



## April 9, 2020 COVID-19 Online Edition

### Ripples &

### Reflections Reflections

By  
Senior Pastor  
Rev. Kevin  
Pleas

*And all that had been commanded them they told briefly to those around Peter. And afterward Jesus himself sent out through them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.*

— The Shorter Ending of Mark

Dear Friends,

What is the most important thing to you about being a Christian? Obviously, there are a lot of ways we could answer that question. For me though, it all boils down to one thing. We are free to live our lives without fear. To me, in its simplest form, that is the whole message of the gospel. The “shadow of death” that hangs over our human lives need not darken our hearts, because death itself has been shown up for the imposter it always was by the death and resurrection of Christ. You’ve often heard me say that love is the center, the heart and soul, of his message, and it is. But how can we truly love until we are free of fear?

In the first letter of John, there is a beautiful line we should all keep handy. “Perfect love casts out fear.” (First John 4:18) In his book, *What Happy People Know*, Dan Baker talks about how modern neurological science has proven that this ancient line from John is literally, physically, true for us. The human brain, according to the research, literally cannot be in a state of love and a state of fear at one and the same time. But the casting out of fear by perfect love is more than just an individual experience. It is nothing short of what Jesus himself demonstrated on the cross. The language of Easter is always about Jesus’ victory over death, and the freedom to live joyfully and lovingly that this victory has made possible.

Stop and think for a minute. How badly do you imagine our world needs this message? How much of the ways we have been treating one another these last years—our uncompromising politics, our hoarding of wealth, our rejecting of immigrants, our running and hiding from disease and climate change—how much of it all is driven by fear? Let me tell you something that I know you don’t want to hear. We are all

going to die. Hopefully, not any time soon, but sooner or later, one way or another, we are all going to die. The question is not, how can we keep this from happening? The question is, how are we going to live until it does?

We can certainly choose to believe that this one lifetime is all we get. A lot of people make that choice these days. But much as it may feel like a rational decision that lines up with the available evidence, ultimately, it is a choice that can only lead to despair. The closer we get to the end, the more anxious and self-focused most of us would become. On the other hand, if we embrace the gospel of Christ’s victory over death, it takes the pressure off. We can live in the confidence that death is not the end. We can live joyfully and lovingly apart from the constant threat of impending doom. Clearly, that message is especially important as we all deal with the demands, sacrifices and sufferings of our current situation. So, when Easter comes, call it history, call it metaphor, call it the greatest story ever told, call it whatever you want. But the bottom line is this: perfect love casts out fear. God’s love for you is perfect. You need not live in fear. That is the sacred and imperishable proclamation of Easter.

Yours in Grace,  
Rev. Kevin

# Happy Easter!

### **ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES**

Until service at church resumes, please join Adam and the Rev. Kevin on **FACEBOOK LIVE** Sunday Mornings at 10AM as they offer a live Hymn Sing and a short prayer service on our Facebook page!

Music for Sunday and an outline of the service is posted on the website under Bulletins.

TO FIND OUR FACEBOOK PAGE GO DIRECTLY TO:  
[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FCCMANCHESTER](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FCCMANCHESTER)

You may also Google Search  
“FCC MANCHESTER FACEBOOK”  
or you can follow our links from FCC’s homepage.

# Senior Moments

The sun is shining today and that is a rare treat. I hope everyone can get out a little bit and enjoy the sun. Just remember your masks and gloves.

This situation has certainly given me a new perspective on life. I found myself complaining about all the gray hair that is growing in, complaining about the empty grocery store shelves, complaining about wearing a mask and gloves, complaining about not being able to go to the shoe store for new Spring shoes and not going to the Mall for new Spring clothes. Then I started thinking about all the people who have lost jobs, all the people who are sick and dying, all the doctors and nurses and first responders who are putting their lives on the line every day to save other lives. I'm thinking about the homeless who are having problems getting food to eat. I have stopped complaining.

I am grateful for the sun and the rain. I am grateful that I can still find food at the grocery store. I am grateful for the electronic devices that are keeping me connected with family and friends. I am grateful for Kevin and Adam and Lauren for bringing us some community worship time every week. I am grateful for a loving and caring God who is with us through this turmoil and will be with us when it ends. I am finding comfort in my daily prayers and devotion and meditation.

I pray for all of you every day and I hope you are all keeping well and making the best of a difficult situation. I'll continue to make calls so please call me at any time if you feel like talking. I pray for peace and health for all of you and look forward to seeing you.

Barbara Papagian  
Director of Parish Care

Beginning Monday, April 13th, the Reverend Kevin Pleas will be hosting a "Morning Watch Weekday Service" on our Facebook book page at [www.Facebook.com/FCCManchester](http://www.Facebook.com/FCCManchester).

This special service will run each morning, Monday through Friday at 9:30AM. Please tune in and join us!



## ***The Spring Senior Fellowship Luncheon has been postponed!***

The date of May 12th has been cancelled and rescheduled for **October 20th, 2020**. This luncheon will be our 60th anniversary celebration! Look for your invitation in the mail coming this fall.



## **▪ April Committee Meetings ▪**

**Committee Chairs will contact you regarding ZOOM online meetings or conference calls.**

## **Prayers through email and calls....**

For a call, email, or Rev. Kevin's **IN THE SPIRIT blog**, email him at [RevKPleas508@gmail.com](mailto:RevKPleas508@gmail.com). Or call the office.

Keep in touch with Barbara at [BPapagian@FCCManchesterNH.org](mailto:BPapagian@FCCManchesterNH.org)



## **Would you like to add your cellphone number to our Church Directory listing?**

Please email Linda at [LBonetti@FCCManchesterNH.org](mailto:LBonetti@FCCManchesterNH.org) or call her



## **Thanks to all who have continued to send in pledges and donations during this trying time!**

**Our Church continues to stand proud on the corner of Hanover & Union Streets; your staff continues to work—in a new way—to keep you connected to each other and the Lord; and friends and members continue to reach out to support one another through calls, notes, emails, video chats, and some pretty interesting online images! Plus our website and Facebook are evolving daily!**

Unfortunately, your pledges and donations are still needed to keep this going. We have a variety of ways to make donations...

- **Mail**—you don't need to mail your envelope every week...put a check in the mail and consolidate a few weeks to make it easier for you. Include one envelope or write your number on the check.
- **Mailbox**—there's a mail slot in the Chapel door, but we prefer that you don't venture out.
- **Online Banking**—if you use online banking through your own bank, set up FCC to schedule your pledge or donations. There are no fees for this service and your bank mails us a check.
- **Vanco Online**—You can access Vanco through our website under the Giving tab, then click on Donate Now. You will be directed to a secure site where you can schedule giving. We do pay a fee for each transaction.
- **Don't send cash**—please wait until we are all together again to give cash to the plate.

***Please don't hesitate to email me— [LBonetti@FCCManchesterNH.org](mailto:LBonetti@FCCManchesterNH.org)—or call 625-5093.***

With love & appreciation, Administrator Linda Bonetti, Treasurer Jeffrey Frye & Stewardship Chair Dan McKenney



## Congratulations to Bill Jones!

## New Hampshire Knights of Columbus to Award Bill Jones!

The Executive Board of the NH Knights of Columbus has selected beloved FCC member William "Bill" Jones to receive its 2020 Granite Award. The Granite Award was established in 1989 and is the most prestigious award presented by the NH Knights of Columbus. It is bestowed upon those citizens who exhibit exemplary works of community service and volunteerism in the state of New Hampshire. Bill is being recognized for his 30 years of service to the Special Olympics of New Hampshire, which has raised over \$102,000, and has helped over 3,000 New Hampshire residents with intellectual disabilities.



This article courtesy of the *Neighborhood News* newspaper

## Open & Affirming Committee News!

### ▪ Open and Affirming Committee ▪

### **Living into our Covenant - to be Open, Affirming, and Accessible to All.**



The committee arranged for Accessibility Consultant Janet Zeller to complete a review of FCC in February. With help and support of Building Manager Larry Dearborn, Janet and committee members toured our facility (inside and outside), with an eye toward accessibility and accommodations. Janet met with the group following the tour to share thoughts and observations about other aspects of welcome and accessibility related to worship, language, attitudes, and beliefs. She sent a follow-up report and also provided print resources on a number of topics. Janet prefaced her review and the report by explaining that churches are not required to meet the standards of public buildings, but most churches (including ours) want to "... ensure equal opportunity for all people regardless of abilities to participate actively in the full life of the church." She also noted that accessibility efforts at FCC have respected the significant historic features of the building. John Rowe and Jeanine Finefrock shared highlights of the report with the Church Council and the report was shared with the Trustees as well.

#### **Accessibility Review Highlights:**

- Janet expressed appreciation for the beauty of our sanctuary, and noted wheelchair cutouts, the newly installed handrail on the steps to the altar, large print bulletins, and portable FM listening devices.
- Accessible parking spaces, the ramp, parlor entrance, most doors, our elevator, classrooms, kitchen, dining room, recreation room, and offices comply overall with standards.
- All restrooms were reviewed. The main floor accessible restroom meets standards and she offered suggestions to improving accessibility and safety of the other main floor restroom and second floor restrooms.
- Janet offered helpful, economical suggestions to improve signage in several areas. Her suggestions about doorknobs are easy to implement and will make interior doors easier to open for all.
- Discussion also included appropriate terminology and tips for interacting with people with disabilities.

Look for news about upcoming Open and Affirming events in the *Sunday News* and the *Window*.

#### **Open and Affirming Committee**

*Kathy Alger, Bruce Attridge, Stephen Bearse, Jeanine Finefrock, Jeffrey Frye, Karen Hawver, John Rowe, Kathy Rowe, Bridget Thornton, and Carol Soucy, Chair*

## News from Outreach



**Hallsville Elementary School**

Members of the committee held a Zoom meeting with Danielle Saitz, guidance counselor and Stacey Evans, social worker for Hallsville School on March 26. We discussed the food programs and learned that during the shutdown meals are being delivered by school bus to every child in Manchester in need. This includes weekends. Kudos to the Manchester school system for taking care of our children during this crisis. We assured Stacey and Danielle that we would help them in anyway we could should the need arise.

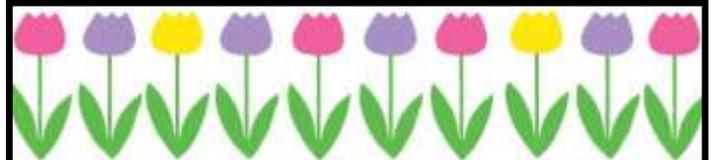
## Videos Available on Our Website!

Did you know that we have video clips from past services that you may view from our website? This includes all of Kevin's online Facebook worship services thus far, and also, choir music & other past services and musical performances.

Just log onto [www.FCCManchesterNH.org](http://www.FCCManchesterNH.org).

Then scroll down the front page until you find "Current Videos" and click there to view!

A very special thank you to Neil Funcke for recording and posting these special videos for all to enjoy!



## Church Scholarships for 2020

As we celebrate our 2020 high school graduates and recognize all members of our church community who are continuing their higher education, the Scholarship Committee announces the request for applications.

Over the years, many of our church members have given funds to provide scholarships for our seniors as they graduate from high school to help them with their upcoming higher education expenses. In recent years, First Congregational Church's Scholarship Fund has been blessed by substantial bequests from long time members, including Virginia Smith and more recently, Gordon P. Woolner in late 2016. Such bequests have enabled the Committee to not only increase the amount of scholarships awarded but to increase the outreach of its awards.

This year, we will honor every graduating senior, and offer the opportunity to apply for scholarships to our seniors and others to reward individual excellence and encourage further education to others at whatever stage they are in.

So, if you are a 2020 high school graduate, a church member starting out on a new career that requires further education, or in the process of attaining a postgraduate degree or certificate, we encourage you to apply.

### The First Congregational Scholarships are:

#### The Senior Scholarship

This award may be given to deserving students and will depend upon the student's potential for new education, activity in the church, academic record, and future plans. Official school transcripts are required.

#### The Beth Jenkins Ernest Scholarship Award

The Award may be given to a graduating high school senior young woman who shows high potential for new education, activity in the church, academic record, and future plans. Official school transcripts are required. An essay of 300 words is also required in response to the following question: *How do I intend to express the values of First Congregational Church in my future career?* The recipient will present her essay to the congregation in Scholarship Sunday.

#### The William P McGuiness Scholarship Award

The Award may be given to a graduating high school senior young man who shows high potential for new education, activity in the church, academic record, and future plans. Official school transcripts are required. An essay of 300 words is also required in response to the following question:

*How do I intend to express the values of First Congregational Church in my future career?* The recipient will present his essay to the congregation in Scholarship Sunday.



#### A New Chapter Award

This award is reserved for active church members who may decide to take a new road in life, to enter a "new chapter." Perhaps this new pathway may be to pursue new schooling or enter a new career that requires further education.

#### The Higher Education Award

This award may be given to students who have graduated from high school who are continuing their education, whether or not they have received a Church Scholarship in the past. The intent of this award is to support our church members as they continue to pursue their education either at college undergraduate or postgraduate level or in pursuit of certificate jobs training programs. Students will be asked to respond to an essay question about how their foundation from FCC has effected their college careers and why/what they are doing and planning to do as they move forward.

If you are interested in applying for any of the scholarships please let us know, and we will provide you with the appropriate Scholarship Application. Please be aware that First Congregational Church's Scholarship program is a merit-based program for members of the church as of the application deadline.

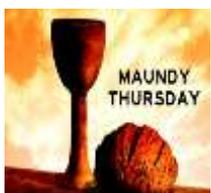
### All Scholarship Applications should be submitted by May 15, 2020.

For further questions please feel welcome to ask a committee member. Written applications are to be delivered to the church office addressed **to the attention of the Scholarship Committee chair** no later than **May 15, 2020.**

We will celebrate all of our 2020 high school graduates and recognize members of our Church community who are continuing their higher education on June 7, 2020. Scholarships and Awards will be given on that Sunday.

Ellie Stetson, Chair  
Peter Perich  
Lucia Carlisle  
Dawn Gagnon

**Maundy Thursday  
Worship Service  
with self Communion  
Thursday, April 9th 7 PM**



**Easter Sunday  
Worship Service  
Sunday, April 12th  
10 AM**



**Join us on our  
Facebook Page:  
[www.facebook.com/  
FCCManchester](https://www.facebook.com/FCCManchester)**

## News from the H.O.M.E Team! *Hands on Mission for Everyone*

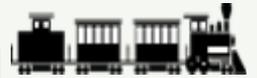


As we all regroup and learn to deal with a new normal due to our Covid-19 world, I hope this update finds you and those you love safe and well.

All of our community volunteer activities, as you know, are currently suspended. As soon as we are able to start up any of them again, we will be sure to let you know.

As the Meal Train is not able to operate the way we usually do, Peggy and I are connecting with those members of our FCC community we usually serve, to let people know they are on our minds and in our hearts. If you know of someone who could particularly use a note or a phone call please let us know, and we will try to make that connection happen. Food reserves of soup, cookies and muffins that we still had in the freezer, Lauren has added to the food given out from our food closet to those

who still come to our door, and she tells us that the extra homemade goods are very welcome by all. We will also try to continue to provide a meal for those people and families where it would be helpful in times of hardship and we will be guided in that by Rev. Pleas and Barbara Papagian. The rainbow in this cloud is knowing that we will, when it is safe and comfortable to do so, gather together at First Church. What a celebration that will be! - Liz Verity



Larry's been busy keeping FCC in shape for your return....

### ROOF WORK AT FCC March 2020



### NEW RAILING IN THE SANCTUARY

When worship resumes, come see the new railing on the altar steps!

This new addition is one of the many ways that FCC is making sure we are a safe, welcoming and accessible church to all.



## Children & Youth Ministries

### Dear Families and Children of First Church...

During this time of uncertainty and chaos the children here at FCC have still been learning at home with their families. Each week, in their email inbox, they receive a lesson, coloring sheet and worksheet so they can still learn and celebrate this Lenten season! We're happy to keep this going for as long as we are unable to meet in person. It's a wonderful way to keep our youngest ones connected with God and the church.

If you have young ones who are not receiving these weekly lessons, please email Kelda York at [kyork@fccmanchesternh.org](mailto:kyork@fccmanchesternh.org) to be put on the mailing list!



### Horton Center Programs for FCC Youth!

FCC Families! It's that time of the year to start thinking about summer and the programs offered at the Horton Center. The Horton Center is an Outdoor Ministry for kids and teens that offers week and weekend long camp sessions. The CYM committee is happy to offer scholarships to potential campers. There are many different themes to the weeks and weekends such as Adventure Camp, Gameapoalooza, Hogwarts on the Mt. and more! If you are interested please email Kelda York!





**HOLLY BERRY  
CHRISTMAS FAIR!  
Saturday, November 21st**

Surely by now you have heard that FCC is going to have a Christmas Fair on November 21 from 9 am - 3 pm. What you might not know is the name. It will be the "Holly Berry" Christmas Fair. Since we were not able to have our informational meeting as planned, Kevin gave us the opportunity to announce our plans using In The Spirit. Thank you very much Kevin. You will also be able to view it here.

This is a list of our ideas and placements. You will see names next to some of the Shoppes, they have agreed to be the organizers. As you read down through the different Shoppes we hope you will find one area that interest you, either as an organizer or to help out. Please send either Pam LeBlanc or Peggy Neveu an e-mail if you see something you would like to be a part of or if you would like more information.

- Treasurer - Set up in the Christen Education Room
- Silent Auction and /or a raffle - Dining Room by the wall where the closet doors are.
- Handmade Craft Shoppe- Rec. Room
- Wood Craft Shoppe - Rec. Room - Bill Jones and Leo LeBlanc
- Dazzling Jewelry Shoppe - Rec. Room- Terri Patti
- Pet Shoppe - Rec. Room
- Baked Goods - (Sweet Treats Shoppe) Kathy Nelson - Rec. Room  
Candy Shop - both shoppes together
- Cookie Walk - Dining Room in the middle
- Attic Treasures - Dining Room near the windows - Dick Jarvis plus one more person.
- Children's Crafts and Games - Rec. Room - Kelda York
- Luncheon - Bon Appetit Cafe... Dining Room near the kitchen.  
Morning Snack Shack in the kitchen on a cart!
- Popcorn Machine - Rec. room
- Set up Crew - Thursday night November 19
- Break down Crew - Saturday November 21 beginning at 3.

Blessings from Your  
"Holly Berry" Christmas Fair  
coordinators,  
Pam (blanclp@comcast.net)  
Peggy (frannys1@aol.com)



**Women's Connection News**

**Tentative date!  
May 30th for the 8th  
Annual Mystery Ride!**

**More information to come soon!**



**Dress A Girl Project!**

**Sundresses**

I have heard from many of our sewers that they continue to sew dresses for DAG but need labels. Don't worry, we'll put the labels on later when they are available.



The Mercier family delivered our dresses to girls in Ghana on the last Visions International mission trip. We hope trips will resume in the fall.

**Masks**

Many have turned to making masks for family, friends, the elderly, and medical personnel. This mask was made by Jeanine for use in teletherapy sessions.

Here's a couple links to patterns. Because elastic is hard to find, she used bias binding and 2 layers of cotton fabric.  
<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=X-R8Ox3Spw>

Also make sure to call facilities before bringing your masks to them!



For more information to sew or donate, contact Linda Bonetti.

**Knitting & Crocheting Ministry**

JoAnn Ward can't wait to receive your supply of hats and mittens! This is a great time to pull out those knitting needles!



Let's show something positive coming out of this chaos!

## “COVID-19...What has it taught me?”

That I can sing as loud as I want on Sunday morning and only the cat stares at me

How to check the FCC website...there's a lot of information there!

Say “please” and “thank you” more often...and mean it!

How talking to my brother across the country once a month is really not enough

Use the “House Party” app to keep in touch with friends & family

How to do Zoom meetings...and to remember to turn off the video!

How to get on the FCC Facebook page for the Sunday Hymn & Sing and Worship.

How important a phone call or handwritten note is so people know I care.

To work as a family to get the school work done...and grade it!

How to make a list and actually stick to it, and shop once a week, and not be a hoarder

That folding the laundry when the dryer stops is really much better!

Working from home doesn't mean the kitchen is open 24/7, and the maid's on call.

I have apps? I admit, my grandchildren are sometimes smarter than I am.

How to read to the grandchildren with the computer.. It's a new habit I love!

That quantity of time is not the same as quality time.

How to do groceries online with home delivery.

There are people a lot worse off than me who could use my help & encouragement.

My house was much bigger when my children were much smaller.

Patience is not one of my strengths...but I'm learning.

How to actually use the remote control... after I found it.

Send 20 words or less to Linda to post on the website...

[LBonetti@FCCManchesterNH.org](mailto:LBonetti@FCCManchesterNH.org)

(no names will be mentioned!)

## The April 2020 Church Window

Our monthly newsletter  
(603) 625-5093 (with voice mail)  
(603) 622-1511  
FAX: (603) 625-9107

[www.fccmanchesternh.org](http://www.fccmanchesternh.org)

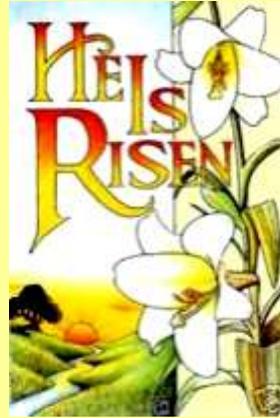
Please note that worship services & all church gatherings have been suspended until further notice.

Any of the upcoming event dates listed in this newsletter are subject to change.

The church office is staffed Monday-Friday for limited hours and we are not accepting visitors.

The food closet is available for limited hours, with restrictions, until further notice.

**JOIN US ON  
FACEBOOK  
FOR WORSHIP  
SERVICES...**



▪ *Maundy Thursday* ▪  
Thursday, April 9th 7PM

▪ *Easter Sunday* ▪  
Sunday, April 12th 10AM

▪ *Morning Watch Weekday Ser-  
vice* ▪

**Monday-Friday at 9:30am  
starting April 13th**

GO TO: [www.Facebook.com/](http://www.Facebook.com/)



[www.facebook.com/FCCManchester](http://www.facebook.com/FCCManchester)

Also stay current by visiting FCC online at [www.fccmanchesternh.org](http://www.fccmanchesternh.org)

**The Girls Scouts at FCC  
are an active group of young ladies that meet in the  
church dining room and recreation room at First  
Church every Tuesday night!**

The Girl Scouts at FCC have been missed these last few weeks at our church. Over the years they have been involved in many donation drives including those for winter coats, women's shelter items, and our own FCC community food pantry. We thank them for their thoughtfulness, generosity and for being a positive extension of our church community.



**Girl Scout Troop Leaders (above) sorted their famous  
Girl Scout Cookies here at church on Saturday, February  
28th.** The cookie sale operation not only supports the  
Scouts but also offers the girls important lessons about  
finance, responsibility and working in their communities.



**Watch for Girl Scout  
Cookies  
when we all return!**

**Our Offerings...  
Lenten Offering**



Lent is the 40 day period between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, April 12th. Traditionally it has been a time when Christians re-examine their spiritual life and try to discern the quality of their relationship with God. Part of our Lenten tradition is the Lenten folder to remind us daily of our Christian responsibilities and the good work of our Church. We have sent a letter and generic Lenten envelopes so you can plan your own offering! On the back of the envelope you can write in your Pledge number, or write your name, so we can report it on your annual giving statement. ...it's our first good deed to start the Lenten season!

**One Great Hour of Sharing**

It comes as no surprise that as we adapt to the rapid changes taking place related to the coronavirus, that it has been difficult to get through the regular daily tasks. So participation in the One Great Hour of Sharing offering may have been just one of those things that couldn't happen on March 22nd. We thank those who were able to participate in OGHS and we remind everyone that it is not too late. You can participate in the offering at a time in the future that works best for your congregation. And you most certainly can wait until the threat of the virus has ended.

One Great Hour of Sharing remains a priority because it becomes one of the major ways the United Church of Christ provides outreach to the world in its response to disaster, violence and chronic poverty.