

First Parish Congregational Church

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

Liz and I recently attended “The Wild Goose Festival” in NC. I learned that the wild goose is an appropriate symbol for the Holy Spirit. Who knew? And it fits!! “A wild goose is strong, beautiful and ... utterly unpredictable. It often surprises and disturbs our plans, leading us on wild and wonderful adventures.” How often does God, aka the Holy Spirit, lead us on a wonderful adventure? Often enough we are surprised and sometimes disturbed when God intervenes in our lives and nudges into our plans. We had everything figured out and poof! A conversation, an email, a letter – and “our” plans take a detour for “new” plans. When we trust that God is always with us, these “new” plans can turn out to be better than what we had envisioned. That is the way of God.

The first day of the festival, I attended an all-day seminar for people who want to publish a book. One of the first things I learned was that the book is like an iceberg - that the book itself is what everyone (hopefully) sees and reads, and that there is an enormous amount of work that goes into getting published. In this day and age, it is more difficult than ever to even *get* published. One must have an on-line presence, a website, a blog, a following on social media – Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. It was overwhelming and good to know, of course. This was so much good information and I learned so much.



I met Brian McLaren at the Wild Goose. I told him about our CE program with “flat Jesus”. He was pleased to pose for a photo with me and my flat Jesus.

The Wild Goose Festival was the first week of my Study Leave. The second week I began writing what I hope to be a book one day. God has led me on such a journey in my life. I have read so many people’s points of view. Amid all of that I am confident that I have a message to share. And I believe that this is how our ‘wild goose’- God works! Not only do I have something to share – perhaps you do, too. I know that there are those among you who write poetry. Write! And there are those among you that appreciate craft projects and have an idea in mind. Create! And there are those among you who appreciate gardening. Garden!

Our world is full of messages that would encourage us to complain, to tear down and to otherwise see the glass half empty – or worse. Don’t give in to that messaging! Find the silver lining! Look on the bright side! Give thanks that you have a glass in the first place!! God is great. God is good. God is unpredictable – and always working for our benefit! Rejoice and be glad, my friends! God is winking – all the time.

Hugs and prayers,
Pastor Deborah

Improving Communication

We are an extremely active church. What is happening that you want more information about? Do you know who is on Council? Do you know when we hope to be back in the Meetinghouse Sanctuary? Beginning in September, on the second Sunday of each month, we will have a 15 minute “conversation” immediately following the worship service. What topic do you want more information about? Who do you want to answer your questions? What other questions do you have? Do you understand how we make decisions in our church? Do you know what our sacraments are?

Please give your topics/questions to Jill, at officemgr@fpc-ucc.org The list will be distributed, and we will take them in order of popular vote.

Christian Education and Faith Formation

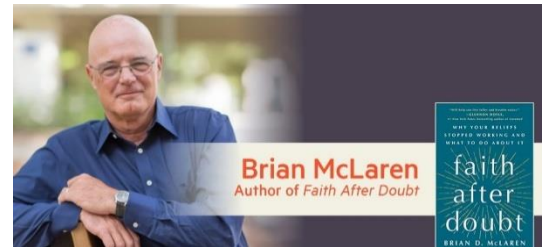
Pondering “Faith After Doubt” by Brian McLaren

NEW REVISED Schedule: August 2 and 9 - ONLY

Tuesday: 6:45PM-8:00PM; hybrid (Corinthians).

You are welcome to use a journal to write down your thoughts and feelings along our journey.

Join us – whether or not you’ve read the book – as we discuss our respective faith journeys.



Brian McLaren’s experience is HIS experience. This book has opened the door for us to share OUR experience of faith and OUR faith journey. We will use his observations to guide our discussions.

Rocky Railway:

Vacation Church Camp (VCC) was so successful we ran out of Boarding passes! On July 25th it was full steam ahead as they departed on their adventure...stopping at Imagination Station, Bible Adventure (with skits), Sing and Play Express, and Locomotion Game Stop to name a few.

This would not have been possible without the dedication of our leaders, volunteers, and our C.E. Director, Christine Lehoullier. Thank you all for this Wonderful Journey!

ALL ABOARD! We Are Trusting in You.... To join us as the C.E. Board takes you for a ride on the Rocky Railway. Sunday, August 14th at 10 am in Currier Hall. If you cannot be in person, we hope you join us by Zoom or Facebook. Don’t miss the adventure.

Mission Possible: Adult Faith Formation Assignment (SHOW and TELL)

You have accepted the challenge of uncovering new and fulfilling books. Books you think others would benefit from and books in the Bible that interest you. Time is getting short. Be prepared to share these treasures on SUNDAY, AUGUST 21st.

If you are still looking for ideas you may try these sites: <https://www.prcli.org/webinars-res/adult-ministry-2/> or <https://www.sneucc.org/disciples>

BACK TO SCHOOL DONATION DRIVE

It’s that time of the year already when we start to collect backpacks and school supplies for local students in need of support so they may start off the new school year with the success they deserve! Supplies needed are:

Colored Pencils Glue Sticks Erasers Rulers Pencil Sharpeners Binders
 #2 Pencils Pens (blue or black) Pencil Bag Pocket Folders Kid’s Scissors
 Backpacks Spiral Notebooks Pencil Topper Erasers Composition Notebook
 Post-It Notes Student Planners Highlighters Boxes of Kleenex Hand Sanitizer

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights. James 1:17

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

Community Caregivers \$100	Derry Friendship Center \$100	Family Promise \$100
First Baptist Church Food Pantry \$100	Our Church's Wider Mission \$350	
Pastoral Counseling \$100	Pinkerton Homeless Program \$100	
Sonshine Soup Kitchen \$100	Upper Room \$100	
Zimbabwe-Dangamvura Partner Church \$200		

ZIMBABWE

Our generous worshippers continue to donate to the food insecure seminary students of the United Theological Seminary. It's President, Rev. Dr. Kennedy Gondongwe is so thankful for these life-saving gifts.

Would you or your family like to have a pen pal in Zimbabwe? We have some names of members of our Dangamvura partner church, and they would enjoy corresponding with us!!! If so, please contact Nancy Murdock.

FAMILY PROMISE OF SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE

You helped us fill the box to overflowing. Thank you for your donations supporting Family Promise's ongoing program of assisting, nurturing and educating homeless families living in their Nashua residence.

If you would like to join the team that provides a meal on the first Thursday of every month, please contact Randy Brown or notify Jill in the church office. On a rotating basis, we prepare side dishes or donate purchased items that are collected at the church and transported to Nashua, where they are heated and served by our members.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH

Thank you for your donations to the Strengthen the Church offering. As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity helps plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in UCC youth and young adults.

MISSION BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Sadly, Shirley and Kevin Foster have resigned from the Board due to each one caring for a parent living out of state. Our prayers are with them.

We are looking for two members who embrace outreach to the greater community. If you are interested, please contact one of our members or Pastor Deborah.

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.

Board of Deacons

The Deacons would like to thank all that have helped so far with summer worship. There are so many people we could name. We would especially like to thank Katie Cobban for organizing, planning and leading the Christmas in July (7/17) worship. We look forward to worshipping with you in August, and hearing from the Book of Ruth. Here is our upcoming schedule:

- August 7 - Outdoor service with Pastor Deborah at 10 (weather permitting). Communion will be served. Bring your own chair and come early to help with setup if you can.
- August 14 - Vacation Church Camp, led by Christian Education Director Miss Christine, will lead the service.
- August 21 - Diana Sweeney will lead the service and offer the reflection.
- August 28 - Pastor Deborah will conclude our consideration of Ruth.
- September 7 - Rev. Linda Snyder will be our guest preacher and will offer Communion.

As noted in earlier communications, the church doors will be locked during each Sunday service by 10:10 AM for safety reasons. If you arrive after the doors are locked, a deacon will be nearby to let you in.

This is a reminder that while Pastor Deborah is on Study Leave there is always a clergy person on call. Please contact the office or one of the Deacons if you experience a pastoral care need.

The **AV Crew** needs more trainees. There is a great crew working with all the technical equipment and they are more than happy to teach you how to use the equipment.

The **Deacons** are also in need of more helpers. Please prayerfully consider lending a hand on Sunday morning.

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

Path to the Sanctuary Update

We are happy to report that, if the pledges and matching fund are received, we will have almost \$300,000. This is very exciting and thanks entirely to the congregation. If you have pledged, please make your donation as soon as you can so we can be assured this year's money will be received.

We are actively working on community sponsorships and assistance for our events this fall. Many thanks to Art McLean and the Boys and Girls Club for allowing us to use that facility for Trivia night. We are planning a luncheon also in October and in December we will host the Granite States Men's Choir. So please save these dates: Chamber of Commerce luncheon October 13 at 11:30. Trivia Night October 15 4 to 7 with games and dinner. Concert on December 11 at Stockbridge Theater 2:00. As you can imagine we will be needing help so please be ready to assist in whatever capacity you can. In next month's Newsletter we will have more detail on our needs.

We would like to publish the names of those who have given to this cause (names NOT amounts). If you do not want your name to be shared, please contact one of us to be sure we know this.

Again, our everlasting thanks to all who support this campaign and cause.
Cynthia Gray, Margie Ives, Sue Lindemann, Anne Marie Merrill

Fund Raising Committee

So far this year we've made over \$5k for the church! So exciting! We couldn't do it without all of your help! Thank you! We donated 10% of those funds to the "Path to the Sanctuary" efforts.

We will host a 2nd bigger and better yard sale on August 6th. It's not too late to rent a space for your own treasures (and you can rent a table from us in you need one) AND we will accept donations for the church tables. Please bring us things that someone can use. We are going to use the classroom downstairs (John) for staging.

Future fundraising projects include the "Antiques Roadshow" in September, the Sugar Plum Fair in November 2022 and the Spring Fling II in July 2023.

Cathy Zylinski, Stephanie Berg, Julie Greenfield, Beth Hunter, Cathy Pottle, Liz Greenberg, and Pastor Deborah.

Board of Personnel

Our song leader, Katie Cobban, has been working 3-5 hours every week and the Music Committee and Personnel felt that she should receive compensation for all she is doing.

We met with Pastor Deborah and Randy Brown to create a job description and hours & pay. The funds to pay Katie will come from the Choir Director salary line item. We agreed to \$15 per hour for up to 5 hours. Preapproval would be required for more than 5 hours. The job description is in the Personnel notebook in the office if you would like to see it.

Your Board of Personnel members,
Beth Hunter, Margie Ives & Karen Wilson

Music Committee

The Music Committee led the worship service on Sunday, July 17, in the absence of Pastor Deborah who was on Study Leave. The service was entitled "Christmas in July". The committee chose a Christmas pageant based on The Friendly Beasts from 2018. Katie Cobban took the lead as our Song Leader and put together the pageant choosing the speakers, music, and prayers. A number of children and adults from First Parish participated in the service. As one member put it, "it was nice to see so many people engaged in the service". Thank you, Katie, for all your work and a wonderful presentation. Also, Deanna Butler, who provided the accompaniment.

We continue to look to hire a permanent musician for our worship services. We also encourage members of our own congregation to apply.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Invitation to Star Island

Many of our church family have been making a pilgrimage of sorts to our Star Island home over Labor Day weekend for the Star Gathering Family Weekend Retreat for many years. Star Island is part of the Isle of Shoals about an hour by boat off the coast of Portsmouth, NH and is home to the shared UU and UCC Conferences as a retreat center.

On island there is a wide range of accommodations including the grand old Oceanic Hotel which also houses the dining hall, main lobby with its main desk and communication hub, a gift shop, a bookstore, a snack bar, and a huge wraparound porch lined with rockers. You'll see people gathering in small groups with old and new friends, chatting, or reading, or doing a craft, or just soaking in the view and the fresh salt air off the ocean. Other accommodations include single, double, and triple rooms in cottages and motel units all connected to the main hotel building by wooden porches also lined with rockers.

Our theme this year is Nurturing Self: Body, Mind, and Spirit. Our theme speaker is Jen Messner, a nutritionist and healer who will be offering at least three different workshop sessions over the weekend. There are lots of activities planned that you can participate in including Jen's workshops, making sea glass windows, an ice cream social, doing a skit or sharing a special talent in the talent show, evening chapel by candlelight, kayaking in sheltered Gosport Harbor, a morning Polar Plunge or swimming later in the day, hiking around the island. Or you can spend time just relaxing, reading, journaling, rocking on the porch, napping, chatting with friends, or just lazing in the sun with a lime Rickey or an ice cream from the snack bar.



The conference fee of \$50 per person covers expenses of the conference, while your room and board charge covers your room and three hearty meals each day served either family style or by servers at buffet tables, depending on Covid protocols at the time. Prices also include the boat ride out and back on the Thomas Leighton. Room and board prices range from \$391-\$933, which depend on which type of lodging you request, whether you come on Friday for three nights, or Saturday for 2 nights, and whether you choose a single or shared room. On Sunday night you can also order a lobster dinner for an additional charge.

We hope you will join us this year as we gather on Star Island to create beloved community yet again! If you have any questions, any of us would be more than happy to talk with you.

(Submitted by Liz Greenberg; other "Shoalers" to consult: Diane Breeden, Joanne Worthen, Pat Plouff, Diana and Joe Sweeney)

A decorative header illustration featuring a bright yellow sun with rays, partially obscured by white, fluffy clouds. The background is a light blue sky that transitions into a soft pink and purple gradient.

Saturday August 6th

COMMUNITY YARD SALE

Where:

First Parish Church

47 E Derry Rd.

Derry NH



Time: 8-1



August 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

August – Ruth - A Faithful Women

Upcoming Worship Services:

- August 7th: 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook~ Communion Outdoors
- August 14th 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- August 21st 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
- August 28th 10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook ~ Baptism

Adult Faith Formation Tuesday evenings ~

August 2nd and 9th – 6:45 – 8:15PM in Corinthians -
Labyrinth walks will resume in September

Spaghetti Supper: To-Go Friday August 26th at 5:00-6:00pm

Star Gathering Weekend UCC Family Conference: Sept. 2 or 3-5, 2022. Speak to Liz Greenberg, Diane Breeden, Joanne Worthen or Pastor Deborah for more information.

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

Jill Taylor:
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.

Photo credit: Paul Lindemann

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United Church of Christ

47 East Derry Road

PO Box 114

East Derry, NH 03041-0114

Address Service Requested