

First Parish Congregational Church

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

By way of introduction to my message this month, allow me to share that I am sensing an apprehension in the air around me – at church, at stores, at restaurants. So much to do. So many conflicting messages. So much going on. And while this is true, it is also true that each one of us at any given moment can stop and pay attention to the beauty and glory that surrounds us right now. In moments of despair, there are angels of mercy. In times of disaster, look for the helpers. Choose to see God and God is there.

With Fall upon us, we see the colors changing. We feel the temperatures falling. The birds and butterflies begin to gather and begin their southern journeys. Sports programs ramp up again. Children begin another academic year both at school and at church. And it's not just the children, because the adults reengage with our Adult Faith offerings and check their calendars for the Patriots games. The Deacons and I talked about receiving new members in October. New beginnings. They surround us. What also surrounds us is the vast array of emotions that accompany all these activities. I was reminded of an amazing poem last week. The title is “Guest House” and the poet is Rumi. I'll share it with you here:

‘This being human is a guest house.
 Every morning a new arrival.
 A joy, a depression, a meanness,
 some momentary awareness comes
 As an unexpected visitor.
 Welcome and entertain them all!
 Even if they’re a crowd of sorrows,
 who violently sweep your house
 empty of its furniture,
 still treat each guest honorably.
 He may be clearing you out
 for some new delight.
 The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
 meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.
 Be grateful for whoever comes,
 because each has been sent
 as a guide from beyond.’”

“From beyond”... For followers of Jesus through our relationship with God and Christ, we have a keen awareness that God is actively in our lives and in everything we do. We forget sometimes, though. It happens. And we need reminders – like this poem or perhaps from scripture.

Sacred scripture (and the Byrds in the 60’s) says “for everything there is a season... and a time for every activity under heaven.” (Ecclesiastes 3) Breathe in this message and know that **God is with you**. Resist getting overwhelmed by people and schedules. **All shall be well**. Take a moment every now and then to just be present to the exact time and place where you are. In so doing, you will follow the wisdom of the mystics. Take note of your “here” and your “now”. And breathe.

Autumnal Blessings Abound,
 Pastor Deborah

Board of Deacons

Heartfelt “thank you” to everyone who helped with and attended Welcome Sunday. It was such a fun and enjoyable way to get everyone together after summer vacations.

“Second Sunday after Worship Conversations” will continue on October 9 with a topic of the Meetinghouse. The process for rehabilitation of the Meetinghouse has taken longer than anyone expected. What would you like to know about how we’re going to move forward? This is a time to talk informally about what’s happening.

It has been a joy having our children with us during worship hour. What an opportunity for them to see us worship and to have them grow in their understanding of what it means to worship God. Christine has done an amazing job preparing age-appropriate Praise Packs each week to help parents give their children guidance during worship time. The Praise Packs are located on the table in the Foyer along with the bulletins.

Pastor Deborah plans to have discussion sessions in the spring and fall for those interested in joining First Parish Church. If you are interested in joining our church family, please contact her.

Christian Education and Faith Formation

Christian Education & Faith Formation October Newsletter

October 4th Drive-Thru & Zoom Blessing of The Animals
3:15pm - 4:00pm Drive-Thru @ FPC; 4:10 – 4:30 via Zoom



“If you want to see God, simply look into the eyes of an animal.” — **J. Bartell**

Come visit First Parish Church in person if you can or let us know if you need a Zoom invitation if you can't make it in person as we honor and ask God's blessings upon our animal companions.

[UCC Climate Hope Cards Art Contest!](#)

October 4th 9:00 am – November 29th 5:00 pm

We find ourselves amid an ongoing climate and environmental justice crises. The future sometimes seems uncertain and even frightening. Yet as people of faith, we are called to heed prophetic voices and fight for a livable planet.

It is in action that hope is found. As the Israelites confronted the challenges of their time, the prophet Jeremiah passed along God's message: Your labor is not in vain. There is hope for your future.

(Jeremiah 31:17) That's why we are calling all UCC children and youth: Draw or paint about climate hope, environmental justice, or protecting the Earth. Sunday school class and youth group participation encouraged. Winners will be selected in November!

NHUCC [Environmental Justice Mission Group](#)

New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ (follow the link to view meeting schedule, mission statement and amazing resources!)



THE WONDER BOX

Christian Education Questions/Suggestions Box

Kids or adults alike: is there something you wonder about that you'd like answers to? Perhaps you'd like to know what God looks like? Who created God? Why do we go to church if God is everywhere? When did God create the dinosaurs and were they on Noah's ark? We will use all our available resources to answer your questions to the best of our ability on [Padlet](#).

Perhaps you have a suggestion for the Christian Education Team. We would love to hear your constructive feedback! Please let us know in specific detail how we might better serve the congregation. Please remember that we are limited to four people on our board at this time and need as many volunteers as possible to make events successful! Thank you for your help in letting us serve you the best we are able.

salt*

THEOLOGIAN'S ALMANAC October

DID YOU KNOW.....?

October 2 is the birthday of Mohandas Gandhi, a religious and civic leader born in India in 1869, best known for his role in India's independence movement against British colonial rule, and particularly for his promotion of nonviolence as a means of resistance and liberation. He influenced Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s interests in nonviolence; King kept a portrait of Gandhi in his study. Gandhi wrote, "The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is an attribute of the strong."

October 4 is the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, born in 1182, today considered the patron saint of animals and the natural world. He was a friar — a kind of monk who lived not in a monastery but rather among the poor out in the world.

October 6 is the day in 1683 the first Mennonites arrived in what would become the United States. Francis Daniel Pastorius, a German lawyer and teacher, founded Germantown in Pennsylvania. After eating with a group of Native Americans, Pastorius wrote that they "have never in their lives heard the teaching of Jesus concerning temperance and contentment, yet they far excel the Christians in carrying it out." In 1688, he wrote to slave-holding Quakers in Germantown, urging them to free the people they were enslaving — the first formal abolitionist protest by European immigrants in the American colonies.

October 7 is the birthday of Desmond Tutu, born in Klerksdorp, South Africa, in 1931. For his leadership in opposing apartheid in South Africa, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984; two years later, he elected to be the first black archbishop of Cape Town, the head of the country's Anglican Church. In 1995, President Nelson Mandela appointed Tutu to lead the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, investigating apartheid-era human rights abuses. Tutu said: "How does peace come? Peace doesn't come because allies agree. Allies are allies — they already agree! Peace comes when you talk to the guy you most hate. And that's where the courage of a leader comes."

October 8 is the day in 1971 that John Lennon released his second solo album, Imagine. The title track was the best-selling song of his solo career. It's often understood as anti-religious ("...no religion too..."), but Lennon insisted otherwise. He and Yoko Ono had received a prayer book, he explained, and that book inspired him to write the song as a kind of "positive prayer." He put it this way: "If you can imagine a world at peace, with no denominations of religion — not without religion but without this my-God-is-bigger-than-your-God thing — then it can be true."

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

“Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.” Proverbs 22:9

MISSIONS SEPTEMBER DONATIONS: Thank you for continuing to support our mission giving:

Community Caregivers \$100	Derry Friendship Center \$100
Family Promise \$100	First Baptist Church Food Pantry \$100
Our Church’s Wider Mission \$350	Pastoral Counseling Services \$100
Pinkerton Family in Need \$100	Sonshine Soup Kitchen \$100
Upper Room \$100	Zimbabwe-Dangamvura Partner Church \$200 (annual)

AUTUMN OUTREACH

Your Mission Board needs both donations and volunteer participation as we support several projects: October’s **Family Promise Harvest Food Collection** and the **Neighbors in Need Collection**

November’s **Thanksgiving Collection** for grocery gift cards

December’s **Angel Tree** gifts for families and senior citizens who may not receive gifts

Thank you so very much for all your support.

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

NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is one of the 5 annual offerings of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Grants are awarded to UCC Churches and organizations doing community organizing and advocacy addressing systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. Envelopes are available on the table as you enter worship or in the church office. If you are writing a check, please write it to “First Parish Church” and note “NIN” or “Neighbors in Need” in the bottom left corner.

Family Promise of Southern New Hampshire

Pantry Items Are Needed: (There is a box in the foyer at church.) Thank you in advance!

- | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------|
| ❖ Sugar | Flour | Ground Coffee |
| ❖ Condiments | Juice bottles | Creamer |
| ❖ Canned Fruit and Vegetables | Canned/Boxed Soups | Kid’s Snacks |
| ❖ Spaghetti | Spaghetti Sauce | Olive Oil |
| ❖ Vinegar | Salad Dressing | Spices |
| ❖ Mac and Cheese | Tea Bags | Peanut Butter and Jelly |
| ❖ Pancake Mix | Syrup | Tuna |
| ❖ Crackers | Ginger Ale | |
| ❖ Sides: Rice, Stuffing, Noodles, Ramen, Pasta Sides, Instant Potatoes | | |
| ❖ Hamburger/Tuna/Chicken Helper Cereals | | |

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.

Kairos – A Prison Ministry

Matthew 25:35 – 36 – Jesus said:

³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.”

A MESSAGE FROM MIKE SCHROEDER

I'm getting ready to go to prison. I will spend 3-1/2 days behind the walls, along with about 21 other volunteers. We'll be in the Federal Corrections Institution in Concord, New Hampshire starting on October 20th and ending on October 23th.

The Kairos Prison Ministry is an amazingly effective program to bring the love of God into the lives of some of those who need it most. The experience of helping those men is a great blessing, but I don't do it for me, or even for them, I do it on behalf of our Lord Jesus. Matthew 25:36 doesn't just apply to “somebody” it applies to us all. But you don't have to “visit me in prison” yourself directly, you can support me as I go in on your behalf.

How can you help?

1. You can volunteer to be a team member. It may seem scary to go into prison, but I've done it dozens of times, and I can attest to the fact that it is nothing to be feared.
2. You can volunteer to serve as support staff. You don't have to go into prison to volunteer, there are many jobs available on the outside.
3. You can be a prayer Partner. Sign up to pray for us on the weekend.
4. And of course, we are always in need of donors. Kairos is a very good steward of funds, but it isn't cheap to provide the valuable services of Kairos to prisons at no cost to the prison.

Here are some other dates for weekends in New Hampshire.

NH State Prison for men in Concord: 5/16 - 5/19/2023

NH State Prison for women in Concord: Dates will be set soon.

Kairos Outside (For Women impacted by incarcerated family members) November 11-13.

Won't you please help? Please see me (Mike Schroeder) after worship on Sunday to sign up for prayer time or to write a brief word of encouragement to the residents in Berlin.

Board of Facilities

Happy Fall from the Facilities Board! We have been working on several projects that do not always show a physical improvement for you to see:

- Our previously used underground oil tank will be removed by a contractor on October 6, 2022. You may see some disruption in the walkway/parking lot surface and the memorial garden outside the Pastor's office. We will do our best to minimize any disruption. The wood from the tree that was cut down has been saved for the church and we hope it will be used to create some form of memorial/recognition from the previously planted tree.
- Facilities has been working on replacing certain pieces of exterior trim that are rotting. The most visible is at the Currier entrance where the trim goes up the ramp and around/above the doors.
- New closet doors were painted and mounted in the Noyes hallway to the connector.
- A doorbell has been installed at the Currier entrance and rings in the office.
- We are in the process of getting new quotes for maintenance of all our Fire Safety systems, including our new Fire alarm system, fire extinguishers, and kitchen hood suppression systems.
- The fencing along the road has been removed and will not be replaced.
- The bushes around our FPC sign in front were extensively trimmed to make our sign more visible.
- Future activities include: Fall Cleanup by the Boy Scouts scheduled for November, review of current contract and 2nd quote for snow removal, continued replacement of fluorescent lighting to LED lighting, and our next primary project will be upgrading our keyed entry system into facility.

Facilities Board – Dee, Bob, Alan, Bill, and Lianne

Path to the Sanctuary Update

Trivia Night is coming soon. The Boys and Girls Club, Game Time Trivia and Hare of the Dawg are all in place for what should be a really fun night. The teams are forming, some have even shared their team names with the registrar. The raffle items and Silent Auction items are in place. The raffle card will be sold for \$20 with more than 25 prizes available. The Silent Auction will have, among other things, a basket from Cask and Vine, a set of air pods and a bench given by the Allen family. There will be many lucky winners so you don't want to miss out.

So, what can you do? We need players. Please consider a family team, a work team, maybe you are part of a team associated with First Parish or its Mission partners. If you are a single person without a team, don't worry, you won't be alone, we will match you up with others. If you want to go but don't want to play we still want your support. It is an early night, you will be out by 7:00 pm filled with heavy appetizers, games to test your knowledge and a night of fun. Go on the church website for your registration and, as always, Jill Taylor can help guide you in the process.

Remember it is October 15th. 4:00 to 7:00 at the Boys and Girls Club, 40 East Derry Road. \$25 per person.

Save the date for December 11 at 2:00 at Pinkerton's Stockbridge Theatre for a wonderful Christmas Concert. The price will be \$30 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. More details to come.

ELECTRONIC GIVING - Venmo Announcement

VENMO IS NOW AVAILABLE TO MAKE FINANCIAL DONATIONS TO FIRST PARISH CHURCH

Anyone can now use **Venmo** to make contributions to the church via credit card (3% fee applied), debit card (no fee), or direct transfer (no fee) from their checking account directly into the church's account. Having this option makes things simpler for congregation members, friends, and visitors who wish to contribute in this way and could attract contributions from community members who visit our website or know about our activities.

To experience these benefits of Venmo (the most widely used of these electronic transfer services) while avoiding the drawbacks, you will need to follow these procedures:

1. Download the Venmo app on your phone. Click "pay". Type in @first-parish. Fill in the blank labelled "what's it for" (VERY IMPORTANT). Examples are: general fund, mission, building rehabilitation, Christian Ed. The contribution can also be split among these categories in any desired proportion that you specify. You must also indicate if this is payment toward a previously made pledge or is a new, separate contribution—e.g., "October pledge toward operating budget."
2. Click on the button labelled "public," which is the default. That will then give you the option to restrict who sees that you made a contribution to the church. If you don't do this, anyone who uses Venmo can see that you made a contribution to the church (but not the amount).
3. Enter the amount. Then enter your payment info (checking account number if that's what you choose, debit card (no fee charged), or a credit card (3% fee). Once you've done this once, it will show up as a payment option for you to choose.

If a contribution is made that does not contain the required information about what it's for, Julie Greenfield, a member of the finance committee, will call you for clarification. Please be respectful of her time by always indicating exactly what your payment is for, so that she does not have to call you. If you cannot be reached, the default for your payment will be that it will go into the general fund as a new contribution, not payment of an existing pledge.

To find out how to set up a Venmo account (it's VERY easy), and learn more about it, please visit this website: <https://venmo.com/signup/> You will be asked to provide one or more methods by which you will make payments, and your formal name. Julie Greenfield (juleslab1@comcast.net) can also offer advice on Venmo.

Randy Brown, First Parish Council Moderator

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? We began in September with 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? Our topics for October (Meetinghouse update) and November (how decisions get made). What else would you like to talk about?

Please give your topics/questions to Jill, at officemgr@fpc-ucc.org

Membership Information

Would you like to become a member of First Parish Congregational Church, UCC? Each year, in the Spring and in the Fall, we invite people who have been visiting to consider joining our church. Whereas everyone has the privilege of ‘voice’ at meetings – which are open to everyone, membership allows you to vote. Anyone may serve on committees and/or participate in activities of the church. Only members may serve on one of our five Boards or Council. To become a member, we ask that you identify your wish to serve God in this way by affirming your baptism. For anyone who has not been baptized, Pastor Deborah will baptize you first. There will be some conversations about what membership entails and how we function as a church. Please let Pastor Deborah know if you are interested in joining.

Boards and Committees

With our smaller congregation, we need to revamp the way we get things done. We no longer have enough people to have 5-9 people on each board and committee to plan and do all the related work. We need to move to smaller boards/committees of 3-5 people, who will plan and organize the work needed. These small groups then draw on other volunteers to help them achieve the necessary tasks.

Many of you are willing to help with short term projects. We need your help. We hope to transition from large boards and committees to smaller ones with short term help from members of the congregation. We will talk about this at one of the second Sunday after church “conversations”. We need you to think about what your interests are and where you are willing to help out with short term projects.

We are just beginning this discussion and hope to have a form for you to fill out where you can tell us what your interests are and where you are willing to help out. Please think about this as we continue to get this organized.

Beth Hunter, Nominating Committee
Randy Brown, Moderator
Church Council

Music Committee

"Song Leader" is the official title of Katie Cobban, but she does so much more than leading songs. She helps to pick songs for the services, prepares music and related needs for each service. She prepared and directed the pageant "Christmas in July" of which she casted adults and children so as to have the play all-inclusive of ages which made it a very wonderful experience for cast and worshipers.

She has introduced using You Tube videos mainly for the music when we do not have a live musician on site. She is also using virtual organist Tim Schramm's recordings from time to time. The Music Committee is fortunate to have her as a member.

In other items, Deanna Butler, committee member, is going to work with Beth Hunter, Personnel, to re-energize the search for a new choir director,

Eileen Cox is Inventorying our choir music. There was some discussion on selling the music or keeping it. The Committee is taking a virtual vote on that. Results were not available at this writing.

The Music Committee now has a firm day and time for meetings. We will be meeting on the second Friday of the month at 4:30 PM. Next meeting is October 14. We are currently meeting via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

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

In Other News

OFFICE UPDATE: As you may have noticed, a large calendar has been hung in the office. We envision this calendar is for FPC activities. Keep in mind building use can be found on your website. Got an event in mind? Check the timing of other church events. If you have any questions, please contact Jill at officemgr@fpc-ucc.org

The office and copier room have been re-organized. If you are looking for something, please check the copier room shelves or the cabinets. Questions? Please contact Jill at officemgr@fpc-ucc.org

UCCZ – United Church of Christ - Zimbabwe

The New Hampshire Conference and UCCZ have agreed that this year's UKAMA Sunday offering on Sunday, October 23, will be for Education--school fees, uniforms and supplies. We know that many families in our UCCZ churches cannot afford the fees to send their children to school.

If you choose to participate, you may send your support directly to the NH Conference, earmarked for the "2022 Ukama Education Appeal." Here at First Parish, make checks payable to FPC and write "Ukama" in the memo.

October 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).

Upcoming October Worship Services

October 2nd	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook (Communion)
October 9th	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
October 16th	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
October 23rd	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
October 30 th	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook

Adult Faith Formation Thursday evenings ~

October 20th – 6:45 – 8:15PM in Corinthians / zoom available

Labyrinth walks on October 6th and October 20th from 6-6:30PM/zoom available

Spaghetti Supper: To-Go Friday October 28th 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

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

First Parish Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

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Address Service Requested