



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of First Congregational Church

What's Inside

Holy Week8-9



Movie Night!8



Sunday Service2
 April Calendar3
 Committee Notes4-5
Spring Clean-Up 5/75
 Warren Belding7
 Thank You!9
 Our Local Mission10
 Music at the Meetinghouse11
Choir Festival.....11

The Pastoral Perspective

It is hard to think of a more compelling reminder of one's mortality than the graveyard I can see from the window of my church study. Slender obelisks, squat headstones, markers of marble and granite are all within sight of where I am typing these words. These memorials bear the names of people long dead, some famous, others not, who once were alive as you and I are today. At some future time, we will join these neighbors, perhaps not in this particular location, but most definitely in whatever it is that comes after we die.

Perhaps you would like a little more specificity from your pastor about the nature and shape of the afterlife. Sadly, I am unable to offer that. Scripture does not offer us a definitive vision with any particulars; instead, what we see in the Bible reflects an evolving, changing understanding of what might happen to us after we die. What I can offer you, though, is a promise that our present lives are not in vain, that they are made holy and thus treasured by God.

For too much of Christian history, and indeed in other faith traditions, there has been an emphasis on "getting to heaven," with a concomitant diminution of the value of the time women and men spend on Earth. Yet if this life is not sacred and of utmost importance, why did God spend so much effort creating, nurturing, fretting over, and ultimately redeeming Creation and all in it? Because, as Paul reminded the early church, the God of Jesus Christ fashioned this world and thus all that is in it bears the stamp of Divine love and creativity.

Each Sunday when I offer the benediction, I share the following words: "My friends, life is short and we do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So be swift to love and make haste to be kind." They come, slightly amended, from the nineteenth-century Swiss philosopher Henri-Frédéric Amiel by way of the Rev. Bruce Jenneker, an Episcopal priest who once served on the staff of Trinity Church Copley Square. The message is clear: we only have so much time to do God's work, to love and serve

Continued on Page 6

SUNDAY SERVICE

COMMUNITY DINNER

Sunday, April 24, 5:00 pm

Leaders: CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Thanks to the Christian Ed Committee for leading this month's dinner! Please consider lending a hand to provide this vital service to our neighbors. **Look for sign-ups in the Parish Hall.**

***Never helped before but interested in trying?
Make THIS your month!***

Worship Transportation

A Congregational Service

Some in our congregation, for various reasons, have difficulty getting to Sunday worship on their own. Others of us have plenty of room in our cars and could easily offer rides. It's time to get these two groups together!

If you need assistance getting to church on Sunday mornings, or you're willing to give a ride to someone else who does, please contact the church office.

***Our congregational life will be all the richer
for this small but vital ministry!***

Queued for Coffee Hour

April—Mission and Social Action

May—Women of the Church

June—Board of Governors

New Members Welcome!

Have you worshiped with us a few times? Have you returned because you've found a welcoming, spiritually nourishing church home here? If so, we warmly invite you to join our community of faith as a
COVENANT MEMBER.

If you would like to learn more about this invitation, please speak with Rev. Steve Silver or contact the church office.

Participate in Worship!

Serve as a Liturgist or Greeter/Usher

Ever wonder how your friends ended up handing out bulletins on Sunday morning? Or delivering the call to worship and reading scripture from the lectern? Or lighting the altar candles? Or walking gracefully from pew to pew to collect the offering?

It's easy—we asked, and they said yes.

No experience or training is required for these important roles in worship!

If you'd like to serve as either a liturgist or a greeter/usher, contact the church office.

Your congregation will thank you!

Mother's Day is Blanket Sunday

On Sunday, May 8, we are pleased once again to participate in Church World Service's **CWS Blankets Program**, a special mission opportunity that provides blankets and other essential relief supplies to people in crisis around the world (for details, please visit <http://www.cwsglobal.org/get-involved/cws-blankets/>). Please consider making a contribution of any amount to this project, in honor or memory of the mother(s) in your life. *Dedications will appear in the bulletin on May 8.*

To contribute, please complete and return the bulletin insert (later in April) or contact the church office directly with your contribution and dedication information (no later than Thursday, May 5).

APRIL 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 EASTER SUNDAY 6a Sunrise Service 6:30-8a Breakfast 10a Festival Worship 5p Community Dinner	28 3p WCBH After-School Group 6:15p Cub Scouts (Bears)	29 5:45p Cub Scouts (Wolves/Tigers) 7p Boy Scouts	30 6p UVPRN	31 7p Choir	1	2 8a Men's Breakfast 10a Juneberry Music School 2-6p UVMC Suzuki Recitals 5:30 FCC Movie Night!
3 10a Worship (Communion)/Church School 11:15a MSA 12:30-4:30p UVMC Suzuki Recitals	4 6:15p Cub Scouts (Bears)	5 5:45p Cub Scouts (Wolves/Tigers) 7p Boy Scouts	6 6p UVPRN	7 7p Choir	8 8a UVIP Senior Stories 6-9p Leb Rec Quilters' Retreat	9 9a UVIP Senior Stories 10a Juneberry Music School 10a-5p Leb Rec Quilters' Retreat
10 10a Worship and Church School 1p Classicopia: Deutschland Duo	11 3p WCBH After-School Group No Diaconate (moved to 3/18)	12 7p Boy Scouts	13 8a-4p NH-WIC 6p UVPRN 7p Christian Ed Committee	14 9:30a-4p Grafton-Orange-Sullivan Assn 7p Choir	15	16 10a Juneberry Music School
17 10a Worship and Church School	18 6:15p Cub Scouts (Bears) 7p Diaconate (moved from 3/11)	19 5:45p Cub Scouts (Wolves/Tigers) 7p Church Council 7p Boy Scouts/Troop Committee	20 6p UVPRN	21 7p Choir	22	23 10a Juneberry Music School
24 10a Worship and Church School 11:15a Board of Governors 5p Community Dinner	25 MAY NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE 10a-6p NH-WIC 3p WCBH After-School Group	26 7p Boy Scouts	27 6p UVPRN	28 7p Choir	29	30 10a Juneberry Music School
1 10a Worship and Church School 1p Classicopia: The B's in Spring	2 6:15p Cub Scouts (Bears)	3 5:45p Cub Scouts (Wolves/Tigers) 7p Boy Scouts	4 6p UVPRN	5 7p Choir	6	7 8a Men's B'fast 10a Juneberry 5:30p FCC Movie Night (?)

If your event is missing or incorrect, please notify us at church@fclub.org or 603-448-4281.

COMMITTEE NOTES

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

At its meeting on March 20, the Board of Governors chose John Gilliatt as chair, with Walter Scott serving as Secretary.

The Men's Fellowship group has offered to fund the installation of an **instant-hot-water system for the kitchen**. Over the long term, we will need to consider a more thorough kitchen renovation.

Don Collins' estimate for **painting work remaining to be done in the Sanctuary**—the lower two-thirds of the walls, the proscenium and its gold-leaf details, and trim work throughout—is \$55,000. All agreed that we would ideally like to finish this work prior to the congregation's 250th Anniversary in two years.

The church has considered an **energy audit** several times in the recent past, but it is now too late to conduct one this winter season. The cost will be roughly \$900, but we will need to contact the two competing auditors to have them refresh their bids.

Another issue carried from earlier discussions is **new signage** around the church campus to make access clearer and more welcoming. This will be addressed in greater detail at the Board's next meeting, with the Church Administrator.

The Board also considered situations in which members may wish to bid on projects it initiates and supervises, in order to avoid conflicts of interest in that regard.

The church should define a policy to handle these situations.

Surveying **other projects** around the church, board members noted that the Parish Hall floor should be refinished, for which Wayne Braley offered to get an estimate. Nan Parsons added that we might also consider replacing the carpet in the Sanctuary soon, as it has frayed and faded and presents a tripping hazard in certain spots. Other issues discussed include the proliferation of box-elder bugs, minor cosmetic repairs in the Sanctuary, and the need to repair the flue and clean the chimney at the Parsonage, which has not been done for several years.

Lastly, it was determined that our **spring clean-up** would take place May 7, following the regular Men's Breakfast, which that day would be open to the whole congregation.

DIACONATE

At its March meeting the Diaconate discussed making gifts of \$500 each to our **mission partners** WISE and Second Growth. Steve Silver also suggested that the Deacons' Fund could be used more regularly to help members of the community.

The Deacons are planning a **retreat** for a Saturday in May at some off-site location. The goal would be to discuss Diaconate priorities for this year, ideas for faith formation, and more practical matters, as well as strategies for encouraging volunteer

participation by the congregation. It was suggested that the retreat might use materials from the recent Prepared to Serve conference, which Susan Montmagny and Steve Silver reported as a positive experience.

There has been some concern about the provision of **childcare during worship**. At this time there is just one provider for children who do not attend church school, which is a safety issue and doesn't accord with our Safe Church policy.

The Deacon of the Month will ensure that the **weekly offering** is brought to the church office after the service. Counting the offering, however, is now the responsibility of the Church Administrator, who has been recording and depositing it since October.

Kathy Beckett and the **UVIP Economic Justice Team** will meet with Richard Cordray, Director of the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau. They and others from agencies across the country will present letters advocating regulation of payday lending. FCC members are encouraged to participate in the letter-writing campaign. There was some discussion about FCC's participation in an alternative to predatory lending.

The Deacons continue to discuss our **communion service**. There was good feedback on the last service using distribution, and it was decided that we would follow that format on April 3rd. Steve Silver did express concern that in

COMMITTEE NOTES

the distribution format, those who do not take the elements have no opportunity to participate, whereas intinction allows them to come forward for a blessing. He observed the need for ongoing conversation.

Jon Scott will moderate the open breakfast conversation about our **alternative witness to the UCC's "boycott and divest" resolutions** on Saturday, March 19, offering a slide presentation and three main questions—What did the NH Conference and UCC do? What concerns do people have? What is our response as a congregation? The discussion will determine if a second forum is needed and inform its direction accordingly.

Biff Simpson and Hilary Ryder offered an update on the new

Movie Night idea. The program welcomes the entire congregation, particularly children and families, which would influence the choice of films. Movies would support or promote messages sympathetic to our mission and community, without necessarily being explicitly Christian. To show films to a group of people, a license must be purchased for a modest cost. We may offer food, and we would encourage people to bring snacks and invite their friends.

In his **pastoral report**, Steve Silver noted a busy Lenten schedule and the focus on Holy Week services, which will include some great music. As in years past, Deacons will serve as readers on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Unfortunately, there will be no ecumenical Stations of the Cross walk this year, as Sacred Heart Parish is unable to participate.

Steve also reported on a positive meeting with Rabbi Edward Boraz of the UV Jewish Community and the potential for our congregations and choirs to do some joint events. Another important ecumenical event is the planned installation service for Rev. Jeff Scott at West Lebanon CC on May 15. Lastly, Steve encouraged our congregation to follow up on some initiatives that we've identified as important, such as Park Street Community Church, mission work with Native American communities, and more work on marriage equality.

Let's Have a Party... A Work Party!

Congregational Breakfast and Spring Clean-Up

Saturday, May 7 (Weather Permitting)

Breakfast at 8:00 / Clean-Up at 9:00

Please help out the Board of Governors with this seasonal effort to clean up the church yard after the winter! We'll rake lawns, trim hedges, and generally pick up around the grounds.

Prior to our clean-up project, the Men's Fellowship invites everyone to share in its monthly breakfast! We will have coffee and plenty of delicious food, along with warm fellowship. We'll serve breakfast at 8:00 and be ready to work at 9:00.

If you would like to attend breakfast, RSVP to the church office so that we'll know how many we need to feed.

Bring a rake and any other tools that might be useful. After enjoying breakfast, we'll finish up before noon. Please join us!

April Meetings

Mission/Social Action and Stewardship 4/3, 11:15

Diaconate 4/11, 7:00

Christian Education 4/13, 7:00

Church Council 4/19, 7:00

Board of Governors 4/24, 11:15

May Meetings

Mission/Social Action and Stewardship 5/1, 11:15

Diaconate 5/9, 7:00

Christian Education 5/11, 7:00

Church Council 5/17, 7:00

Board of Governors 5/22, 11:15

A Few Words About...

Congregational Contact

The Church Administrator reminds you to ensure that your contact information and preferences are current in our records. Please pass along changes to your mailing address, email, or phone numbers, and if you have any preferences regarding how we contact you, we do try to accommodate them.

Along the same lines, if you wish to contact a particular group of church members about items of church-wide interest or business, we ask that you do so through the church office. Committee chairs in particular are urged to obtain current contact information for their members from the office.

Primarily, this is to ensure that all church communications reach our congregation in a consistent, coordinated manner. We never give our “lists” to anyone outside the church, and we try to minimize and regulate the communications that we do send within our congregation.

Your assistance in this effort is greatly appreciated!



Worship in the Parish Hall.
Thanks to Kathie Schuster for our Lenten cross, a powerful image for study and prayer.



The Pastoral Perspective, *continued from Page 1*

him and his people. This quote, along with those nearby gravestones, serves as a reminder that our time is not only limited but precious—offering us the opportunity to leave a lasting impression on and make a positive difference for those with whom we share our days and those who will follow in our footsteps.

During this Easter season we celebrate God’s victory over death, knowing that in the risen Christ we do not see the end of our dying but the affirmation of life and God’s hope for each of us to lead lives of transforming, healing, nurturing purpose. In other words, to work to bring about “heaven,” what Jesus calls the Kingdom, here on Earth.

Yours faithfully,

Steve

Women of the Church
invites

All Seniors in the Church Family
to be our guests for

Luncheon
served in your honor

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2016

Coffee, tea, and fellowship starting at **11:00 am**

Performance by the Superlatives of Lebanon High School at **12:00 noon**

Luncheon served at **12:30 pm**

CONGRATULATIONS!

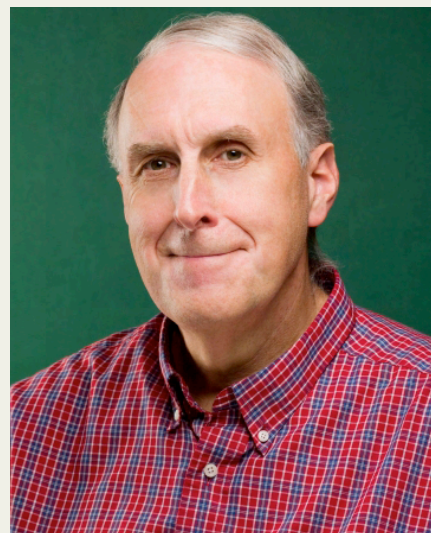
To Warren Belding on His Retirement

In February Warren Belding completed a 43-year career working in IT at Dartmouth College. During those four-plus decades, amidst revolutionary technological change, Dartmouth's IT infrastructure has transformed itself so dramatically that Warren's greatest success may simply be his ability to learn, evolve, and adjust.

Our congregation joins in celebrating Warren's professional achievement, even as we continue to be grateful for his years of service here at FCC in many, many roles.

Looking forward, Warren and Kathy are most excited about spending more time with their adorable granddaughter Arianna. Whatever pursuits and opportunities Warren's retirement offers them, we are blessed to have the Beldings in our church family.

For more on Warren's career, visit <http://tech.dartmouth.edu/its/news-events/interface/warren-belding-essential-supporting-role-dartmouth-43-years>.



THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



Hosannas to Alleluias! The Church School children offer a pageant for Palm Sunday, with congregational participation...

MOVIE NIGHT AT FCC!

Our first FCC Movie Night on April 2 was a smashing success!

Around thirty children and youthful adults enjoyed snacks, pizza, and the clever comedy of Rob Reiner's *The Princess Bride*.

We plan to repeat this event on Saturday evening, May 7, at 5:30 (movie choice TBD). All are warmly welcome to join the crowd!



THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



...And a week later, a real bunny showed up on Easter! Thanks to Elizabeth Duvall and Susan Montmagny for preparing the pageant, and to Elizabeth for her gorgeous cupcake cross. Right: Early on Easter morning, Steve and his clergy colleagues lead the sunrise service on the Green.



020 CALLED TO CARE

Called to Care offers assistance to those in our congregation who need it, for whatever reason—illness, loss of a loved one, loneliness, depression, aging issues, and divorce, to name a few. We offer support with cards, phone calls, visits, meals, and transportation.

This ministry needs your help! If the Spirit moves you to join this rewarding group, please contact Steve Silver or Linda Jacobs (mrands.mrs.j@comcast.net / 802-296-8251).

Thank You!

I want to thank everyone in the church for the cards, thoughts, food, and especially the prayers during my bout with lung cancer.

At my appointment on March 31, the doctor did a complete progress exam and has found that all the cancer that had spread to other parts of my body is gone, and the spot on my lung is significantly smaller. He does not need to see me for three months and will then do another exam.

I am very optimistic!

*Thank you again,
Pete Mason*

OUR LOCAL MISSION

Nine to Ninety A Film About Families and Aging with Dignity

Special Screening at Filene Auditorium, Dartmouth College
Wednesday, April 13, 6:00-8:00 pm

Have you had “the conversation” in your family? *Nine to Ninety* tells the story of Phyllis and Joe Sabatini, a nonagenarian couple who live at home with their daughter and granddaughter. Their declining health and other challenges prompt the family to make a difficult decision that may surprise viewers. The film considers how to live, love, and die with dignity and grace in the modern age.



Admission is free but registration is required, as seating is limited; please register at www.endowmentforhealth.org.



Volunteer at David's House

David's House is the dream of a little boy named David Cyr, who passed away in 1984 after struggling with acute leukemia. During his treatments at the children's hospital in Hanover, David and

his father Dick met families who were determined not to leave their sick children but had nowhere to stay locally and couldn't afford a hotel. Soon after David's passing, his parents and friends began raising funds to establish David's House, which in 29 years has welcomed and served over 12,500 families from around the world, while their children get the specialized treatment they need at DHMC next door.

David's House is generously supported by a variety of sources—including our own Church School kids!—**but volunteers are essential to its operations. If you are interested in volunteering at David's House, please contact Katie Nolen (603-643-2298 or katie.nolen@davidshouse.org).**

Lebanon's RSVP Volunteer Center

Volunteers getting things done locally in Grafton and Sullivan Counties

RSVP is a Lebanon-based program connecting volunteers with older adults in need of basic assistance with daily life and responsibilities. Its free services include three “signature programs”:

Chore Corps—Helps people remain in their homes, safely and with dignity, by assisting with simple repairs and household tasks, from fixing windows to grocery shopping.

Good Morning—Keeps older adults connected by arranging volunteers to make daily phone calls to check in, chat, and offer friendly support and reassurance.

Bone Builders—Offers no-impact weight training and exercise classes by trained volunteers, to improve physical health and provide social opportunities.

If you'd like more information about RSVP and its programs, or if you're interested in volunteering or receiving support, please contact RSVP at 877-711-7787 or rsvp@gcsc.org, or visit www.rsuptoday.org.

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Spring Concerts!

All in the Sanctuary, First Congregational Church

THREE CONCERTS WITH *Classicopia*

Now in its fifteenth year under the leadership of Marcia Colligan and Daniel Weiser, Classicopia offers an engaging combination of brilliant musicianship and informative discussion in a relaxed atmosphere.

Suggested admission for all concerts \$20, FCC members \$10, children 12 and under free.

Sunday, April 10, at 1:00 pm—**Deutschland Duos**

Pianists Dan Weiser and Philip Liston-Kraft entertain as always, with a delightful, German-themed program of Bach, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Moszkowski, and more.

Sunday, May 1, at 1:00 pm—**The B's in Spring**

Tim Schwarz brings both violin and viola to present an alliterative concert with Dan Weiser, featuring Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and Bernstein.

Sunday, May 22, at 1:00 pm—**Violin Virtuoso**

Violinist and Hanover native Roseminna Watson brings her national reputation back to the Upper Valley. She and Dan Weiser will perform Faure, Beethoven, and more.

A CAPPELLA SHOWCASE WITH HARMONY NIGHT—Saturday, June 11, at 7:00 pm

Dan Signor brings his community *a cappella* group Harmony Night to our Sanctuary for a program of popular favorites, upbeat rhythms, and rich chords. *Free-will donation to benefit summer music scholarships.*

WILLIAM ÖGMUNDSON: NEW MUSIC FOR PIANO—Friday, June 24, at 7:30 pm

Will Ögmundson returns to share his piano virtuosity on a program featuring all-new material from not one but **two** recordings he's releasing in June. And an audience-request medley is always a possibility!

10th Biennial Choir Festival
March 6, 2016, FCC Sanctuary



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

Weekly Worship and Church School: Sundays, 10:00 am • Office Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9-12
10 South Park Street, P.O. Box 230, Lebanon, NH 03766 • 603-448-4281 • church@fccleb.org • www.fccleb.org
Rev. Stephen R. Silver — silver@fccleb.org • Newsletter Submissions — church@fccleb.org