

# *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.

*“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,

November is here and many of us are still reeling from the spring and summer of 2020 when we did not accomplish what we had hoped, we didn't visit our loved ones as much as we had imagined, if at all, and vacation plans are still just that: plans, never having been acted upon. “Word on the street” is that we are not out of the woods yet with this pandemic. Even though many of us have been compliant with scientists' recommendations, there are enough people who carry the virus to others, and so we await a second surge.

We wait and we wonder – what will Thanksgiving look like this year? We just cannot know but it will come nonetheless, and it will be different.

I began thinking about the origin of Thanksgiving. I remember being taught as a child that the arriving Europeans made peace with the indigenous Native Americans and there was a time of sharing, as they shared their prospective foods, they shared space and they shared a table. The Europeans brought things like the potato and the sugar needed to make a pie out of the indigenous pumpkin. The Native Americans introduced them to corn and introduced the Europeans to that lovely indigenous fowl – the turkey – that has become synonymous with the holiday, itself.

I remember it as if I had lived through it: different people sitting together and eating together and celebrating life. In their celebration, they expressed a gratitude to a Holy Creator that they each called by a different name. And there was peace and there was laughter and

there was a sharing of different perspectives. The early Europeans might not have survived those early years.

And today, in 2020 – the year of pandemic and political division and cultural polarization – the historians tell me that the early years may not have looked like that at all.

“But I remember it!” I think. Alas, we yearn so much for peace that we forge our memories around peaceful moments. 2020 has been difficult for many – AND it was brought peace and restoration to many, as well. It is not just nostalgia that causes that yearning for peace within us. It is our sacred calling. AND it is not just our sacred calling to remember peace, it is our sacred calling to create peace and peaceful moments whenever and wherever we can.

More than ever before, your family and your world needs YOU to recall and create peace through moments and acts of gratitude this Thanksgiving 2020. As the song says, you can’t give the world all the gratitude and peace that it needs BUT the world NEEDS all the gratitude and peace YOU CAN GIVE!

Happy Thanksgiving everyone! I thank God for you, for our faith family, for our church, and for our history. We inherited the ideals and determination of some awesomely courageous and dedicated saints to be sure!

God’s blessing this November 2020!

Pastor Deborah

## A Poem Dedicated to this Month of Thanks

### On the Other Side

by Lynn Unger

Through the looking glass,  
down the rabbit hole,  
into the wardrobe and out  
into the enchanted forest  
where animals talk  
and danger lurks and nothing  
works quite the way it did before,  
you have fallen into a new story.  
It is possible that you  
are much bigger—or smaller—  
than you thought.  
It is possible to drown  
in the ocean of your own tears.

It is possible that mysterious friends  
have armed you with magical weapons  
you don’t yet understand,  
but which you will need  
to save your own life and the world.  
Everything here is foreign.  
Nothing quite makes sense.  
That’s how it works.  
Do not confuse the beginning  
of the story with the end.

## Christian Education and Faith Formation

### Advent Workshop ~ Virtual and More!

This year the Christian Education Board would be remiss without offering some Advent celebratory activities for everyone to be able to participate in. This Advent season is different than any other and so our activities must attempt to reach above and beyond these barriers to bring us closer into each other's homes and hearts.

*Please stay posted to the Eblasts for An Advent Zoom and Facebook Workshop activity in addition to other Advent craft treats available to all.*



### Sharing of Recipes

Our first advent project aimed to simply bring people together and to lift spirits after a rough many months will be the **SHARING OF RECIPES**. It's cathartic to channel our energies toward a tangible activity like sharing recipes. Send us your favorite gluten free recipe, kid-friendly fun recipe, vegan recipe, whatever-you-have-in-the-cupboard recipe, mom's secret recipe (shhh, we won't tell), spicy chili, comfort food recipe, your best blueberry muffin recipe, you name it, we want it!



Email recipes and photos so we can design a digital and print cookbook to be shared with all church members to make each other's holidays merry and bright!

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

### Winter Season Sunday School Lesson Supply Bags

*November 29<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent – February 7<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday before the Transfiguration and start of Lent*

The Winter Season Sunday School Lesson supply bags will be ready earlier than November 29, 2020, the start of Advent. In these bags we will have an Advent calendar chain for each student so it is important that the students receive their bags prior to this date. If you are a family with students (of any age) who would like supply bags for your children, please let us know how many you'll need so that we can get the appropriate amount of supplies. Please respond to this email ASAP: [cedirector@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:cedirector@fpc-ucc.org)



## Gratitude Journals and Video Compilation

In September's bags, families with students that requested bags received gratitude journals for the month of November. Please let us know if you haven't received one and we will gladly supply one to your student(s).



We are reaching out to all FPC families and friends who would like to participate in our **Gratitude Video Compilation** for the Holiday season. The Christian Education Board would like to collect short 30 second statements of what you are grateful for with or without a picture or piece of artwork of that which you are grateful for. A simple short 30 second statement (this may be written or spoken), no faces for privacy reasons. If artwork is not supplied, we may fill in some for you to complete the presentation.



Please contact Christine Lehoullier for any questions and to participate!  
[cedirector@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:cedirector@fpc-ucc.org).

## News from the Board of Deacons

### Sunday Services in the Coming Months

Like you, we all wish we could be physically together as one body. We prayerfully considered ways we could meet together for Sunday services especially as it is only a month before we enter the Advent season. Many of us had concerns about the news reports we see about Covid clusters associated with church services.

For now, we will continue to meet virtually via Facebook and Zoom. We have made no formal decisions regarding Christmas Eve services and are considering ways in which we can join together. We will make that decision at our November meeting.

### How can you help?

During the live virtual service if you notice anything off about the quality please use the Zoom *Chat* or Facebook *Comments* to tell the greeter directly. The greeters are monitoring quality as well and can let you know if the team is working the issue. The crew in the Digital Chapel are not always aware of problems in the two streams, so through the greeters is the best way to give immediate feedback.

If you have specific ideas how we can celebrate Advent and Christmas safely please share with a deacon or Pastor Deborah.



## November 8<sup>th</sup> Service

Pastor Deborah will be on Study Leave for a week starting Sunday the 8<sup>th</sup>. We plan to hold a Zoom service with live virtual chat before and after, but the actual service will be pre-recorded. We extend our thanks to Pastor Deborah, Joan Virga, and Paul Lindemann for taking out time in the week to create the service for us.

## Members in Discernment (MID)

We have three MIDs: Diana Sweeney, Debbie Gline Allen, and Shellie (Aseltine) Brook. One of the responsibilities we at First Parish have is to form a Local Church Discernment Committee (LCDC) for each MID. We have already formed the LCDC for Debbie and that team will be supporting Debbie on her path to ordination. We will be working with our other MIDs to help them form their LCDCs.

Your Deacons:

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

## Praying Circles of Gratitude Around the Meetinghouse

Take advantage of the Meetinghouse Prayer Circle before this seven-week celebration of gratitude concludes with a service of thanksgiving at 3:00pm Saturday afternoon, Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>.

We look forward to seeing you there as we praise God from whom all blessings flow. We will come together in worship to praise God using an *invocation*, a prayer inviting God's presence. After we've offered our gifts to God, we'll sing a *doxology*, a prayer of thanksgiving. God has been and continues to be "present" to us and this is our opportunity to say thanks.

Meanwhile, enjoy the 1/7<sup>th</sup> mile walk with its seven stations. Each offers info on a preservation project and an appropriate bible passage. An accompanying pamphlet (pick it up at the beginning) further offers a prayer or meditation for each station. Walk any time except while Nutfield Coop is in session (Mon., Tue. & Thur. 8am–5pm).

## 1 Sanctuary Rehabilitation

*Exodus 15:17:* "You brought them in and planted them on the mountain of your own possession, the place, O Lord, that you made your abode, the **sanctuary**, O Lord, that your hands have established."



### ~2021 priority 3:

- Planning underway; must:
- Deal with peeling lead paint, repair & paint ceiling
- Deal with asbestos floor tiles, install new flooring
- Repair historic plaster and paint interior
- Upgrade electrical, lighting, & multimedia systems
- Reinstall pipe organ
- Clean and refresh trim and furnishings
- Includes Narthex (entry and staircases) & requires completed Accessibility Connector

Visit our [website page for downloads](#) or see photos and the rest of the info panels on this post:

[facebook.com/fpcucc/posts/3998849366795107](https://facebook.com/fpcucc/posts/3998849366795107)

## Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

Many things have changed this year and many more will. As we approach the holiday season the Mission Board has come up with safer ways to continue our traditions of giving Thanksgiving Baskets and Angel Tree gifts.

### Gift Cards Instead of Thanksgiving Baskets

We will be giving grocery gift cards in place of Thanksgiving Baskets this year. We have been in contact with Community Caregivers & The Upper Room. They will give us family names and addresses and we will mail the gift cards to the families. **If you are able & would like to help, you can give a monetary donation to help with the cost of the gift cards.** If you write a check please write "Thanksgiving" in the memo.



### Angel Tree Differences

**Community Caregivers** will not be giving names to any of the organizations they have worked with in the past. They will have a tree in the foyer of their new location with the gift tags and each person will have to go to their office and chose the gift(s) they want to purchase. Then wrap and return the gift to Caregivers. Their new location is 6 West Broadway Unit 6, Derry.



**FPC Angel Tree** will be different also. **After Nov. 22nd** the name tags will be available in the foyer by the office. You can choose your gift anytime the office is open. Generally, someone is there between the hours of 9am-3pm. The gifts will need to be wrapped with the gift tag taped to it and **returned to FPC by Friday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>**. When you take a gift tag **please fill out the form on the clip board with your name, phone # & gift tag family #.**



*If any of you know families in need or have any questions about Angel Tree, please contact the FPC office or call Beth Hunter @ 603-505-0702. The office will have forms to fill out if you know someone in need.*

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

PS — We are pleased to share the letter of thanks that follows from United Theological College in Zimbabwe.

# UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

“Spes Unica - Unique Hope”



132 Valleyview Lane, Hatfield, Harare, Zimbabwe [www.utc.ac.zw](http://www.utc.ac.zw)  
P.O Box H97 Hatfield, Harare, Zimbabwe [info@utczim.co.zw](mailto:info@utczim.co.zw)  
+263777808539 - +263715715233247

12 October 2020

The First Parish Church

Attention: Pastor Deborah Roof

Warm greetings from United Theological College.

I write to confirm receipt of USD 4 700.00 you sent through for purpose of supporting ministry at the seminary.

You can never be able to sufficiently, imagine how those funds will be deployed to save the United Theological College community from literal starvation. Please accept our heartfelt appreciation to the entire congregation. We have no doubt that under your leadership Pastor Deborah, the partnership between the First Parish Church and United Theological College continues to strengthen.

I wish to point out that although the issue of human rights violations and food insecurity continues to burden us, it is your ministry to us that gives us hope. We continue to pray for individual members of your church who have lost loved ones due to Covid 19 pandemic.

United Theological College would like to invite members of your church for a visit to the seminary when the conditions of travel are relaxed.

Please know that you remain in our prayers and we cherish our partnership so much. Your presence in our lives is very liberating sustaining and missional.

Yours in His Grip

Revd Dr K. Gondongwe  
**Principal**



## Music Ministry

This month in the First Parish music room we have started our Chimes Thanksgiving hymn which will be recorded on November 19 for the November 22, 10:00 am church service. I am so excited for this piece! Chimes choir hasn't played this piece before but it does consist of two familiar hymns.

Then on December 3, we will begin rehearsing our Advent selection, as well as our two Christmas pieces.

With Advent just around the corner, we need to think ahead. A long-standing Christmas tradition in our church is to sing carols before the worship service starts. We won't let Covid stop us this year! I would like you to pick out some Christmas hymns (carols) and **send them into us ahead of time** (email the [office](#) or [Pastor Deborah](#) or to [me](#)). We will start singing at 9:45 am before the worship services. Per usual, we will sing the first verse of each of 5 hymns each week. Please pick familiar hymns so that all may join in our Christmas rejoicing.

Finally, we need musicians for Christmas Eve who will pre-record their selection. Would you like to sing a solo? Would you like to participate in a virtual choir? If you would like to participate, please let Pastor Deborah know. We are trying to cover as many beloved Christmas songs as we possibly can. We don't know exactly how this will work but we'll figure it out as we go. Join with us, won't you?

God Bless, Joan Virga, First Parish Choir Director/Organist



### Church Service Videos

Enjoy these pieces we've used at recent Sunday services (click an image to play in YouTube or go to *FPC-UCC Digital* on YouTube to see them all).



Joan playing Bach Toccata in D Minor (Oct. 25, 2020)



The Allen Family playing Mozart's Sonatina 2 (Oct. 11, 2020)



Hand Chimes Choir (Sept. 13, 2020)



Rebecca Brook & Shellie (Aseltine) Brook (Oct. 4, 2020)



## 2021 Pledge Drive — Hope in Action

*"and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us." Romans 5:5*

This year the theme of the FPC Pledge Drive is **"Hope in Action"**. Hope is what keeps us going. Hope is believing that there is something good on the horizon. First Parish Church and our world will get through this and will be better than before.

Even though we are in the midst of some real challenging and upsetting times, life does continue on and in the life of our church it is time to address how we are going to raise funds to keep the church alive & well in 2021.

By the time you get this newsletter you should have received your pledge card in the mail. Will you prayerfully consider what gift you can give to our church? Your gift large or small is a blessing and very much appreciated.

*If you could return your pledge card by November 22  
it will help us in preparing the 2021 budget.*

Thank you,

Pastor Deborah, Cathy Zylinski, Beth Hunter, Margie Ives, Nancy Murdock

## Taking a Look Back ...



Sacred Dancers in the Sanctuary, June 18, 2006.



The Memorial Service for Marnie Willis, Oct. 10, 2020.

## Preservation Projects and Plans

The Accessibility Connector is finally getting buttoned up for winter. Our long-time general contractor Morin Contracting Services has been busy installing the building's windows, doors, siding, and trim (all on hold since we constructed the shell in 2016).

Next they'll be working inside on various projects to support the installation of the elevator. Previous materials donor Liberty Electric will also be working to prepare the electrical and fire alarm systems for that installation. Stanley Elevator should receive the elevator from the manufacturer this month, and will proceed with its installation probably through February.

In 2021 we'll focus on fundraising for these projects and executing them as possible:

- **Exterior Painting** — Last painted in 2011 and starting to suffer, the historic building needs lead paint remediation; repairs to the East Portico, window trim, etc.; and high-quality paint to match the Tower. We're estimating about \$150K for this.
- **Connector Interior** — We'll need to fully finish the inside—walls, floors, lighting, heating, etc.—to make use of the elevator, with a rough estimate of \$100K.
- **Sanctuary Rehab** — Making the Sanctuary safe and beautiful again means addressing peeling lead ceiling paint, asbestos flooring, cracked plaster walls, opening through the historic wall to the Connector, and returning the pipe organ, plus updating the electrical and fire alarm systems, adding better multimedia capabilities, and generally cleaning and refurbishing everything as needed. Our very rough estimate for this is \$400K.

The BAC is planning these projects and getting quotes now. If you'd like to join in and help—or if you have any questions—just contact any current BAC member.

Your Building Advisory Committee,

Steve Davis, Larry Krantz, Paul Lindemann, Bill Mann, Bob Wilson

Follow [facebook.com/nuthist](https://facebook.com/nuthist) for project updates and photos.





## November Worship Services and Events

Worship Services are Sunday mornings at 10:00am. These are currently virtual-only. Participate with Zoom (see the pre-service church eBlast for meeting details) or live on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/fpcucc](https://facebook.com/fpcucc)).

**Worship Services** using the Narrative Lectionary 2020-2021  
(Readings for Year 3 ~ Luke)



### November 1: All Saints Day

God's Care for the Widow: 1 Kings 17:1-16  
*Elijah and the widow; God's care for those on the margin.*  
Greeters: Rachel Cobban and Katie Cobban

### November 8

Jonah and God's Mercy: Jonah 1:1-17; 3:1-10  
*Jonah's attempted escape from God, God's mercy on the people of Nineveh.*  
Greeters: Anne Marie Merrill and Sue Brown

### November 15

God Calls Isaiah: Isaiah 6:1-8  
*Call of Isaiah: Holy, holy, holy is God; the prophet's sin, cleansing, and sending.*  
Greeters: Jack Martin and Sue Lindemann

### November 22

God Promises a New Covenant Christ the King / Reign of Christ Sunday  
Jeremiah 36:1-8, 21-23, 27-28; 31:31-34  
*Jeremiah's scroll calls for repentance, but the king burns it. The prophet promises a new covenant, written on the heart.*  
Greeters: Rachel Cobban and Katie Cobban

### November 29

First Sunday of Advent: Daniel's Hope in God: Daniel 6:6-27  
*Daniel in the lions' den; deliverance; God's kingdom shall never be destroyed.*  
Greeters: Anne Marie Merrill and Sue Brown

### Gratitude Mindfulness Rocks All Month

*It's not too late to participate in this CE program. Supplies are here at FPC; come get what you need to do at home!*

### Meetinghouse Gratitude Circles Closing Service

Saturday Nov. 7, 3:00pm  
*Gratitude Worship, Prayer and Praise marking the conclusion of seven weeks of walking prayer. In-person only: meet at the flagpole, bring a chair, and dress for the weather!*

### Labyrinth Walks

Tuesdays  
Nov. 17 & 24 at 6:00pm  
*Zoom-only group meditation; email the office if you need an invitation.*



### Adult Faith Formation – Unbinding the Gospel

Tuesdays Nov. 17 & 24 at 6:45pm

**First Parish  
Congregational Church, UCC**

(603) 434-0628

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 114  
E Derry, NH 03041

Location:  
47 East Derry Road

**Office Hours**

Temporarily closed to the public;  
please call to make an appointment.

Monday – Friday  
9:00am – 3:00pm

**Online**

[www.fpc-ucc.org](http://www.fpc-ucc.org)  
[facebook.com/fpcucc](https://facebook.com/fpcucc)

**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)



**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***