



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of First Congregational Church

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The Pastoral Perspective

In less than three weeks we'll celebrate Easter, the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. To those of us who attend church, this is obvious, but to the wider society, this fact has been lost. Exhibit A in my argument is to the right.

For many, Easter is just another commercial opportunity, yet one more way to celebrate "Spring." At times, this makes me jealous of Jews and Muslims. Passover and Eid al Fitr

after all, aren't used as marketing props. But rather than lament this fact, I give thanks that Easter, with its message of renewal, has so permeated our culture. And while lots of people may not be rejoicing the triumph of Life over Death, that doesn't mean that we can't.

One thing that 21st-century culture gets wrong is what it thinks we Christians believe is of paramount importance. Consider our holidays: many Americans would identify Christmas as the central day in our calendar. But we know Christmas isn't as important as Easter. Christmas is the beginning of the story, while Easter is the unexpected, glorious culmination. Christmas is the promise, and Easter is its fulfillment.

Like Christmas, Easter has its own season, one we in the church will observe until Pentecost arrives in June. The truth is, our entire liturgical year is built around Easter and grew out of a conviction that the day is central to our faith. We worship on Sundays because that was the day that Jesus rose from the dead. In a way, we commemorate this miracle every week of the year.

This year, let's give thanks for the tremendous, world-changing thing that God did in and through Jesus. Let's rejoice that Truth has prevailed over Lies, and Hope over Despair. And if you want to enjoy some Peeps cereal while doing so, I believe there may still be some at the store.

Yours faithfully,

Steve



SUNDAY SERVICE

Lenten Lunch Bag Offering

Collection on Palm Sunday, April 14

Our Church School children will collect your lunch-bag offerings for two vital organizations:

David's House (davids-house.org) and
Epilogos Charities (epilogos.org)

David's House offers lodging, meals, and home-away-from-home care for families whose children are in treatment next door at DHMC. Epilogos seeks to improve the lives of people in San Jose Villanueva, El Salvador, a town dear to many at FCC and a model for focused global outreach. This offering will purchase basic supplies for David's House and fund scholarships for SJV's school.

The Lenten offering encourages FCC's children to see stewardship as a way to share God's love, by helping other kids in challenging circumstances.

FLOWERS FOR EASTER

We will again adorn the Sanctuary with flowers for Easter morning, and all are invited to contribute in honor or memory of family and friends. You may either order flowers through the church office or supply your own. **Dedications will appear in the bulletin on EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 21.**

This year FCC will be ordering 6" lilies only, at a cost of \$7 each. You may supply your own flowers, of any variety, for our altar display.

Orders through the church office must be placed by noon on THURSDAY, APRIL 11. Dedication information must be received by WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17. If you're donating your own flowers, please deliver them by SATURDAY, APRIL 20.

Queued for Coffee Hour

April—Mission and Social Action

May—Women of the Church

June—Board of Governors

New Members to Be Received

Palm Sunday Worship, April 14

Have you found a welcoming, spiritually nourishing church home here? Would you like to get involved in our programs and ministries? If so, we invite you to join our faith community as a covenant member.

If you'd like to learn more about this invitation, or would like to join the church on Palm Sunday, please speak with the Rev. Steve Silver.

Questions? Please speak with the Rev. Steve Silver or contact the church office.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY: PHILIPPIANS

Sundays, April 7 and 14, at 9:00 am

All are invited to join this study of Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, led by the Rev. Steve Silver. We'll explore a new chapter each week and learn what it means to Paul for us to be a living church.

Feel free to come to either session or both.

Community Dinner

Sunday, April 28, 5:00 pm

Leaders: WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

Many thanks to the WOC for organizing this month's Community Dinner! Please lend a hand to provide this vital service to our neighbors, especially if you'd like to help for the first time.

Sign-ups will be posted in the Parish Hall.

Would You Like to Participate in Worship?

Members of our congregation already sing in our choir and serve as greeters, ushers, and liturgists. Additional roles for lay leadership include prayers of invocation or dedication, sharing stewardship messages, or even leading children's moments.

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

If you're interested in this opportunity to serve, please contact the church office.

APRIL 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9a Lenten Bible Study: Philippians 10a Worship (OGHS) and Church School 11:15a New Members Open House	1 3p WCBH After-school Group 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bears/Webelos/Girls)	2 4:45p UVIP 7p BSA Troop 279	3 5:30p Cub Scout Pack Committee 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	4 3p WCBH After-school Group 7p Choir	5 1p UVIP Exec Council 6-9p Leb Rec Dept Quilters' Retreat	6 9a-5p Leb Rec Dept Quilters 7p Camerata New England
7 9a Lenten Bible Study: Philippians 10a Worship and Church School (Communion) 11:15a Campaign Planning Session	8 3p WCBH After-school Group 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bears/Webelos/Girls) 7p Diaconate	9 2p UVIP Personnel Comm 7p BSA Troop 279	10 8a-4p NH-WIC 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto 7:15p Christian Ed Committee	11 5:45p Cub Scouts (Lions) 7p Choir	12	13
14 PALM SUNDAY 9a Lenten Bible Study: Philippians 10a Liturgy of the Palms and Church School	15 No WCBH After-school Group	16 No Scouts No Council (moved to 4/23)	17 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	18 MAUNDY THURSDAY No G-O-S Assn 7p Communion and Tenebrae	19 GOOD FRIDAY 12-3p Seven Last Words 7p Service of the Word and Prayer	20
H O L Y W E E K						
21 EASTER SUNDAY 6a Sunrise Service 6:30a Community Breakfast 10a Festival Worship and Church School 3p Classicopia	22 3p WCBH After-school Group	23 7p Church Council (moved from 4/16) 7p BSA Troop 279/Committee	24 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	25 10a-6p NH-WIC 7p Choir	26	27
28 10a Worship and Church School 11:15a Bd of Govs 5p Community Dinner	29 3p WCBH After-school Group 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bears/Webelos/Girls)	30 7p BSA Troop 279	1 5:30p Cub Scout Pack Committee 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	2 3p WCBH After-school Group 7p Choir	3 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	4 1:30p UVMC Suzuki Recitals 7:30p Bel Canto: Sudden Light

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

COMMITTEE NOTES

CHURCH COUNCIL

Treasurer Terry Ellison reported to Council that we have already spent roughly \$3,000 of the \$5,000 we budgeted for **capital improvements** in 2019. Significant expenditures beyond budgeted amounts may be authorized by Council; for capital improvements, Council would recommend a distribution from the Dole Trust. The budgeted amount was proposed and accepted with the understanding that should we decide to pursue the larger capital projects identified by the Board of Governors, those could be funded by the Dole Trust and, perhaps, a campaign. (Insulation, for example, will likely be funded with Dole money, while visible Sanctuary refurbishment will be a campaign purpose.)

For the **Diaconate**, Barbara Jones reported on funding for the Open Door Ministry and plans to review our membership list. The Deacons have discussed a desire for more bible-study programs, the importance of more intentionally welcoming individuals at worship and coffee hour, and a possible presentation on FCC's history. They also have recognized the need to recruit new members and build our congregation; an important part of that effort is the creation of new welcome brochures to be placed in the pews for worship and other events.

For **Stewardship**, Jon Scott noted that campaign planning has posed three broad areas for development—creation care, for environmentally responsible resource usage; mission and outreach, with an emphasis on

hunger and poverty relief; and the growth of our music ministry. The planned congregational campaign discussion will now be on April 7.

Kathy Beckett noted for **Mission and Social Action** the success of this month's initiative to fill our shopping cart with food and some personal-care items for donation to Listen and the Haven. Given the positive response, Council weighed the possibility of sustaining such a collection year-round, perhaps by designating different beneficiaries every month or two. Many in the congregation are unaware that we've long collected food items in a basket in the Narthex; this would renew and expand that effort. Valerie Nevel suggested the Humane Society as a potential beneficiary, as it takes up collections for people who cannot afford to care for and keep their pets.

John Gilliatt reviewed the **Board of Governors'** current work, including the recent completion by Wayne Braley of several insulation projects in the church offices and Parish Hall. Several commended John and his committee for all the work they have completed in the past couple years. John noted that the Board would be planning for a Spring Clean-Up Day, including the clearance of storage areas in the dirt cellar below the Sanctuary.

For the **Music Committee**, Brian Clancy reported on the great success of Paul Ayres' visit in early March. Paul's choral workshop, "Singing the Psalms," attracted about 50 singers of varying experience from across the Upper Valley, many of

whom expressed appreciation that FCC offered this opportunity to the community. Sunday's worship service and organ recital also drew good crowds. Brian noted a very full concert schedule this spring, particularly in May. Linda Jacobs pointed out that many in the sellout audience for Lula Wiles (an LOH on Location event) had never been inside our church. It was again noted that new welcome brochures could well be effective in reaching some of these new visitors.

In his **pastor's report**, Rev. Steve Silver highlighted plans for Lent, including a four-week bible study on the book of Philippians. On Easter we will once again participate in the sunrise service and host a breakfast afterward. Steve will soon meet with Nan Parsons to discuss ideas for Church School for next year. He is going to Cleveland in late March to meet with the UCC Historical Council, after which he plans to step down from that group.

April Meetings

<i>Mission/Social Action</i>	TBD
<i>Diaconate</i>	4/8, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	4/10, 7:15
<i>Church Council</i>	4/23, 7:00*
<i>Board of Governors</i>	4/28, 11:15
*moved due to Holy Week	

May Meetings

<i>Mission/Social Action</i>	5/5, 11:15
<i>Diaconate</i>	5/13, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	5/8, 7:15
<i>Church Council</i>	5/21, 7:00
<i>Board of Governors</i>	TBD

COMMITTEE NOTES

Steve reported that he'd been to a meeting at the NH Conference offices about mission efforts, from which he encouraged us that FCC is doing good work in that area. He also recommended the book *Small Church Essentials*, which offers some perspective on small congregations like ours (those with 200 or fewer members). While we shouldn't be complacent, Steve observed that FCC is healthy and active when considered in this wider context.

We'll welcome **new members** in worship on Palm Sunday, April 14. Regarding how this process works at FCC, Jon Scott wondered whether we might have new members share something about their background with the congregation when they join. All agreed that this would be helpful in connecting new members to the congregation, although it was not clear how best to do this in a way that was comfortable for all.

DIACONATE

Bob Gerlach opened the March Diaconate meeting with a reading on free will from C. S. Lewis' *The Case for Christianity*. Several pastoral-care cards were circulated, and the Deacons reviewed new schedules for communion and other duties. They also authorized additional purchases of food and gas cards for the Open Door Ministry.

Barb Jones reviewed the Diaconate's responsibilities, including worship life, evangelism, lay pastoral care, and membership. Deacons play a vital role in the reception of new members, and the group will soon undertake a full review and update of the church membership roster. They continue to schedule weekly ushers and greeters. Communion services require preparation and administration of the elements, and the Deacons remain on call for

baptisms as needed. Replenishment of children's activity kits could be done as part of a future Diaconate meeting, and it was noted that the responsibility for Church School staffing now lies with Council.

The Deacons also discussed other responsibilities. Phil Hammond encouraged the more intentional welcoming of individuals at worship and coffee hour. Steve Teeter noted that the monthly men's breakfast has been suspended pending a long-term arrangement. Kathy Beckett encouraged more bible study groups if the Lenten series is well attended. Regarding recruiting new members, the music program is an effective draw, but a welcome brochure is needed in the Sanctuary to provide background to visitors. A lecture on FCC's history could engage a wide audience, and the church mission statement could be distributed as part of the Annual Report.

HOLY WEEK AT FCC

April 14—Palm Sunday

10 am: Liturgy of the Palms, with Children's Procession (*Sanctuary*)

April 18—Maundy Thursday

7 pm: Service of Communion and Tenebrae, Stripping of the Altar (*Sanctuary*)

April 19—Good Friday

12-3 pm: Quiet Meditation on the Seven Last Words (*Sanctuary*)

7 pm: Service of the Word and Prayer (*Sanctuary*)

April 21—EASTER SUNDAY

6 am: Ecumenical Sunrise Service (*Colburn Park*)

6:30 am: Community Breakfast to Benefit Listen (*Parish Hall*)

10 am: Festival Worship Service (*Sanctuary*), Easter Egg Hunt

OUR LOCAL MISSION

Tools for Aging with Dignity

Tuesdays, April 23, 30, May 7, 1:00-3:00
Aging Resource Annex, UV Senior Center

Seniors and their families are invited to join this course led by trained facilitators Jan Lord and Jodi Austin. You will learn how to organize your affairs, stay active and connected, and plan for a time when you may not be able to advocate for yourself in important decisions. The course consists of three sessions:

Calendar of Seasonal Living—A fun tool to help seniors stay active and connected to the community year-round.

Honoring Care Decisions—Detailed information that will help you select a Health Care Agent, prepare an Advance Directive, and have that all-important family conversation about end-of-life decisions.

Resource Checklist for Life Care Planning—Record information in case someone else needs to manage your affairs due to illness, incapacity or death.

Enrollment is limited! For registration or questions, please call 603-653-3460 or email deb.dworak@comcast.net.

Understanding Opiate Addiction **Three-Class Community Workshop**

Tuesdays, April 23, 30, May 7, 6:00-8:15
Hartford Career & Tech Center, WRJ

Learn about the opiate crisis, signs of opiate addiction, the effects of addiction on people and their families, and what individuals and communities can do to help. Funded by the Vermont Department of Health.

**Cost \$30; registration at www.hactc.com.
For more details, contact 802-359-4739
or adulsted@hartfordschools.net.**

FCC Fights Local Poverty and Food Insecurity

Our March shopping-cart drive to collect food and supplies for Listen and the Haven brought a hugely generous response, as our congregation responds to rising poverty and hunger in the Upper Valley. The Mission and Social Action Committee is proposing to sustain that effort year-round, with a different beneficiary designated each month.

During the month of April, we will collect pet food and supplies for donation to the UPPER VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY. Many who struggle with food and financial insecurity just manage to take care of themselves but cannot afford to keep their beloved pets, whose companionship is vital in difficult times. UVHS seeks to address this need, and this month we can help! (*More details to come.*)

Let's all plan to do our part to fill the cart!



This cart may be empty now, but last month we filled it to overflowing—TWICE! *Let's do that again...*

*** FOOD DONATIONS FOR HEADREST ***

FCC has for many years collected food in a basket in the Narthex for the benefit of our friends in recovery next door at Headrest. Please consider contributing as you're able, anytime during the month.

Thanks to all for joining these efforts to support our neighbors in the wider community.

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION

PAUL AYRES VISITS FCC. The first weekend of March we happily welcomed composer, conductor, and organist Paul Ayres for a richly rewarding choral workshop, a brilliant organ concert, and the premiere of *The Spacious Firmament*, a choral work commissioned for FCC's 250th anniversary.



THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



MARCH AND THE MASONS. Continuing an annual ritual, Lent opened with ashes created by burning last year's palms; FCC's choir prepared and served Community Dinner; and Pete Mason's 90th birthday brought a cast of grateful family members and a festive lunch for the entire congregation.



MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Spring Concerts

All in the Sanctuary, FCC

Camerata New England: Spring Piano Trios—Saturday, April 6, 7:00 pm

The acclaimed chamber music group Camerata New England makes its debut performance at FCC with a program of glorious piano trios by Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Turina. Violinist Omar Chen Güey, cellist Linda Galvan, and pianist Evelyn Zuckerman have all performed on international stages. *Adults \$28, under 18 free; tickets available online at cameratanewengland.org, by phone at 802-785-4833, or at the door.*

Classicopia: Reed 'Em and Weep—Sunday, April 21, 3:00 pm

Pianist Dan Weiser welcomes Margaret Herlehy (oboe) and Janet Polk (bassoon) for a lyrical program of trios by Ludwig van Beethoven, Ludwig Milde, Paul Carr, Andre Previn, and more. Perfect for after Easter brunch! *Admission \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; tickets at classicopia.org/concert/reed-em-weep/.*

Bel Canto Chamber Singers: Sudden Light—Saturday, May 4, 7:30 pm / Sunday, May 5, 5:00 pm

Directed by Jane Woods, the Bel Canto Chamber Singers celebrate the many forms of light that illuminate our lives. The program features G. F. Handel, Ola Gjeilo, and many others, along with folk, jazz, and spiritual arrangements. *Adults \$15, students \$10, under 13 free; more at www.belcantosingers.org/concerts.html.*

Classicopia: Musical Mothers—Saturday, May 11, 7:30 pm

Cellist Cecylia Barczyk joins Dan Weiser for beautiful, dramatic, but sadly neglected music for cello and piano by three female composers of late-19th-century France: Melanie Bonis, Luisa LeBeau, and Cecile Chaminade. *Admission \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; tickets at classicopia.org/concert/musical-mothers/.*

LOH ON LOCATION: April Verch Band—Friday, May 17, 7:30 pm

Champion Canadian fiddler, singer, and stepdancer April Verch plays traditional styles from her native Ottawa Valley but adds a dynamic, fresh interpretation of bluegrass, country, and Americana. *Adults \$18.50, youth \$8.50; tickets and more at lebanonoperahouse.org/events/april-verch-band/.*

UVMC Sing & Play Festival—Saturday, May 18, 2:00 pm

Reprising last year's Sing & Play 50k event, our neighbors at UVMC have planned a full afternoon of music at various sites in downtown Lebanon, to be sung and played by faculty, students, and audiences alike. *Full schedule and contribution information TBD; for more, please visit www.uvmusic.org/spfestival.*

Camerata New England: Spring Piano Duets and Trios—Sunday, May 19, 2:00 pm

Violinist Omar Chen Güey, cellist Linda Galvan, and pianist Hannah Shields bring Camerata New England back to FCC with a wonderfully lush program of Rachmaninoff's G minor cello sonata (op. 19) and Dvorák's F minor piano trio (op. 65). *Adults \$28, under 18 free; see April 6 listing above for ticket information.*

Samara Piano Quartet—Friday, May 31, 7:30 pm

This excellent chamber ensemble—Keene-based pianist Nicholas Burns, violinist Louisa Stonehill, violist Marcia Cassidy, and cellist Paul Cohen—play a gorgeous program of music by Vincent d'Indy, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Gabriel Fauré. *Adults \$20, students \$5; more at www.samarapianoquartet.org/.*

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 • Music: music@fccleb.org • Newsletter Submissions: church@fccleb.org



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

10 South Park Street

PO Box 230

Lebanon, NH 03766

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

HOLY WEEK
AT FCC
APRIL 14-21

Palm Sunday	10a Liturgy of the Palms, Children's Procession
Maundy Thursday	7p Communion, Tenebrae, Stripping of Altar
Good Friday	12-3p Quiet Meditation on the Seven Last Words 7p Service of the Word and Prayer
Easter Sunday	6a Ecumenical Sunrise Service (<i>Colburn Park</i>) 6:30a Community Breakfast to Benefit Listen 10a Festival Worship Service, Easter Egg Hunt



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Spring Concerts

All in the Sanctuary, FCC

Classicopia: Reed 'Em and Weep—Sunday, April 21, 3:00 pm

Bel Canto Chamber Singers: Sudden Light—Saturday, May 4, 7:30 pm / Sunday, May 5, 5:00 pm

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