

First Parish Congregational Church

United Church of Christ • East Derry, New Hampshire February 2022 Newsletter



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,

The first thing I want to share with you is how proud I am to be your pastor! You are such a faithful and generous people! We ended 2021 with such good will and cooperation! Everyone worked so very hard! SO MANY things have been accomplished in God's name and to God's glory! We have "signs" (quoting John's Gospel) of wonder all around us. Let us rejoice and be glad.

The second thing that I want to share is this: Lent is right around the corner! We have a month to think about it – and that is exactly what I'd like you to do: think about what you would like to do differently this year.

The six weeks prior to Easter constitute a holy time of spiritual preparation, called Lent. As a Protestant growing up in the 50's we didn't really "do" Lent. My Catholic friends gave stuff up and didn't eat meat on Friday. We concentrated on Holy Week. However, in more recent years, we Protestants have come around to the realization that this Lenten time is truly a sacred time. We don't generally give something up the way that our Catholic friends do. Many of us try to add something rather than give up something. We do devotionals, for example. Lent begins on March 2 with Ash Wednesday, includes five Sunday's and then we enter Holy Week, starting with Palm

Sunday, Maundy Thursday (our tradition here is the well-known Tenebrae) and then Easter Sunday.

We are coming out of a two-year upheaval. Our lives have been forever changed by this pandemic. This would be a perfect time to take a sacred pause to reflect and regain balance. This year's Easter celebration – we hope – may coincide with a true resurrection experience – with a rapid descent of covid cases. That is my prayer! What if this Lent, you were to think about engaging in a spiritual practice - in addition to what you already do?

Give it some thought and plan ahead! There are several ideas in this edition of the Newsletter.

- Join the labyrinth walks on Tuesday evening from 6-6:30.
- Participate in the Feng Shui “move 27 things every day for 9 days”. (See on page 10.)
- Participate in the Tuesday Adult Faith Formation. We will continue to read the Gospel of John and add some music and pray. (Remember Wonder Wednesday?)
- Participate in one of the Saturday morning programs.
- Join a daily “gratitude texting” group for Lent.
- Participate in “cards of caring” to one of our local hospitals.

Two friends are talking about things to come in the year ahead. One says: “I wonder what awful things will happen THIS year?” The other says: “I’m expecting flowers.” The first one says: “What?! How can you say that - after what we’ve been through last year?” The second one says: “Because I’m planting flower seeds.”

Take time, my friends. Plant some seeds of spirituality and watch them grow.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Deborah

Lent 2022

On the Saturdays of Lent, we will offer mindfulness and other spiritual opportunities for you to experience. Offerings will include SoulCollage*, Zentangle*, poetry, a talk on “Death and Dying” and a viewing of the movie “The Shack”.

You may choose to join a Lenten daily gratitude texting program. Interested participants will join with 3 or 4 others. Each day you will text one another one thing for which you are grateful.

You may choose to participate in the “cards of caring” campaign. So far, we have written cards of gratitude and care to staff of Parkland hospital, Elliot Hospital and Dartmouth Hitchcock in Lebanon. We will do this again. Simply write a card a day for Lent.

Pray about how you can participate in Lent 2022 in a meaningful way.

Christian Education and Faith Formation

Rocky Railway Vacation Church Camp

Do you like trains and can help construct some cool real-life decorations? Are you perhaps a fan of demonstrating cool science experiments? Maybe you are a crafter, or you've been told you have a real gift for telling stories? Please consider helping with Vacation Church Camp preparation!



Volunteer opportunities for "Rocky Railway Volunteer Signup" are now open.

Please click on the following web link (or copy it into your web browser if clicking doesn't work) to go to the signup sheet: volunteersignup.org/T9EDW - To sign up, just follow the instructions on the page. It only takes a few seconds to do. Thank you for volunteering! Christine Lehoullier
cedirector@fpc-ucc.org

Adult Faith Formation



John's Gospel is filled with rich truth about who Jesus is and why He came to Earth. Each chapter is designed to dive deep into these truths to help us draw deeper into relationship with Jesus! How well-suited for such a time as Lent. We hope you'll accept the invitation this Gospel sends all of us to let the Spirit fill us, let the Living Water bubble up inside us (John 7:38) so that we may learn to worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). Blessings of peace in your hearts, minds and bodies!

Join us on Tuesday evenings at 6:45 pm via Zoom invitation

Youth Group String Art and Table-Top Talk



✚ **Middle Schoolers:** The new date for the String Art and Table Talk is Friday, February 18th from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm. Dinner provided. Please let us know if there are allergies or medical needs we are not already aware of here:

<https://form.jotform.com/220266366277157>



Postcards will go out and students will receive extras to invite friends to the event.



In-Person CCEP Classes Back in Session

February 13 , 2022 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Please remember your masks and look for any additional details in next week's e-blast. Thank you, parents and caregivers, teachers and volunteers for all you do and for being just plain amazing! Please stay safe and help to keep others safe by staying home if you are not feeling well or have a fever over 99.5. Thank you and blessings of good health and peace of mind!

MONTHLY SACRED MOMENTS AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

courtesy of Traci Smith (Pastor, author & loving mother and wife)

Waiting: Water, Air, and Sky

[24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.](#)

Waiting is hard, for children and adults alike. Sometimes we wait for small things like the bus or our turn in line. Sometimes we are waiting for something that happens slowly and gradually, almost imperceptibly, like water evaporating from a glass. Throughout life we must wait. We wait for healing or for our dreams to become reality; we even wait to understand our faith.

This activity is a visual reminder that many of the things we hope for in life come slowly.

Materials: **1.** Pitcher with 8 ounces of water **2.** Empty glass

Time Investment: 5 minutes of active time, up to a month or more of waiting

How To: **1.** Someone (Or Yourself) reads Romans 8:24-25, which says, [“24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.”](#)

Reflect on two questions: (1) “What does it feel like to wait a long time for something?” and (2) “What is something you are waiting for now?”

- ❖ *After the questions, start the activity now about waiting, and explain to everyone (if in a family group) that it will take a very long time. Each of you is going to pour a little bit of water into the glass, and then put the glass somewhere you can check on it every day. You'll wait to see how long the water stays in the glass and how long it takes to evaporate. As you pass by and see how long it is taking, you might feel discouraged or wonder if it is ever going to happen, but slowly, very slowly, all of the water will evaporate. The water becomes part of the air, but it is such a slow process we hardly notice it.”*
- ❖ *Now, take turns pouring the water into the glass, and decide where to put it in your house. Choose a place where people will pass by it regularly but will not disturb it.*
- ❖ *Walk by the glass on a regular basis and take note of how the water is evaporating. Comment with family members on the progress from time to time. When the water has finally evaporated completely, schedule a time the family will come back together for a discussion.*

Read the Bible verse together again: *“²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.”*

- ❖ Ask: (1) “How did it feel to wait for the water to evaporate?” Give prompts if nobody comes up with a reaction. “Was it boring? Did you feel like it was happening so slowly you could hardly see it? Was it exciting to imagine that the day would finally be here?” and (2) “What are some things that we wait for that take a very long time?” Some ideas for this question include healing, a new baby, perfecting a skill, etc.

Close with a prayer: “Thank you, God, for this lesson about waiting. Help us to remember that you are with us, even when waiting for something important that takes a long time. Amen.”

- ❖ *Variations* • Color the water with food coloring to make it even more noticeable (and less likely the water will be thrown away!).

Smith, Traci. Faithful Families: Creating Sacred Moments at Home (pp. 188-190). Chalice Press. Kindle Edition.

Ministry of Care

What is the Ministry of Care?

Carry each other's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ."

Galatians 6:2

You may have heard of the Ministry of Care here at FPC, but do you know what it is and what we do?

The Ministry of Care seeks to identify needs in order to provide care to individuals and families as needed in the First Parish Church Family.

So that is our mission, but what does it mean? Have you been in the hospital, have you lost a loved one, maybe you just had a baby? Whatever you are going through we hope to help you. That's where the Ministry of Care steps in. We send cards of condolence, get well cards or cards of encouragement or congratulations. We may call you to see if you would like us to bring some meals to help out. We want to help carry your burdens or celebrate with you. When Pastor Deborah or someone in our congregation hears of a need they contact the Ministry of care and we take it from there. We are aware of prayer requests made during our Sunday services and often respond to these.

If you would like to be part of this ministry or if you ever know of someone in need, please contact Pastor Deborah.

Ann Engelhardt, Connie Cox, Karen Wilson, Mary LaFrance, Pat Plouff, Wendy Williams, Sue Brown, Beth Hunter

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. Proverbs 11:25

MISSIONS JANUARY DONATIONS: Thank you for continuing to support our monthly donations.

Community Caregivers \$100	Derry Friendship Center \$100
Family Promise \$100	First Baptist Food Pantry \$100
Our Church's Wider Mission \$350	Pastoral Counseling Services \$100
Pinkerton Homeless Program \$100	Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$100
Sonshine Soup Kitchen \$100	Upper Room \$100
Zimbabwe-Dangamvura Partner Church \$25	

FEBRUARY DIAPER and BABY WIPES DRIVE

On January 30th we will kick off our second Diaper Drive. This time, FPC will be supporting The Upper Room's Teen Mom Program and its Food Pantry. Pull Up Sizes 2T/3T – 3T/4T – 4T/5T can be brought to the church until February 13th when Pastor Deborah will bless the diapers and baby wipes. If the church is closed, donations can be left inside the lobby entrance.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

The United Church of Christ has four Covenanted Ministry partners. OGHS channels resources for international programs in health, education, agricultural development, emergency relief, and refugee ministries. During Lent, we will provide Lenten Calendars and collection boxes for your daily use.

FUNDING for the BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH AND MISSION

We are overwhelmed by your continued support to provide monthly funding of FPC's community and worldwide organizations.

Respectfully submitted by BOCOM members: Nancy Murdock-Chair, Melanie Pawl, Heather Paradzick, Shirley and Kevin Foster, Carol Guerrin, Sue Brown-Treasurer designee



Horton Center



Horton Center – Faith-based Camp and Retreat Center, NH Conference, UCC
Visit <https://hortoncenter.org/> to learn more about Horton Center and Register for Summer Camp for ALL AGES, Opening Work Days to help get Camp Ready and much more....

Rekindling Curiosity program, A Message from Tim Hughes, Executive Director of Horton Center

Dear Horton Center Families,

The Rekindling Curiosity program of financial support for NH students to attend camp has been extended and will be available for summer 2022!

We had very few families in NH who took advantage of the Rekindling Curiosity program last summer so there's still a big chunk of Federal money left in the fund and the state is looking to use it to get kids to camp in 2022!

Horton Center is already on their list of approved camps and so once you are approved, it's easy to get the money to help pay for your kiddos to come to camp! And our already low prices make it super affordable with this support! In many cases they will cover the whole cost for a week at Horton Center! It's a great, generous program so please take advantage of it this year and don't let your camper miss out on the Horton Center experience this summer!

Check out the link below and apply today. Don't wait, I expect this money will go quickly!!

NOTE:

- Sign up for a Rekindle Curiosity account at the link below
- You will also need to create a 'Class Wallet' account as part of the process, which is how they send the money to HC once you're approved.
- You don't live in NH? Check your state's DOE - most have similar programs.

I know there is more publicity being put out there about this program this year so don't delay, okay? We want everybody who wants to attend Horton Center this summer to be able to!

<https://rekindlingcuriosityeducation.nh.gov>

Eligible students and corresponding youth recreation camp fees include:

- ✓ \$650 eligible: Students with a disability are eligible for a \$650 camp fee
- ✓ \$500 eligible: Students from families at or <250% federal poverty level are eligible \$500 camp fee
- ✓ \$350 eligible: Students from families at or <400% federal poverty level are eligible \$350 camp fee

It is such a blessing and an honor to serve as Executive Director of Horton Center with Tivvi Paré as our Summer Director and see the wonderful, joyful spirit-growing that happen out there in the wilds of Pine Mountain!

We cannot wait to see you at camp!
Shalom my friends, shalom.

Peace,
Tim & Tivvi



United Church of Christ

5 for 5



In the national setting of the United Church of Christ there are four Covenanted Ministry partners who are supported by gifts Our Church's Wider Mission: General Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Wider Church Ministries (notably: disaster ministries) and Justice and Witness Ministries. (FPC gives monthly)

The 4 Special Mission Offerings collectively serve to lift people closer to the abundance and wholeness to which Jesus Christ has called us.



Channels resources for international programs in health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response, administered by Wider Church Ministries, Global Sharing of Resources. (Lent)



Re-imagines and builds the future of the UCC. Shared at the conference and national levels, Strengthen the Church largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches and new initiatives in parts of the country where the UCC does not have a strong presence. (Pentecost)



Supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States, including the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM), justice and advocacy, and direct service projects supported by Justice and Local Church Ministries. (World Communion; 1st Sunday of October)



The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. (Christmas)

2022 Lenten Cleanse of Stuff

Join Us for 2022 Lenten Cleanse of Stuff – 27 things for 9 days!

Several years ago, author **Marci Shimoff**, a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author, whose books include the international bestsellers *Love for No Reason* and *Happy for No Reason*, wrote an article entitled “Making Space for Your Future”. In that article, she wrote about a Feng Shui ritual that consists of giving away or throwing away 27 items a day for 9 days in a row -- that's 243 things!

Here's how:

1. Each day for nine days in a row, recycle, give away or throw away 27 items. Notice what you choose to hang on to, not because you love it, but because you're afraid to let it go – or maybe you don't even know why.
2. Stand in your closet and touch or try on every piece of clothing. Ask yourself whether you want to carry that into your life ahead - if it represents the future you. If not, recycle it, give it away or throw it away.
3. Clear out old books that don't have messages that speak to you anymore, vitamins or medicines you no longer need, kitchen items that are cracked or worn-out. (Or how about those half-used shampoo bottles from four years ago?)
4. Fix items that are broken (or get rid of them). Clean items that are dirty.
5. Take one final look around and see whether what's left represents who you are now and who you want to be in the future.



Pastor Deborah and Liz did this in January, and it was a very enlightening opportunity!

They will do it again with any of you that participates! Let the office know!

We will begin on Ash Wednesday, March 2nd

We hope you will join us!

2022 Lenten Cleanse of Stuff – 27 things for 9 days!

Diaper & Wipe Drive for Upper Room

Please Donate Baby Wipes or Diaper Pull-Ups for
the Following Sizes:
2T/3T, 3T/4T, 4T/5T



Donations will be accepted at FPC
February 1-13.

If the church office is closed, donations can be
left between the doors.

Additional information about Upper Room:
<https://www.urteachers.org/>



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Labor Day on Star Island

Come to Star Island Labor Day with Pastor Deborah and Liz, along with many FPC friends!
There are four UCC Conferences. Many folks from First Parish go for Labor Day! This year Liz is one
of the program coordinators and Pastor Deborah will be the worship leader Labor Day weekend.

Enjoy peaceful days on an island off Portsmouth NH!

Registration for all 2022 Star Island
conferences is now open.

There are four UCC conferences:

- Star Gathering 1 Family Conference,
July 31-Aug. 7, 2022
- Star Gathering UCC Youth,
July 31-Aug. 7, 2022
- Star Gathering 2 Family Conference,
Aug. 7-14, 2022
- Star Gathering Weekend UCC Family
Conference, Sept. 2 or 3-5, 2022.

Detailed information may be found
at starisland.org.



February 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/fpcucc).

Worship Services

using the Narrative Lectionary

February is Black History Month

What is your favorite Spiritual?

Upcoming Worship Services:
(subject to change)



Photo Credit: Paul Lindemann

- February 6th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook~ Commu
- February 13th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- February 21st: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- February 27th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- February Greeters will be Sue Brown (In-Person) and Sue Lindemann (Zoom & Facebook)

Diaper & Wipes Drive: February 1-13

Adult Faith Formation: Tuesday evenings: Labyrinth walk at 6:00 pm and reading together the Gospel of John 6:45 to 8. ZOOM only until further notice. Check with the office for week-to-week schedule. All are welcome.

Annual Meeting: moved to Sunday February 6th – following Worship Service

String Art- Middle Schoolers- Friday February 18th at 5:30-7:30pm

Spaghetti Supper: To-Go Friday February 25th at 5:00-6:00pm

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!

**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
facebook.com/fpcucc

Senior Pastor and Teacher

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof
pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org

Office Manager

Michelle Guerrin:
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