. The shelter, food, and training that Family Promise provides to homeless families will be needed more than ever in the coming months and years.

Construction on the new facility will begin July 30 and will be kicked off with a groundbreaking ceremony, with Governor Sununu and the CEO of the national Family Promise organization as featured speakers. More details to come on that. At the moment, only 2 families remain in the program, with no new guests admitted for the last several months because we must be out of Ann Marie House by September. Projections are for the building to be completed and ready for occupancy in November.

Family Promise has launched a large building campaign to raise the necessary funding that must complement the federal, state, and foundation grants we receive. We continue to apply for more such grants every week to cover the future construction costs and pay off the loans that enable us to begin the construction. While the need for funding could hardly have come at a worse time economically, we are optimistic that private donors and businesses that have not been adversely affected will make extra efforts to support the program and the families who have lost their homes.

If you would like to follow Family Promise's progress, please visit our website at [familypromisesnh.org](http://familypromisesnh.org). Please consider supporting this program by donating to the capital campaign if you can.

Yours in Christ,

Randy Brown  
([randybrown1119@gmail.com](mailto:randybrown1119@gmail.com))  
Board Member for Family Promise  
of Southern NH



## *“Before It’s Too Late” by Marcia McFee*

I do not know exactly what lies ahead;  
 how far we will have to travel on the road of unrest.  
 I cannot foretell the number of bombs that will have to explode  
 or the lives that will have to be lost before...  
 Before we understand that we cannot  
 kill each other into the future we think we have imagined.  
 You cannot hate enough to make yourself happy.  
 You cannot destroy enough to make yourself feel secure.  
 You cannot oppress enough to make yourself feel superior.  
 You cannot commit enough evil to make yourself feel holy.  
 I do not know exactly what lies ahead;  
 how far we will have to travel on the road of unrest.  
 I cannot foretell how many rights will have to be taken away,  
 or how much progress will have to be reversed before...  
 Before we understand that we cannot  
 persecute each other into the future we think we have imagined.  
 We cannot neglect each other enough to feel worthy.  
 We cannot starve each other enough to feel full.  
 We cannot silence one another enough to feel heard.  
 We cannot fragment each other enough to feel whole.  
 I do not know exactly what lies ahead;  
 how far we will have to travel on the road of unrest.  
 I cannot foretell how many baby's bodies will have to float  
 on the sea of greed and vain glory before...  
 Before we understand that we cannot  
 bully our way into the future we think we have imagined.  
 We cannot bury each other deep enough to feel alive.  
 We cannot rape each other enough to feel loved.  
 We cannot infect each other enough to feel well.  
 We cannot enslave one another enough to feel free.  
 Before it is too late may we understand that the call is coming from inside the house.  
 Before it is too late may we comprehend that the  
 Stench  
 Rot  
 Brokenness  
 Emptiness  
 Insecurity  
 Woundedness  
 Disease  
 is from within and not without.  
 Erasing you will not heal me.  
 May we understand before it is too late.  
 God, help us to understand before it is too late. Amen.

(A Prayer Poem shared from Marcia McFee)

## *Hannaford Fundraising: We all buy groceries, right? Is it really that easy? Yes!*



You see it every week in the Sunday Announcements Blast, but are not familiar with the program?

**Hannaford offers a community fundraising program in which we buy gift cards in any denomination and they pay our church back 5%. We have been running this program here at FPC since fall 2015 and it has been such a great success!**

When we submit \$1000, the church receives \$50.

We can add \$2600 a year to the budget by just submitting \$1000 once a week for something that you are already doing- GROCERY SHOPPING.

Imagine how quickly that can multiply!

- You may purchase or reload your gift cards by emailing or calling the office, then send your check to the church or drop it off. We will email you as soon as we have the minimum \$1,000. If you are in need of a new card, please let us know and we can issue a new one.
- To make sure that you are able to shop as quickly as possible, we created a specific email list for our Hannaford Card holders. Lately we have been able to load twice a week!

**Even if you're not a Hannaford shopper regularly - Give the gift of Hannaford!**

Our cards aren't just for reloading, you can purchase a one-time card (just like at the store) and we receive a percentage to help the church.

- Wish a Happy Birthday, Congratulations on your Graduation, Thank you!
- Help someone who is struggling. (If you prefer- you can give the card to Pastor Deborah to give to someone).
- Or just a "pay it forward" gift to someone in the grocery line.

Hannaford Cards can be used along with your Hannaford Rewards as well as Hannaford To-Go

If you have additional questions, please reach out to Liz Greenberg or Michelle in the office to learn more.



## *Worship Service- Sunday 10:00AM*

### *Narrative Lectionary July*

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

**Job (5 weeks): K. Schifferdecker's 6-week series (2012) (Last week of the series)**

**July 5<sup>th</sup>:** Job 41:1-8; 42:1-17 Communion Sunday

Greeters: Sue Lindemann, Debbie Gline-Allen

**2 Corinthians (5 weeks): Lois Malcolm's 6-week series (2016)**

**July 12<sup>th</sup>:** 2 Corinthians 1:1-11 – Consolation

Greeters: Jack Martin, Rachel Cobban

**July 19<sup>th</sup>:** 2 Corinthians 2:1-10 – Forgiveness

Greeters: Brian Williams, Debbie Gline-Allen

**July 26<sup>th</sup>:** 2 Corinthians 4:1-18 – Treasure in Clay Jars

Greeters: Anne Marie Merrill, Sue Lindemann

## *July at a Glance*

### **Outdoor Service July 12<sup>th</sup> 8:30am**

See details in the Board of Deacons article (rain date - July 19<sup>th</sup>)

### **July Adult Faith Formation ~ Labyrinth Zoom "walks"**

Tuesday July 7, 14 & 28 at 6:30pm

### **Wonder Wednesday: Worship, Prayer and Praise**

July 1, 8, 15 & 29 7:00pm

Zoom & Facebook Live (This service will not be recorded.)

### **Christian Education**

### **What's Up Wednesday**

Weekly at 3:00pm

### **Compassion Camp**

Released Weekly July 7, 14, 21, 28

**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:**

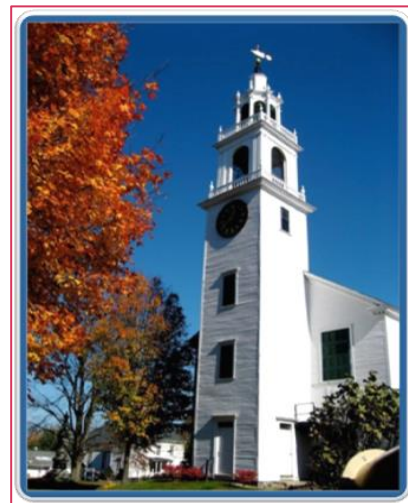
[pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org)

# 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.



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United Church of Christ  
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