



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of First Congregational Church

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The Pastoral Perspective

One of the things for which I'm very grateful to our church is our music. As most of you know, I can't sing. Oh, I can "sing," but I am in no danger of being signed to a recording contract. But that doesn't mean I'm unable to appreciate good music, or stellar performances.

I was reminded of how much live music means to me as I attended a recent performance at the Hopkins Center, featuring the Dartmouth Wind Ensemble and guest trumpeter Pacho Flores. Flores is a musician of the first order, "world-class"—perhaps a cliché, but in his case quite true. Dartmouth was fortunate to line him up, and he shared his music with both the audience and the student performers. Hearing him play was a gift, and it was the first performance I've been to at the Hop since COVID inflicted itself on us.

As I was enjoying myself at the Hop, I reflected on how we enjoy great music at First Congregational Church. Ernie Drown does a wonderful job playing the organ and piano, and I've heard lots of positive things from the members of our choir and the wider congregation. Our small choir has some great voices who deliver week in and week out.

On top of Sunday mornings, our church, with its phenomenal acoustics and Steinway baby-grand piano, draws a regular procession of musical guests. If you haven't come to one of the concerts that we regularly host, you are missing out on something truly special. In addition to groups like Classicopia, we have established a close relationship with the Upper Valley Music Center, which has used FCC for recitals and offers weekly Suzuki classes here for its young students. If classical is not your thing, there's the Anonymous Coffeehouse, bringing together community performers and allowing us to extend hospitality to our neighbors. One of the benefits of these partnerships is that we have the opportunity to introduce people to our sanctuary and our church.

Music is a gift from God. We are blessed to be able to enjoy it, in all its many forms. During this stewardship season, I am mindful of all that God has given us, and one of the best things we can do with the gift of

Continued on Page 4

SUNDAY SERVICE

All Are Welcome to Worship at FCC

Sundays at 10:00 am (Sanctuary/Zoom)

In-person worshipers are required to wear masks and observe distancing in the pews. Contact the church office to receive the Zoom link.

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 (though Zoom greeting requires some basic training).**

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

Spend Some Time in the Corner!

The **Children's Community Corner**, that is! We'd like to involve more of our congregation's adults in engaging with FCC's great kids on Sunday mornings. **Our purpose for this interaction is mentorship, not just supervision. Please consider offering your time to our young people—thanks!**

If you're interested, contact Nan Parsons at nlp3721@yahoo.com or 603-863-8354.



Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

Tuesday, November 22
7:00 pm
FCC Sanctuary

All are welcome to share this inclusive, ecumenical worship service, joining friends from across the Upper Valley to faithfully observe Thanksgiving.

Let us give thanks as a community!

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 13 Stewardship 2023: Dream Big

For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. —Isaiah 65:17

The prophet Isaiah offered these words at a time when the exiles of Judah were wondering about their future. Having seen promises go unfulfilled in the past, they despaired. They hoped to restore their imagined glory, and they wondered just what God had planned for them. Isaiah told them that God was seeking a break with the past and a fresh start for his people, one grounded in possibility.

Following the disruptions of COVID, we now have the opportunity to ask, "Who do we want to be? Where is God calling us to go?" We may disagree on the answers to these questions, but we should agree on the destination: a sustainable, healthy future for our community.

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY IS NOVEMBER 13. Please consider your commitment, prayerfully and honestly, to FCC's mission and ministry in 2023, as we dedicate our pledges together.

Epilogos Representatives to Attend Worship

On Sunday, November 13, Ed Warren and Brooke Finnell of Epilogos Charities will visit us for worship. Epilogos remains grateful for our generous support over so many years, and Ed and Brooke look forward to visiting FCC in person and sharing news from our friends in San Jose Villanueva.

Christmas Decorating!

Following Worship on Sunday, November 27

Yes, CHRISTMAS!! Advent begins the last Sunday in November, so plan to stay after worship to hang wreaths, string lights, trim our tree, and have fun getting the church ready for this festive season.

Join in welcoming the spirit of the season!

NOVEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 10a Worship/CCC	31 <i>Halloween</i> (No Suzuki Program)	1 <i>All Saints' Day</i> 4:15p FCC Choir	2 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	3 7p NA Group	4 6-9p Leb Rec Quilters Retreat	5 9a-5p Leb Rec Quilters Retreat 2:30p UVMC Recitals
6 10a Worship/CCC (Communion) 3p Reflections: Flute and Piano	7 4-8p UVMC Suzuki Program	8 <i>Election Day</i> 4:15p FCC Choir 7p Church Council	9 8a-4p NH-WIC 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	10 7p NA Group	11 <i>Veterans' Day</i> 7:30p Anon Coffeehouse	12 1p Balourdet Master Class 4p Balourdet Quartet Concert
13 10a Worship/CCC (Stewardship Sun; Epilogos visit) 2p Classicopia: Latin Cello	14 4-8p UVMC Suzuki Program 7p Diaconate	15 4:15p FCC Choir	16 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	17 7p NA Group	18 7:30p Cameo Baroque: Musica Obscura	19 3p E. Borowsky Student Recitals
20 10a Worship/CCC 1p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	21 11a-6p NH-WIC 4-8p UVMC Suzuki Program	22 4:15p FCC Choir 7p Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service	23 (No Bel Canto)	24 <i>Thanksgiving</i> 7p NA Group	25 7:30p Anon Coffeehouse	26
27 <i>ADVENT 1</i> 10a Worship/CCC 11a Christmas Decorating!	28 4-8p UVMC Suzuki Program	29 4:15p FCC Choir	30 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	1 7p NA Group	2 7:30p Anon Coffeehouse	3 12-5p UVMC Holiday Music Fest
4 <i>ADVENT 2</i> 10a Worship/CCC (Communion) 2p Classicopia: Four-Hand Holiday	5 LISTEN Holiday Basket Program (all week) 4-8p UVMC Suzuki Program	6 9a-4p LISTEN HB 4:15p FCC Choir	7 9a-4p LISTEN HB 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	8 9a-4p LISTEN HB 7p NA Group	9 9a-4p LISTEN HB 7p Bel Canto Chamber Singers	10 7:30p Bel Canto Chamber Singers

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

NEWS AND NOTES

DIACONATE

Linda Gerlach opened the Deacons' October meeting by reading a Native American Dakota prayer, noting the commonalities possible among different faiths.

In his **pastor's report** the Rev. Steve Silver recounted his trip to Cleveland for a meeting of the UCC Historical Council. He also continues to serve the United Church Funds board, the NH Conference Investment Committee, the Grafton-Orange-Sullivan Association, and the APD Lifecare Ethics Committee.

The **book group discussion** of Esau McCaulley's *Reading While Black* has drawn a good-sized group of participants. The conversations and exchange of ideas have so far been lively and rich. Steve solicited the Deacons for their ideas on additional spiritual programming that FCC might offer in the future.

Steve and the Deacons also discussed **covid and its continuing effects** on our worship and congregational activities. It was noted that there might be a surge of cases as we move through fall and winter, due to more inside activities. The Deacons recognized that wearing masks was

a personal choice outside church, and each person should determine how much risk they wanted to take. There was strong feeling that washing hands and using sanitizer should be emphasized, and some described wearing a mask as an exercise of the Golden Rule. It was noted that the congregation was settling into two groups, those who attend worship in person and those who participate on Zoom—all agreed that we should address the resulting lack of personal connection in some way. Some also shared the hopeful belief that the pandemic may be helping us become a softer, gentler, kinder world.

The **Children's Community Corner** has been meeting both on Zoom and in person at FCC. Deacons again considered the challenges and potential improvement of air quality in the downstairs rooms. (Concurrently, the Board of Governors and Council have deemed that proposals for such a project are more costly than we're prepared to pursue.)

The Deacons also discussed plans for **Larry Doyle's memorial service** on October 15, including a suitable

reception after the service and offering rides for friends of Larry who wished to attend. When the date arrived, the service was lovely and quite a few people attended—although the most memorable attendee was Larry's dog, Austin. The reception was held inside, and everyone seemed comfortable with that choice. The entire event was a perfect celebration of Larry and his contributions to the life of FCC.

An abundance of leftover food prompted the decision to offer an in-person **coffee hour** after worship the next day; again, all those who attended seemed fine with that. This is not to say that a decision has been made to resume coffee hour generally, or even that the Diaconate has agreed on such a recommendation. All were grateful, though, for the in-person fellowship.

Committee Meetings

The following regular meetings will happen remotely via Zoom:

Diaconate 11/14 and 12/12, 7:00

Council 11/8 and 12/13, 7:00

MSA 11/28, 7:00

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

The Pastoral Perspective, *continued from Page 1*

music is to share it with others. We can call this evangelism, or we can call this marketing, but whatever phrase we use, we should remember that God calls us to share our music. We read in Psalm 98 that we are to "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises." So, let's join together in making a joyful noise to the Lord, and let's thank God for all he is doing in and through us.

Yours faithfully, *Steve*

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



FALL FELLOWSHIP. All enjoyed a lovely reception after a moving memorial service for Larry Doyle; guest preacher Gail Dimick shared a moment with kids; Ron Bailey led an outing in Pine Park on a perfect fall afternoon; and Camerata New England offered one of several excellent concerts.



LOOKING TOWARD ADVENT

CHRISTMAS COMES TO ALL

The Holiday Basket  Program



For years FCC has participated in the **Holiday Basket Program** run by **LISTEN Community Services**. Economic challenges this year have greatly increased demand for this program, as families struggle to provide warm clothing and food for holiday meals. There is already a wait list.

LISTEN is returning to the familiar process of gathering donations of new items and gift cards, so we will again offer a “giving tree” (of a sort) by which the congregation may support this vital project. **Please look for a sign-up list by email (and in print on Sundays) this month.**

Thanks for giving to our neighbors in the true spirit of Christmas!

Operation Christmas Child—National Collection Week: November 14-21

You're again invited to participate in **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**, an annual gift campaign organized by Samaritan's Purse, which ships shoeboxes of supplies and toys to children worldwide. Gloria and Phil Hammond (802-295-3749) generously manage our collection at FCC, and they will give out as many shoeboxes as can be filled and **returned to church by November 14**. You may also build shoeboxes online before national collection week, November 14-21.

For more information about this project, or to build a box online, please visit samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/. Thank you!



ADVENT IS COMING—PREPARE YE THE WAY!

Sunday, November 27, 11:00 am (Following Worship)—Christmas Decorating Party

Join us to hang wreaths, string lights, trim our tree, and have fun getting the church ready for the season.

Sunday, December 4, 2:00 pm—Classicopia: Four-Hand Holiday

Dan Weiser and Elizabeth Borowsky share seasonal favorites in exciting arrangements for four-hand piano.

Sat., Dec. 10, 7:30 pm / Sun., Dec. 11, 4:00 pm—Bel Canto Chamber Singers: Winter Dreams

Directed by Jane Woods, Bel Canto celebrates the joy of Christmas with a festive and varied program.

Sunday, December 11, 2:00-4:00 pm—Christmas Party and Carol Sing at the Parsonage

All the congregation is invited to enjoy fellowship, delicious food, and good cheer on Kimball Street.

Sunday, December 18, 3:30 pm—Upper Valley Music Center Messiah Sing

This annual tradition features local soloists and chamber orchestra. All are welcome to sing or just listen!

Saturday, December 24—CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Family Service at 5:00, Lessons and Carols at 8:00, and Candlelight Communion at 11:00.

Lebanon Downtown Holiday Celebration

Saturday, December 3

(Various locations throughout town, all day)

Lebanon Recreation and local businesses offer an impressive array of festivities around the Green, and the Upper Valley Music Center will present student recitals in FCC's Sanctuary all afternoon. More details at lebanonnh.gov and uvmusic.org.

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



Music at the Meetinghouse

UPCOMING CONCERTS!

All in the Sanctuary. Masks, distanced seating, and vaccination required.

Reflections: Music for Flute and Piano—Sunday, November 6, at 3:00 pm

Our flautist friend Leslie Stroud joins her frequent collaborator, the superb pianist Matthew Odell, for music by George Enescu, Philip Glass, Robert Schumann, Aaron Copland, and more. *Suggested donation \$10.*

The Anonymous Coffeehouse—Fridays, November 11, 25, and December 2, all at 7:30 pm

Come enjoy our popular community venue for live local music! Conceived as an informal “listening room” for emerging musicians, each show features several acoustic acts. Patrons come and go as they please; baked goods and non-alcoholic drinks available. *Free admission. For performers and more, visit anoncoffee.org/.*

The Balourdet Quartet—Saturday, November 12, at 4:00 pm

After hosting it online in 2021, UVMC brings this superb Boston-based ensemble to Lebanon for a master class (1:00 pm, free and open to observers) and a concert program of both familiar and new music (*adults \$20, under-18 free*). For more information, visit uvmusic.org/event/balourdet-quartet-performance.

Classicopia: Latin Cello—Sunday, November 13, at 2:00 pm

Cellist Diego Carneiro—who has been named a Minister of Tourism for his native Ecuador—joins pianist Daniel Weiser for this thrilling program by an unusual variety of Latin-American composers. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; for more, visit classicopia.org/concert/latin-cello/.*

Cameo Baroque Benefit for 19 Days: Musica Obscura—Friday, November 18, at 7:30 pm

Ernie Drown and friends share their annual program to benefit the UV Haven’s 19 Days of the Valley campaign. “Dark” music of J. S. Bach, G. P. Telemann, Michele Cabalone, Robert Valentine, Elisabeth Claude Jacques de la Guerre, and more. *Free-will donation; for more, visit cameoarts.org or uppervalleyhaven.org.*

Classicopia: Four-Hand Holiday—Sunday, December 4, at 2:00 pm

Pianists Daniel Weiser and Elizabeth Borowsky renew this seasonal tradition with a selection of favorites in exciting, four-hand arrangements—from “Sleigh Ride” and “White Christmas” to *The Nutcracker Suite*. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; for more, visit classicopia.org/concert/four-hand-holiday-3/.*

Bel Canto Chamber Singers: Winter Dreams—Saturday, Dec. 10, 7:30 / Sunday, Dec. 11, 4:00

Director Jane Woods brings Bel Canto back for its ever-popular, always-excellent holiday program, this year featuring a cantata by Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo, as well as music of Hans Leo Hassler, Felix Mendelssohn, Eric Whitacre, and more. *Adults \$15, students \$10, under 13 free; for more, visit www.belcantosingers.org.*

Upper Valley Music Center Messiah Sing—Sunday, December 18, at 3:30 pm

Organized by UVMC, this annual performance of G. F. Handel’s beloved oratorio features student soloists and chamber orchestra. All are welcome to join the chorus (scores available!) or just listen. *Fee \$15 for choral/orchestral participants; suggested \$10 donation for audience. More at uvmusic.org/event/messiah-sing.*

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

**Thanksgiving
Ecumenical Service**

Tuesday, November 22, 7:00
FCC Sanctuary



CHRISTMAS COMES TO ALL

The LISTEN Holiday Basket Program

Support local families and seniors!



**Music
at the
Meetinghouse**

UPCOMING CONCERTS!

All in the Sanctuary. Masks, distanced seating, and vaccination required.

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First Congregational Church of Lebanon

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organist and Choir Director • Nancy Parsons, Children's Community Corner

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

Brian Clancy, Church Administrator

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