



First Congregational Church

A Friendly Church in the Heart of the City

FCC Friday Link



Published Friday, February 26, 2021

Weekly Inspirational Words

You are not on a journey to God, you are on a journey WITH God.

-Steve Maraboli-



The first Beatitude states: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

I was at the end of my driveway to bring in my trash barrel and a man was walking by. He was disheveled and dirty with a long scraggly beard, and he was whistling. I looked at him and smiled and he smiled back and said "hello." I said, "that sounds like a happy tune you are whistling." He said, "I have no reason not to be happy. I am on my way to the shelter where I will get a hot meal and a warm bed and someone there will pray with me." I asked him if he would like to pray with me and he said "yes". I prayed a prayer for his safety and well-being, and he started off down the street saying, "I'll see you in Heaven", and he started whistling again. This man had definitely been down and out and obviously been through rough times, but he is seeking the kingdom of Heaven and I am sure that is where he will go.

I went in my house and sat down and randomly opened my Bible and it opened to Matthew, chapter 5...the Beatitudes. We can't buy our way into Heaven, we earn it by loving and helping others and by the Grace of God. The poor precede the rich in the Kingdom of God.

-Barbara Papagian-

CHURCH REOPENING UPDATE

February 19, 2021

Dear Church Family,

The First Congregational Church Reopening Committee met again on Tuesday, February 16th. We are continuing to follow the progress of the pandemic with an eye toward beginning to reopen our church as soon as it is safe and sensible to do so. We are encouraged by the numbers of people who are receiving their vaccine shots, and the fact that the most recent spike in infections seems like it may be leveling off. We certainly hope and pray that these positive trends continue so that all our lives may begin returning to normal as soon as possible. As we look at the immediate future, we will remain closed at least through the end of this church year. The current projection of the committee is that we will be open as the new church year begins in September, but our hope is that it will be safe to begin conducting some trial services over the summer. The committee will continue to meet monthly, and if the circumstances change more quickly than we imagine they will, we certainly have the option of revisiting these projected dates.

Thank you for your support, patience, and understanding as we continue to navigate these uncharted waters.

Yours in Christ,
Reopening Task Force

The Open and Affirming Committee commits to ongoing efforts that will bring religious perspective to issues of race and justice.



While Black History month is coming to a close, our faith challenges us to engage in continuing efforts to welcome and affirm all, demonstrating “love in action” at FCC and in the community. If you haven’t already done so, we encourage you to listen to Tsh Oxenreider’s podcast, “Be A Bridge.” <https://tshoxenreider.com/34/>

FCC Member Bruce Felmy shared his thoughts after listening, and we’ve included some of his reflections for your consideration.

I found it a thought-provoking conversation with many helpful insights for all of us dismayed with systematic racism in America, but not quite sure how we help address it. I feel that confusion or questioning is magnified by the isolation and constant flow of anxiety of so many issues and challenges that the pandemic and our political turmoil present.

I especially found helpful in the discussion the emphasis of education and becoming prepared to conduct this dialogue...The resources the commentators discussed are powerful...I thought the podcast and these excellent commentators could say much more on what affirmative actions and teaching we can provide our youngsters and grandkids in confronting and changing racial injustice. Do not be “color blind” but do ...??...It’s hard to be a kid on these issues.

Thanks to Bruce for sharing his reflections and asking an essential question. What **actions can we take** to work toward racial justice and the beloved community? Members of the Open and Affirming Committee are open to your thoughts and suggestions. And look for upcoming events that we hope will inspire constructive dialogue and faith-based actions.



***Join us for Weekly Trivia*
with Pip Adams!**

This week's Questions

1. What sheds 50,000 cells every minute?
2. What product was originally called Little Short-Cake fingers?
3. The letter "J" appears in the name of how many states in the US?

[Answers from Last Week. . .](#)

1. What has approximately 50 miles of canals? . . . [The human tooth](#)
2. What can hear with it's tongue? . . . [A Snake](#)
3. What does "Chop Suey" mean? . . . [Odds and Ends](#)

The Annual Meeting is going to be virtual this year on Sunday, March 7th at 11:30 am on Zoom



The Zoom invitation will be sent by email on March 1st. You will need to cut and paste the link into your browser. If you don't know how to do that or need help with it, please email Linda. The meeting will open at 11:15 am with a start time of 11:30 am.

The FCC 2020 Written Committee Reports are available on our website: www.FCCManchesterNH.org. Financials were mailed to your homes this past Monday, February 22nd.



Outreach Committee says Thank You to FCC Congregation!

This is a proud time to be a member of the FCC congregation. Hunger in Manchester, as in the whole of the United States, is at it's highest level in years. FCC has responded to this by setting a new record for our Souper Bowl participation (\$1462). We are amazed and humbled by your generosity to those in need in hard times. In addition, donations to the food closet continue to be strong. This has allowed us to continue to meet the increased demand and to add much needed toiletries to the items we provide to people in great need.

One Great Hour of Sharing Annual Lenten Offering: Sunday, March 14th

Outreach announces this year's *One Great Hour of Sharing* Campaign with the theme "Let Love Flow". Donations are requested by Sunday, March 14th - if you would like to contribute, please mail checks to the church office with "One Great Hour of Sharing" in the memo line.

One Great Hour of Sharing is the Lenten Offering of the United Church of Christ which supports disaster, refugee and development actions and so carries God's message of love and hope to people in 138 countries. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water and food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, emergency relief, and advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons. *OGHS* also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response. Thank you for your support!

Book Club/Bible Study

Friday mornings at 9:30 am, John Rowe hosts a Bible study session on *Isaiah, Part 2*. The Zoom Link Invitation is below and all are welcome to click and join...



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87247169653?pwd=MThxY0UwOHQvdmt4TmRPY1VXaGg3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 872 4716 9653

Passcode: 361028

Dial by your location: +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)



Goodrich family update!

Everyone is well and enjoying their new adventure into parenting. Piper started daycare in mid-January and it has been great for her - she's been growing physically and developmentally as well! So fun to watch her grow!! \

Photo from when they took her flying in January!

2021 WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FRIDAY, MARCH 5TH

Women's Connection would like to invite you to participate in the **World Day of Prayer** coming up on Friday, March 5th. Please see the announcement below provided by the NHCUC Women's Fellowship - the text may

appear small so please reach out to the church office if you would like the NHCUCW Women's Fellowship *Women's Link Newsletter* emailed to you! You may also visit www.wdp-usa.org for more information.



DURING THIS TIME OF COVID, WE DON'T KNOW WHEN OUR NEXT IN-PERSON MEETING WILL BE, BUT WE ARE TENTATIVELY PLANNING ON GOING TO **BRISTOL** IN THE FALL OF **2021** AND TO **WARNER** IN THE SPRING OF **2022**.

CELEBRATION XI rescheduled to March 17, 18, 19, 2023...

DoubleTree Hotel in Manchester NH. Visit: www.UCCWomensCelebration.org

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER—VANUATU 2021
YOUTUBE: SEE NHCUCW WEEKLY NEWS FOR MORE INFORMATION.
THIS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR THREE WEEKS STARTING
AT 10:00 A.M. ON FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 2021.

THANK YOU MIKE MARSHALL OF THE LACONIA UCC FOR SETTING UP
THE YOUTUBE VIDEO FOR THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER.

WHAT IS WORLD DAY OF PRAYER?

WHO WE ARE

WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT OF CHRISTIAN WOMEN

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER is a worldwide, ecumenical movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year, and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service. It is initiated and carried out by women in more than 170 countries and regions. It is symbolized by an annual day of celebration observed on the first Friday in March to which all people are welcome. It brings women of different races, cultures, and traditions together in fellowship, understanding, and action throughout the year. Through World Day of Prayer, women affirm that prayer and action are inseparable and have immeasurable influence in the world. The motto of World Day of Prayer is *"Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action."*



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2021—VANUATU

The theme, "Build on a Strong Foundation," is based on Matthew 7:24–27. In the teachings of Jesus, he talks of the love of God, our neighbor, and ourselves meaning if we want to be forgiven, we need to forgive; if we want to be understood, we need to understand; and if we desire love, we need to first love. Jesus says everyone who hears my words and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.

If we practice these teachings in our homes, communities, and nation, our world will be transformed. When we build a strong foundation in our lives and experience a pandemic as with Covid-19 or unrest in our communities like the protests of Black Lives Matter, it may feel as if our world is on sandy ground, but the women of Vanuatu assure us that our lives and God's creation is built on a strong foundation.



Sending Cards to Members and Friends

Please send **Healing Prayers** to **Wylene Fuller** as she is recovering from back surgery.

Wylene Fuller, 54 No. Bend Drive, Manchester, NH 03104

Please send **Get Well Soon** messages to **Fran Hastings**. She spent some time at the hospital this week suffering from vertigo. She is now home and will be undergoing some physical therapy to regain her balance.

Fran Hastings, 6 Alexander Drive, Manchester, NH 03109

News and Events at First Congregational Church

Announcements by
Barbara Papagian



This Week's Happenings

- Rev. Kevin Pleas will lead worship at 10:00 am on Facebook this Second Sunday of Lent, February 28th, 2021. The sermon is titled, "Changing Lives: Lydia" and Ruth Knowles will be the Scripture Reader.
- Rev. Kevin continues to host the "9:10 Morning Watch" each Monday thru Thursday morning on Facebook Live at 9:10 am.
- The next Mini Concert with Adam Peithmann will be held on Facebook tonight at 6:00 pm.
- The Open and Affirming Committee will meet on Sunday, February 28th at 1:00 pm. The Senior Fellowship Board will meet Monday, March 1st at 9:30 am and the Deacons' Board will meet Monday, March 1st at 6:30 pm. The Membership Committee will meet Tuesday, March 2nd at 6:30 pm. All meetings are held on Zoom.

*Future and Ongoing Happenings

- Wednesday, March 10th at 10:00 am will be the next Women's Connection Virtual Gathering – with a Seated Chair Yoga Class.
- Just Announced! . . . The next Interfaith Women of New Hampshire Event is Monday, March 22nd at 6:45 pm on Zoom. It is titled "Let's Talk: Faith and Race". More details can be found in the March Church Window Newsletter and on the IWNH website: interfaithwomennh.org.
- Please mark your calendar for Barbara Papagian's Ordination scheduled for Sunday, May 16th! More details to come!
- Please call ahead before heading to the church office in inclement weather. If your driveway is slippery at home, it will be at church too. We want to keep you safe!

Barbara Papagian, Director of Parish Care bpapagian@fccmanchesternh.org

"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" Micah 6:8



Friday Funnies

We will no longer be publishing the "Friday Funnies" on a regular basis due to lack of material. However, if anyone would like to contribute an appropriate, funny piece, we will gladly include it in the "Link"!



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Photo: Friends of the Office Staff - FOOS - preparing the Church Window Newsletter, 2018

SEATED YOGA CLASS

Women's Connection invites all FCC ladies to join us for a "Free 1 hr. Zoom Seated Yoga & Meditation class" to be held Wednesday, March 10th at 10am!

- All that is needed (in addition to your computer) is:
- A sturdy chair with a flat back, no arms with a firm seat
 - Comfortable clothing
 - A quiet undisturbed space in your home for an hour



Our Yoga instructor is *Jennifer Jean, BA, CYT200* www.chairyoganh.com

If you are interested email Denise Beaurivage (beau.de@comcast.net) or call her (603-714-5023) to get more info and register.