

First Parish Congregational Church Newsletter – End of Year! January's Newsletter will be sent January 7th



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 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Child of God,

We are approaching the end of Advent and the beginning of new life! We are so very active this week! Piles of gifts delivered to Community Caregivers! More gifts were picked up by Upper Room! Dozens and dozens of caring cards were delivered to Elliot Hospital last week. I thank God for you and for your serious stewardship and caring of other children of God!

A thought for you today:

"There is always a gap between present reality and future potential.

A gift unwrapped has never been truly received.

An uncashed check cannot be spent.

A bridge that spans a raging river is useless to us unless we begin to advance across it.

The divide between earth and heaven, between us and God, is one that only Jesus Christ could reconnect. He is our link to life and eternity— a bridge to be stepped onto so that it bears our whole weight as we cross the space from one side to the other." By Luci Shaw

As you walk through these special days ahead, remember the “reason for the season.” Remember that love was born in Bethlehem.

You will find a full schedule of the next week in these pages. I pray to see you! If I do not see you, know that I thank God for you so very often and I'll see you next year!

The adventure continues in hope, peace, joy and love!
Pastor Deborah

Christian Education and Faith Formation

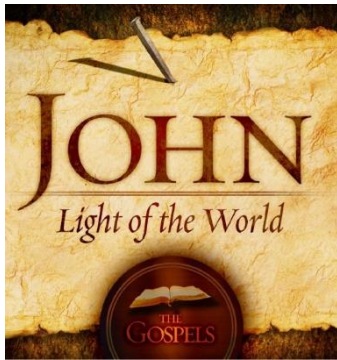
HAPPY NEW YEAR AND BLESSINGS FOR A JOYOUS, PEACEFUL AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The Christian Education Board would like to send out a sincere thank you to parents, volunteers, employees, and all church members who helped make, and continue to make, this year's transition to in-person learning within the new constructs of the Children's Christian Education Program a success.

I know there are still many things to learn, and we should always be looking to evolve to benefit the spiritual growth of everyone in the church and beyond as we are all students of God's Word. I look forward our future together as we traverse whatever comes our way. God bless everyone's immense hard work that has gone into the building and technology that strives to keeps us all connected to one another. It is love and a caring for one another that is our greatest call.

A special thank you to our outgoing board members: Ed Sullivan! For your wonderful sense of humor, gracious acts of kindness and continued discipline at our board meetings, we thank you and we love you!

Adult Faith Formation – The Gospel of John Bible Study Begins Tuesday, January 11th 6:45pm



If the Bible were a mountain, the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament lead up to the top, where the cross of Jesus stands as described by the four gospels, and the remaining twenty-three books of the New Testament lead down from the top while looking back at His cross. And even among the four gospels, the Gospel of John sheds perhaps the brightest spotlight on Jesus and His cross.

Come, join us in studying the good news brought to you by a man whose reference to himself as someone Jesus loved made his name - "John," of Hebrew origin, the meaning of John is "God is gracious."

CCEP Emergency Class Cancellations

Attention Parents, Caregivers, and Volunteers:

Should there be a need to cancel class due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances unrelated to weather, the Christian Education Board has agreed to send emergency text notifications, in addition to, email notifications, to best reach everyone in the timeliest and least intrusive way possible. In the event of inclement weather, please refer to WMUR's weather cancellation listings.

We sincerely apologize if there were any inconveniences to anyone's personal schedules or otherwise during the latest cancellation due to illness. We thank you for your cooperation and patience.

If there is a preferred way in which you'd like to be contacted that does not include text or email, please let us **ASAP** by either calling the front office at 603-434-0628 or emailing Christine Lehoullier @ cedirector@fpc-ucc.org and we will update our system accordingly.



In Person Worship Services Reminders

We enjoy seeing everyone, and we want everyone to stay safe!

Please be patient and kind and remember that we are all doing the best we know how!

- Masks will be worn **correctly** at all times in the building.
- UPON ARRIVAL, IN THE FOYER/NARTHEX:
 - Pick up your bulletin and the children's bulletin (if needed)
 - **NEW Collection Box**- Please leave your financial donations and pledge cards. The box will be collected by Deacons
 - Write down all prayers that you wish to share
 - On Communion Sundays: you will pick up your Communion elements
- Chairs will be spread out in different "bubbles" around the room. Please select the number of seats that you need for your family.
- Please remain seated for the worship service.
- Children will sit with their families for the worship service.
- These are subject to change as the conditions may change.
- Volunteers will be needed to help this time of transition.

Season of Giving

Remember First Parish at Christmas

At First Parish we have abundant resources: an amazing physical plant and an equaling amazing staff. We are able to pay salaries and keep the lights on! We host a pre-school and community groups like Scouts – Boys and Girls, as well as recovery groups like AA. We offer a monthly spaghetti supper for the community at no cost to them. Our annual budget last year was \$291,000 but that was a deficit budget. It was risky but we adopted it prayerfully and many people stepped up financially. We are close but we are not quite in the black yet.

Please prayerfully consider how you might help the church financially this Christmas. Perhaps you can pledge a certain amount for next year. Perhaps you are one of the lucky ones who has more than they need right now and would be in a financial position to offer a Christmas gift to FPC. We prayerfully hope that we might end this year in the black. You can trust that if we end this year in the black and there is a surplus, it will help us going into next year's budget.

December Worship Services and Events

Participate In-Person or with Zoom (see the pre-service church eBlast for meeting details) or live on our Facebook page (facebook.com/fpccucc).

Worship Services

using the Narrative Lectionary

Upcoming Worship Services:



Photo Credit: Paul Lindemann

- Dec. 24th: Christmas Eve- 5:00 In Person and Zoom/ Facebook 7:00 is In Person only
- Dec. 26th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook – Led by Beth Hunter & Cathy Zylinski
- Jan. 2nd : 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook

Christmas Eve: 5:00 & 7:00 Please return the survey to help us plan accordingly. The 5:00 service will also be on Zoom/Facebook

January Newsletter Deadline is Tuesday January 4th ~ Please submit your article to officemgr@fpc-ucc.org.

Advent Adult Faith Formation: Tuesday January 11th meet from 6:45 to 8:00. Hybrid Contact the office for the link. We will be reading the Gospel of John.

Annual Meeting: Sunday January 30th – following Worship Service

Office Hours: COVID has caused many changes, with working remotely, online meetings and hours shifting to accommodate new schedules. Though someone is typically here daily during the week, we ask that you continue to make an appointment if you are coming to the office. We don't want to miss seeing you!

The Office will be closed on Monday December 27th and Monday January 3rd
The office will be closed at 11am on Tuesday December 28th & Thursday December 30th

Christmas Eve

The Deacons are happy to announce good tidings of great joy this Christmas Eve. We will gather in person or you may come virtually. The Board of Christian Education will produce a nativity play that everyone can enjoy online.

At church, we will offer two services: one at 5:00pm and one at 7:00pm. Both of these services will be in the Currier worship space, and we must still adhere to safety protocol due to the pandemic, (i.e. masks required for all).

We are limited to 100 people in the room at one time. We need your help! Please let us know which service you hope to attend and how many people will be in your group. Note: We will not be offering Poinsettias this year.

Please let us know as soon as possible so that we can plan accordingly.

To make it easy, we created a survey with three ways to respond:

- Click the link
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGBFF1cBLmwcieciIgBIp_qe9idedDyiRzvfTTZcbMA3BozQ/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0
- Complete this sheet and return to the office
- Call the office or email officemgr@fpc-ucc.org

~~~~~



What time will you be attending?

5:00

7:00

How many people- approximately?

\_\_\_\_\_

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

If your plans change, even day of, please let us know! We appreciate your participation.

**First Parish  
Congregational Church, UCC**

(603) 434-0628

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 114  
E Derry, NH 03041

Location:  
47 East Derry Road

**Office Hours:**

Please call to make an appointment  
as office hours may vary daily.

**Online**

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

**Senior Pastor and Teacher**

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof  
[pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org)

**Office Manager**

Michelle Guerrin:  
[officemgr@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:officemgr@fpc-ucc.org)  
603-434-0628



**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***