

First Parish Congregational Church

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

A song of my youth “what the world needs now is love, sweet love”, rings in my ears over the past few weeks. Truer words were never spoken. The world truly does need more love and more light and more truth. One of the forebears of the United Church of Christ, the Rev. John Robinson said this: “I am verily persuaded the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth out of His Holy Word.” This is still true.

This year we have followed the Gospel of John consecutively from beginning to end. No pun intended, I should say, because the first verse of the Gospel of John is “In the beginning.” And the end of John’s Gospel is (Jn 21:35) “But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”

The Gospel of John has brought us closer to God these last few months. The words of hope, along with the demonstrations of love are around every corner. John assures us of the abundant grace – “grace upon grace” – and demonstrates that grace with overflowing wine, abundant healing, more food on a hillside than can be consumed, profound conversations with outcasts –

and always reminding us to “abide” in the love of a Creator and creating God who is with us always. Jesus promises: “I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. (14:18-19)

Assurance comes to us with promises of what “will never” happen, when we walk seeking relationship with God through what Jesus taught and through the Holy Spirit who accompanies us. Allow the profound nature of these promises sink into your heart and soul. Jesus says (Jn 4:14) to those who believe on Him unto eternal life that they “will never thirst.” Jesus says (Jn 6:35) to all those that come to Him that they “will never hunger.” Jesus says (Jn 8:12) that those who walk in Him “will not walk in darkness.” Jesus says (Jn 10:28) to them that believe, who acknowledge their shortcomings and turn to the light of love Divine, that they “will never perish.” Indeed, Jesus says (Jn 11:25,26) “Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

How? How do we get to that place where there will not be hunger and thirst, where forgiveness and grace abound? According to Jesus in the Gospel of John, it is our relationship with God that needs to be foremost in our minds. In all that we say and all that we do, we honor a loving, caring, compassionate God who wants these same for all of God’s children.

But that’s not all. Jesus talks about peace. A world in peace is a world that acknowledges the value of love and goodness. Jesus says (Jn 14:27): “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” And Jesus says (Jn 16:33): “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Our world is rocked with violence and greed. The world’s currency seems to be power and possessions. Jesus offers an alternative throughout John’s Gospel. Jesus doesn’t pull any punches: “in this world you will have trouble.” That doesn’t have to be where we choose to abide. We can take heart and abide in the words of Jesus, abide in the light of love and abide in the impeccability of our word. This is how we build relationship with God and with one another. This is how we offer a solution to our world.

The Apostle Paul says it another way when he writes to the Philippians (4:6-7): “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

We have superpowers, friends. May we work the muscles of our faith and practice the lessons Jesus taught us. Whatever is affirming, whatever is compassionate, whatever serves one another – may we focus on these.

Lent is nearly over. The Resurrection approaches. Take heart! Remember: “there is a force of love moving through the universe that holds us fast and will never let us go.”

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Deborah

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

Lent 2022: update and it's not over yet:

Worship Services:

Ash Wednesday at 7:00pm on March 2 and our Worship Wonder Tuesdays were a blessing!

April 5: one more Tuesday Wonder Worship with Joan Virga. Join for joy!

April 14: Maundy Thursday; Tenebrae Service at 7:00pm; a “service of shadows”.

April 17: Easter - Sunrise at 5:45am at Broadview Farms; 10:00am at FPC

(If you are new to First Parish: the Tenebrae service is communion followed by the grim story of Jesus – betrayed, deserted, beaten, tried and put to death. It is an incredibly powerful service, a testimony to Jesus giving his life so that we may live. Easter morning, we enjoy a bonfire, thanks to our Boy Scout Troop, outside and watch the sun come up as we declare: “He is risen! He is risen, indeed!”)

We offered numerous Lenten programs and hope that you participated in them to the extent that you were able. It is not too late! You can do the “Sanctuary Visualization Prayer” or write a “card of Caring”. The basket will be put out for you so that you may bring them to the church. (Pastor Deborah participated in the daily card of care program by writing each day to someone in the church for whom she is grateful – there are more than 40 to be sure! It was lovely to handwrite these cards.)

Did you do a “27 things in 9 days”? Several people did and it is not too late. For 9 consecutive days move (recycle, discard, donate, pack up) 27 items.

All clothing and soft goods can be donated in the shed at church.

All electronics and metal objects can be left at church on the blue pallet next to the clothing shed. Or you may decide to participate in the May Yard sale.

There are two more Tuesday Labyrinth “walks” 6:00-6:30pm. We have people all over New Hampshire gathered together. Zoom or come to Corinthians classroom 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.)

The Saturday sessions were wonderful! We enjoyed SoulCollage* -thanks to Liz Greenberg; and Zentangle - with thanks to Mary Ann Schroeder. We made some fun glass garden totems and we had a wonderful poetry workshop with Marci Wren.

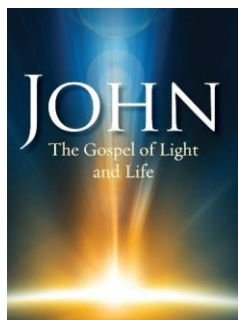
There are still two Saturday sessions at 9:30 at the church:

April 2nd “The Shack”: watch and discuss (classroom downstairs)

April 9th “On Death and Dying” a conversation (Currier)

Christian Education and Faith Formation

Adult Faith Formation



Lenten Wonder & Worship Tuesday Evenings

April Dates: 4/5/22; 6:45 pm

Abide in God Tuesday evenings at 6:45 In Person in Currier Hall and Zoom/Facebook (live ONLY and not available for future viewing). Joan Virga will be our musician. There will be Music, Prayer, Reading of The Sacred Scripture of The Gospel of John, A time of Wondering and Reflection, as well as a Final Blessing by Pastor Deborah.

Easter Activities & CCEP Classes:



NO CLASSES: Easter Sunday Celebration, April 17th & School Vacation April 24th

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

Holy Week: Holy Week is a journey through the most difficult week of Jesus' life, followed by the most joyous day in the Christian year. There are many emotional ups and downs during this week! This week we will take the students through simple stations of activities, practices and prayers for each day.

Rocky Railway Vacation Church Camp Updates –

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Dates: July 25th – July 28th **Times:** 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Ages: 4 – 12

[Register Here:](#)

<https://form.jotform.com/220746128730150>

Important Dates:

April 24th: All Volunteer Registrations Due

July 10th: ALL VOLUNTEER TRAINING DAY – MANDATORY

July 17th: ALL Volunteer Leaders Planning Meeting – MANDATORY

[Volunteers Register Here:](#)

<https://form.jotform.com/220844240914148>

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. or call 603-434-0628.

Monthly Sacred Moments and Spiritual Practices Courtesy of Traci Smith

A Prayer for the Easter Vigil

Before the sun rises on Easter morning, we watch and wait for the day to come. We watch and wait for the good news we know will be here soon. We light a fire and watch the flames light up the night. Thank you, God, for being with us this night and every night.

Smith, Traci. Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection: Simple Ways to Create Meaning for the Season (p. 115). Chalice Press. Kindle Edition.

Make Something New Again: Upcycle or Recycle

Another way to make resurrection tangible is to make something old and worn-out new again by recycling or “upcycling” it. Something that may have been discarded for a long time can be given a new life. The internet is full of ideas for this, but here are some very simple ones you might try.

- Turn old and broken crayons into new creations by melting them down in mini muffin tins.
- Make a birdfeeder from a milk jug or paper towel roll.
- Use recyclables such as paper egg cartons and plastic lids to create art.
- Save old glass jars for storage.

Every time you make something old new again, you are practicing resurrection and celebrating life. This practice is also a reminder to take care of the earth God created for us to protect and enjoy.

Upcoming Events:

Youth Group Event coming in May

Parents Night Out

Fun Array of Kid Friendly Activities for all ages at the 1st Annual Spring Fling on Sat. May 21st!

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

MISSIONS MARCH 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 \$200	

THE CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING

We greatly appreciate all of you who donated to this worthy cause. First Parish Church collected \$580 for the offering. These funds bring relief and hope to those who have dedicated their lives to serving the United Church of Christ.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Although the OGHS banks were blessed on March 27th, your contributions will be collected through Easter Sunday. Your gifts enable our church to make a difference in lives around the world by responding to disasters and supporting sustainable farming education and health initiatives.

THE UPPER ROOM

The Upper Room is a non-profit family resource center located on Tsienneto Road in Derry. It is a go to place for individual and family support, education and resources for parents, teens and young adults. It also houses a Food Pantry open on Mondays. Its director Brenda Guggisberg was a zoom guest speaker at our March meeting. We discussed ways in which FPC could become more involved with the Upper Room's programs.

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

Board of Deacons

The Deacons have been busy this Lenten season assisting with the Tuesday evening “Wonder Worship” services that will continue through April 5. It has been so nice to have Joan Virga join us as our musician. We are looking forward to Palm Sunday (April 10) when we will be waving our palm branches and making joyous noise (bring your noisemakers) as we will be walking in a procession through our church building heading into Currier Hall. If you cannot be there in person and would like a palm branch, the church will be providing palm branches the day before on Saturday morning, from 9:30 to 12 Noon. We hope you can join us in person or online on April 14 for Maundy Thursday. Communion will be offered. On Easter, April 17 we'll start off the day (in person only) with our early morning sunrise service beginning at 5:45 AM at Broadview Farm Conservation Area on Young Rd., with gratitude to the Boy Scouts for the bon fire. We will celebrate our traditional 10:00 AM Easter service at the church where you can join us in person or online.

Would you like to lead worship during one of the Sundays while Pastor Deborah is away? Separately in this newsletter see the announcement of a tutorial led by Pastor Deborah on how to lead a worship service on April 24, right after church. Also, if you are interested in being a lay reader, please contact Joanne Worthen or any of the Deacons.

Lastly, we would be remiss if we didn't mention that we are still in need of two additional Deacons to complete our Board. We are not only short staffed, but several Deacons have added Tech duties to their responsibilities. No experience is necessary. Please prayerfully consider joining our Board.

Your Deacons:

Sue Brown, Rachel Cobban, Reni Harnden, Jack Martin, Brian Williams, and Joanne Worthen

Worship Design 101 – April 24

Learning how to organize and lead worship is simple and fun! There are times when Pastor Deborah is away on vacation or Study Leave. What if we had teams of members of the congregation who organize and lead the worship service? How hard can it be?

If you have never thought about it, it may seem difficult. And when you stop and think about it, take it apart like a Lego castle, it is simply pieces. Pieces that are organized a certain way.

On April 24th, directly after the worship service, Pastor Deborah is going to show us the pieces, step by step. Even if you hope that you never have to do it, think about joining this conversation!

Music Committee

The Music Committee received a lot of good news last month. Joan Virga will be our musician on Tuesday evening worship services throughout Lent. Katie Cobban has agreed to join the Music Committee and be our Song Leader when needed during worship. Some other people have or will be playing for us during worship from time to time. They are Kevin Foster, Tom “Woody” Wood, Trina Brand, Kaitlyn Leahy, Deanna Butler and Daemian Allen.

Some other updates, Eileen Cox has contacted the piano tuner that we have used in the past but has received no response thus far. Eileen also has taken care of the choir robes and put them in storage for safekeeping. Streaming + license has been paid for and we can begin using it,

Kaitlyn Leahy suggested we contact Manchester Community Music School, where she works, also Nashua and Concord locations, for the open position(s). Beth Hunter (Personnel) will contact them. Katie will help Pastor Deborah with selection of hymns for worship services. Katie can also help put together online music when we do not have any musicians. We will make sure any songs we select are covered by our license. It was also suggested that we could use pictures from the congregation for these times as well.

The committee is working diligently to bring a diverse music program to the congregation. If you know of someone who might be interested in playing on Sunday morning – either occasionally or ongoing, please contact Beth Hunter or have them enquire at the church office.

Respectfully submitted, Eileen Cox, Melanie Pawl, Deanna Butler, Pastor Deborah, Jean Brodeur, Katie Cobban, Beth Hunter (Personnel), Brian Williams (Deacon Rep)

1st Spring Fling- May 21

Imagine all the festivities of the Sugar Plum and more – AND it’s Spring! The fund-raising committee is putting together a **fun, multi-event** day. How can you participate? Reserve a space for your own treasures at the Yard Sale on the front lawn with for all your still good goodies. There’ll be a Spring version of the ‘famous’ Cookie Walk! There will be a basket raffle! There will be food sold! Maybe even some vendors! And there will be fun, fun, and more fun! Do you have ideas, as we are still in the planning stages? Let us know! And start planning how you can participate that day!

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.

[Volunteer form is available online](#) or in the lobby.

Back to the Sanctuary Update

By now you should have received the letter from this committee, the pledge card and a wonderful brochure designed by Paul Lindemann which gives one an idea of the specific work yet to be done to return to the Sanctuary. We decided to roll out the plan over a two-year process so that some of you can plan accordingly. It is indeed exciting to think we are moving toward the final steps with your generosity and the work of all the teams combined. We hope to raise money in other ways with events throughout the year.

Note for returning Pledge Cards ~ We did realize that, throughout the last two years of this campaign the instructions lacked who to send the pledge cards in to. How did that get through all this time? Regardless, the returns should be addressed to Pat Crowell who keeps a running tabulation. The amounts are never shared and the names can be anonymous. You are welcome to place your pledge card envelope in the offering box on Sunday or mail to:

First Parish Church
PO BOX 114
East Derry, NH 03041
Attn: Financial Secretary / Pat Crowell

**If, by chance, you do not write Pat's name, know that Michelle Guerrin opens the mail but places in the safe for the Financial Secretary. Michelle keeps all information/records anonymous as well.*

We cannot thank enough those who have supported this project. We pray we can finish this huge endeavor soon and will celebrate heartily when we return to our sacred space.

Submitted by Cyndi Gray

Fundraising Footrace — Saturday June 25th

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

In Our Community

DERRY COMMUNITY MEALS

Due to COVID19 and social distancing restrictions, Derry Community Meals will provide **FREE BAG MEALS TO GO!**

April 2022



APRIL

4/10/22 (Sun)-**Church of the Transfiguration (DECOFT)/Elijah's Table (EHS)**- Dinner 2-2:30 PM

4/16/22 (Sat) - **St. Luke's Church**- Lunch 12:00 -12:30 PM drive around to back door

4/24/22 (Sun) - **St. Jude's Parish**- Lunch- 1:30- 2:30 PM

4/29/22 (Fri) - **First Parish Church**- 5:00 - 6:00 PM drive up to side door

Sonshine Soup Kitchen –Every Week serving drive by TO GO MEALS ON MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, AND THURSDAYS 4:30 PM -5:00 PM

FACILITIES

- **Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration ("DECOFT"), 1 Hood Road, Derry (603-432 2120)**
- **Etz Hayim Synagogue ("EHS"), 1-1.2 Hood Road, Derry (603-432-0004)**
- **First Parish Congregational Church, 47 East Derry Road, East Derry (603-434-0628)**
- **St. Jude Parish Community, 435 Mammoth Road, Londonderry (603-432-3333).**
- **St. Luke's United Methodist Church, 63 East Broadway, Derry (603-434-4767)**
- **Sonshine Soup Kitchen, 6 Crystal Ave., Derry (603-437-2833)**

April 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)



April 3rd: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook~ Communion

Photo Credit: Paul Lindemann

April 10th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook

April 17th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook

April 24th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook

Saturday Sessions during Lent: April 2, 9 ~ 9:30-11:30.

Lenten Tuesday evenings ~

April 5 - Worshipful Bible Wonder 6:45 All are welcome.

April 5 and 12 - Labyrinth Lenten walk at 6:00-6:30pm. Please contact the office for the Zoom invite.

Maundy Thursday ~ April 14th at 7:00pm

Easter Service ~ April 17th ~ Sunrise / 5:45am (Broadview Farms) and 10:00am

Worship Service 101 April 24th – after Worship Service

Spaghetti Supper: To-Go Friday April 29th at 5:00-6:00pm

Spring Fling Fundraiser: May 21st – see page 8 for more information

UCC Rockingham Association- Spring 2022 Meeting Sun May 22nd 1:45pm – Zoom

Fundraising Footrace: June 25th - 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

Photo credit: Paul Lindemann



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