

First Parish Congregational Church

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

We have enjoyed an amazing Spring so far. This year, we have not experienced a season with big swings in temperature – one day 40 and the next 75 - and I feel blessed. The flowers are so very beautiful, and the blossoming trees look almost like fuzz. We are so blessed to live on this miraculous home that God created for us!

May is a happy month for me! It is my birthday month and you all know that I love my birthday (5.5.55!!). It is also the anniversary (5.15.05) of my ordination – which is very important to clergy. It is a big deal and this year I'll be with all of you on that day!! (And look at all those fives!)

One of the things that I love about this time of year is that as an Easter people and the reality – no longer a hope but a **reality** – of the empty tomb, we know that even the impossible is possible! As Christians, we live in the truth of Christ's peace – even amid difficulty. We remembered together on Sunday those precious moments when Jesus gave Thomas exactly what he needed to move from unbelieving to believing. What do you need? Have you shared your prayer with God – in complete and raw honesty? Make no mistake: God is not a genie in a bottle and does not grant wishes. That is not what I'm saying. I AM saying that God does seek relationship with us and as we become more attune to God's hope for us, we can be honest with God about what we need to accomplish that hope.

Our Sunday morning journey through the Gospel of John has been spectacular! Truly. My faith is stronger than ever, and I know that no matter what happens – even if I may feel like there's a huge hurdle to overcome – I will not be alone. There are going to be staffing changes here at First Parish. It's not the first time and it won't be the last. Breathe deeply and know that God's got a plan. We have been blessed with a spectacular Administrative Assistant – turned – Office Manager for the past four years. Michelle has been offered an enormous opportunity and she will take it. She will leave us as soon as the Board of Personnel can find someone, but she'll stay until July 2 if need be. We will celebrate her and give thanks for her time among us, Sunday after church one Sunday in June.

Dear friends, I know that I have dreams, visions, and wonderings about what First Parish could do together. How about you? What are you wondering about? What are your visions and dreams for First Parish? What would you like to see the church do? Where would you like the church to be in 5 years?

Remember the words of Paul to the Philippians 4:8,9:

“Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.”

May you remain in God's grip,
Pastor Deborah

Board of Personnel

Personnel has been working with the Music Committee to find and hire a music director/accompanist or 2 people, an accompanist and a choir director. We have contacted several local music schools, changed the help wanted ad on the NHCUCC website and put a 'help wanted sign by the FPC' sign out front.

We are currently in the process of employee annual reviews. You may have been asked by either Pastor Deborah, Christine, or Michelle to fill out a review form. Will you please consider doing this? We use this information to get input from the congregation as to how we are doing and then set goals. Are there things we are doing really well and are there changes that need to be made?

As you read in Pastor Deborah's note, Michelle is moving on to the next stage in her career. Her professionalism, her knowledge of promoting FPC happenings, her smile every time you enter the office, her willingness to take on new projects, all that and more is going to be missed. She has done an amazing job in the years she has been with us and will be sorely missed.

Michelle, we all wish you well in your new job at Family Promise!

We will begin the process posting, finding and hiring a new office manager ASAP.

Beth Hunter, Margie Ives, Karen Wilson

Christian Education and Faith Formation



Youth Group Ice Cream Sundaes and Service Project Friday, May 13th 2022; 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Middle Schoolers & Friends! Come and join your youth leaders for ice cream sundaes and help decorate



placemats for the Sonshine Soup Kitchen in Derry, with bright artwork & words of encouragement and kindness!



CCEP Program Mother's Day Special Projects Sunday, May 1st & May 8th classes for students

We hope students will join us for the special projects, prayers and songs to learn what we celebrate about Mother's Day, the special mothering people we celebrate on this unique celebration and why. We will be making unique gifts for students to lavish upon the mothering and caring individuals in their lives that hold these most sacred roles. God Bless you all this year on Mother's Day!

Rocky Railway Vacation Church Camp Updates – PLEASE HELP GET THE WORD OUT! (Flyers in the lobby)

NEED 4 VOLUNTEERS!

Immediate need: filling the following volunteer positions

Dates: July 25th – July 28th:
9:00 am – Noon **Ages:** 4 – 12

[Campers Register Here](#)
[Volunteers Register Here](#)

July 10th: ALL VOLUNTEER
TRAINING DAY – MANDATORY

July 17th: ALL Volunteer Leaders
Planning Meeting – MANDATORY

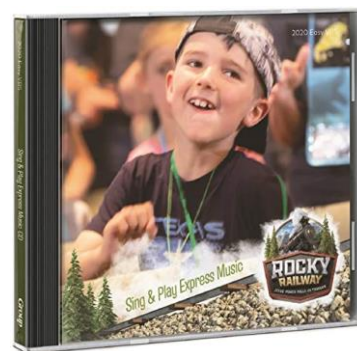
Volunteer Opportunities I am Interested in:

- ☐ Decorations Help (all hands on deck!)
- ☐ Snack Prep Crew (Chew Chew Snacks 2 helpers needed here)
- ☐ Locomotion Games Crew
- ☐ Imagination Station (Crafts & Science)
- ☐ Bible Adventures (Bible Story-Telling of the Day)
- ☐ Little Kids Depot (Pre-K & Kindergarten 2-3 helpers needed here)
- ☐ Crew Leaders (leads groups of campers from one station to the next and keeps track of check-in and out of crew members. At least 4 leaders and 4 helpers needed!)
- ☐ Sing and Play Express (Get kids pumped up for each day with songs and Bible Point~ 1-2 people)
- ☐ Rocky Wrap-up (Help kids wrap up the day with what they learned, point out the bible point of the day and demonstrate with an example or skit ~ 1-2 people)

[Add Option](#) [Add "Other" Option](#)



Parents and Guardians! Don't forget to let us know your child's t-shirt size when signing up (t-shirt free of charge) and **order your Rocky Railway Sing and Play Express Music** ahead of time to have for your child to play as much as they want after Vacation Church Camp (\$5.00) ! They're sure to love the fun tunes we'll be singing and dancing to all week!



The Christian Education Board Presents: Sacred Moments to Share with Family and Friends

Although National Poetry Month was in April, as was Earth Day, this beautiful poem was brought to my attention, and I just couldn't pass up the opportunity to share the piece with others:

breathe by Becky Hemsley

Posted: December 9, 2021

She sat at the back and they said she was shy,
 She led from the front and they hated her pride,
 They asked her advice and then questioned her guidance,
 They branded her loud, then were shocked by her silence,
 When she shared no ambition they said it was sad,
 So she told them her dreams and they said she was mad,
 They told her they'd listen, then covered their ears,
 And gave her a hug while they laughed at her fears,
 And she listened to all of it thinking she should,
 Be the girl they told her to be best as she could,
 But one day she asked what was best for herself,
 Instead of trying to please everyone else,
 So she walked to the forest and stood with the trees,
 She heard the wind whisper and dance with the leaves,
 She spoke to the willow, the elm and the pine,
 And she told them what she'd been told time after time,
 She told them she felt she was never enough,
 She was either too little or far far too much,
 Too loud or too quiet, too fierce or too weak,
 Too wise or too foolish, too bold or too meek,
 Then she found a small clearing surrounded by firs
 ,And she stopped...and she heard what the trees said to her,
 And she sat there for hours not wanting to leave,
 For the forest said nothing, it just let her breathe`

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

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

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

Community Caregivers \$100
 Family Promise \$100
 Our Church's Wider Mission \$350
 Pinkerton Homeless Program \$100
 Sonshine Soup Kitchen \$100
 Zimbabwe-Dangamvura Partner Church \$25

Derry Friendship Center \$100
 First Baptist Food Pantry \$100
 Pastoral Counseling Services \$100
 Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$100
 Upper Room \$100

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FOOD PANTRY

On April 24th Margaret Isbell, the Director of the First Baptist, spoke about this mission. For many years FPC has collected non-perishable items and supported the pantry with a monthly donation.

FAMILY PROMISE OF SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Family Promise has transformed the former Infant Jesus School in Nashua into a new transitional housing facility for 24 homeless families. Its mission is to guide these families as they rise from crisis to sustainable independence. First Parish Church donates funds and provides monthly meals. During May we will welcome a staff member to provide our Mission Moment.

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



Thank You!

To the members of

First Parish Congregational Church, UCC

for being a 5 for 5 Congregation of the United Church of Christ in 2021.

5 for 5 Congregations support Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support and the Neighbors in Need, One Great Hour of Sharing, The Christmas Fund, and Strengthen the Church Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ.


 John C. Dorhauer
 General Minister and President
 United Church of Christ


 Conference Minister



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST SAYS

Thank You!

To the members of

First Parish Congregational Church, UCC

For your 2021 contribution of

Four thousand, one hundred and 00/100

For Basic Support of

Our Church's Wider Mission

Changing Lives


 John C. Dorhauer
 General Minister and President
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 Conference Minister



Board of Deacons

At the April Council meeting, it was decided to safely resume a time of fellowship after the worship service. As a Board, we applaud this decision. The reality is that we are short-staffed already and two of our members assist the digital ministry on Sunday morning. We cannot take this on. We also recognize that there is no longer a community life committee. We are asking members of the congregation to pray about how we as a church can come together to accomplish this task. We are happy to help brainstorm a solution but we cannot take on this task. Who among you would like to do this?

May 15th is the 17th anniversary of Pastor Deborah's ordination. We are truly blessed to have Pastor Deborah lead our congregation. As a preacher she is a student of scripture and preaches the gospel regularly, and as a teacher she is not only a biblical scholar but has the ability to translate scripture to lay people. She is a compassionate presence while providing pastoral care. She has a high degree of efficiency at multitasking and working with a variety of personalities, building community, managing staff, and serving as the ex-officio member of all church boards and committees.

Thank you, Pastor Deborah for all you do!

Your Deacons: Sue Brown, Rachel Cobban, Reni Harnden, Jack Grand (Martin), Brian Williams, and Joanne Worthen

Back to the Sanctuary Update

Greetings from your Back to the Sanctuary Committee especially as we embark on our last giant step toward returning to our beloved space. As of last week, we have received 8 pledges for both years and have received over \$25,000 so far. We have leftover monies from last year, the monies aforesaid received and significant gifts from friends and associates in Ruthlee Root's name. Many, many fundraising ideas are shaping including selling American flags, Branch of Service flags and red and white carnations at the cemetery this month, . We are looking at a Trivia Night in October and we are aware of Friends' Road race next month. Paul keeps us up to date on the projects and spending amounts so that we are well informed where your money is going.

Only eight pledges is a little disappointing but we trust that is because this campaign is only a few weeks old and that your generosity will morph into actual finances in the coming months. We cannot finish this without the commitment of the entire congregation so please donate whatever you can, in whatever timeframes you can.

God bless you as you consider your contribution.

Cynthia Gray

Thank you - from Michelle

Dear Friends,

As you've just read, or maybe even already heard (gosh "secret" news travels quickly!), I have accepted a full-time position with Family Promise of Southern New Hampshire.

When leaving the hospitality industry after 20 years, and moving back to Derry in December 2017, I truly did not have a vision of what my 2nd career would look like. So, when Pastor Deborah was looking for a volunteer to cover the office one day during the spring, I was happy to help! That was four years ago.

After years of long hours of restaurants & hotel sales, it was wonderful to apply my business & hospitality experience to this office and also bring Giovanni to work every day! Pastor Deborah and I have had a special connection which allows us to seamlessly switch from my boss Pastor Deborah to my friend Pastor Deborah. I learned how to be her assistant, as well as an assistant to you (the congregation). Your complimentary messages have assured me, I felt so much pride when someone would say "You are so professional". You've also challenged me to cultivate the skills required to support successful worship services, maintain a house of worship, and encourage communication.

So much has happened - Weekly Sunday Services, Sugar Plum Fairs, Harvest Suppers, Nutfield 300th Anniversary, Meetinghouse Rehab, Weekly scout/group meetings, Monthly committee meetings, Facebook, website content. Then everything changed March 2020. Cross all items most the list above off. Add Virtual Worship Service, learning more about facilities, bookkeeping and weekly meetings with Ms. Margie to teach her how to Zoom, then still driving over to her house to log her onto Zoom Council meetings!

It's quite the full circle to announce this during spring, a time of renewal, exactly four years after I started here during April 2018. It also shows the power of this church's missions that I'm transitioning over to an organization that the church has supported for many years. I am excited to start this new chapter but it's also hard to close this one. Writing this has made me tear up more than once.

Being in the office and collaborating with all the different committees and events, I am so thankful that I've have the unique opportunity to interact with many of you on different levels. I started to mention everyone that I wanted to thank, but quickly realized that if this was the Oscars – the music would start and I'd get "played off" the stage quickly!

Thank you, Pastor Deborah for your encouragement, coaching, support and having faith in me.

Thank you, Christine for your amazing spirit, knowledge and your work ethic is inspiring.

Thank you, Mom & Dad for your love, guidance, for believing in me, and for giving me the courage to take on a completely new career. Having this time together, after living so far away for so long, has been so special.

THANK YOU ALL, for your kindness, support, laughs and fun over the past four years. I'll always be grateful for you!

With much love and gratitude,

Michelle

My email is michelleguerrin@me.com, please don't hesitate to reach out!

Music Committee

Personnel reposted the position(s) of Choir Director and Accompanist near the FPC sign outside on the grounds of First Parish Church and the NHCUUC website. Both positions are on the same ad with the option of combining the two positions.

The purchase of a special dolly for the piano was approved by the Deacons. When the dolly arrived, the piano was moved to Currier Hall awaiting the piano tuner who arrived on Thursday, April 14th. The company is Piano Restoration. The piano will remain on the dolly so it can be moved around without damaging the floor. The music committee was thrilled that this move was completed, and we can hear our piano again. Many thanks to the person who donated the dolly and the person who donated the money to tune the piano.

The committee decided to add some music to the Spring Fling on May 21st. We had a healthy response from people interested in playing and singing. It should be a fun day. Pray for a good weather day. The music will be from 11-1 (approx.).

The Music Committee continues to work to be sure we have music every Sunday and for other events as well. Our list of people is expanding who wish to fill those openings. We thank you. Another suggestion is to call local churches and ask if they have substitute accompanists' they would be willing to share with us. If you or anyone you know wishes to participate in this endeavor, please contact Beth Hunter or the church website.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Cub Pack 405- Garden clean up day!



Photo Credit: Terrance Brand
Used with Permission

May 21 - 1st Spring Fling – 8:00 – 1:00

Imagine all the festivities of the Sugar Plum only bigger – AND it's Spring!

All are welcome to our 1st Annual Spring Fling which is a **fun, multi-event** day.

- **Yard Sale-** Giant Yard Sale on the front lawn. Reserve a space and get rid of some of your treasure – or stuff! Or peruse a variety of items from different families/home all in one place!
- **Cookies-** A Spring version of the 'famous' Cookie Walk in Currier.
- **Vendors** Tables - including a Pampered Chef fundraiser with a minimum of 20% of orders will go towards the church
- **Basket raffles** – A variety of baskets!
- **Eat** - Breakfast goodies and lunch!
- **Music-** There will be live music on the lawn!
- **Kids Activities**

Please sign up soon if you can help!

Can you provide a basket?

Can you bake cookies?

Will you secure a space to sell your own treasures?

Are you willing to help at the church table?

Can you serve food out of the kitchen?

Do you know a vendor who might want to participate?

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

Let's make this a H U G E event: raise friends and fun – and funds!

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

DONATIONS NEEDED:

Breakfast foods of muffins and donuts

Juice Boxes

Homemade baked Cookies bagged in 3's

Water bottles

Books and Puzzles

RAFFLE BASKET IDEAS: it's time to get your creative juices flowing and donate something for our raffle table! You can use a basket, a decorative box or one covered with wrapping paper, a pail or bring a single item that needs no packaging at all: a seasonal wreath or decorative item, a new puzzle, game or toy. Gift cards are very popular along with scratch tickets, arts and crafts, snacks, gardening and yard items and beach/pool accessories. How about date night, baking with kids or pamper yourself? There even are web sites with more ideas.... Please drop off your donations in the church office the week of May 16th and by noon on May 20th at the latest. See you at the Spring Fling on May 21st.

The Meetinghouse Five

To help Sanctuary worship services and activities resume sooner, the Friends of the Meetinghouse is staging a fundraising footrace event.

Saturday, June 25, 2022

Rain or shine • Free water and snacks • Guided Tours of the Meetinghouse

5 Mile Competitive Running Race

starts at 9:00am

\$30 registration

includes a custom Numbered Bib &
a Race T-shirt (first 300 registrants)

2.5 Mile Fun Walk

starts at 9:15am

\$10 registration

includes a custom
Walkers Bib

All proceeds and donations will go to Building Rehab

The courses will start and finish at First Parish and wind past historic sites in East Derry. Dave Breeden and his [New England Timing](#) firm are donating professional race staging and timing. Awards will go to the leaders of the Race and Walk.

We need help now recruiting:

- **Sponsors** — Businesses and organizations with cash or in-kind donations from \$10 to over \$1,000 will receive many benefits. Please contact Beth Hunter.
- **Volunteers** — On race day, help with registration, course monitoring and runner assistance, food and drinks, etc. Please contact Nancy Heywood.

We also hope everyone reading participates!

Watch for announcements of Race and Walk registration opening up soon.

Contact Nancy, Beth, Paul Lindemann, or Bill Mann with questions and suggestions. Thank you.

Remember the wonderful Family Five series run successfully a decade ago?



May 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

- May 1st: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook~ Communion
- May 8th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- May 15th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- May 22nd: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- May 29th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook

Adult Faith Formation Tuesday evenings ~

May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Read and discuss the book of Acts of the Apostles from the New Testament.

May 3 and 17 - Labyrinth walk at 6:00-6:30pm. Please contact the office for the Zoom invite.

Youth Group Ice Cream Sundaes and Service Project ~ May 13th 6:00-7:30pm

Spring Fling Fundraiser: May 21st – see page 9 for more information

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

Spaghetti Supper: To-Go Friday May 27th at 5:00-6:00pm

Fundraising Footrace: June 25th - see page 10 for more information

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