



June 2021

Ripples & Reflections Reflections

By
Senior Pastor
Rev. Kevin
Pleas

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.
— Romans 14:7-8

Dear Friends,

By now you will know that I am in the process of retiring. Some of you are probably wondering what comes next and, to be perfectly honest, I'm not really sure. After many years in pastoral ministry, I'm feeling called in some new directions. It would certainly be possible to do some interim work, or preaching, or spiritual direction. The fact that I will no longer be a settled pastor of a church does not mean that I am through with ministry altogether. I'm not likely to plant myself in a rocker on the porch anytime soon. But right now, what most calls to me is a deep need for sabbath or sabbatical, in the biblical sense. I have a real need to let the fields lie fallow for a period of time, and what might emerge out of that is something I'm content to leave in God's hands.

As hard as it may be for you to hear, I need to be very clear with you about what this transition means. Beyond the end of my active ministry with you, which is to say beyond the eleventh of July, I will no longer be your pastor. By the terms of my professional ethics, I am not permitted to perform baptisms, weddings or memorial services, or in any other way act in the role of your minister. I don't mean this to sound harsh, but churches and clergy have gotten themselves in all kinds of trouble when they have allowed their feelings to overrule the clear boundaries that have been established for times of transition. I will always think of you as friends, and always be grateful for the time in ministry we have shared these last few years. But for the sake of the ongoing life and health of church we have served together, I will not do you the dishonor of violating these boundaries. In times like these, we are all best served by keeping our focus on our calling. We do not live or die to ourselves. Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

In the coming weeks, as I've said, we need to take advantage of the time we have left to say goodbye, to clear the air if any of you should want to, to grieve and to celebrate. I am determined to end the wonderful ministry we've had in as healthy and appropriate a way as possible. I invite you to be a part of this time in whatever ways you want and need to. I welcome your phone calls. For those who are vaccinated, I welcome visiting with you, as much as time allows, either in my office or at some other location. And I hope many of you will take advantage of the two upcoming services we are planning to hold live in our sanctuary, on June 27th and July 11th.

There will be more details coming out as we go along. In the meantime, if you have questions, please feel free to call.

Yours in Grace, Rev. Kevin

Worship Services Update!

The calendar says spring is here, but the weather sends a different message. No matter what, we know it's been a very long winter, made all the more challenging because of the pandemic. While we as Christians abide by the age-old story of new beginnings with the message of Easter, we are doubly anxious this year. But people are getting vaccinated and anticipating a return to familiar routines, and our strong faith has sustained us thus far.

With that in mind, the Reopening Task Force has recommended to the Council that we begin a 'soft opening' for church services. So, mark your calendars for our tentatively scheduled first in-house church service on June 27th at 10:00 am. We will be continuing to monitor Covid statistics between now and then, and will keep you updated, should we feel the need to make any changes. But we are hopeful that we will soon worship together once again.

Of course, there will be specific protocols, so watch for this information in the coming weeks. But attendance will require masks and reserving a seat, so please call the church office to do that. Watch for details in the FCC Friday Link. Thank you.

We also thank the members of the Task Force for their very thoughtful and extensive deliberations, and we thank all of you for your patience, connectivity, and ever-present faith. By the Grace of God, we will be together again soon.

Blessings, Selma Naccach-Hoff, Moderator

Senior Moments

With Rev. Barbara Papagian



By the time you receive this newsletter, I will be ordained as your Associate Pastor. You also will know that Kevin will be retiring this Summer.

I don't know at this writing what the plans are going forward. But I do know this. We are a strong congregation and a hard working congregation and we will continue forward with determination and love. God is with us and His Holy Spirit will be leading us through our time

of transition and into a new chapter in the life of our church.

I promise you that I will be here and available during this transition, and I know I can count on you all to keep moving forward with all that you do within the church and your outreach projects in the community. These transitions are not easy and I think the best thing we can do for each other is carry on doing just what we have been doing and be ready to welcome any new people that come aboard.

We will miss Kevin and wish him the best on this new chapter in his life and now we will be starting a new chapter with a new minister and the excitement of opening up our church again and seeing each other in person. There will still be some restrictions, but I look forward to the "in person" as opposed to computer screen.

We will survive this change and I urge you all to keep in mind these words from Philippians 4:6-7. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Rev. Barbara Papagian, Associate Pastor

Children & Youth Ministries News



Hello families! Sunday, June 6th will be Scholarship Sunday and would have been children's Sunday if we were meeting in person! This would have been the day that our third graders receive their bible. We want to acknowledge the students who would have received Bibles last year, if it were not for covid. We do not want to let this important milestone to go unrecognized! On June 6th, we will be announcing the names of those children who will be receiving their bibles this year; and we aim to be able to present their bibles to them, in person, this September (fingers crossed!).

On that note – we are starting to plan church school for this fall! With the ever changing situation of covid – we are not certain what church school will look like but we are on the ground running. If you are interested in teaching any age level, please reach out to Kelda and let her know that you are interested! Teachers are the cornerstone of the children's program and we would be so happy to have you involved! You can email Kelda at kyork@fccmanchesternh.org
Have a WONDERFUL summer!

Cards and Cupcakes for Barbara!

Reverend Barbara Papagian, her Member in Discernment Committee, and Office Staff, shared fancy and delicious cupcakes to celebrate Barbara's Ordination that took place on Sunday, May 16th on Zoom.

At the ordination, Barbara received gifts from the church. At the conclusion of the ordination service, a stole for her to wear and a pink quartz bracelet were presented.

Members of the congregation sent congratulatory cards and they were presented to her on Tuesday (5/18). She was also given a beautiful floral arrangement to accompany her cards and cupcakes! Thank you to all who participated!



June Committee Meetings Announced

- **Tues., June 1st—Membership Committee**
- **Mon., June 7th 9:30AM—Senior Fellowship Board**
- **Mon., June 7th 7PM—Deacons' Board Meeting**
- **Weds., June 9th 7PM—Outreach Committee Meeting**
- **Tues., June 8th 1PM—Connecting the Congregation**
- **Tues., June 8th 6PM—Church Council Meeting**
- **Sun., June 13th 1PM—Open & Affirming Committee**
- **Mon., June 14th 6PM—Stewardship Committee**
- **Mon., June 21st 6:30PM—Church Trustees' Meeting**
- **Weds., June 23rd 6:00PM—Reopening Task Force**
- **TBA: CYM & Teachers' Meetings**

Friday Link Submissions Needed: We are looking for your stories, photos, favorite poems, appropriate jokes, favorite bible passages, book recs., etc.! Please consider contributing to our *Friday Link* Newsletter. You can remain anonymous, too, if you'd like. Email your submissions to Rev. Barbara at BPapagian@fccmanchesternh.org.





News from FCC Outreach

June 2021



Father' Day Tools Sunday is June 20th!

If you would like to give a donation in honor of a father or paternal figure, please see the donation form on the last page of this newsletter. Please fill it out and return to the church office by June 11th. If you would like to include a picture of the loved one you honored with your donation, please send it to Adam Peithmann. It will be included in the Father's Day Online Worship Service.



Church World Service Mother's Day Blanket Update

Our Congregation donated a total of \$580 to the blanket fund this Mother's Day! The Outreach Committee thanks you all for your Generosity.



Dress-A-Girl Update!

It takes a village!
The FCC Sewers were all part of a collection of 1500 dresses and skirts heading for Kenya this month!



FCC packed up 155 dresses, skirts and panties for disadvantaged girls!

Children's Book Drive for Elliot Hospital Donations accepted thru June 6th, 2021

"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents." - Emilie Buchwald



The Outreach Committee is sponsoring a children's book drive to benefit the Elliot Hospital's family/ children outreach program. This program provides free NEW BOOKS to families of children from birth to age 5 to foster reading and learning skills.

Follow these easy steps to participate:

- Purchase a NEW BOOK suitable for ages birth - age 5.
 - Drop off the book to the church office.
- If ordering a book online, have the book sent to the church. Address to:

Outreach Committee
First Congregational Church
508 Union Street
Manchester, NH 03104



Outreach Matching Grant:

For every book donated the Outreach Committee will purchase 2 new books.

The Outreach Committee is excited to partner with the Elliot Hospital as we look forward to finding different ways to extend our community outreach.

"A book is a gift you can open again and again"
- Garrison Keillor



Join us for "Movie of the Week Club" at 9:30 am on Friday mornings on Zoom!

Admit One

In this fun take on our Bible/Book Study, we will discuss a movie we watched during the week. Each Friday we will choose the next movie to watch from a list we have made. If you would like to join us, we meet via zoom, so call Barbara Papagian at the church office (625-5093) to be included on the invitation list. We will be voting via email for the movie to watch each week, so let me know if you are interested. Also, if you have any suggestions for appropriate movies, let me know. Feel free to join in all sessions or just the ones that interest you.

Have fun watching movies, eating popcorn, and joining in the movie discussion with some fun people!



Open and Affirming Committee News June 2021

“Remind us, O God, that you have not given us a spirit of fear, but you have given us a spirit of power and love...

You have called us to be courageous and stand strong, knowing that your power is on display in our lives.” -Rev. Barbara Papagian, April 2021

These words from a recent prayer shared by our newly ordained and installed Associate Pastor Barbara Papagian, challenges all of us to express our faith with conviction and action. Barbara’s faith journey and her path to ordained ministry offer us inspiration and direction. She has continued to learn, grow, and answer God’s call to live out her faith and “stand strong.” We give thanks for her service, leadership, and example of steadfast, active faith; and extend warmest congratulations.



In keeping with Barbara’s prayer and God’s call to us, selected elements of the **June 13th** worship service will highlight **Pride Month**, to reaffirm the promises of FCC’s Open and Affirming Covenant and remind each of us to embody the “spirit of power and love,” and “to be courageous and stand strong.”

Our faith community will stand strong and be represented with a booth at the **Queen City Pride Festival**, to be held at **Arms Park on Saturday, June 19th, from 12 - 6 pm**. We invite FCC folks to volunteer for the event. If you are interested in helping out for an hour or 1.5 hour shift, please call Carol Soucy 603-591

-6387; email carolsoucy@comcast.net, or contact Lauren Henderson in the church office. A sign-up sheet will also be posted on the church office window. We appreciate the support and assistance we’ve received from the Membership Committee. They are preparing print give-aways and FCC labeled water bottles for that day. The QCP organizing committee has established Covid-19 protocols. If you sign up as a volunteer, committee members will review the plans QCP has established for the safety of all.

Special thanks to Linda, Lauren, Adam, and Jeffrey Frye for their efforts in support of the Mark Miller *Draw the Circle Wide* event on May 23. It was exciting to join hands in sponsorship with FCC’s Music Ministry, the Outreach Committee, and the Church Council. The free program conveyed our ongoing commitment to reach out to the wider faith community and area organizations. We hope to mirror Mark Miller’s passion – to help change the world through music and build God’s beloved community - extending welcome and love to all.

Committee members continue to support "Connecting with the Congregation" efforts, and also make regular submissions to the FCC Friday Link. If you’re interested in attending a meeting and learning more about the Open and Affirming Committee, please contact Carol Soucy carolsoucy@comcast.net, 603-591-6387. The summer committee meeting schedule will be published in upcoming Friday Links and on the website calendar.

Open and Affirming Committee

Elizabeth Blood, Jeanine Finefrock, Jeffrey Frye, Karen Hawver, John and Kathy Rowe, and Carol Soucy, Chair



Women’s Connection News June 2021

You and a friend are invited to attend the 2021 Women’s Connection Ninth Mystery Ride!

Date: Saturday, June 5th

Time: Arrive in the church driveway at 8:45 am.

Estimated time of return: 3:00 pm.

Destination: An Outside MYSTERY!!!!???

Cost: \$15.00 not including lunch. Lunch will be your own choice, ordered that day at an indoor-outdoor restaurant.

More information: Anyone who is planning on going, needs to either be able to drive your own car, or feel comfortable riding with someone. Email either Pam: blanclp@comcast.net or Denise: beau.de@comcast.net to sign up. Please let them know what your plan is for transportation.



BRACELET MAKING WITH TERRI!

Women’s Connection had two small get togethers at Terri Pattee’s house in her back yard in May! She had it set up perfectly to make bracelets for the Holly Berry Christmas Fair. We made more than 10 beautiful beaded spring



bracelets that you won’t want to miss. There will be more gatherings like this in the future.

Yes, the fair is happening - mark you calendar for November 20th, 2021!

Groups are beginning to get together to make items for the fair. If you have any ideas for projects and would like a group of people to help make it just contact Pam LeBlanc or Peggy Neveu and they will help coordinate it. The fair is not just a Women’s Connection event. It is for everyone to participate in one way or another!



News from The H.O.M.E TEAM!

Hands on Mission for Everyone

June 2021 by Liz Verity



*** Meal Train * We Deal in Smiles!!!!!!**



Last month the meal train said THANK YOU to our volunteers from our FCC family who continue to bake, cook meals, write notes and birthday cards for seniors.

This month we are highlighting some people to whom we are GRATEFUL:

- **Joseph Bifulco**, whose company, Fabri-Kal, donated 150 containers and lids for the Meal Train, after hearing from Linda Bonetti about what the Meal Train does. Thanks to Fabri-Kal, Linda, and Peggy (who usually shops for our containers).
- **Lauren Henderson**, who creates our note cards, and is always willing to go the extra mile to help us out, and always with a smile .
- **Tiny Tot's Preschool in Auburn**, who have donated new books from Scholastics Books, which First Congregational Church will be giving to UpReach Therapeutic Riding Center for the kids ages 8-17 years in their *Resilience Reins* program. This is a program we used to cook a meal or two each session, and we look forward to this program being able to have volunteers take part again soon.

Thank you to everyone from our church community who help support the Meal Train's efforts in lots of different ways. Peggy and I are so GRATEFUL !

The Meal Train continues to:

- Provide Spring Sunshine Bags (soups, muffins and cookies) to give a little TLC to those who need an extra smile.
- Write notes and birthday cards to seniors to keep in touch.
- We continue to provide vegan meals once a week for Sue and John Curtis, as she navigates her chemo treatments on her cancer journey.
- Ask for cookies for the next session of *Caring Connections* at UpReach Therapeutic Riding Center in Goffstown, a program for First Responders!

P.S... When Peggy delivered the 3-week supply of cookies to UpReach recently, the ecstatic ladies wanted to make sure we "thanked the wonderful cooks!" So **THANKS to all of YOU!**

If you have questions about the Meal Train, please contact: Liz at 603-494-6785... liz-v@comcast.net , or Peggy at 603-483-8388... frannys1@aol.com

Photo: UpReach Cookie Bag!



*** Gardening News ***

Work has started on the **Memory Garden**. Bill Jones, Sokhom Sar and I did some weeding and planted the Easter Lilies that were either left at church for that purpose, or were never picked up.

We hope to see them bloom again this year.

Two Hydrangea Trees have been ordered from Faulkner's Landscaping and they will be planted in the location of the burning bushes that were removed last year. I am awaiting a date for Faulkner's to deliver and plant the trees.

We started spreading mulch on Monday, May 24th. If you would like to help in the garden, please let me know so I can notify you of our plans. Annuals will be purchased and planted, ready for Memorial Day. After that, the garden for this year will be ready for you to spend a quiet moment reflecting on God's gifts to us, and your precious memories.

Our Memory garden is totally funded by the donations we receive and we are grateful to all who have given in memory or in honor of a loved one. Donation slips are available in the hallway on the table opposite the Parlor door or you can send a check to First Congregational Church, with the "Memory Garden fund" in the memo line. Should you wish to honor a loved one by your donation please specify their name, which will be recorded in the Memory Book.

Thanks, Liz (liz-v@comcast.net) 603-494-6785

*** Hollows Community Garden Update ***

As soon as I get more info on the dates for cleanup I will send them out to you. I really enjoyed being out there last summer and will miss it this year. They have received a grant which will allow them to have running water and electricity next year
GOOD NEWS! Please contact Liz: liz-v@comcast.net or 603-494-6785, if you have any questions.



5K VIRTUAL
June 12th-26th, 2021
Register @ TotalImageRunning.com

You're Invited to a Virtual 5K from June 12th—26th!

To complete this virtual race, you can choose to run, walk or jog at a time and a location of your choice. Then submit your results online!

To find out more & get registration link go to: www.wesleyswayfoundation.org



**Worship will continue at
10am Sundays
throughout 2021.**

THIS MONTH AT FCC

ACTIVITIES, DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE REFER TO THE PRINTED CALENDARS BY THE OFFICE OR GO TO
WWW.FCCMANCHESTERNH.ORG

JUNE

Tuesday, June 1st

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook
6:30 PM Membership Committee Zoom Meeting

Wednesday, June 2nd

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Thursday, June 3rd

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Friday, June 4th

9:30 AM Movie Club on Zoom

Saturday, June 5th

No Church Activities Scheduled

Sunday, June 6th—Scholarship Sunday

10:00 AM Worship Service on Facebook

Monday, June 7th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook
9:30 AM Senior Fellowship Board Zoom Meeting
7:00 PM Deacons' Board Zoom Meeting

Tuesday, June 8th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook
1:00 PM Connecting the Congregation Team Meeting
6:00 PM Church Council Meeting

Wednesday, June 9th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook
7:00 PM Outreach Committee Zoom Meeting

Thursday, June 10th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Friday, June 11th

9:30 AM Movie Club on Zoom

Saturday, June 12th

No Church Activities Scheduled

Sunday, June 13th

10:00 AM Worship Service on Facebook
1:00 PM Open & Affirming Committee Zoom Meeting

Monday, June 14th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook
6:00 PM Stewardship Committee Zoom Meeting

Tuesday, June 15th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Wednesday, June 16th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Thursday, June 17th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Friday, June 18th

9:30 AM Movie Club on Zoom

Saturday, June 19th

12:00 PM Queen City Pride Festival at Arms Park in Manchester

Sunday, June 20th—Father's Day

10:00 AM Worship Service on Facebook

Monday, June 21st

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook
6:30 PM Church Trustees' Meeting

Tuesday, June 22nd

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Wednesday, June 23rd

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook
6:00 PM Church Reopening Task Force Zoom Meeting

Thursday, June 24th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Friday, June 25th

9:30 AM Movie Club on Zoom

Saturday, June 26th

No Church Activities Scheduled

Sunday, June 27th

10:00 AM Worship Service

Monday, June 28th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Tuesday, June 29th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Wednesday, June 30th

9:10 AM "9:10 Morning Watch Prayers" on Facebook

Church Photo Directory



PICTURE DIRECTORY FOR FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

By anyone's account, it has been a long time since a pictorial directory was prepared for our church – 15 years to be exact. The Membership Team is pleased to let you know we are working on a directory that will be distributed this fall. Our 2021 Picture Directory will be a much less formal project, not something where portraits are taken and you can then order prints from the portrait company. Our intent is to make a simple directory using pictures we take of ourselves so that we can put a face to a name. Here's how it will work. Starting June 14, we are asking Members and Friends of First Church to take their own "selfie" pictures and email them to Lauren Henderson in the church office at: LHenderson@FCCManchesterNH.org Pictures can be of individuals, couples, or families – it's up to you. If you have problems with this approach, such as an older cell phone or no cell phone at all – you can stop by the church office from 10 to noon during June or July, and Lauren or Linda will gladly take your picture. Just give them a call to let them know you are coming at 625-5093. If that is not convenient for you – please call Bill Jones at 603-860-1236 to discuss coming to your home to take the picture. If you do not wish to have your picture in the Picture Directory – that's fine – just drop Bill Jones an email to tell him you are not interested – wjones0615@comcast.net When the directory is finished, we will ask people to pick up a copy during worship or at the church office, as this will save us the expense of having to mail them out. The Membership Team will also help in delivering the directories to those people who cannot pick them up. Your cooperation in making this project a reality is most appreciated!

Fathers Day Tools Sunday

June 20th, 2021



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

Please honor your father and paternal caregivers with \$10 donations to the Church World Service Father's Day Tools Fund.

Donations may be sent to the church office by mail or in person. The traditional CWS Greeting Cards are available in the office and can be picked up in person or mailed to you. **Fill out the form below and return it to the church office before Friday, June 11th, 2021.**



FATHERS DAY TOOLS SUNDAY ORDER FORM 2021 (return by 6/11 to receive card & to be in video on 6/20)

Donor _____

Phone # _____ Email _____

In Memory of _____

OR:

In Honor of _____

Donation Amount (at least \$10):

***Payment must accompany this form.**

***Send a photo of your loved one by June 11th to Adam at**

APeithmann@FCCManchesterNH.org



Rev. Kevin Pleas
Senior Pastor

First Congregational Church
508 Union Street
Manchester, NH 03104-4890

Non-Profit Organ.
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*Time Dated Material -
Please Deliver Immediately!*

The June 2021 Church Window

Our monthly newsletter
(603) 625-5093 (with voice mail)
(603) 622-1511
www.fccmanchesternh.org



Join Us Online!
Sunday Worship
Facebook at 10AM
[www.Facebook.com/
FCCManchester](http://www.Facebook.com/FCCManchester)

PLEASE NOTE THAT WORSHIP SERVICES ARE ON
FACEBOOK & CHURCH MEETINGS ARE ON ZOOM
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

ANY OF THE UPCOMING EVENT DATES LISTED IN
THIS NEWSLETTER ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
THE CHURCH OFFICE & FOOD CLOSET ARE OPEN, BUT
PLEASE CALL AHEAD.

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR THE MOST UPDATED
INFORMATION: WWW.FCCManchesterNH.ORG



Online Giving via Our Website!

We have access to online giving on the front page
of our website! www.FCCManchesterNH.org
For questions or assistance...Call Linda at 625-5093
Checks or direct banking can be sent payable to
First Congregational Church, 508 Union St, Manchester NH
03104



Offering Envelopes are still available for pickup!



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