

# *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,

Happy New Year! 2020 is now a memory – thank you, God! May we appreciate the gifts we have received from 2020, hold on to the learnings and let go of the resentments! 2021 – here we come!

As we move forward, let us be mindful of what brings us together: the Call of God to live lives of faith, practicing that faith through prayer and worship, and through service and generosity. We are so blessed to belong to a church that seeks to live so fully into God's plan for our lives. (See Jeremiah 29:11.)

The adult faith formation group is reading an excellent book entitled, “Unbinding the Gospel.” So many wonderful nuggets can be found in this book. There are some things that we don't agree with, too, but the core message is that God loves us more than we can imagine. Jesus is crazy about us and wants more than anything a relationship with us. Our only job as Christians is to let Jesus and God love us! Allowing that love to enter deeply into our being, we pray more, we see God more, we do more for the world around us – because God loves that world, too.

Reading this book together reminded me of the work of Stephen Covey, who made famous the “7 Habits of Highly Effective People”. Someone came up with the “7 Habits of Highly Effective Churches”. What a great way to enter into God's plan for us and 2021. Try these on for size:

**1. Strive for excellence in service to Christ.** Effective churches are churches where people *enjoy what they're doing and do it well*. Give God your best whether in the care of church grounds or the soup you prepare for the homeless shelter dinner.

**2. Cultivate a spirit of innovation and experimentation.** Be open to new ideas that advance your mission. Develop and try new ministries. Just remember, if you're not failing at something, you're probably not trying anything.

**3. Take the initiative to build relationships with people and groups in the wider community beyond your congregation.** As best we can during a pandemic: Get involved in community events. Meet people. Introduce yourself as a member of the church. Be curious about what's going on.

**4. Accept responsibility for mistakes, learn from them, and in all things, let grace abound.** Making mistakes is not the worst thing that can happen. We often learn the most from our failures. In the end, and in the beginning, it is about God's grace, not our achievements. Give others the benefit of the doubt. While you're at it, cut yourself some slack, too.

**5. Be people of hope, trusting in God to find a way even when we can't.** Look to where love, energy and life are flowing freely and focus on that. "Always be prepared to give an account of the hope that is within you." (1 Peter 3:15)

**6. Be clear about your core mission.** Doing that won't make everyone happy. When folks are unhappy, find out why, connect, talk and pray. If things remain stuck, be willing to let people go in order to stay focused on your core mission.

**7. Generosity: God loves cheerful givers. So spend money wisely, well and freely in God's cause.** A hospice nurse told the story of bringing an elderly woman home for the final days of her life. Noticing a large bottle of perfume on the woman's dresser, the nurse asked, "Would you like me to dab a bit of that behind your ears?" "Honey" said the woman to the nurse, "Why don't you just splash it on!"

Friends, a life of faith is about mystery and practicality; it's about living lives that are drawn to the mysticism of a life of faith; it's about expecting miracles and seeing God-winks throughout your day.

Happy New Year, dear Child of God! May your walk in faith be more enriching than you could have ever dreamed! Thank you for 7 years of faith-walking together! Blessed Be!

Pastor Deborah

## Christian Education and Faith Formation



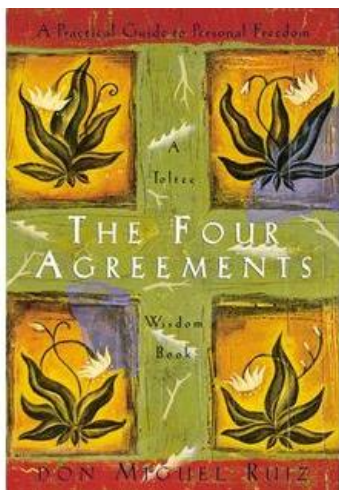
### **New Year, New Opportunities!**

As your Christian Education Board we are dedicated to you and your faith formation in all the activities that we offer. Not everyone is connected to the cyberworld and we want *EVERYONE* to have as much opportunity as possible! We want you to be involved! Please let us know if there is something we can mail you or if you may be interested in a different kind of activity. We will do our best to figure out a way to make it happen! You can call the office, 603-434-0628 to reach us.

### **Valentine's Day Cards**

There are at least 100 Nursing care and Rehabilitation facilities within a thirty mile radius of zip code 03053! Let's get creative with some Valentine's cards and send some LOVE along with a fun activity. Fun for us and a cheerful surprise for our community neighbors! We will provide the supplies and some ideas, you provide the creativity. Two boxes will be located in between the doors at church, one for drop off for finished cards and one for card making supplies. All cards will be due by **February 12<sup>th</sup>**.

### **Adult Faith Formation ~ Labyrinth Walk at 6:00pm and Book Study at 6:30pm**



Galatians 5:1 "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

We will finish our discussion of "Unbinding the Gospel on January 19 and begin a revisit to "The Four Agreements" January 26<sup>th</sup>- February 16<sup>th</sup>.

The first agreement: be impeccable with your word. What does the Bible say? "Treat others the way you wish to be treated." Many scriptures support the "four agreements". Which ones? How many? "The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz was published in 1997 and spent seven years on the "New York Times" bestseller list. It encourages people to lead more fulfilling lives with four general guidelines in order to avoid unnecessary worry and suffering. During our gatherings, we will explore each agreement while doing a deep-dive into Biblical

scriptures. You may come to one or all of these sessions: 4 weeks = 4 Agreements.

**This will be a great 4-week exploration in a small group setting. We can discuss our views, while getting to know one another better. Please email [cedirector@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:cedirector@fpc-ucc.org) if you need a book or call the front office.**



## **Resources for Coping**

**We're all human and we all need them. Here are a few ideas to help our kids and ourselves:** Click on this link or copy and paste to your browser to read the entire article courtesy of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network: [helping-children-with-traumatic-separation-related-to-covid-19.pdf](https://www.nctsn.org/resources/helping-children-with-traumatic-separation-related-to-covid-19.pdf) ([prcli.org](https://prcli.org))

### **HELPING CHILDREN WITH TRAUMATIC SEPARATION OR TRAUMATIC GRIEF RELATED TO COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in thousands of children being separated from loved ones who require isolation and/or hospitalization due to a loved one testing positive for COVID-19 or because of potential exposure for essential workers. For some children, the separation may result in distress or in a traumatic reaction. If a loved one dies from the virus, a child may experience traumatic grief due the sudden nature of the death and being unable to say goodbye or observe cultural or religious mourning rituals. This tip sheet is for caregivers or other adults supporting children with traumatic separation or traumatic grief related to COVID-19. Especially in stressful times, in addition to the suggestions here, all children benefit from caregivers listening to and validating their different feelings.

I want you to know that:	You can help when you:
1. I may have a lot of feelings but am not able to identify them or why I have them.	Acknowledge it is ok to feel sad, angry, hurt, lonely, etc.  Understand when I get upset out of the blue about things that do not seem related.  Help me label my feelings with words and talk about what is happening.
2. I am afraid when my loved one who is sick must be isolated from me at home or away from home.	Explain that isolating my loved one protects me from getting sick and helps the sick person to recover.  Tell me the isolated person cares about me very much and does not want me to get sick.  Remind me how you or other helpers take care of our sick loved one and me.  Help me to find ways to stay in contact with my sick loved one (call, text, make a card).
3. I am afraid that my loved one, who is a health worker or emergency responder, will get sick or die.	Explain that health professionals and emergency responders get special training on how to stay safe at work to care for people.  Tell me ways I can stay in touch with my loved one if I can't see them all the time or if they have to stay close to work for a period of time.  Explain the important work they are doing to care for people.
4. I am sad that I can't see my sick loved one in the hospital and I worry that they are alone.	Assure me that my loved one wants me to stay safe, so they do not want me near sick people in the hospital.  Explain how people in the hospital make sure my loved one is not alone.  Help me communicate with my loved one, through calls, cards, pictures, songs, prayers, texts, and virtual communication when possible.
5. I am scared that my sick loved one is in the hospital and might die.	Give me accurate information about how my loved one is doing in words I can understand for my age.  Help me understand that most people get better and come home.  Tell the truth if my loved one won't recover and help me find a way to say goodbye.
6. I am scared, sad and mad that I can't say goodbye in person if my loved one is going to die in the hospital, and we can't go.	Explain that health care workers are with my loved one, so they are not alone.  Find out if you can send a message for me or I can say goodbye remotely.

**When you can (sometimes that means making the time or putting in the effort to try something new, you can do it!) do things that you enjoy and that help you relax.**

- Read a book/listen to an audiobook. Many public libraries' websites offer free audiobooks.
- Learn a new skill
- Create art — draw, build something, etc.
- Journal or write
- Play puzzles or games
- Take an online course — various free online courses available ([Online Courses - Learn Anything, On Your Schedule | Udeemy](#))
- Rearrange your living space
- There are many ways you can build a feeling of connection, even if you can't see people in person or go places you usually would
- Make sure you have the phone numbers and emails of close friends and family
- Stay connected via phone, email, social media and video calls
- Offer to help others if you can.
- Ask for help when you need it
- Share how you're feeling with people you trust
- Regularly call, text or email with family and friends who may have more limited social contact — older friends, those with disabilities, those who live alone, those who are quarantined or at high risk because of chronic health conditions.
- If talking about COVID-19 is affecting your mental health, set boundaries with people about how much and when talk you about COVID-19. Balance this with other topics you'd usually discuss.
- If you are living with other people, communicate expectations about how to live well together while staying home.
- Do virtual activities together
- Plan virtual dinners and coffee breaks
- Do at-home crafts and activities over a video call
- Watch a virtual concert together
- Read the same book or watch the same movie/tv show and talk about it
- Play online multi-player video games

**Please, if you have an idea you'd like to share with everyone to help keep us connected and safe at the same time, we want to hear it! Stay safe and wishing everyone peace and love!**

## News from the Board of Deacons

2020 has been a very difficult year, but we still can find many reasons to be grateful, and so we'll begin this new year by thanking Pastor Deborah for 7 years of serving God and First Parish Church!

The Board of Deacons, along with Pastor Deborah, is considering the ways we use technology and how we might improve our worship services. We will be examining such things as, but not limited to: how the service flows; whether a more or less formal approach would be better; and whether PowerPoint slides can take the place of paper bulletins. As always, your input is most welcome.

Our appreciation goes out to every person who took part and assisted with the production of the Christmas services. The responses have been overwhelmingly positive.

We hope you got an opportunity to watch the recording of the New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ Worship Service for the First Sunday of Christmas December 27<sup>th</sup>. The prayers, songs, and in particular the Christmas Reflection entitled "I Was a Boy in Bethlehem" by Rev. Gordon Rankin were absolutely wonderful.

Keep sending those prayers and cards. They are both very powerful actions we can take in making a difference in the lives of others. (See the related article in this newsletter on Deacon card exchange program.)

As we begin our new year, we are taking this time to recognize Diane Breeden, who is retiring from the Board of Deacons. Although we will miss her greatly on the Board, we are very thankful that she will continue her Liturgical Arts ministry.

Finally, let us know if you'd like to be on the Board of Deacons, or would like to be a Zoom or Facebook Host, or be a Lay Reader. We are always looking for new voices.

Your Board of Deacons:

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

## Stay informed! Receive Emails from FPC

We have many options to keep you informed. We have created specific emails list so you can receive the information that you request. Please let us know which email/emails you would like to receive:

- Congregation News- Typically once a week with General Announcements, and now with the Zoom Sunday Service link and Bulletin.
- Newsletter - Once a month with the link to the Newsletter.
- Prayer Angels - Special prayer requests as we need to communicate them.
- Adult Faith Studies - Information about the Adult Faith Program, typically weekly and if you are participating in a specific book study, may be more frequently.
- Labyrinth Walks- Typically once a week- Pastor Deborah leads this group for brief centering and gathering followed by a ten-minute " virtual walk".
- Christian Education- Sent as needed- focusing on children's lessons, special zoom events
- Hannaford Cards- typically sent a couple times a month. Notice to reload gift cards with the 5% back to the church.

Please email Michelle if you would like to be added to any of these lists. [officemgr@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:officemgr@fpc-ucc.org)

## Annual Meeting Call

TO THE MEMBERS OF FIRST PARISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC:  
YOU ARE HEREBY CALLED TO THE VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
CHURCH ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021 AT 11:30 AM FOR THE PURPOSE  
OF:

I. Receiving the reports of Officers, Boards and Committees of First Parish Church as printed in the 2020 Annual Report.

Adopting a budget for the 2021 Fiscal year as proposed by the Church Council.

Electing persons to serve as members of Council, Boards and Committees as well as Officers of the Church.

Transacting any other business that may come before congregation.

Cynthia Gray Clerk



## Meetinghouse Preservation Update

Finishing the Accessibility Connector is essential to resuming use of the Sanctuary, as the Connector will provide great handicapped (and coffin) access and a second emergency exit route.

We've made good progress on this since the last update.

- Morin Contracting Services (MCS) installed the new wide Main Entrance Door and the siding around it.
- We installed a temporary heater, and MCS insulated the elevator part of the Connector. This facilitates work through the winter and provides the warm temperature needed for some elevator installation steps.
- MCS installed a temporary door between the Connector's third level and the Noyes building, giving contractors direct access to the bathrooms with minimum Covid exposure for the rest of the facility.
- Liberty Electric ran electrical and fire alarm wiring at the top of the elevator shaft. MCS then removed the scaffolding, clearing the shaft for the next steps.
- The special Sump Pump and Basin have been ordered, and MCS will install them in the first half of this month.
- We had discovered groundwater seeping in between the first-floor cement slab and elevator shaft wall, and this is scheduled to have been sealed by the time you read this.

Next, Stanley Elevator will inspect the Elevator Support work completed so far and schedule the Elevator Installation. This will likely run into early March.

### NEXT PROJECTS

Coordinating the recent projects has consumed available BAC resources. Now we'll shift to planning the next projects.





- The Meetinghouse Exterior Painting needs to happen this coming summer, as the historic clapboard siding and trim are in bad shape (it was last painted, hurriedly, in 2010). Rehabbing the failing East Portico entrance area, repairing window sashes and other trim, and remediating the lead paint are all part of this project.
- Second in priority is designing and completing the Connector Interior. (The insulation just installed is actually part of this project, done early to support the elevator work.) This must be finished to resume use of the Sanctuary. When completed, it will immediately give us a fantastic elevator servicing both levels of the Noyes Building, including Nutfield Cooperative School.
- Planning for the large and complex Sanctuary Rehab project is also resuming shortly, and the work will be scheduled as soon as fundraising allows. This includes rehabbing the hazardous lead-painted ceiling and asbestos-tiled floor, repairing cracked historic plaster walls, updating electrical and audio-visual systems, reinstalling the pipe organ, and cleaning and finishing everything.

## BUDGET & GRANTS

Barring unforeseen new expenses, the 2020/Spring 2021 project costs should total \$220K (versus the \$225–\$250K estimated last month). That covers the Connector Exterior finishing and Elevator Installation. We'll provide our best estimates for the remaining projects for the Annual Meeting.

Those remaining projects include the Roof System Rehab. We won a 2016 LCHIP grant for \$59K of the project's then-quoted \$177K cost. LCHIP gives winners two years to use the grant money. We've already requested and received two one-year extensions and would have had to ask for a third last month.

However, we don't plan to work further on the Roof until after the Sanctuary is finished. That's because of the congregation's prioritization and the fact that we repaired what had been significant leaks years ago. So we could not honestly say when we might realistically tackle the Roof in yet another extension request.

Moreover, we learned that the 2016 award money sitting in escrow all this time was souring our hard-won positive reputation with the LCHIP board (recall that we lost our East Portico Rehab



grant request last year). So, Council voted to approve the BAC's recommendation that the church release (give up) the 2016 grant award.

We don't have to return any grant cash—since we never initiated that project to receive the funds—but this does increase our future challenge in raising funds to fully finish the Meetinghouse Preservation work. But it's the right thing to do.

We'll have more information on upcoming plans and projects at the Annual Meeting. If you have questions please email them in advance.

Your Building Advisory Committee,  
Larry Krantz, Paul Lindemann, Bill Mann, Bob Wilson

## 2021 Pledge Drive — Hope in Action

2021 is finally here and that brings hope and challenges. One of the challenges facing FPC is coming up with a budget that will help First Parish navigate the year 2021. In order to do a budget, we need to know what our income will be. We know that not everyone is able to give and we respect that. We ask that you have a conversation with God about what is possible for you and your family.



We hope that you have received a pledge card, but if you have not you can call /email the office and ask Michelle or Pastor Deborah to send one or you can stop by the church and pick one up. Your pledge is confidential and the only person who sees your pledge is our Financial Secretary, Pat Crowell.

### Our current pledge amounts:

General Fund	\$177,146
Missions	\$17,495
Building Rehab	\$6,790
Christian Ed	\$3,250
Hist. Preservation	\$1,200
Elevator	\$3,300

**What we will need to meet our budget in 2021 exceeds \$211,000.**

Submitted by Beth Hunter, Margie Ives, Cathy Zylinski and Nancy Murdock

## Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”

Happy New Year! I am sure that is a phrase that we are all glad to hear. Jeremiah 29:11 is also something we need to hear. God is with us and is working with us. He knows what our future is. There are many times we wish He would tell us what His plans are.

Those plans for FPC must be really good because despite all the negativity in the world today, FPC has a lot to be grateful for. And so, does the Board of Outreach and Mission. We received an amazing gift from Ken Gould and we were able to help many local organizations in 2020.

The Sonshine Soup, the First Baptist Food Pantry & The Upper Room all needed financial help because of the pandemic.

Several organizations were moving to new locations and needed donations to help with renovation costs. We were able to help these organizations with their projects: Community Caregivers, Family Promise & Liberty House.

We also were able to assist Jack Kennedy's ministry in Sumbabwa with funds to put in 2 solar operated wells to irrigate their food crops that will supplement the villager's diet. To them, water is life, a precious gift.

Thank you, Ken, for your generous gift.

The mission pledges from the congregation continue to come in and we have been able to continue our monthly gifts to local organizations.

We were able to keep our traditions of Thanksgiving Baskets & Angel Tree even though they were different.

We were able to help 10 families & 2 single people with grocery gift cards for Thanksgiving dinners. We received donations from the congregation that added up to \$36 more than the cost of the gift cards. Isn't God amazing?

There were fewer Angel Tree names, but we still had 8 families with 21 children and 65 gifts. The gifts were given to families with on Sat. Dec 19 with no one coming into the church except the mission board members doing the organizing. As always you were amazing. Despite no church gatherings you came to FPC during the week and chose names. All the names were taken and gifts returned on time.

**Your generosity is a gift to so many people. Thank you**

Prayers & Blessings of Hope in 2021,

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



## Health Access Sumbawa



Health for Remote Communities

November 15, 2020

Dear Friends,

As I write this Covid-19 continues to disrupt all our lives. When the pandemic spread to Sumbawa in April, the HAS team quickly pivoted.



Covid -19: HAS produced thousands of cloth face masks and distributed "kits" door to door. Each infection prevention kit contained face masks, soap and a flyer explaining how to avoid infection. Thankfully, our area remains mostly free of the virus.

Malaria: Despite the pandemic, our efforts to control malaria continue. **With your help**, this year we were able to protect 3,500 more people from infection compared to a year ago.

**Focus for 2021: Hunger.** Unfortunately, chronic poverty and hunger increased around the world during this pandemic. In Sumbawa, fresh



food is more scarce and more expensive than ever. A typical meal is white rice with little else. Protein is almost totally absent from the daily diet.

We know from years of experience promoting kitchen gardens that most everyone enjoys fresh fruits and vegetables in their diets, but only a handful of families grow their own. Most lack basic understanding of the connection between diet and good health. We are under no delusions about how hard it is to change behaviour. But clearly, we have not done enough to explain why a balanced diet is so important.

That is why Health Access Sumbawa has partnered with the 1000 Days Fund to provide education and tools to reduce the number of infants





and children who suffer from stunted development. We currently offer the program to 8 villages in Tarano sub-district. Last week we trained 84 health volunteers and 7 midwives/nurses. Our program focuses on the first 1,000 days of life from gestation to age two, the most critical years for biological development. You can read about our 3-part plan in the enclosed report. Taken together, they form a complete package designed to make severe under-nutrition a thing of the past.

New mothers are certainly the best group to focus on. I have seen how conscientious the young mothers are when they come to our clinic with their infants on their hips. They look to health workers for guidance. Unfortunately, the health team typically lacks necessary knowledge and messaging skills about nutrition. We must fix that.

I am so grateful for your support to HAS over the years. Together we have enjoyed many successes. This is our most ambitious project yet. It's a bold effort to improve, even save, many lives under difficult circumstances. I leave for Sumbawa shortly and will spend six weeks with the team in the field. I know you will do what you can to help us fund these programs.

As always, we are so grateful for your help. Best wishes for 2021 & keep yourselves healthy.

Gratefully,

Jack

Jack Kennedy, Heath Access Sumbawa

*How You Can help:*

*Donate online at [www.healthaccesssumbawa.org](http://www.healthaccesssumbawa.org)*

*or send a check to:*

*Health Access Sumbawa Inc, 392 East Neck Road, Nobleboro ME 04555*

## Music Ministry

Happy New Year!

I want to say – no, I want to shout - a huge “Thank You” to all our Thanksgiving/Advent Chimes Choir, as well as those who came to sing in our Virtual Chapel and sang our Christmas carols for Christmas Eve! Thank you all so very much. Also, a special shout out to: Hilary Gorgol and Brian Lew for singing solos and also adding to the virtual choir. Also, a huge “Thank You” to Ben Allen and family for the special “Silent Night” that we used for a prelude at the Christmas Eve service.

Christmas is such a special time of year and the music always lifts my heart in gratitude to the Lord. A quote from “The Grinch Who Stole Christmas” popped into my head so many times during December:

“And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more.”

We saw that this year with so many people coming together to make Christmas mean a little bit more. We may not have been able to see all the people we love so much but we all made the best of it. We sang, and prayed, and rejoiced, and cried, and we gave God the glory through it all.

If you do have a special music or poem you'd like to share during offertory, please let me know [joan.virga@gmail.com](mailto:joan.virga@gmail.com) or [officemgr@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:officemgr@fpc-ucc.org)

God Bless and a very Happy New Year to my First Parish Church family!

<3 Joan Virga

**The Christmas Services this year were very special as we learned how to Worship in a New Way.** Drive-In Service and videos are linked below.

**Christmas Eve Service**

[www.nutfielddhistory.org/fpc-christmas2020](http://www.nutfielddhistory.org/fpc-christmas2020)

**Nativity Puppet Show** as part of our Christmas Celebration Lesson. <https://fb.watch/2ADbRNoYCV/> This is fantastic for all ages!



## How Can We Meet While We Are Socially Distant

The best thing about coffee hour isn't really talking to people you know—though that is important—it's having a conversation with someone you really don't know that well or meeting someone new. The deacons have been wondering how we could create that feeling or opportunity while everyone is social distancing.

One way we can meet each other is very old fashioned: let's send each other cards as a way to introduce ourselves. Our first time will be to send cards for delivery by Valentine's Day.

What we would like everyone to do us as follows:

1. Write one or more cards.

Your card will go to a randomly selected member of our church family. You introduce yourself and provide the level of contact information you're comfortable with: at least your name and mailing address, but maybe also your phone number or email. The more contact information the more easily someone can reach back to you.

Note: If you can't purchase cards, please reach out to a deacon or the office so we can provide you with up to five cards with postage.

2. Put each card in an envelope with your return address and add a stamp.

Because we will be using the USPS, the envelopes need to be legal size (not the little envelopes the kids use in the classroom). If you can, please put proper postage on your card. We're asking for your return address so we don't send the card back to you.

3. Drop it off at the church by Sunday 31 January in the Deacon Card Exchange Mailbox in the entryway.

What the Deacons & Ministry of Care will do:

1. Help you get cards if needed.
2. Mail your card to someone in the church family.

The deacons and members of the ministry of care will randomly add mailing labels to the cards, postage if needed, and mail them. (We will use your return address, so we don't send your own card back to you.)

If we're lucky, we'll get enough cards so every household—better yet every house member—will receive a card. If we're even luckier everyone will get two cards!

If this works, we'd like to do it again for Easter (even if we aren't distancing).

Submitted by: Sue Lindemann on behalf of Deacons

## **Family Promise to Resume Housing Homeless Families in mid-January!**

Well, we didn't complete the building renovations quite as soon as we hoped, but they have progressed enough that Family Promise received its Temporary Certificate of Occupancy the last week of December. The staff and the Board of Directors are SO looking forward to providing housing to 12 new families. The staff have been busy finding alternative arrangements for homeless families over the past few months, but it's not the same as us directly providing meals and bedrooms and support to them.

We will have a volunteer "get the building ready" work week beginning the week of Jan 4 at the new facility at 3 Crown Street in Nashua. Volunteers will be needed to set up the new beds, clean things up, stock the kitchen, etc. etc.—imagine moving into a new home yourself, with 24 bedrooms and 30 to 40 family members. I will pass the details along in a blast email as soon as I get them for anyone able and willing to help (while wearing a mask).

Many of you have seen the Family Promise Wish List provided in First Parish's weekly bulletin for Sunday January 3. It includes NEW linens: Twin and Full-size sheets and blankets; crib sheets and blankets pillows; towels; hand towels; wash cloths; and padded fabric mattress covers for twin and full-size beds. In addition, they need glassware, plates, and bowls to support 10 families (approximately 35 individuals); pots and pans; toilet bowl brushes; toilet bowl plungers; small trash barrels; shower curtains; bathroom rugs; first aid kits; cleaning buckets; brooms and dust pans; mops; individual bottles of multi-purpose cleaner; paper towels; and toilet paper. Please have items to the church by January 25. If you prefer, you can donate funds for the staff to purchase needed items. You can make your donation via credit card through the website [familypromisesnh.org](http://familypromisesnh.org). Checks can be made out to Family Promise and mailed to Family Promise, PO Box 450, Nashua NH 03061.

Construction on the fourth floor of the building will continue while the families move into the rooms on the second and third floors. Once completed, that will add enough rooms for another 12 families. Unfortunately, the number of homeless families in need is likely to increase dramatically 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.

Completing the work and covering the increased operating cost of the larger staff needed means that we continue to fundraise. Family Promise has an outstanding grants writer, who has applied for scores of grants to cover the future construction costs and pay off the loans that we will need to cover the construction work in Jan and Feb. But the program needs money from individual donors too. So, please consider supporting this program by donating to the capital campaign if you can. The Family Promise website [familypromisesnh.org](http://familypromisesnh.org) provides instructions on how you can donate. You can also follow our progress by visiting the website, and review the list of ongoing volunteer opportunities.

Yours in Christ,

Randy Brown ([randybrown1119@gmail.com](mailto:randybrown1119@gmail.com))

Chair, Board of Directors for Family Promise of Southern NH



## Letter from Pastor Diana

**Merry Christmas ! - Happy Holidays ! - 'Tis the Season to be Jolly ! December 2020**



Mick's New Ladder



La Jolla, San Diego, CA



Mick's Garden Ramada



Heritage Park, San Diego



Disney Archive Exhibit, Santa Ana, CA



Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá



Waterfront Park, San Diego



Red Rocks, Las Vegas

### **This is the Blessing used each Week at Chris' church, First Presbyterian Fullerton:**

"Now go in peace, and bless the world.  
And remember: you go nowhere by accident.  
Where you are going...God is sending you.  
And where you are...He has placed you.

God has a purpose for your life  
right where you are.

Christ Jesus, who indwells you, has something  
that He wants to do in and through your life  
right where you are.

Believe this...and go in His love and in His grace  
and in His power.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of  
the Holy Spirit. Amen."

—Rev. Richard Halverson



Arrowhead Village, Lake Arrowhead



Belmont Shores, Long Beach



Sunnylands, Palm Springs

Dear Friends,

This year this season calls for prayers -- for our world, our country, our communities and all people everywhere. Everyone has been impacted by the pandemic in some way. And that's before we get to hurricanes, a derecho, wildfires, racial justice concerns, wars, refugees, and a contentious election. It's been a tough year! We need the hope and promise of Christmas more than usual.

We pray that you, our dear friends and relations, are doing OK -- that the physical, mental and spiritual fatigue has not got you down. This will be a different kind of holiday season. But it's also an opportunity to do things differently, to stay closer to home, to take time to enjoy simple things and the wonderful books and stories of the Christ coming. Please take time to breathe, pray, and open your hearts to God's love and presence.

Obviously we didn't travel so much this year. We got to the desert before COVID and are enjoying timeshares close to home this fall -- only places we can drive to easily and that are safe. Nothing fancy, but huge gratitude for our health and that we are retired with sufficient pensions, comfortable homes and few responsibilities.

May God keep you safe and healthy through the coming year, open to the love of God and people around you, and filled with gratitude.

**Diana, Chris and Mick Augspurger** ~ pdncsd@aol.com ~ 760-390-6113 ~ 4650 Dulin Road #142, Fallbrook CA 92028

*God bless you all this Holy Season. Diana*

## January 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)

### January 3

Boy in the Temple: Luke 2:41-52  
Greeters: Anne-Marie Merrill, Sue Brown

### January 10

Jesus' Baptism: Luke 3:1-22  
Greeters: Jack Martin and Sue Lindemann

### January 17

Sermon at Nazareth: Luke 4:14-30  
Greeters: Rachel Cobban and Katie Cobban

### January 24

Fish for People: Luke 5:1-11  
Greeters: Anne-Marie Merrill, Sue Brown

### January 31

Healing on the Sabbath: Luke 6:1-16  
Greeters: Jack Martin and Sue Lindemann



### Labyrinth Walks

Tuesdays

Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26 at 6:00pm

*Zoom-only group meditation;  
email the office if you need an  
invitation.*



### Adult Faith Formation –

Tuesdays Jan. 5, 12, 19 at 6:45pm  
Unbinding the Gospel;

**Starting the 26<sup>th</sup>** The Four  
Agreements

### Spaghetti Supper- To-Go

Friday Jan. 29 at 5:00-6:00pm

### Annual Meeting Via Zoom

Sunday Jan 31 at 11:30am



**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***