

# First Parish Congregational Church

## SPECIAL EDITION February 2023 Newsletter

United Church of Christ • East Derry, New Hampshire

### Our Mission Statement

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 12<sup>th</sup> Century Church in Hampshire, England

Welcome to this **special edition** of the First Parish Congregational Church’s newsletter. You are receiving this because we have your email address and we want you to know all of the wonderful things that are happening at First Parish. If you are happy to receive this newsletter and you don’t usually get one - **reply** with “**please add me**” in the subject line. Please let us know: if you **never want to receive** an email from us again – reply with “**remove**” in the subject line. Thank you and may God bless you!

## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Child of God,

We held our Annual Meeting on Sunday! It was outstanding! I am so grateful for each and every one of you. Everyone at this meeting witnessed God's abundance in action. There was lavish kindness, a wealth of compassion, and a cornucopia of civility as we discussed serious and strategic decisions. 2022, it was pointed out, was an amazing year in so many areas of our ministry. If you haven't had an opportunity to read the Annual Report, I encourage you to look at how much we have to be grateful for.

Some may be saying right now, "What are you talking about? We accepted a budget with a deficit of \$21k!" And while that is true, I heard plenty of positive energy around moving forward in faith, collectively working on solutions. Money is currency and currency is always on the move. Our money says, "In God we trust." So we trust God and roll up our sleeves. That is a winning combination.

I recently read an exceptional book, entitled *The Soul of Money*, by Lynne Twist. I commend it to you. In the chapter entitled "Money is Like Water", the author writes: "True wealth, or well-being, can't be found in a static balance sheet, no matter how large the accumulation of financial assets. Wealth shows up in the action of sharing and giving, allocating and distributing, nourishing and watering the projects, people and purpose that we believe in and care about, with the resources that flow to us and through us."

If we take that one quote and superimpose it over the running of our church, we will find a path to success:

**We act.** Abolitionist statesman and freedom fighter Fredrick Douglass is believed to have said that he prayed to be free for years - and for years nothing happened. Then prayed for freedom and started walking – and he walked to freedom. We must act.

**We share our talents.** You are good at something and the church and community in which we live needs that gift. Share your gift.

**We nourish and water** the projects that we currently have. Think about how you can plug into one of our mission projects or one of our fundraising projects. Everyone can do something.

**We nourish the people around us.** Let's make a concerted effort to express gratitude and appreciation for the efforts of those people around us. Thank them to their face. Bless them when you say your prayers. Ask how you might help out.

We are an amazing church, and we are an incredible faith family. There are people who need what we have. They need to know God's all-inclusive love. We have built a community of people who believe and trust in a loving and inclusive God. There are people who need to know we are here. May we shine our light brighter in the community so that more and more people are attracted to the mission of this church:

When you read our Mission Statement on page one, you will see that we are committed to four aspects of living out one's faith: worship, prayer, education and service. When we talk about our faith, we know that it takes practice and we practice together – rejoicing together and mourning together, working together and playing together.

I invite you to pray about how you can be more involved in the success of God's mission at First Parish.

May you feel God's grace upon grace,  
Pastor Deborah

## Christian Education and Faith Formation – February 2023

“Train up a child in the way she should go, Even when she grows older she will not abandon it.”  
(Proverbs 22:6)

We are dedicated to the Faith Formation of all ages. Our Children’s Christian Education Program (CCEP) will continue to grow strong led by able leaders and caring adults. Praise packs that go along with the worship theme of the day will still be available during the worship service. Lessons will continue to the best of our ability. Adults will continue to grow in faith reading together holy scripture and inspirational books.

You may have heard that we are looking for a new Christian Education Director. If you know anyone who might be interested, please let us know. We are finding our way for now with a devoted group of volunteers and the assistance of Pastor Deborah. We may need your help. If you can assist us, please reach out to one of us or Pastor Deborah.

Thank you, Chris Cox, Paula Robinson and Anne-Marie Merrill

## Board of Christian Outreach and Missions

**God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7**

**MISSIONS February 2023 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 Services \$100

Upper Room \$100

Pastor’s Discretionary Fund \$100

## Board of Deacons

Have you noticed the exciting new things that are happening during our worship service? We are taking the offering with those old-fashioned, long-handled collection baskets. It’s never been more fun to give your donation to the church! And we are standing for hymns again! So many of us wanted to get back into enjoying the hymns on our feet. Let’s get those lungs in shape and really put some energy into singing. We’re always looking for people to help take the offering, so if you think you want to try carrying one of those long-handled baskets for the offering, just tell a Deacon that you want to volunteer.

February brings us to our time of Lent. The church starts out the season with pancakes on February 21, Fat Tuesday! February 22 is Ash Wednesday, with a service at 7:00pm. The service will be a solemn one with communion served. Lent will continue with Tuesday evening services at 7pm: February 28 and March 7, 14, 21, and 28. The February 28 service will be preceded by a meal at 6:00. See Jo Worthen if you want to contribute something to the meal.

We welcome new Deacons: Tom Wood, Liz Greenberg, and Sue Lindemann. Returning Deacons are Reni Harnden, Jo Worthen, Sue Brown.

## An Invitation

### *What kind of seeker are you?*

Many people are searching for ways to fill a need they have. Some people are quite satisfied with their lives in general, and at the same time they would like to find some hands-on ways to give back to those who aren't as fortunate as they are. Other people are looking for a place that can help them satisfy a spiritual need for themselves or help them teach their children about God. Finally, some people are looking for a like-minded, supportive community where they can make friends and have fun together.

The good news is that regardless of what kind of seeker you are, First Parish Church of Derry, NH can help you find what you need. Our church:

- is a mission-oriented, non-judgmental group of people who provide services to the community in numerous ways,
- offers an inspiring worship service and engaging Christian education program for adults and children, and
- gives loving support to each of its members and sponsors fun events for all ages.

Our mission is to serve the local, national and international communities in as many fruitful ways as possible. We donate much-needed financial aid to at least eight local non-profit organizations; we participate in our denomination Mission giving and we contribute to organizations in Zimbabwe and Southeast Asia, with whom we have a close personal relationship.

Our worship services and Christian education programs teach the value of a growing relationship with a loving, creating God who nurtures and supports every child of God – no matter who they are, no matter who they love, and no matter where they are on life's journey. Our members support one another through all the travails of life. Whether it be providing rides to medical appointments, meals for members who are homebound or ill, or simply a compassionate ear. We are HERE for each other. And we sponsor events where we can enjoy an afternoon or evening in each other's company, such as Trivia Night or a concert or a Santa's breakfast for kids.

If what First Parish offers might help you find what you are seeking, please give us a try. If you want to know more, you can email Pastor Deborah Roof at [pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org](mailto:pastordeborah@fpc-ucc.org) or call the office at (603) 434-0628. She'll either answer your questions or connect you with a member who has all the details you seek. Or you can simply show up and experience First Parish by coming to our services at 10am every Sunday. We livestream on our First Parish Facebook page, as well.

We hope to see you one day. We love helping people find the treasure they are seeking.  
(Submitted by Randy Brown, Moderator)

## Inspiration

I asked for strength  
 and God gave me difficulties to make me strong.  
 I asked for wisdom  
 and God gave me problems to learn to solve.  
 I asked for prosperity  
 and God gave me a brain and brawn to work.  
 I asked for courage  
 and God gave me dangers to overcome.  
 I asked for love  
 and God gave me people to help.  
 I asked for favours  
 and God gave me opportunities.  
 I received nothing I wanted.  
 I received everything I needed.

— Hazrat Inayat Khan, *The Soul of Money* by Lynne Twist

## PREPARED TO SERVE – February 25

This is a day to come together with everyone from our Conference – to worship, to share  
 and to grow together in faith.

**Prepared to Serve Registration ends February 8th. Register Today!**

**Link to Brochure with lists of Workshops [here](#)**

Prepared to Serve  
 February 25, 2023

Connecting & Reconnecting

*I want to see you and share with you the same blessings that God's Spirit has given me. Then you will grow stronger in your faith. What I am saying is that we can encourage each other by the faith that is ours. Romans 1:11-12 (CEV)*



## Fundraising Committee

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Fundraising Committee committed to increase our fundraising goal by \$2,000. Our new goal now is to raise \$12,000 in 2023. We believe that with your help, we can do this! We'll do the organization and legwork – will you participate and spread the word? We have several upcoming fundraisers for this year that we'd like to highlight.

### ON-LINE

- a. **Happy Valley Soups** – 13 varieties of soup mixes - \$9.00 each – of which FPC receives 50% - currently due to expire on February 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. **MCM** – Easter is coming – how about a/some frozen pies from Lyman Orchards or Classic cookie dough - yum – yum – yum – this fundraiser begins on February 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - c. Selling items online. Donate your gently used items, it will be sold and the church will receive **100% profit**. We are always looking for donated items such as:
    - household goods                      - collectibles                      - women's and men's clothing
    - accessories                              - home décor
- \*Reach out to Julie Greenfield if you have any questions.

**NO-COST-TO-YOU:** Participation in the **Hannaford's card program**: If you do your shopping at Hannaford, you can purchase a refillable card through the office. We all need to spend money on groceries. Using the gift card program, the church receives 5% and you get your groceries.

### IN PERSON EVENTS

1). **Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper** scheduled for February 21st from 5-7pm. Tickets sold ahead of time as well as at the door. Spread the word! \$5 -kids/seniors; \$10 -adults; \$25 max for families

2). The **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Fling** – SAVE THE DATE June 3rd.

- We will be looking for yard sale donations - we will accept most everything except large items that are difficult to move around. No large furniture, small shelves and side tables we will accept.

- We are looking for vendors and crafters, as well as yard sellers to join in the fun - \$30 for a spot and \$10 for a table. If you know vendors, crafters or people who have lots of stuff to sell, please give them this information so we can fill up all of the spaces and make this a wonderful fundraising event.

**Increase our building use:** *Please promote the use of our building for family/friend/local events.* We offer very reasonable rates. The money goes directly to the church's general fund. Think, baby shower, wedding reception, maybe a family holiday party. Check the office for rates and dates.

### **How can you help us reach our goal?**

- Volunteer to lead an event                      - Volunteer to help with an event                      - Spread the word

We regret to inform you: the Amazon Smile program was discontinued. Thank you if you helped.

Reach out to any of us for more information or to answer questions: Cathy Zylinski, Cathy Pottle, Stephanie Cm-berg, Beth Hunter, Liz Greenberg, Pastor Deborah, Jill Taylor or Julie Greenfield.

## Music Committee

The music committee continues to work on providing meaningful music for worship services. We continue to work with musicians who play on occasion. Pastor Deborah is connecting with them about playing for a pick-up choir. We continue to hope for a paid musician.

We so appreciate all the work that Katie is doing. She works with Pastor Deborah on weekly hymns; she works with the musicians; when there is no musician, she finds recordings that will work for us in worship; she works with Jill to include the hymns in the on-line bulletin; and she met with Council leaders regarding the Music Budget.

We bid goodbye to Melanie Pawl and Jean Brodeur who leave us for now. We thank them for their service to our church. We thank Brian Williams who was the Deacon Representative.

Lent is coming! Joan Virga will be with us on Tuesday evening from February 28 - March 28 at our 7:00 Prayer and Praise services. We hope that many of you will be among us.

Respectfully submitted: Eileen Cox, Deanna Butler, Katie Cobban (Staff) and Pastor Deborah

## Stewardship: Time, Talent as well as Treasure

Stewardship isn't just about money!! While it is true that we need financial support for our budget and for the Meetinghouse Rehab Project, there are a lot of other ways to serve God and First Parish.

Here are a few ideas:

- volunteer at Sunshine Soup Kitchen or our Spaghetti Supper ministry or once a month supper at Family Promise,
- participate in adult education and other offerings outside Sunday worship,
- help provide outreach support, care and services to parishioners who need it,
- help the Deacons to ensure the Sunday morning worship services are effective and satisfying for the congregation while also supporting the pastor,
- offer to make coffee Sunday morning after worship,
- help the Facilities team in making our physical surroundings safe and conducive to community and worship,
- volunteer to help with events and activities,
- imagine new ways the Church might support the surrounding community,
- join boards or committees or Council to help the organization run efficiently,
- talk to neighbors and friends about all the service work that we do, or
- evangelize the great "return on investment" First Parish brings its members.

## Nominating Committee February 2023

### **Officers\***

Moderator: Randy Brown T1 Y2  
 Treasurer: Michael Rounds  
 Financial Secretary: Pat Crowell  
 Asst. Financial Secretary: Harry Carter

Asst. Moderator: Cathy Zylinski T2 Y1  
 Clerk: Anne Engelhardt T1 Y2  
 Records Clerk: Barbara Williams T2 Y1

### **Five Boards:**

#### ***Christian Outreach and Mission (6)***

Nancy Murdock T2 Y1  
 Cyndi Gray T1 Y1  
 Karen Wilson T1 Y1  
 Liz Greenberg T1 Y1

#### ***Christian Education (7) (as needed)***

Chris Cox T1 Y3  
 Paula Robinson T1 Y3  
 Anne-Marie Merrill T1 Y1

#### ***Deacons (8)***

Sue Brown T2 Y2  
 Reni Harnden T2 Y1  
 Jo Worthen T1 Y2  
 Tom Wood T1 Y1  
 Liz Greenberg T1 Y1  
 Sue Lindemann T1 Y1

#### ***Facilities (5)***

Bill Armstrong T2 Y2  
 Dee Deranian T1 Y2  
 Bob Wilson T1 Y2

#### ***Personnel (3)***

Beth Hunter T2 Y1  
 Margie Ives T2 Y1  
 Karen Wilson T1 Y2

#### ***Church Council Members at Large (3)***

Cyndi Gray T1 Y2  
 Anne-Marie Merrill T2 Y2  
 Cathy Pottle T2 Y1

#### ***Nominating Committee***

Julie Greenfield  
 Beth Hunter  
 Reni Harnden

#### ***Music Committee (3)***

Deanna Butler T1 Y2  
 Eileen Cox T1 Y2  
 (Staff rep: Katie Cobban)

#### ***Finance Committee at large (3)***

Bill Armstrong T2Y1  
 Julie Greenfield T1Y2  
 Fred Merrill T1Y1

#### ***Safe Church Committee (2 at large)***

Christie Lombardi T1 Y2  
 Wendy Williams T2 Y1

#### ***Historical Preservation Committee (3)***

Nancy Heywood  
 Paul Lindemann  
 Wendy Williams

## BAC Rehab

We've recently completed several projects bringing us all closer to resuming use of the Sanctuary

Contractors are vetted, approved, and scheduled for removing the failing lead ceiling paint then prepping, priming, and painting the ceiling in March. A new plywood subfloor will get installed before that in February, safely encapsulating the asbestos-rich floor tiles and

providing a smooth scaffolding surface for the ceiling work. Completing the doorway opening between the Connector and the Sanctuary is also scheduled for January or February.

Volunteers helped us execute two essential prerequisite projects.

In November we removed the plaster and wooden lath and stringers from the MacGregor Hall ceiling, which were historic but too badly deteriorated to consider repairing. This revealed the structure supporting the Sanctuary floor. That structure looks adequate to proceed with current projects, but we'll need to beef it up before returning the pews and completing the Sanctuary.

In December we loosened and separated the pews, then carried down and stacked the 60 pew sections in MacGregor Hall. We also carried down and wrapped the pew cushions. These will all reside safely downstairs until the final flooring and other Sanctuary finish work is completed.

We had applied for another state LCHIP Grant for \$85,000 towards the ceiling, but did not win this one. Even so, our current Rehab Funding is adequate for these next projects, but we will need to do more fundraising to support the next phases of work.

In January we 'll start the detailed planning for those next phases, including the plaster rehab; electrical, fire, and multimedia system upgrades; and final installations, refurbishments, and finishes. Assuming success in executing these projects, we remain on track for resuming regular use of the Sanctuary for Christmas 2024.

Thanks for all your interest and support,  
Larry Krantz, Paul Lindemann, Bill Mann, and Bob Wilson



## UCC 2023 Celebration

### UCC NEW ENGLAND WOMEN'S CELEBRATION XI March 17-19, 2023

#### RIGHT IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

Celebration XI will be in Manchester, NH at the DoubleTree by Hilton in just under 4 months! Registration is now open. On January 1 prices will go up. The famous Marketplace will be open Friday, March 17, 12:00pm -10:00pm and Saturday, March 18, 7:00 am - 7:30pm.  
\*Please note, the registration fee does not include meals or accommodations.

All the details and registration for Celebration XI are on our website - [www.uccwc.org](http://www.uccwc.org)

#### Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Velda Love, national UCC Justice & Peace speaker and advocate

Rev. Karoline Lewis, PhD, foremost Biblical scholar, Gospel of John interpreter

Rev. Marcia McFee.

These amazing women collaborated with our worship team for months putting together 4 fabulous worship experiences.

Register now!

Tell your friends and women of faith in your lives to join us.

Do small fundraisers to help women with the registration fees.

Talk it up anywhere you go!

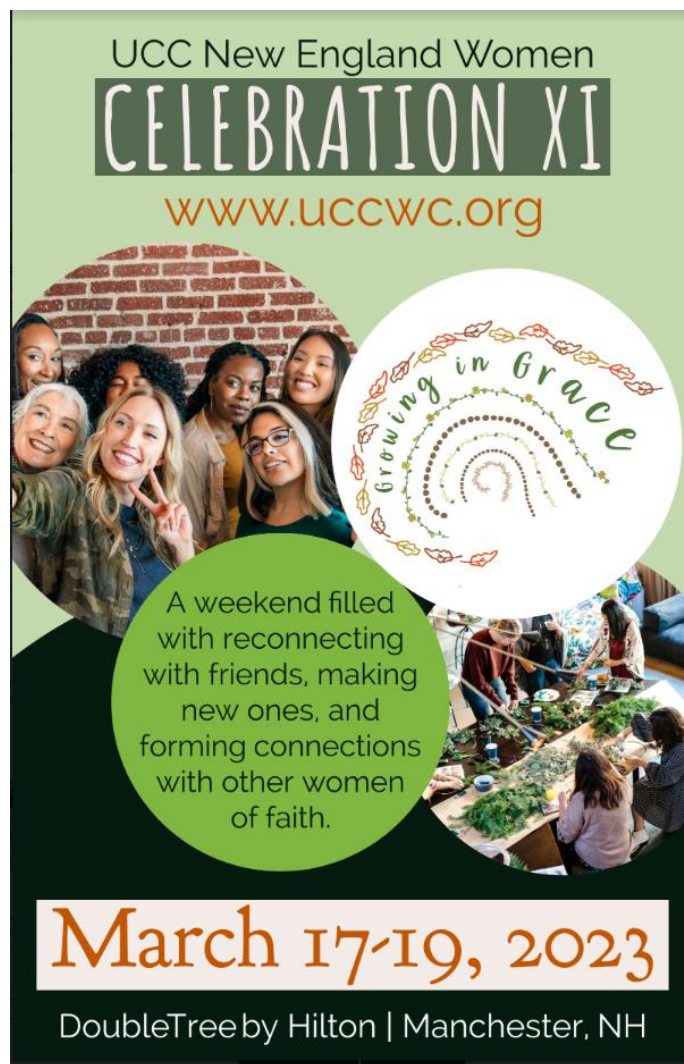
**Hope to see you all there!**

**Register here:** <https://sites.google.com/view/uccwc/register-hotels/register-now>

**Call for your room reservation.**

**More info here** <https://sites.google.com/view/uccwc/register-hotels/accommodations>

Pastor Deborah and Liz Greenberg are both presenters this year!



## Church Calendar

**Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> 6:30pm** – Board of Education;  
Serve supper at Family Promise

**Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup> 10:00am** – **The Golden Rule**

**Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> 6pm** – Virtual Labyrinth Walk at 6pm via Zoom

**Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> 6:45pm** our Adult Faith Formation group will welcome the author of the book, *Grace in Tension*, Claire McGarry

**Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup> 10:00** – **Parables of the Kingdom/Kindom**  
Baptism

**Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> 7pm** – Council Meeting

**Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> 10:00** – **Transfiguration**

**Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup> 5-7pm** - Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

**Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Ash Wednesday service at 7PM  
(Communion and Ashes)

**Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup> 4:30-5:30** - Spaghetti Supper

**Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>** – all day event in Pembroke: **Prepared to Serve**

**Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup> 10:00** – **Lent 1: Who Is the Greatest?**

**Tuesday, February 28 at 6pm** – supper; 7pm Prayer and Praise

## Bridge the Gap Fund

If you can help us meet 2023 financial demands, please pray about making a “bridge the gap” donation, helping us with a \$21K deficit. Trusting God and with your contribution we will bridge this. Every little bit helps. Thank you.



Photo credit: Paul Lindemann

**First Parish  
Congregational Church,  
UCC**

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**Office Hours**

Please call to make an appointment  
as office hours may vary daily

**Online**

[www.fpc-ucc.org](http://www.fpc-ucc.org)

[facebook.com/fpcucc](https://facebook.com/fpcucc)

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