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The Pastoral Perspective

Odds are you've hosted a dinner party, birthday bash, or a backyard barbecue. You've set a date and time, sent invitations, and then, when you had a sense of who was able to come, gone about planning a menu and making the meal. Whether you've decided to prepare a five-course meal worthy of a Michelin-rated restaurant or to grill up those perennial American favorites, burgers and dogs, knowing how many people will be present is a requirement for success—after all, a good host wants to make sure there's enough for everyone. Then there's the matter of making sure that all of the guests will enjoy one another's company. Sparkling conversation and comfortable laughter, not awkward pauses and sullen silence, are the hallmarks of a successful gathering. So what is one to do when strangers wander in? How should one react? Do we welcome them with open arms, or do we offer our regrets?

If we follow the example of Jesus, we'll throw caution to the wind and set aside our concerns about headcounts and personality clashes. Remember that when tax collectors, women, and outsiders came to dinner, he ate with them. Recall that when 5,000 people showed up to hear him preach, he found a way to feed them. For Jesus, the table is open to one and all, every time, all the time.

Members of our church family had a chance to experience this during our recent retreat at the Horton Center. There we were, people from three churches, gathered on Chapel Rock as one congregation. We sang songs, read Scripture, and reflected on the word. We prepared to celebrate communion, saying the words of institution, extending the invitation, and beginning to distribute the bread and juice.

That's when the hikers showed up.

I don't know who was more surprised: them or us. They clearly weren't expecting a church service. We weren't expecting backpack-wearing travelers to pass through. But something wonderful

Continued on next page

SUNDAY SERVICE

The Pastoral Perspective, *cont. from Page 1*

happened. People in the congregation invited the newcomers to participate. And they did! Those two hikers fell in with folks from Meriden, Hookset, and Lebanon and shared in the Lord's Supper. Nobody cared about anybody's theology, personality, or ideology. Nobody worried whether we had enough to share. At that moment, our mountaintop community grew by two and the Kingdom of God felt more imminent, more intimate. At that moment, we were touched—no, enveloped by grace. It felt great.

And joy of joys, it can happen again. And again. Perhaps not at that spot, with those people, but anytime, anywhere we choose to let down our defenses, to set aside our grudges and fears, we can create space for the Holy Spirit to work in us and through us. The communion table is a great place for us to give it a try, to accept Jesus' invitation to new life. After all, since it's God's party, we don't have to worry about guest lists or menus; we just have to be ready for God's healing, transforming, empowering love.

Yours faithfully,

Stene

All-Church Forum and Potluck! Sunday, October 27

"What Does That Committee Actually DO?"

The Diaconate invites the congregation to stay after worship on October 27 for an informal discussion of the roles and responsibilities of our volunteer committees.

We'll also seek your input about the skills and interests you can contribute to our church community. Afterward, we'll enjoy the fellowship of a potluck lunch, so please bring a dish to share!

Neighbors in Need

UCC Special Mission Offering—Sunday, October 20

COMMUNITY DINNER

Sunday, October 27, at 5:00 pm

Team Leaders:

Christian Education Committee

Please participate in this vital service to our local community, especially if you haven't done so before.

Volunteers old and new are always welcome to donate ingredients and help with cooking/prep, set-up, serving, and clean-up.

***Never helped before but
interested in trying?
Make THIS your month!***

A Community Dinner APPEAL

Seasons Greetings!

We are looking for volunteers to lead our monthly dinners for the November and December holidays. If you're interested in taking on this important role, or if you have questions about what's involved, please sign up in the Parish Hall or contact the church office.

Queued for Coffee Hour

October—Mission & Social Action

November—Women's Fellowship

December—Board of Governors

OCTOBER 2013 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 10a Worship/ Church School ALL-CHURCH RETREAT <i>(concludes)</i>	30 5:30p Wolf Cubs	1 7p Boy Scouts	2 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto	3 7p Choir	4 7p Cub Scouts Committee 7:30p Classicopia: "Hobo Oboe"	5 8a Men's Fellowship Breakfast 9a Bible Study
6 10a Worship (Communion)/ Church School CROP Walk 12:30p Reg. 1p Walk 1:30p Lunch	7 3p WCBH After-school 5:30p Wolf Cubs 6p Tiger Cubs	8 7p Boy Scouts	9 11a Grafton- Orange Assn Visitation Com 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto	10 9:30a-4p Grafton- Orange Assn 7p Choir	11 7p Bear Cubs	12 9a Bible Study
13 10a Worship/ Church School	14 COLUMBUS DAY 5:30p Wolf Cubs 7p Diaconate	15 7p Church Council 7p Boy Scouts	16 6p UVPRN 7p Christian Ed Committee 7p Bel Canto 7:30p Faith in Three Objects (1)	17 7p Choir	18 7p Bear Cubs	19 9a Bible Study
20 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a Mission & Social Action 12:30p Spiritual Walk 4p Blessing of the Animals	21 NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE 3p WCBH After-school 5:30p Wolf Cubs	22 7p Boy Scouts	23 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto 7:30p Faith in Three Objects (2)	24 7p Choir	25 7p Bear Cubs	26 9a Bible Study NHC-UCC Annual Mtg (Concord)
27 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a Forum and Potluck! 5p Community Dinner	28 5:30p Wolf Cubs 6p Tiger Cubs 7p Board of Governors	29 7p Boy Scouts	30 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto 7:30p Faith in Three Objects (3)	31 HALLOWEEN 4:30p Trick or Treat! 7p Choir	1 7p Cub Scouts Committee 7p Bear Cubs	2 8a Men's Fellowship Breakfast 9a Bible Study 7p UVMC Mini-Mandolin Festival

If your event is missing or incorrect, please notify us at church@fccleb.org or 603-448-4281.

COMMITTEE NOTES

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Trish Heatherton reports that the annual Fall Clean-up Day has been cancelled for this year, as some of the usual tasks have been or will be done in other projects. On October 4, for example, an outside group of paid volunteers is going to paint and improve the access ramp, making it more secure and less slippery. Gordon Sargent and Wayne Braley will trim hedges in the front.

The Board of Governors also recommended adopting service contracts for the church and parsonage heating systems (a total of two furnaces and two boilers). This has since been approved by Council and arranged with Cota & Cota. Chimney Savers will provide an estimate for repairing and replacing the liners in the Sanctuary flues.

A recent insurance survey noted the need for a railing on the chancel steps, and reminded the church to obtain insurance certificates from outside users. The survey also pointed out the need to repaint the left side of the building, and Trish has talked to Don Collins about the timing and costs of this painting job.

Don and the Music Committee will also determine how best to conceal the insulation visible on top of the organ case in the Sanctuary, either with a panel on top or partial removal.

Lastly, JP Pest Services will be contracted to address issues with both wasps and carpenter ants. We will then fill the gaps in the bay window molding where the wasps have been able to penetrate that wall.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Council Chair Warren Belding reported that FCC has agreed to host an after-school program supervised by West Central Behavioral Health. Also, a church member has offered workshops on community-building through improvisation. Some suggested that this could well be included in a future forum/potluck.

Further discussions with **Nancy Brown** have proposed mediated, individual discussions among church members and the pastor. Addressing specific issues and conflicts in detail, these meetings will precede wider discussions among the congregation. Anyone wishing to set up a meeting may do so, and should contact Steve Silver or Warren Belding. All agreed that the mediation process should move forward as soon as possible.

Steve Silver discussed an adult education series he has planned for October, exploring the relationship between faith and objects. He also commended the Diaconate on its faithful work with Mark Rowell. Finally, he

added that the new pastor at the First Baptist Church is interested in reaching out to the wider community.

The **Music Committee** plans to circulate a survey on the church's music ministry to all members. They have also added Susan Montmagny to the committee, replacing Eric Petersson, who has gone off to college.

On behalf of the **Stewardship Committee**, Jon Scott offered a preliminary draft of a policy for accepting non-monetary and specifically designated gifts. He also solicited feedback on the timing and planning for Stewardship Sunday, including financial guidance for setting goals and expectations.

Amy Driscoll has joined the **Nominating Committee** and actively seeks volunteers to share this important work with her. She emphasized the importance of informing the congregation of committee roles and available opportunities to serve. The planned October forum on committees will help in this regard. In particular, the Board of Governors needs new members.

Pete Mason reported that the **Memorial Gardens** will be cleaned up and prepared for the winter by November. He also noted that Barb Jones and Linda Oronte are now co-chairing the **Safety Committee**.

COMMITTEE NOTES

DIACONATE

As the new program year begins, the deacons met to consider both new and ongoing projects. The all-church retreat at the Horton Center will enable members to reflect on Creation in a weekend of worship, prayer, spiritual study, natural recreation, and fellowship in the White Mountains with members of two other churches. Scholarships will be available from the Deacons' Fund, so that costs will not prevent people from participating.

On the afternoon of October 20, Jen Grant and Ron Bailey will lead a spiritual walk/hike. After

worship on October 27, a forum and potluck lunch will explore the work and responsibilities of the church's many boards and committees. Have you wondered what the Board of Governors governs—and whether you'd like to join their efforts? Or the Deacons? Or the Nominating Committee? Representatives from each group will briefly present and answer questions. Church members will also consider their interests and skills.

The deacons have been supporting Mark Rowell, Student-in-Care, as he follows his vocation to become a UCC pastor. Over the past seven years,

Mark has completed seminary, done field work, served as a chaplain in DHMC's Clinical Pastoral Education program, and presented his ordination paper. Our September meeting featured an extensive conversation in response to Mark's explication of his theology, his understanding of UCC polity, and his vision for ministry. It was a joy to share this conversation with several former deacons who have accompanied Mark on this journey. The Diaconate recommended him unanimously for approval by the Committee on Ministry of the Grafton-Orange Association.

***Please don't forget to complete and return the
Music Committee Survey (pp.9-10)***

The FCC Safety Committee: Looking for a Few Good Monitors

Every Sunday, while most of us are in the Sanctuary focusing our attention on worship, the Safety Committee ensures that a team of monitors is on duty to make our building a safe place for everyone. If you would like to volunteer your time to this important purpose, please contact co-chairs Linda Oronte (603-448-0313/loronte@aol.com) and Barb Jones (603-863-9664/basketmaker@mac.com).

October Meetings

<i>Diaconate</i>	10/14, 7:00
<i>Church Council</i>	10/15, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	10/16, 7:00
<i>Mission & Social Action</i>	10/20, 11:15
<i>Board of Governors</i>	10/28, 7:00

November Meetings

<i>Diaconate</i>	11/11, 7:00
<i>Mission & Social Action</i>	11/17, 11:15
<i>Church Council</i>	11/19, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	11/20, 7:00
<i>Board of Governors</i>	11/25, 7:00

Committee Members Needed to Fill Current Vacancies

The Board of Governors and Nominating Committee both have vacancies, and Church Council seeks volunteers to fill them. If you are interested in serving the church by participating on either of these important committees, or if you would like to know more about their responsibilities, please contact Warren Belding at 603-448-2630 or warren.d.belding@dartmouth.edu.



www.cropwalk.org

The Upper Valley CROP Walk

Sunday, October 6 — Registration 12:30 / Walk 1:00
Lunch at FCC Following

This annual event, organized by Church World Service and involving thousands of participants in over 2000 communities across the country, raises substantial funds to combat hunger locally and globally. **You can STILL help by...**

Walk!—Participate in the walk itself and get pledges and donations. Registration materials available in the Parish Hall.

Serve!—Volunteer to serve or clean up at the post-walk lunch.

Donate!—Sponsor a walker, or make a gift at www.cropwalk.org.

Questions? Contact the church office or visit www.cropwalk.org.

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 20, 4:00 pm

On the front lawn of the church

Animals of all shapes, sizes, and species—or even just photos, mementoes, and stuffies—are welcome to this special ceremony in the spirit of St. Francis.

Called to Care

If you would like to learn more about Called to Care or join the group, please contact Linda Jacobs (mrandsmrs.j@comcast.net / 802-296-8251).



Trick or Treat!

Thursday, October 31, at 4:30
On the Front Lawn of the Church



The Christian Education Committee seeks donations and volunteer help for this family-friendly, neighborhood event. Packages of individually wrapped candy and small bags of chips or crackers are welcome!

Please contact Marcia Corkins (603-448-2664) with questions or offers to volunteer your help.



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Adult Education—A New Sermon and Discussion Series

A HISTORY OF OUR FAITH IN THREE OBJECTS

This series will explore how our faith can be experienced through and made manifest in objects. Over three weeks, we will encounter the Magnificat, the End of the Babylonian Captivity, and the Binding of Isaac. Each topic will serve as the starting point for both a Sunday morning sermon (October 13, 20, and 27) and a discussion session in the Parish Hall on the following Wednesday:

Week 1—Wood: The Magnificat

Wednesday, October 16, 7:30 pm

Luke 1:39-56 and Duccio's *Madonna and Child*



Week 2—Clay: The Return of the Exiles

Wednesday, October 23, 7:30 pm

Ezra 1:1-11 and the Cyrus Cylinder



Week 3—Glass: The Binding of Isaac

Wednesday, October 30, 7:30 pm

Genesis 22:1-19 and the New Milford (NJ)

Jewish Center's stained glass window



Although they will complement each other, these sermons and discussions are designed to stand alone, so you needn't attend all three. For more information, please contact Rev. Steve Silver.



A Spiritual Walk with the FCC Outing Club

Sunday, October 20

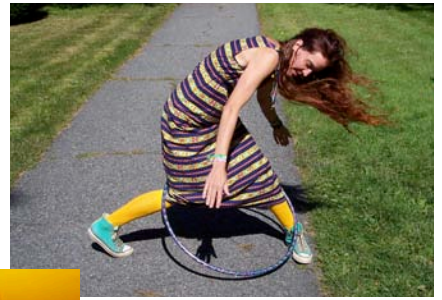
Meet at 12:30 (Location TBA)

All are invited—young and old, men and women, seasoned hikers and couch potatoes—to join this expedition to one of Lebanon's wonderful natural areas. (We haven't yet determined which one, but the date and time are set!) We will again enjoy the engaging guidance and historical perspective of Lebanon's Park Ranger—our own Ron Bailey! Our last Spiritual Walk at Boston Lot was a huge success, so don't miss this chance for some exercise, mental rejuvenation, and spiritual enrichment.

Plan to bring a picnic lunch, blanket or chair, water bottle, bugspray, and sunscreen. For more information, please contact Jennifer Grant (802-436-3996/jenhartland@vermontel.net) or Ron Bailey (603-675-2326/ronbaileymtman@gmail.com).

Photos courtesy Kris Hansen

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



Kick-off Sunday!
September 8, 2013



CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY OF THE MUSIC MINISTRY AT FCC

Music has long been fundamental to the worship and spiritual life of First Congregational Church, and it's also a way we connect to the wider community. The Music Committee would like to assess how our music ministry serves both of those purposes. Please take some time to respond to this survey, as thoughtfully and honestly as possible—your feedback is greatly appreciated.

It has been more than eight years since the Music Committee conducted a similar survey, in which time we have welcomed a new music director, called a new pastor, acquired a new Sanctuary piano, and initiated a new concert series. *We encourage and welcome your thoughts and opinions!*

Your feedback will be kept confidential, although you may include your name if you choose.

PLEASE PRINT, COMPLETE, AND RETURN TO THE MUSIC COMMITTEE BOX IN THE FCC OFFICE.

WORSHIP

How important to you and your family are the following elements of worship?

	<u>Not at all important</u>			<u>Very important</u>			No opinion
Prelude/Postlude	1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Introit	1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Anthem	1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Offertory	1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Hymns	1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Children's Hymn	1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Soloists	1	2	3	4	5		N/A
Visiting soloists/instrumentalists	1	2	3	4	5		N/A

We currently sing four hymns in a typical service (no communion or holiday). Do you feel this is an appropriate number? Y N *If not four, how many would you prefer to sing?* _____

Which hymnal do you prefer? ____ *Pilgrim* (Red, 1960) ____ *New Century* (Black, 1995) ____ No pref

Do you think the Music Committee and Pastor should consider finding a new hymnal? Y N

The Children's Hymn is an effective way to involve and engage our children in worship.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

The choir is an essential part of worship music and congregational life at FCC.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

I would like the choir to participate more extensively in worship.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

I would like to hear the organ played more often in worship.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE

It is important for FCC to sponsor and support the Music at the Meetinghouse series.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

The Music at the Meetinghouse series has been effectively promoted and publicized.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

How many Music at the Meetinghouse events have you attended in the past year? _____

How appealing, satisfying, or rewarding are concerts by the following groups?

	<u>Not at all appealing</u>			<u>Very appealing</u>		<u>No opinion</u>
Bel Canto Chamber Singers	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Classicopia	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
UV Music Center events	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Other (<i>please specify below</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

PREFERRED TYPES OF MUSIC

Please rank your top three preferred genres of music, for both worship and concert contexts:

	<u>Worship</u>	<u>Concert</u>
Classical (e.g. Bach, Mozart, Handel)	_____	_____
Traditional/Standard (e.g. Hymns, Anthems)	_____	_____
New/Recent/Modern Composers	_____	_____
Early American (e.g. Wm. Billings, Shakers)	_____	_____
Spirituals	_____	_____
Gospel	_____	_____
Jazz	_____	_____
Folk	_____	_____
Other (<i>please specify</i> _____)	_____	_____

Please feel free to offer any additional or more specific comments and suggestions for improvement, particularly if they concern something not mentioned elsewhere on the survey. **THANK YOU!**

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



Music *at the* Meetinghouse

Classicopia
HOBBOBOE

Friday, October 4, at 7:30 pm
Sanctuary, First Congregational Church

For over ten years, pianist Daniel Weiser and Classicopia have offered an engaging combination of brilliant musicianship and informative discussion in a relaxed atmosphere. This month, oboist Alicia Chapman joins Dan for a program of wonderful music from Germany, France, Spain, the United States, and more.

Admission is \$20 for adults and \$10 for FCC members; children are free.

For more information, visit www.classicopia.org.

Still to come this fall at the Meetinghouse...

UV Music Center Mini-Mandolin Festival—Saturday, November 2, at 7:00 pm

Zazzle Vocal Quartet—Friday, November 8, at 7:30 pm

Classicopia: Violin Voyage—Saturday, November 16, at 7:30 pm

Sunflower Wind Quartet—Saturday, November 23, at 7:30 pm

Classicopia: Fabulous Four-hand—Friday, December 13, at 7:30 pm

Bel Canto Chamber Singers—Saturday, December 14, at 4:00 pm

The First Congregational Church of Lebanon

Weekly Worship and Church School: Sunday, 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

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