

First Parish Congregational Church

United Church of Christ • East Derry, New Hampshire March 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,

Julian of Norwich was born in 1342 and died after 1416. She is a celebrated mystic whose *Revelations of Divine Love* (or *Showings*) is generally considered one of the most remarkable documents of medieval religious experience. The clarity and depth of her perception, the precision and accuracy of her theological presentation, and the sincerity and beauty of her expression reveal a mind and personality of exceptional strength and charm. She survived the "black death" that decimated Europe in the mid-1300's. With an ever-present optimism, Julian of Norwich penned her famous line: "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well". To be honest, I quote that line very often. It is so reassuring to know who wrote it and what HER life was like, what SHE lived through and survived with grace. Recently, I learned that there is more to that quote. It goes like this: **"for there is a force of love moving through the universe that holds us fast and will never let us go."** Wow! That is amazing! Let's keep this thought in the forefront as we begin our Lenten journey in the next week.

My prayer for all of us is this: as we re-emerge into a somewhat 'normal' pace that life was known for prior to the pandemic, may we seek God in new and more profound ways. We are changed – for sure. Have we known or will we know a spiritual transformation? Are our spirits ripe for a transformation of deepening faith that might occur this year – in Lent 2022?

Remember the story of the two friends: “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.”

I invite you; I encourage you; I exhort you to “plant seeds of new faith”. Do one activity. Do two of them. Or try them all! There are solitary activities and group activities. There are silent activities and ones that use words. Sometimes you leave home and sometimes you stay home. Prayerfully choose to join your church family this Lent so that this Lent we all “may be One” in God, who strengthens us.

Traditionally, Lent includes more prayer, more generosity and fasting things that aren’t good for you. Among the services and programs that we are offering at First Parish this Lent, there are numerous options for you to do just that: pray more, deepen your practices of generosity and fast from behaviors that don’t serve God or your neighbor or yourself. There are also programs of creativity and contemplation. There are mindfulness practices. There are solitary practices and group activities.

Please join us in one of these seven different ways of deepening your faith as a Child of God and member/friend of First Parish. Dates and details can be found on the following page. You may:

- Attend any or all of the seven “special worship services”: Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and a Tuesday Service, which merges Adult Bible Wonder with worshipful music, prayer and the Gospel of John
- Join us in a “Sanctuary Visualization Prayer” every day.
- Participate in “Cards of Caring” to one of our local hospitals.
- Join a daily “Gratitude Texting Group”. (Sign up by 2.28.22)
- Participate in “27 things every day for 9 days”.
- Join a virtual labyrinth walk on Tuesday evening from 6-6:30. (Sign up to get zoom.)
- Participate in one of the Saturday morning programs.

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

Remember: “there is a force of love moving through the universe that holds us fast and will never let us go.” This is why “all shall be well.”

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Deborah

Lent 2022 – Renew, Review, Revisit, Revitalize – Be Transformed!

Worship Services:

Ash Wednesday at 7:00pm on March 2

Bible Wonder: Tuesdays at 6:45 pm on March 8,15,22,29, April 5

Maundy Thursday: April 14 at 7:00pm

Easter Service: April 17th ~ Sunrise (service starts at 5:45am) and 10:00am

Programs:

“Sanctuary Visualization Prayer”: Each day of Lent, take a moment to stop what you are doing and take a deep breath. Speak these words (or something similar): “Holy God of Abundance, I don’t know how but I know You can make this happen.” Visualize sitting in the Sanctuary in the Meetinghouse. Visualize the freshly painted ceiling and walls, the newly carpeted floor, and the beauty of the wooden pews. Visualize yourself sitting in your favorite spot with the sun coming in the stained-glass windows on a beautiful Sunday morning. “Thank you for all of the blessings that we enjoy. Amen.”

“Cards of Caring”: Every day write one personal thank you to someone who works in a hospital setting. Use your own words of gratitude and bless them. (There will be a basket in the office. Depending on how many we receive, our next hospital is CMC.)

“Gratitude Texting Group”: You will receive 2 or 3 names and phone numbers. Each day of Lent you will send one thing for which you are grateful. One thing. Each day. (If you are interested in this program, you must let Beth Hunter or Pastor Deborah know by February 28.)

“27 things in 9 days”: at some point during Lent, you will for 9 consecutive days move (recycle, discard, donate, pack up) 27 items. **Some suggestions:** All clothing and soft goods can be donated in the shed at church. All electronics and metal objects will be collected from the church on an appointed day. All glassware, vases, teacups, saucers, decorative glass, etc, etc, etc – may be brought to church by March 19th for the glass creativity session. Or you may decide to participate in the May Yard sale. (Many of us will begin this activity on March 2 – Ash Wednesday. Let Pastor Deborah know that you are doing this.)

Tuesday Labyrinth “walk” 6:00-6:30pm: Join with others via zoom for a calming half hour. Begin with a centering meditation and then a 10 minute “walk”, followed by a brief time of sharing. (Email Michelle in the office to be added to the list.)

Saturday sessions during Lent – 9:30-11:00am (no sign up needed!)

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| March 5 th | SoulCollage* - using images to create collages (Currier) |
| March 12 th | Zentangle - learn this fun method of mindful drawing (Currier) |
| March 19 th | Creating glass garden totems – some glass and some glue! (Currier) |
| March 26 th | Poetry workshop – ponder a poem and create another! (Zoom only) |
| April 2 nd | We watch “The Shack” together and discuss (classroom downstairs) |
| April 9 th | “On Death and Dying” a conversation (Currier) |

Christian Education and Faith Formation

Adult Faith Formation – Lenten Format

Tuesdays, 6:45 pm In-Person & Zoom Invite

As we continue to read the Gospel of John throughout the season of Lent the format will be a cross between a Bible Wonder class and a Wonder Wednesday service – except that it's on Tuesday. So the class will include prayer, music, bible reading, discussion, music, wrap up and a closing prayer. All are invited to this Hybrid experience either In-person or via Zoom invitation. Please contact the office, Pastor Deborah or Christine Lehoullier to be added to the Zoom invitation list 603-434-0628, pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org, cedirector@fpc-ucc.org.

Rocky Railway – Choo Choo Choose to Volunteer Today!



Volunteer meeting, light snacks, intro, training & brainstorming! Saturday, March 26th 11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Sign up for your position of choice here:

<https://volunteersignup.org/T9EDW>

Climb aboard for mountains of fun at Rocky Railway! On this faith-filled adventure, kids discover that trusting Jesus pulls them through life's ups and downs. Dates for our in-person Vacation Church Camp will be unveiled in the beginning weeks of March, stay tuned via the website and E-blasts!

VOLUNTEERS WHO LIKE FUN: We need train buffs, decorating enthusiasts, food artists, game fans, craft connoisseurs, science wizards and storytellers with heart! Join the crew by signing up using the link above and don't miss the first meeting on Sat, March 26th from 11:00 am -12:30 pm.

Lenten CCEP Activities

A Prayer for Lent:

Dear God,

There are so many ways to spend our time this Lent. Help us to still our minds and bodies so that when we choose how to spend the precious time you have blessed us with, we choose the things that make life brighter. Amen.

During Lent, the Children's Christian Education Program will be offering many hands-on activities for children to explore and wonder about the season of Lent. We hope you will join us for all the wonderful ways our youngest disciples are able to connect and reflect.

WEEK 1: MARCH 2ND -5TH ~ Ash Wednesday: "...you are dust, and to dust you shall return." ~ Genesis 3:19 NRSV



This can be a difficult, somber, and confusing proclamation for children to hold. Making clay figures together is a way to invite children into what it means when we say this. "Dust" is a reference to Genesis 2:7, "then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being." Aside from just being fun to play with clay, an exercise like this has lots of opportunities for theological conversation around identity and what it means to be made by God.

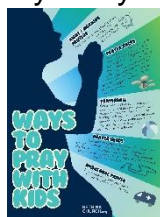
WEEK 2: MARCH 6TH - 12TH ~ Theme/Activity: New Life, Renew, Restore, Recycled Candle Holders



WEEK 3: MARCH 13TH – 19TH ~ Theme/Activity: Water, Gifts of Receiving and Giving, Take One and Pass It On Gifts of Service



WEEK 4: MARCH 20TH – 26TH ~ Theme/Activity: Prayer, Forgiveness, Prayer Pretzels



WEEK 5: MARCH 27TH – APRIL 2ND ~ Theme/Activity: Truth, Simplifying, Giving to Nature



WEEK 6: APRIL 3RD – APRIL 9TH ~ Theme/Activity: Meditation, Symbols of Jesus, Justice Letters



HOLY WEEK & Easter Sunday: APRIL 10TH – 16TH ~ Theme/Activity: Reading, Reflection, Practice and Prayer for each day of the week will be provided to the children for the of April 10th. Please be present to receive your items. If your child is ill or your family experiences extenuating circumstances simply contact us to make arrangements for a pickup/drop off.

Life, Death, Resurrection Collective for All Ages!

The Christian Education Board has loved inviting the ENTIRE Congregation to join in making collective and reflective masterpieces for the Lenten season. This year, inspired by the Gospel of John, we are looking for artwork that resemble symbols of Water (Life), Candle (Death), and Sunrise (Resurrection).

We are looking for artwork of any medium – photography, drawings, paintings, lego masterpieces; let your creativity go wild!

Please either drop off a picture at the church (in the mailbox between the double doors if after office hours) or email a digital picture of your artwork to cedirector@fpc-ucc.org. Feel free to let us know if you're having trouble sending it and we'll be happy to help you: Office @ #434-0628 or Christine @ #603-264-9261. Learn more about these symbols and the project on our website coming soon!



Faith Question for Adults, Families and Children of all ages and stages! Share and discuss with friends, family and neighbors alike:

1. Identify a public person whose faith you admire. Say more about that person's expression of faith.
2. Tell of a kindness or service by someone at church that impressed you.
3. What would be one way to make life better for people born into poverty?

Faith Talk with Children

1. If Jesus were here right now, what would you like to ask or tell him?
2. Name a place where you feel close to God.
3. How do you know God loves you?

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. II Corinthians 9:8

MISSIONS FEBRUARY 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	

DIAPER and BABY WIPES DRIVE

During the first two weeks of February the Mission Board held its second Diaper Drive, this time for the Upper Room's Teen parent program and its food pantry. Pastor Deborah and the congregation blessed the diapers and baby wipes on February 13th. We greatly appreciate all of you who donated to this worthy cause.

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, the Mission Board will provide Lenten Calendars and collection boxes for your daily use. These items are available on the shelf inside the outer door by the office and on a table in the narthex. If possible, please return your banks on Sunday, March 27th.

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



Music Committee

The Music Committee has been working to tie up some loose ends concerning the music licenses. We are evaluating the need for two licenses. These are licenses that allow us to copy and stream the music we play and sing in worship, music for the choir and for the musicians that play during services. All the licenses are paid and up to date.

We have had two members come forward to play an instrument occasionally during worship. Deanna will fill in with the piano from time to time. We have a person considering the choir director's position. It was suggested that the choir/accompanist position be split into two positions. That possibility is being evaluated at this time.

We have found the piano tuner that has serviced our piano in the past. Eileen and Deanna will work with him on what needs to be done aside from the tuning. The piano is currently in the Luke classroom and will soon be moved up to Currier Hall.

It was decided that we will keep our choir robes and put them in storage until such time when we need them. Eileen will oversee getting them into storage. She will also check the choir files for any music that we may choose to use.

We will continue to look for guest musicians in the files that Joan left for us of people that she used. And again, we encourage members of our own congregation who wish to step out and show their talent. Please speak to Pastor Deborah or any member of the Music Committee.

Respectively,

Jean Brodeur, Eileen Cox, Melanie Pawl, Deanna Butler, Pastor Deborah, Beth Hunter
(Personnel), Katie Cobban

Fundraising Footrace — Saturday April 30th

The Friends together with Dave Breeden's New England Timing company are running a competitive race and fun run to raise money for Meetinghouse preservation. If you'd like to help recruit sponsors or assist on race day, please let any of us know.

Thanks! Nancy Heywood, Beth Hunter, Bill Mann, Paul Lindemann

Financial Giving – that doesn't cost you anything

FREE and easy ways to help the church financially:

1. Sign up for electronic payments to the church through your bank.
2. Donate usable clothing and “soft goods”. Put them in bags and drop the bag in the little building in our parking lot - 24 hours a day.
3. Use the Hannaford gift card program.
4. Use Amazon Smile program – designate First Parish, East Derry, NH!

Why?

1. Electronic giving is brilliant! You can arrange with your bank to electronically send First Parish your designated amount on a regular basis. Cash flow is so important to our ministry work. One small step on your behalf helps the church in a multitude of ways.
2. Last year, we received over \$400 from people's donated goods to the shed in the parking lot. St Pauly's uses these clothes. They do not get used for rags. They do not get resold. Clean out those closets and bring bags of clothes and soft goods to the church parking lot.
3. You need to eat so why not funnel 5% of what you already spend at Hannaford to the church? Our process is faster and easier than ever before. Call the office!
4. You shop at Amazon. (We know that you do!) Take that ONE little step to sign up for the Amazon Smile Program benefitting First Parish. (And if you are signed up with another non-profit organization – good for you! Don't let those charitable dollars go to waste.)

Brand New Fun, Friend, Fund Raising Event

May 21, 2022 - 1st Spring Fling

We are putting together a fun, multi-event day – come and participate in our Yard Sale for all your still good goodies; Spring version of the ‘famous’ Cookie Walk ; basket raffle; and we are hoping to add other food events and fun, fun, fun and more – many ideas are still in the planning stages. Do you have ideas?

Additional information will become available as ideas are formulated.

If you would like to be involved in this event, please reach out to a member of the Fund Raising Committee – Cathy Zylinski, Carol Guerrin, Julie Greenfield, Stephanie Crowley, Beth Hunter, Pastor Deborah or Cathy Pottle.

In our Community

The Knights of Columbus Invite You To **Join Us for Dinner**



Knights of Columbus Lenten Fish Fry Dinner

Each Friday evening during Lent - 5:00 to 7:00 P.M.

Saint Thomas Aquinas Center
26 Crystal Avenue, Derry, NH

Dinner:

Haddock Fish Fillet, French Fries,
Cole Slaw, Tarter Sauce and Roll **\$10.00**

And

Drinks: Soda or Water **\$1.00**

Dine In or Take Out

Children's Menu:

Fish Sticks or Home Made Mac&Cheese
with Fries **\$3.50**

March 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

Upcoming Worship Services:
(subject to change)



Photo Credit: Paul Lindemann

- March 6th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook~ Communion
- March 13th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- March 21st: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- March 27th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- March 6th Greeters will be Reni Harnden and Sue Lindemann (Zoom & Facebook)

Ash Wednesday: March 2nd 7:00pm

Saturday Sessions during Lent: March 5, 12, 19, 26 ~ 9:30-11:30. Please see page 3 for details.

Lenten Tuesday evenings ~ March 8, 15, 22, 29

Labyrinth Lenten walk at 6:00-6:30pm. Please contact the office for the Zoom invite.
Worshipful Bible Wonder 6:45 All are welcome.

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

Fundraising Footrace: April 30th - Details to follow

Spring Fling Fundraiser: May 21st – Details to follow

Star Gathering Weekend UCC Family Conference: Sept. 2 or 3-5, 2022.

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