

First Parish Congregational Church

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

Paul, in his letter to the church in Thessalonica, urges affirming and compassionate Christian practices: joy, prayer, and gratitude.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Joy.

One of the songs that we sing in my chorus (Songweavers) has these words: “Joy is a decision we make every day. Wake up in the morning and chase those blues away.” The Bible speaks of joy and rejoicing in hundreds of ways. In another of Paul’s letters, when he writes to the church in Philippi, Paul emphasizes this imperative: “Rejoice in the Lord always. And AGAIN, I say rejoice!” Joy is a faith practice. Joy is a decision.

Prayer.

We talk a lot about our relationship with God. It is important to us. And a relationship with God warrants communication. Prayer is our vehicle. Anne Lamott famously wrote that there are three kinds of prayers: help, thanks, and wow! (She wrote a book by that title.) Indeed, we ask for God’s help. We express gratitude for the blessings we enjoy. And we say wow! Especially when we

witness miracles – like the one that our friend Michelle just received. Wow. Just wow! And thank You, God!

Gratitude.

November is the month of Thanksgiving. AND giving thanks is not just a day – it's a life practice. How are you at giving thanks? Do you make a gratitude list? How often? Do you participate in a gratitude texting group? (If you don't, would you like to? Just let me know and we'll start one for November!) According to an article in the Harvard Health Publishing Blog in August of 2021: "Giving thanks makes you happier." The article proclaims: "In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships."

Joy, prayer, and gratitude – these are three faith practices that are simple and easy to do... when we remember to practice them! This November, make a deal with yourself to practice these three tenets more than ever before. And then watch how God responds to your revitalized faith practices.

I thank God for you, members, and friends of First Parish Church.
Pastor Deborah

PS: a couple of ideas to cultivate gratitude:

Write a thank-you note to someone - once a month!

Thank someone mentally. This is a blessing to them.

Keep a gratitude journal.

Join a gratitude texting group.

Count your blessings. Pick a number (3? 4? 5?). Write them down. Every day.

Pray Prayer cultivates gratitude.

Meditate. Mindfulness meditation involves focusing on the present moment without judgment - and to supercharge your meditation: focus on what you're grateful for!

Boards and Committees

ALL HANDS-ON DECK! YOU CAN HELP!

Many hands make light work. As busy as we ALL are, planning meetings can take up more time than we can afford. Time is precious. Your church leaders understand. We realize that we do not need Boards of many members. We can accomplish a great deal with smaller Boards who identify tasks for more individuals. Many people are willing to help with short term projects, but do not want to commit to 2 or 3 years on a Board or committee, going to monthly meetings and doing all the work themselves.

Perhaps there is a task or two that you DO have time to do. It is no longer necessary for 6-10 individuals do all the related work. Instead, we can share responsibilities and tasks. It may be more efficient for 3 people to plan, organize, and delegate the work that needs to be done.

To facilitate moving to this new model, we ask that you click on the link below and complete the questionnaire. Please email it to Beth Hunter (beth.hunter2@comcast.net) or leave it with Jill in the office. <https://fpc-ucc.org/Wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/ALL-HANDS-ON-DECK-QUESTIONNAIRE.pdf>

Christian Education and Faith Formation

Christian Education and Faith Formation November 2022



Climate Hope Cards

Last Day for Submissions: Wednesday, November 30

Trees. Flowers. Birds. Rivers. Children have always drawn nature's beauty. Now they can use their artistic talents to help promote environmental justice.



Kids of all ages can join in the United Church of Christ's [Climate Hope Cards art contest](#). Participating children will design postcards that highlight hope for and love for the earth. Kids of all ages can get a template and info at the [Climate Hope Cards web page](#) or on the [FPC webpage](#).

Beginning Oct. 4, families can submit their children's earth-loving drawings, doodles and sketches. Then, UCC [environmental justice](#) leaders will print the winning art on postcards. An online award ceremony will be held January 7 on Zoom.

Finally, UCC churches everywhere can help send these postcards to elected officials, calling for action now on climate change. "We're in the middle of climate and environmental crises, so we need everyone involved, from the youngest kids on up," said Andy Wells-Bean, UCC environmental justice fellow.

Wells-Bean is spearheading the Climate Hope Cards campaign. He noted that it's a simple but significant way for any youth to get involved. Anyone can also download the template at ucc.org/ClimateHopeCards. What should kids draw? Anything that demonstrates their love for God's creation, according to Wells-Bean. "Think about the earth. Think about climate change. Think about how you want to protect the earth," he said.



Winter Clothing Drive

Last day for donations: Tuesday, December 13

We hope you will consider donating any unwanted gently used or new winter clothing to our Winter Clothing Drive again this year! Last year's drive was an amazing success, and the local schools were so grateful to know the children had what they needed to be more active outdoors during the colder months. Please see the list below for donation needs and thank you for your kindness!

- * Winter Coats
- * Snow Pants
- * Winter Boots
- * Winter Socks
- * Winter Hats
- * Winter Gloves

- * Winter Clothing (long sleeved shirts, pants and sweatshirts or sweaters)
- * **Holiday Clothing**
- * Goggles
- * Helmets
- * Ski or Snowboard boots



Digital Advent Calendar

Sunday, November 27 to Saturday, December 24

We will be ushering the Advent season in starting Sunday, November 27th and what better way to spiritually prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus on Christmas day than to give ourselves the small gift of a daily spiritual rest. Starting on November 27th, visit our website, Facebook or the link sent via the E-blast to “open” that day’s advent calendar door for a seasonal song, activity, advent prayers, advent spiritual practices and more!



Advent Workshop

Sunday, December 4

We look forward to hosting this much anticipated festive retreat after service as we prepare our hearts and homes for Christ's birth in the world as it is today with joyous crafts and activities that help to welcome the holy holiday season. Activities will be available for all ages. We are looking for volunteers to help us offer a coffee hour while we set up the craft stations.

Please talk to Christine Lehoullier or Holly Gorgol if you can help with Advent Workshop in any capacity, thank you for your consideration! cedirector@fpc-ucc.org or feetpower@usa.net

Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7

MISSIONS OCTOBER DONATIONS: Thank you for supporting our monthly donations.

Community Caregivers \$100

Family Promise \$100

Our Church’s Wider Mission \$350

Pinkerton Families in Need \$100

Sonshine Soup Kitchen \$100

Derry Friendship Center \$100

First Baptist Food Pantry \$100

Pastoral Counseling \$100

Upper Room \$100

In October we voted to send: \$1000 to the **UCC Florida Hurricane Relief Fund**, in addition to funds donated from the congregation \$1000 to the **HAS Fund** in Indonesia for mosquito netting and/or online medical care for patients \$250 for the **UCC UKAMA Fund** supporting partner churches in Zimbabwe.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED OFFERING

During October the Missions Board asked you to support the special **Neighbors in Need** Offering of the United Church of Christ. We also held a drive to support the **Family Promise Food Pantry**. We greatly appreciate all of you who donated to these worthy causes.

THANKSGIVING GIFT CARDS

Each year the Missions Board receives a list of families who need some extra help managing the holidays. This fall we are giving grocery gift cards to Community Caregivers families. There also is a collection box for cranberry jelly/sauce for the Upper Room Thanksgiving outreach. **If you would like to donate to the cost of these cards, please designate Thanksgiving Baskets on your check/envelope.**

ANGEL TREE

This year we are hoping to have the Care Givers name tags and Upper Room lists after services beginning **November 27th** and available in the foyer by the office. When you take a gift card, it is important that **you fill out the form on the clipboard with your name, phone number and the gift tag family number.** The office will have forms for you to fill out if you know someone in need. Respectfully submitted by BOCOM members: Nancy Murdock-Chair, Melanie Pawl, Heather Paradzick, Carol Guerrin, Sue Brown-Treasurer designate.

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.

Path to the Sanctuary Update

Our first Trivia Night was a huge success. We had over 125 participants forming 19 teams. The food, the venue, the prizes, but most of all the comradery and fun, were perfect. The community outside of our church as well as our congregation were such great supporters. We raised in the area of \$3500 profit and learned so much about doing an event such as this. Huge thanks to the Boys and Girls Club, Arthur McLean specifically, who could not have been more accommodating. Hare of the Dawg provided the food, and they were grateful to be able to do this for their first foray into catering. Game Time Trivia staff were perfect with their humor, their songs, and their ability to move the night through.

A huge thanks to all of you who supported in one way or another and especially to the group who put this together.

We move on to our December initiatives: Breakfast with Santa and a Christmas Concert!!

On December 3 Santa and Mrs. Claus will be in Currier Hall hosting a wonder breakfast. Save the date and tell all your friends. Everyone is welcome – children of ALL AGES!!

And then on December 11 at 2:00 at the Stockbridge Theatre, we will hear the Granite Statesmen Chorus. Ticket sales will begin in soon. \$30 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. It will feature a singalong by some of our male church members and will appeal to all ages. The Granite Statesmen Chorus recently went on tour in Nova Scotia so they know how to give a good performance. We are soliciting sponsors ensure this be a pure profitable endeavor. Can we count on your support whether in sponsors or ticket sales? Watch the Friday eblast for details.

Finally, if you have made a pledge to the Path to the sanctuary for 2022 and have not paid yet, please do so soon. We need to plan our finances for the work upcoming sanctuary work

NEWS FLASH! – Next year's Trivia Night is booked for October 21, 2023. **SAVE THE DATE!!!**

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

On November 20th after worship, our communication conversation will be: how decisions get made AND our church's current structure. We will take December off. In January, what would you like to know more about? Please give your topics/questions to Jill, at officemgr@fpc-ucc.org

Membership Information

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.

On November 6 four people will join our church membership: Jill Taylor, Cae Grand, and the Fetters – Lee and Heather. Please take time to get to know more about them when you see them on Sunday!

Fall Letter from Jack Kennedy

Our church received a Fall newsletter from Jack Kennedy titled "Health Access Sumbawa". It is full of wonderful pictures and information. Please click on the link below to read their newsletter

<https://fpc-ucc.org/Wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/DOC101022.pdf>

Music Committee

Digital Ministry has been working on fixing some of the glitches we have. Katie can help by Bluetoothing in music when we do not have live musicians. We enjoy live music as they are free.

In response to a request to buy choir music, the committee voted "no" on that issue because we hope to have a choir again. Eileen is continuing work on the choir music project. It is a work in progress. Regarding pianos, we are blessed with three great pianos. We currently use the Baldwin, a gift from Ken Williams, in Currier Hall. There is a Steinway downstairs in Luke. (Music committee is wondering how best to use this magnificent instrument.) AND we are pleased that the Baby Grand is still in good condition and will remain in the Meetinghouse Sanctuary.

We contract with Tim Schramm to send video recordings of service music. Tim will be the musician for the Celebration weekend in Manchester for the UCC Women of New England. Great news!

In Other News

NEW ENGLAND WOMEN'S CELEBRATION XI – 2023 March 17-19-2023

First Parish, under the guidance of Diane Breeden, will create individual Holy Spirit growth gifts for everyone who attends. Save the March date. Listen for Diane's announcement to start this project.

Greeting Cards - We have a large supply of greeting cards available in the church office copy room. There are cards for pretty much every occasion. They are currently in 2 baskets and a 2-drawer filing cabinet on the right when you walk in the door. Think about how nice it is to receive a hand-written card and then think about who you could send one to. If you need cards, please stop in.

Wise Words – “It's amazing to me. The most valuable things we have are invisible: courage, love, compassion, intelligence, and intuition. The most valuable assets you have are of The Spirit. Everything you have in life is the result of everything that is “invisible.” Caroline Myss

Steward(s) of the Kitchen

We are looking for a Kitchen Steward(s). Fall brings everyone back from the summer hiatus and back into our church for meetings. We are proud to be able to offer this facility for outside use. Many times, after a meeting, the kitchen looks ok but perhaps, not the way we would like our kitchen to appear. We need someone to take charge of the kitchen and show it a lot of love. Are you THAT person? Please let either Pastor Deborah or Jill know if you interested in this important ministry.

Church Calendar

Butter Braid Pastry and Cake Rolls will be delivered on November 11th

Sugar Plum Fair – Saturday, Nov 19 from 9am – 3pm.

Breakfast with Santa – Saturday December 3 from 7am – 12:00pm

Granite State Men's Choir - Sunday December 11 at 2pm at Stockbridge Theatre, Pinkerton Academy

Blue Christmas Service – Wednesday, December 14 at 7pm

Christmas Eve Pageant – December 24 at 4:30pm

Christmas Eve Candlelight – December 24 at 7pm

November 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 November Worship Services

November 6	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook (Communion)
November 13	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
November 20	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook
November 27	10:00 In Person Worship and Zoom/ Facebook

Adult Faith Formation Thursday evenings ~

November 3rd and 17th – 6:45 – 8:15PM in Corinthians / zoom available

Labyrinth walks on November 3rd and November 17th from 6-6:30PM/zoom available

Spaghetti Supper: To-Go Friday November 25th 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

47 East Derry Road

PO Box 114

East Derry, NH 03041-0114

Address Service Requested