



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of First Congregational Church

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The Pastoral Perspective

As I write this, a crew is hard at work paving Kimball Street, where the parsonage is located. The paving is the final stage of a road and sewer project begun many months ago. Soon, in a few days hopefully, the work will be done. And then?

The steamrollers, pavers, and dump trucks will all leave the neighborhood, and cars will begin to zip by in either direction. While potholes will have been filled, water will flow better, and lots of stuff beneath the street's surface will have been made more robust, vehicles will continue to exceed the speed limit. The intersection will continue to have stop signs that many deem to be optional. In short, nothing much will change.

This is depressing, in a way.

How often do we seek change, improvement in our lives, only to revert to our previous bad habits? We may well undertake a lot of work to alter our behavior, but we—as individuals and as a society—often return to doing what we know best, which involves a lot of self-sabotage.

We have a federal election coming this fall, one which, at present, involves a rerun of the same face-off we endured four years ago. We have inflation. We have rising interest rates. We have a fraught international situation. The climate seems to be disordered.

You can see where this is going. You've read enough. I'll stop complaining.

I hope we can use the rest of the summer wisely and productively, that we can reset ourselves and try to do better when September rolls around.

While we may want to give up, God does not. I truly believe that God is with us, all the time.

Even when we're being stupid.

Even when we're lost.

Even when we've given up hope.

So take a few moments to read your bible; take some time to pray. If you're away this summer, visit a new church or take in a service online.

Remember: God—one of whose names is "Emmanuel"—is with us. Always.

Yours faithfully, *Steve*

SUNDAY SERVICE

Strengthen the Church Special UCC Summer Offering



This offering supports the growth of local ministry and congregations all over the country, establishing new churches and invigorating existing ones. By funding fellowships for young, emerging church leaders, this program is vital to our denomination's health.

*Contributions welcome until Labor Day.
Please contribute as you are able. Thanks!*

Do Your Part to Fill the Cart!

Help fight poverty and food insecurity by leaving contributions in our shopping cart in the Parish Hall. We're currently collecting non-perishable food and personal-care items on behalf of:

LISTEN COMMUNITY SERVICES

For a list of current and ongoing needs, please visit listencs.org/food-pantry#Itemsweneedthemost.

Please consider a donation, and thank you!

Community Dinners Returning This Fall!

Sunday, September 22, at 5:00 pm

Leaders: DAWN TROUTMAN AND THE DIACONATE

Many thanks to Dawn for her efforts to lead the revival of our monthly dinners! The hope is that our congregation can offer leadership and guidance for each meal, with the hard work shared by outside volunteers. And all are welcome to come, eat, and share fellowship, regardless of need or affiliation.

Anyone can lend a hand with setup, serving, and cleanup—family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, ANYONE! If you're interested in leading a month, menu resources are available, and the church can reimburse costs. Please contact the church office.

*Please help us provide this important meal!
Look for sign-ups soon in the Parish Hall.*

All Are Welcome to Worship at FCC Sundays at 10:00 AM (Sanctuary/Zoom)

Coffee Hour Served Weekly!

New volunteers welcome to provide food and serve for our weekly post-worship fellowship time.

Zoom Greeters and Liturgists Needed!

Congregation members sing in the choir, serve as ushers and Zoom greeters, and read as liturgists. Additional options include reading prayers, sharing stewardship messages, or even leading children's moments. **All are invited to serve in these essential roles, and no prior experience is needed.**

If you're interested in these opportunities to serve, please contact the church office.



Welcome Back, Gail Dimick!

The REV. GAIL T. DIMICK will be our guest preacher in August, as Rev. Steve Silver takes vacation. Many thanks to Gail for serving FCC once again with her experienced leadership of worship!



Upper Valley
Habitat
for Humanity®

**THANK
YOU!**

This year's SHELTER SUNDAY collection raised \$730 for Upper Valley Habitat for Humanity. We're so grateful to have celebrated our fathers once again with this generous donation.

Get the NHC-UCC Weekly Newsletter

If you'd like to receive weekly news and information from the NH Conference of the UCC, please contact communications@nhcucc.org.

JULY - AUGUST 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 10a Worship 2p Classicopia: The Folk Cello	1 (7p <i>Leb Rec Concert Series: RAIN LOCATION</i>)	2 1p Cameo Baroque	3	4 <i>Independence Day</i> 7p NA Group (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	5	6 Oak Hill Music Festival (arrives until 7/13)
7 10a Worship (Communion; Gail Dimick, guest preacher)	8 10a-5p Oak Hill (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>) 7p Diaconate	9 10a-5p Oak Hill No Church Council	10 8a-4p NH-WIC 7p Oak Hill MF: Folk Songs	11 10a-5p Oak Hill 7p NA Group (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	12 7p Oak Hill MF: The Romantic Virtuoso	13
14 10a Worship 2p Classicopia: Czech, Please	15 (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	16 1p Cameo Baroque	17	18 7p NA Group (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	19	20
21 10a Worship	22 (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	23 1p Cameo Baroque	24	25 11a-6p NH-WIC 7p NA Group (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	26 3p NH Button Society (setup)	27 8a-5p NH Button Society Exhibit
28 10a Worship	29 (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	30 1p Cameo Baroque	31	1 7p NA Group (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	2	3
4 10a Worship (Communion; Gail Dimick, guest preacher)	5 9a-3p Classicopia Music Camp (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	6 9a-3p Classicopia Music Camp	7 9a-3p Classicopia Music Camp	8 9a-3p Classicopia Music Camp 7p NA Group (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	9 9a-3p Classicopia Music Camp 7:30p CMC Faculty Concert	10 10a CMC Student Concert (LOH Nexus RAIN)
11 10a Worship (Gail Dimick, guest preacher) (LOH Nexus RAIN)	12 (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>) No Diaconate	13 CHURCH STREET CLOSURE BEGINS 1p Cameo Baroque	14 8a-4p NH-WIC	15 7p NA Group (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	16	17
18 10a Worship (Gail Dimick, guest preacher)	19 (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	20 1p Cameo Baroque	21	22 11a-6p NH-WIC 7p NA Group (7p <i>Leb Rec RAIN</i>)	23	24
25 10a Worship (Gail Dimick, guest preacher)	26	27 1p Cameo Baroque	28	29 7p NA Group	30	31
1 10a Worship (Communion)	2 <i>Labor Day</i>	3	4 6p Bel Canto Auditions	5 7p NA Group	6	7 UVMC Early Music Festival (details TBD)

If you have questions or corrections regarding any event, please notify us at church@fccleb.org or 603-448-4281.

NEWS AND NOTES

CHURCH COUNCIL

At Council in June, Chair Jon Scott invited committee updates from all those present, having circulated the Treasurer's and Pastor's reports. For the **Diaconate**, Rev. Steve Silver reported that Deb Scott chaired the Deacons' June meeting, and the group discussed promoting FCC's visibility through service projects. They planned for the resumption of Community Dinners in the fall, on the fourth Sunday each month.

Speaking as **Mission and Social Action** chair, Valerie Nevel noted an overlap between MSA and Deacons, wondering whether the two groups might somehow collaborate—or even merge in a possible bylaws revision. Linda Gerlach recognized that with aging and reduced membership, the two groups could at least help each other out. Jon reminded everyone that the resumption of Community Dinners will rely on inviting outside volunteers to help, with our members just providing guidance, rather than doing all the work. Walter Scott noted that many local companies encourage employee service projects.

For the **Board of Governors**, Walter has done preliminary assessment of small repair projects in the narthex and balcony, as well as the front deck and access ramp. The latter, it's widely agreed, should be replaced with composite material that doesn't require painting. Jon also reported he'd spoken with Phil Hammond about the need for minor adjustment in a small area of Sanctuary flooring; he and Walter plan to address that this summer. Corrine Erskine asked for more details about the decking

replacement, wondering which contractor we'd consult and when the work might happen. Walter is gathering information on materials and speaking to Wayne Braley about doing the work, ideally before the winter. Lastly, Walter explained, in response to an inquiry from the **Memorial Gardens Committee**, that he has no plans to maintain or trim the yew bushes in the front or to clear leaves from the property. He is willing to pass that job off to those who have worked on the gardens.

Introducing discussion about **church finances**, Trustee chair Valerie Nevel asked whether the reported income total for **stewardship** included any portion of the large stock gift received in late 2023; Administrator Brian Clancy confirmed that it does. Jon noted that the Finance Committee would address that ambiguity and enable clearer reporting in future. He added that he expects to have an **online-giving option** in place by the end of the summer, explaining that a link from our website will access a site where donations can be made.

Valerie reported that the **Trustees** will meet this fall to review UCF accounts, before which they and Finance will together discuss the church's investment policy. She also explained that auditor Lisa Bybee, who conducted several interviews and reviewed materials for our full audit, would soon be completing her final report.

Turning to other Council matters, Corrine inquired about the status of the **bylaws revision**, wondering why no progress has been made. After Jon explained that we lack volunteer

Committee Meetings

The following regular meetings will happen remotely via Zoom:

Diaconate	7/8 and 9/9, 7:00
Council	8/27 and 9/10, 7:00
MSA	8/26 and 9/23, 7:00

For information on other groups' plans to meet, contact the church office.

capacity to drive this project, she asked whether new leadership and energy might come from elsewhere on the subcommittee. Valerie then offered to help, and Jon clarified that the priority is to identify the larger structural framework of governance needs, not simply to revise language. Walter asked what he could do as Board of Governors chair to move the process along; the Board had previously submitted descriptive changes, but Jon again stressed the structural framework. Both Steve and Valerie noted legal imperatives for having current, appropriate bylaws, particularly with regard to fiduciary management. Corrine reiterated the importance of simply having this subcommittee meet.

Referring to his pastor's report, Steve invited Council members to review the proposed job description for a **Christian Education** director, which he'd circulated prior to the meeting. He asked them to submit feedback for a discussion by the Personnel Committee. Steve also noted that he has planned a week of study leave at the end of July, along with vacation time including most of August.

Steve then reported briefly on the City of Lebanon's conversations

NEWS AND NOTES

about serious issues related to the food trucks on South Park St. He also shared an update on the City's troubling intention to make Church Street one-way (northbound) as part of the new fire station project. The City has poorly communicated this plan, failing to give adequate notice about a decisive May 15 hearing. We are exploring how to respond, with the hope that the City will consider additional feedback. Brian pointed out that the Fire Department itself is not calling for the change as part of its station design; it is instead a matter of minimum street width for

two-way traffic. Council then voted unanimously to authorize Steve to speak for FCC in this matter.

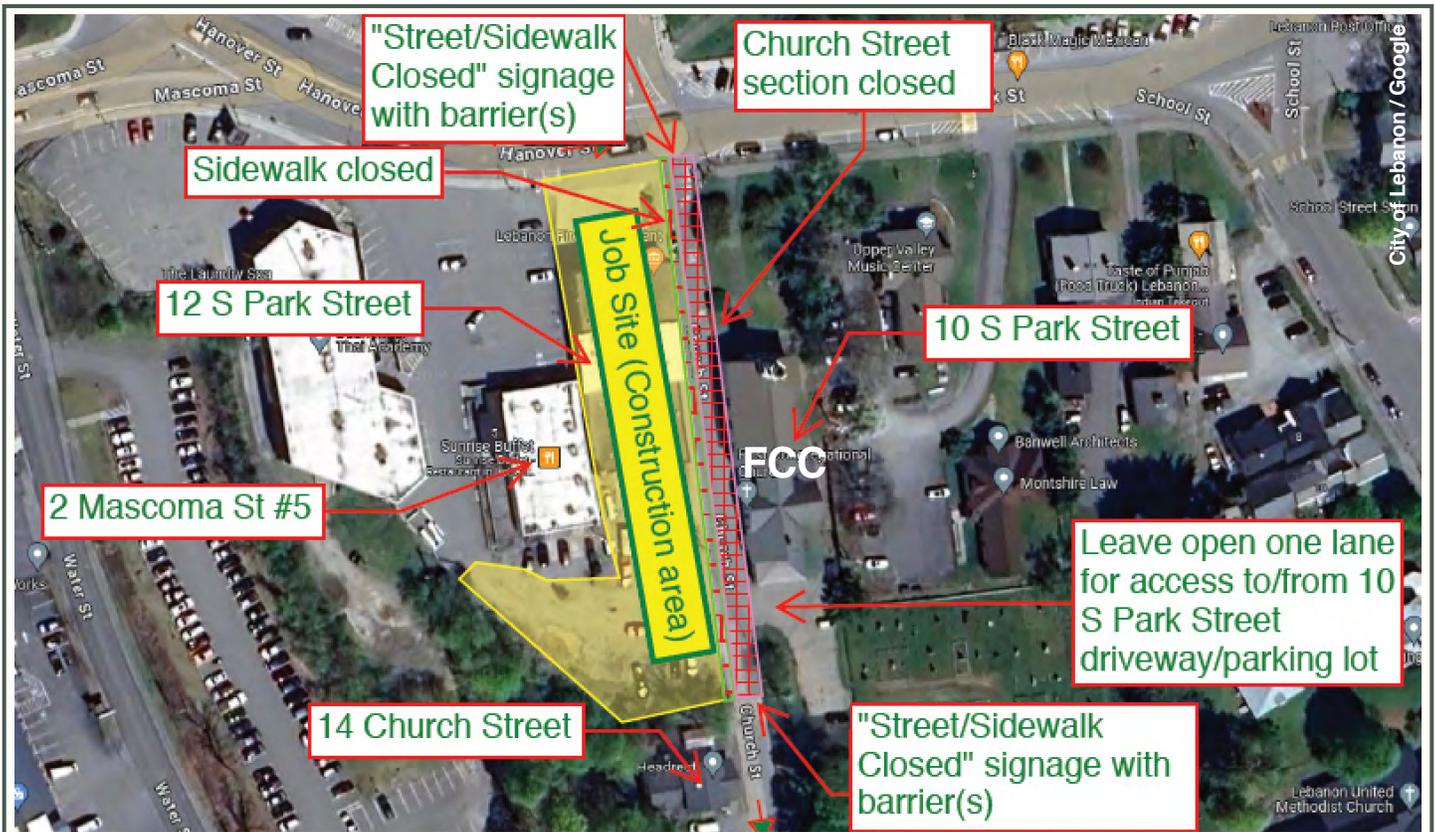
Jon concluded with a consideration of Council's summer meeting plans, recognizing that committees and subgroups have their own work to do in the meantime. It was generally agreed that Council could skip July and plan a meeting for late August.

DIACONATE

In addition to considering pastoral care concerns, the Diaconate has

been discussing how to improve its visibility in congregational life. Deb Scott is working to create a large, easel-mounted display of all current deacons, with names and photos, including Rev. Silver. The displays would be located in the Narthex as well as the Parish Hall.

The Diaconate has also reviewed and updated its member contact lists, confirming or revising each deacon's assignments. Only local members of the congregation who have sustained some relatively recent connection will be assigned a deacon.



Church Street to Be Closed Starting August 13

Please note that the construction of the new Lebanon fire station—beginning with the demolition of the old one, which starts in August—requires the closure of the northern end of Church Street, from South Park St to the entrance to FCC's parking lot. Access to FCC's lot and lower Church St will be possible *only* via detour along Water and Valley Sts or from Spring St. **Upon completion of the station, the City of Lebanon intends to convert that segment of Church St permanently to one-way, northbound traffic.**

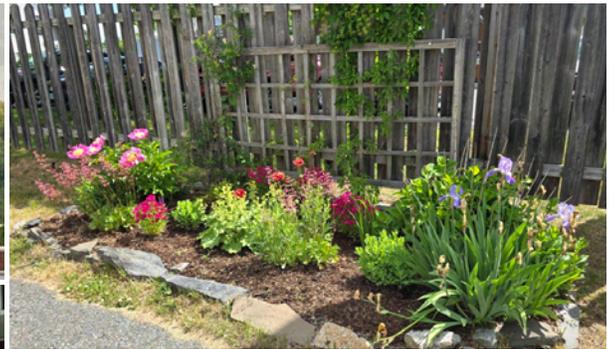
THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION

A New Directory Is Coming... But We Still Need Photos!

Our last printed directory was published in 2016, eight years ago! We will soon be offering a new, digital version, one that can easily be updated as our congregation grows and changes. It will be available to everyone as a PDF document, with printed copies available upon request.

If you haven't yet done so, please submit a current photo (along with any updated contact information) to the church office as soon as possible. Photos should be JPG or PNG files, in a frontal, head-and-shoulders format clearly showing faces (like the fine examples shown above!).

EVERYONE who feels connected to FCC's congregation is invited to be listed in the directory—regardless of whether or not they have formally joined the church as a covenant member.



SUMMER SCENES. The season brings lovely flowers to our gardens, annual events such as the Frederick Douglass reading in Colburn Park, and plenty of great music. It also means several FCC folks taking part in the Prouty, helping raise money for cancer research at DH.

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Summer Concerts

All in the Sanctuary. Masks welcome but optional.

Oak Hill Music Festival: Season Three!—Wednesday, July 10, and Friday, July 12, both 7:00 pm

Having launched this innovative festival in 2022, Hanover-born bassoonist Leah Kohn and her violinist husband Niv Ashkenazi return with several other superb musicians for a week in residence. They'll play two concerts here and a third in Norwich on Saturday, July 13. *Full details at www.oakhillmusicfestival.com.*

Classicopia: Czech, Please!—Sunday, July 14, at 2:00 pm

Pianist Dan Weiser welcomes violinist Andréa Picard Boecker and cellist Alicia Ward for a lyrical program of music that dances and moves the spirit, in piano trios by Bedrich Smetana and Antonín Dvorák. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; more at classicopia.org/concert/czech-please/.*

Classicopia: Summer Music Camp Faculty Concert—Friday, August 9, at 7:00 pm

Dan Weiser and Jacques-Pierre Malan, leading Classicopia's weeklong camp of vocal and instrumental instruction for young musicians, offer a special public concert—including a few fun pieces by the camp's students. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; more at classicopia.org.*

Classicopia: Summer Music Camp Student Concert—Saturday, August 10, at 10:00 am

All are invited to this celebratory performance by the vibrant young musicians, aged 8-18, participating all week in Classicopia's summer music camp. *Free admission! More at classicopia.org.*

The Anonymous Coffeehouse: Season Five!—Friday, Sept. 13, and Saturday, Sept. 28, both 7:30 pm

Our comfy community venue for live folk music returns for its fifth season! An informal "listening room" for emerging musicians, each show features several acoustic acts. Come and go as you please; baked goods and hot drinks available. *Free admission, donations welcome. For performers and more, visit anoncoffee.org/.*

Upper Valley Baroque: Le Vent Français—Saturday, September 14, at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm

Known for stunning performances at the highest level on period instruments, Upper Valley Baroque brings its chamber series to FCC. "Winds Across Europe" showcases 17th-century woodwind innovations in music of François Couperin, Jean-Baptiste Lully, Georg Philipp Telemann, and more. *Adults \$35 and up; ticket options, performer listings, and full program information at uppervalleybaroque.org/concerts.*

Elizabeth Borowsky, Piano, and Cecylia Barczyk, Cello—Sunday, September 22, at 2:00 pm

Our good friend and virtuoso pianist Elizabeth Borowsky welcomes back her mother, internationally renowned cellist Cecylia Barczyk, for a wonderful concert heralding the arrival of fall. Music of J. S. Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, François Francoeur, and much more. *Full program details TBD.*

Classicopia Summer Music Camp at FCC/UVMC—August 5-10, 9a-3p Daily

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

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH *Special UCC Offering Through Labor Day*



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Upcoming Concerts

All in the Sanctuary. Masks welcome but optional.

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Elizabeth Borowsky, Piano, and Cecylia Barczyk, Cello—Sunday, September 22, at 2:00 pm

Partial Closure of Church Street Begins August 13

First Congregational Church of Lebanon

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organist and Choir Director • Brian Clancy, Church Administrator

Jon Scott, Chair of Church Council • Linda Gerlach, Chair of Deacons • Barbara Jones, Moderator

603-448-4281 • church@fccleb.org • prayer@fccleb.org • music@fccleb.org • www.fccleb.org