



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of First Congregational Church

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Buen Viaje!.....8-9



Horton Center Retreat 10



Kick-off Sunday! 11



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The Pastoral Perspective

A late spring Sunday morning and we found ourselves, as usual, going to church. The building was lovely, nothing ostentatious but dignified, and clearly built with love and faith. It was a place whose design, construction and location proclaimed that the worship of God was important, central to the lives of its parishioners and the community in which they lived. I was grateful for these visual cues because heading into the service, I knew that we would understand precious little of the liturgy. We were, you see, going to mass at the Catholic church in Greve, a small town an hour's drive from Florence.

We had picked up enough Italian to ask for directions or interact with waiters, but we would never have claimed anything like proficiency. Still, as the service proceeded, I realized we were not as lost as I had feared might be the case. This was especially so during the liturgy of the Eucharist, which contained all the elements with which we were familiar from worship back home. Words for God, Jesus, and Spirit were easy to isolate, and from there it was possible to get a feel for what was being said. Added to this were the motions of the priest, including his lifting of the host. We could make sense of what was unfolding around us. We were able to be present in the moment, in part because of what we could decipher but also, I believe, because the Spirit was present in that place.

I write of a long-ago service in an Italian hill town because of an upcoming trip to another land where a language other than English is spoken. Later this month, a group from our congregation will fly to El Salvador, where we will build a house in San Jose Villanueva. During our time in "SJV" (as we have come to know this community), we will have a chance to meet the locals in various settings—including church. We will be attending an early-morning mass the morning after we arrive. I suspect some of us will still be tired from a long journey (at least, yours truly will be) and only one or two of our group actually speaks Spanish (and I'm not one of them). Still, I can think of no

Continued on Page 4

SUNDAY SERVICE

Communion Offering to Support El Salvador Mission Trip

This month's communion offering will support project costs for our El Salvador mission trip, October 18-25. Please give as you can!

For more on the El Salvador/Epilogos trip, see Pages 8-9.

Participate in Worship!

Serve as a Liturgist or Greeter/Usher

Ever wonder how your friends ended up handing out bulletins on Sunday? Or delivering the call to worship and reading scripture from the lectern? Or walking gracefully from pew to pew collecting the offering?

It's easy—we asked, and they said yes.

No experience or training is required for any of these important roles in worship!

If you'd like to serve as either a liturgist or a greeter/usher, please contact the church office.

* * *

New Members Welcome!

Have you worshiped with us regularly? Have you found a welcoming, spiritually nourishing church home here? Would you like to become more involved in our programs and events?

We warmly invite you to formally join our community of faith as a covenant member.

If you would like to learn more about this invitation, please contact Rev. Steve Silver or the church office.

Queued for Coffee Hour

October—Mission & Social Action

November—Women of the Church

December—Board of Governors

January—Stewardship

Neighbors in Need

UCC Special Mission Offering

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

Every year the UCC's Neighbors in Need program supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the country. Two-thirds of the offering funds an array of local justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. The other third funds the work of the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries, which continues a long tradition of support for native American populations.

Neighbors in Need helps make another world possible. Please consider contributing as generously as you can on October 19!

LIGHT

Community Nursing Program

Presentation on Sunday, October 26, 11:30

Following worship on October 26, please plan to attend a presentation by the organizers of the LIGHT community nursing program. The discussion will provide details about this new program and what it can offer our congregation.

COMMUNITY DINNER

Sunday, October 26, at 5:00 pm

Thanks to CHRISTIAN EDUCATION for organizing this month's dinner!

Please consider donating food or volunteering to set up, serve, or clean up. Our service is vital to those in our local community who look forward to this meal every month.

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

OCTOBER 2014 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 ALL-CHURCH RETREAT (ends) 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a Board of Governors 5p Community Dinner	29 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bear) 6:15p Cub Scouts (Wolf)	30 7p Boy Scouts	1 6p UVPRN 7p Oneness VT Meditation	2 6:30p Cub Scout Leaders 5:30p Choir	3 7:30p Classicopia: Triple Threat	4 8a Men's Breakfast No Bible Study 10:15a Juneberry MS
5 10a Worship and Church School (Communion) 12:30p CROP Walk (lunch at FCC following)	6 3p WCBH After-school 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bear) 6:15p Cub Scouts (Wolf)	7 7p Boy Scouts 7p Quicksilver Rehearsal	8 8a-4p WIC 6p UVPRN 7p Christian Ed Committee (<i>Note: 2nd Wed</i>)	9 9:30a-4p Grafton-Orange Assn 5p Headrest Support Group 5:30p Choir	10	11 No Bible Study 8:30a Women of the Church Breakfast 10:15a Juneberry MS 7:30p Aged to Perfection
12 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a M&SA / Stewardship 12:30p FCC Outing Club at Farnum Hill	13 6p Cub Scouts Popcorn Event 7p Diaconate	14 7p Boy Scouts 7p Quicksilver Rehearsal	15 6p UVPRN	16 5p Headrest Support Group 5:30p Choir	17	18 9a Bible Study 10:15a Juneberry MS El Salvador Mission Trip Departs
19 10a Worship/ Church School	20 3p WCBH After-school	21 7p Church Council 7p Boy Scouts 7p Quicksilver Rehearsal	22 6p UVPRN	23 9:30a-5p WIC 5p Headrest Support Group 7p Choir	24 NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE	25 9a Bible Study 10:15a Juneberry MS El Salvador Mission Trip Returns
26 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a Board of Governors? 11:30a LIGHT Presentation 5p Community Dinner	27 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bear) 6:15p Cub Scouts (Wolf)	28 7p Boy Scouts 7p Quicksilver Rehearsal	29 6p UVPRN	30 5p Headrest Support Group 7p Choir	31	1 8a Men's Breakfast 9a Bible Study 10:15a Juneberry MS

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

A few words about **Grace Notes**

Three weeks ago, I arrived at work to find a scrap-paper note. “Brian,” it read, “Has anyone suggested Grace Notes?” The note wasn’t signed, and I didn’t recognize the handwriting. I still don’t know who left it, even after asking a few people who happened by the office. This anonymous church member might now choose to reveal him/herself, but I’d almost rather not know, as the mystery seems only to make the choice all the more popular.

I hadn’t planned to accept any new nominations after Labor Day, and when I got the note, “The Meetinghouse Messenger” had a secure lead. And I was comfortable with that choice—the church I grew up in, Bryn Mawr Presbyterian, calls its newsletter *The Messenger*, so that seemed a fine name. But it just didn’t feel right to ignore and discard this anonymous note just because it was late, even with so many suggestions already in play.

So I offered this “late entry” in a follow-up email, and immediately received a couple enthusiastic votes for it. Then a few more. In fact, almost all of the votes I received after that email were for “Grace

Notes,” and each came with more persuasive support than any other choice had prompted, “Messenger” or otherwise.

I liked the name, too, and not just because of my younger daughter’s name. (Full disclosure—I voted for my own, losing suggestion, one of just three votes it got.) In music, grace notes indicate possible ornaments or improvisations, something sung or played outside of strict meter and rhythm to soften, shape, personalize, or otherwise enliven a standard melodic line. They can distinguish one performance of the same piece (or one performer, or recording) from another. At the risk of drawing an easy but cliché analogy (and overstating the importance of this newsletter), I might observe that what appears every month in these pages represents some of what distinguishes our church from another.

And in soliciting suggestions for a new name, I had asked us to consider something that might “evoke our shared faith.” Musical analogies aside, grace is also that redeeming, abundant, and surprising gift which God gave us in Christ and continues to give us every day. Grace is what we, in turn, extend to each other, in the events of these pages and beyond.

The Pastoral Perspective, *continued from Page 1*

better way for us to begin our stay: joining together with God’s people as we prepare for service and fellowship rooted in God’s love. I look forward to the presence of the Holy Spirit amongst us—Spanish and English speakers, Protestants and Catholics, Salvadorans and Americans—to surround us, support us, and unite us, to empower us to embrace our identities as Children of God, brothers and sisters in the Risen Christ. With this as our starting point, we can embark not on a simple building project but engage fully in sacred and holy work.

Whether you will be on the ground in El Salvador or here in the Upper Valley, you can be a full participant in this trip. Pray for those traveling and those who are serving as hosts; take some time to learn about the people of SJV by following the mission team’s progress through (hopefully) daily updates, and look for the presence of the Holy Spirit, wherever you may be.

Yours faithfully,



COMMITTEE NOTES

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Repainting of the east-facing sides of the church was completed this summer, the side-door frame has been repaired and replaced, and the front lawn shrubs have been trimmed. That said, the Board of Governors had a quiet month.

Three members of the Board met with a representative of Building Alternatives to seek information about a possible energy audit of the church facility. We gained useful information for whenever we decide to move forward.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thank you to our church family for supporting the children on Kick-off Sunday, September 14! This is always such a fun event, and our luncheon was well attended.

Our Church School theme for the year is “God’s Big World: Building Diverse Communities.” We will be learning about and celebrating the diversity and creativity of God’s people around the world, through stories, discussions, crafts, visitors, and other activities.

The children have elected to purchase a water buffalo and chickens for Heifer International with their Sunday offerings.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Diaconate chair Jennifer Petersson reported positive feedback for the August hymn sing service and the

other worship services led by the Deacons while Rev. Silver was on vacation. Jennifer thanked the congregation for its support.

The Diaconate is contributing funds and designated communion offerings to both the Guatemala Medical Mission Trip (\$500) and the Epilogos Mission Trip (\$1600).

On the basis of recent discussions about the church’s discernment process, Jennifer suggested that we use its themes as a framework for our Annual Meeting and Annual Report, encouraging opportunities to reflect on “growing younger, growing deeper, and growing outward.” We’ll revisit this idea at a future meeting. A suggestion was made to distribute a summary of the discernment process for the benefit of newer members.

Pete Mason reported for the **Board of Governors** that we’ve contracted with Dead River Company for heating oil this winter. The church has also arranged annual service contracts with Dead River for its boiler and two furnaces. An energy audit is also being considered to improve our building’s efficiency.

Todd Heatherton noted with some concern that **pledges continue to be down** significantly from prior years. Loose collections and rental fees, however, have increased. As Council discussed ways to address this year’s financial shortfall, Jon Scott suggested that **Stewardship** Sunday, traditionally just prior to Thanksgiving, could perhaps set an

immediate goal to make up the shortfall. He offered to explore that possibility before the October meeting. Council generally agreed, though, that any special, short-term appeal might hinder longer-term stewardship goals.

Corrine Erskine noted that the **Mission Committee’s** efforts are focused on planning and raising funds for the El Salvador mission trip. A formal request was brought to Council (approved unanimously) to disburse \$4,000 from the Dole Fund for that trip, as well as \$600 for the Guatemala medical mission trip being led by Deb Scott. This year’s CROP Walk is coming up on October 5.

Amy Driscoll invited the **Women of the Church** to a breakfast on Saturday, October 11, at 8:30. This will offer a chance for fellowship and planning for the year.

As we approach the nominating process, Amy also reiterated a familiar recommendation that Council review **FCC’s committee structure**. Council voted to form an ad hoc task force, drawn from both Council and the congregation at-large, charged with reviewing the present committee structure and their membership.

At the church administrator’s request, Council then discussed rates and policies for **use of the church facility by outside groups**. Brian Clancy shared information about other venues’ fee structures, on the basis of which he advised

COMMITTEE NOTES

increasing our per-event rates, which have remained for several years at \$60 for the Sanctuary and \$40 for the Parish Hall, plus heating surcharges during fall and winter months. Todd Heatherton will attempt to break down heating costs for those individual spaces over the past year; Warren Belding suggested that an hourly rate for heat usage, on top of a flat fee for use only, might be best.

Steve Silver reported that he has been asked to serve on the ethics committee of Alice Peck Day Hospital, and that he participated in the NHC-UCC's stewardship initiative themed "Ambassadors of Abundance." He continues his work on the UCC's Historical Committee. He thanked Council and the Diaconate for enabling and supporting his study leave and vacation in August. Steve also is planning to join the El Salvador mission trip in October.

DIACONATE

Ginger Smith reported that this month's communion offering collected \$300 for the Guatemala medical trip, which the Diaconate

increased to a total of \$500. For the El Salvador mission, the Diaconate approved a total of \$1600, to be supplemented by the October 5 communion offering.

Deacons discussed making greater use of their member assignment lists to support congregational care. At a future meeting, we will discuss strategies to increase concern for our congregation. Mark Rowell has been added to the Called-to-Care list. Jennifer Grant brought news from Janice Boice that Alisha will graduate high school next spring and apply for a VT employment program; Tyler has a new job.

The deacons also agreed that we need, as a church, to examine our progress on the discernment process. We'll share our belief with Council that this be integrated into the annual meeting. The original discernment summary will be made available to the deacons and congregation.

In a report on the El Salvador trip, Ron Bailey explained that the need for armed security will limit activity to daylight hours. Also, the group will be focused on building a single house, shelving other projects that

would have split up the group and required additional translators.

Another spiritual walk will be held on October 12 at Farnum Hill.

Steve Silver appreciated his time away in August and the chance to worship at other churches. Before next summer, the Diaconate will revisit the summer pulpit supply question, perhaps involving our local partner churches who face the same challenge. Steve will attend the Horton Center retreat but return early on Sunday 9/28 to preach. A fall sermon series will explore religion and the centenary of WWI; next spring he plans to devote a sermon each to the four gospels. Steve regrets that because of the El Salvador mission, he'll be unable to join our delegates at the NH Conference Annual Meeting on October 25.

October Meetings

<i>Christian Education</i>	10/8, 7:00
<i>Mission/Social Action and Stewardship</i>	10/12, 11:15
<i>Diaconate</i>	10/13, 7:00
<i>Church Council</i>	10/21, 7:00
<i>Board of Governors</i>	(tbd)

November Meetings

<i>Mission/Social Action and Stewardship</i>	11/9, 11:15
<i>Diaconate</i>	11/10, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	11/12, 7:00
<i>Church Council</i>	11/18, 7:00
<i>Board of Governors</i>	11/23, 11:00

Women of the Church Breakfast

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 8:30 AM

All women of the church (and their kids!!) are invited to a Women's Breakfast at church on October 11. This will give us a chance both to share fellowship and plan our activities for the year.

RSVP to Amy Driscoll (amykdriscoll@gmail.com or 603-448-0976) by Friday, October 10. We hope to see you there!

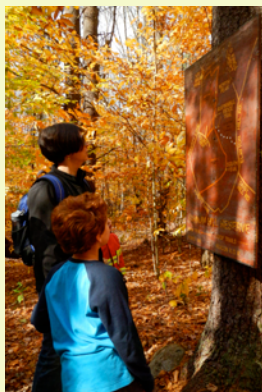
COMMITTEE NOTES

Ad Hoc Group to Review FCC Committee Structure

Over the past few years, many have suggested that the church's committee structure might benefit from some revision. Across that structure—from our Moderator, Treasurers, and Council leadership; through our Diaconate, Board of Governors, and Trustees; to our array of committees for all areas of church life—we currently have over 70 volunteer positions to fill each year. Many feel that our active congregation can no longer support that level of volunteer participation.

At the suggestion of Nominating chair Amy Driscoll, Council voted at its September meeting to approve the formation of an ad-hoc task force to address this issue. The group's goals would be to study the current committee structure, identify which committees might be reduced in size or even combined, and bring recommendations back to Council. With members drawn from both Council and the congregation at large, the task force would communicate openly and effectively with the entire church community, inviting comments and suggestions throughout the process. In addition, all current committees are asked to consider ways to support this process (assessing how many members are required to do the committee's work, how much does that work overlap with that of another committee, and similar issues).

If you're interested in serving on this ad hoc task force, please contact Amy Driscoll (603-448-0976 or amykdriscoll@gmail.com) by October 31. It is anticipated that the group will need only 3-4 meetings.



A Spiritual Walk with the FCC Outing Club

Farnum Hill—Sunday, October 12, 12:30
(Meet at entrance across from Poverty Lane Orchards)

All are invited—young and old, men and women, seasoned hikers and couch potatoes—to join another expedition to one of Lebanon's great natural areas. Ron Bailey—the city's *de facto* Park Ranger—will lead us up Farnum Hill, with its glacial boulders, beautiful stone walls, gorgeous stands of hardwood trees, and good views north and south. The hike covers relatively easy terrain, and there are options for both a short loop and a longer, two-mile loop.

These Spiritual Walks have become a beloved part of our ministry and programs, so don't miss this chance for exercise, mental rejuvenation, and spiritual enrichment.

Bring a picnic lunch, blanket or chair, and water bottle.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Grant (802-436-3996/jenhartland@vermontel.net) or Ron Bailey (603-675-2326/ronbaileymtman@gmail.com).

Support Our El Salvador Mission Trip!

In just two short weeks we'll be departing for a great adventure in San Jose Villanueva ("SJV"), El Salvador!!

SJV is a small town in west-central El Salvador. Our primary project while there will be the construction of a new home for the Lopez family, much like the Perez home that some of us worked on a few years ago. This project is one of many regularly organized with great success by Epilogos Charities, Inc. (www.epilogos.org). Epilogos has for years worked to improve SJV's housing and water systems, offering residents a better life. To date the organization has constructed 150 houses, and their design-build director, Chepe, routinely transforms amateur desk jockeys into construction heroes.

Our church's relationship with Epilogos and SJV has evolved through several different individual trips by our members. Allison Schuster has made numerous trips beginning in 2004, primarily to assist with a clean-water project sponsored by Engineers Without Borders. Ron Bailey, Wendell Smith, and Barry Schuster have also shared the great joy of participating in Epilogos building projects in SJV. All have reported a fine travel experience in a beautiful country.

The travelers in this year's group offer incredible talents and diverse backgrounds, suited to a variety of tasks. We're excited to get to work!!



Middle: FCC's Allison Schuster (center, in pink) works on a clean-water project in San Jose Villanueva. *Below:* The family of Jenny Elizabeth Lopez (second from left), who received scholarship help in 2013 from the FCC Church School Lenten offering.

EL SALVADOR MISSION



Top Right: Mike and Susie Jenkins—the inspiring founders of Epilogos, also known as “Mayor and Health Education Directors” of San Jose Villanueva—lead a presentation after church last May. *Top Left:* The children of our Church School present Epilogos with scholarship funds generated by their Lenten Lunch Bag offering in 2013. *Middle:* An Epilogos team with the Perez Family in San Jose Villanueva, January 2012. *Below:* Building the Perez house in 2012.

In the two weeks before our departure, we hope you as a congregation will help us build momentum in a couple of ways...

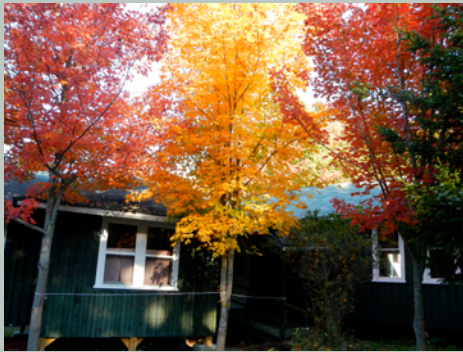
We need help collecting items to be brought along for local donation. These include school supplies, shoes (sizes 6-8), clothing (adult XL, young adult M, girls S), and computers (in good condition, for the kindergarten). There are several empty suitcases in the Parlor; we'd like to bring them to SJV full of gifts!

We need help covering the costs of our project, which should be viewed as just one component in FCC's overall mission program. In the past, our church has raised money for student scholarships in SJV through our Church School's Lenten Lunch Bag offering. For this trip, FCC's Mission and Diaconate funds together have already paid for the home construction project (\$6,000), the materials for which are all sourced in El Salvador. (FCC hopes also to assist with the cost of travel, room, and board, for which each traveler has so far paid individually.) In order to sustain and strengthen our church's mission programs, from our local community outreach in Lebanon to additional, globally focused projects like this, we need to replenish some of what we've spent so far.

Please consider helping however you can, and send us off on October 18 with your prayers and best wishes for success in SJV.

THANK YOU!!

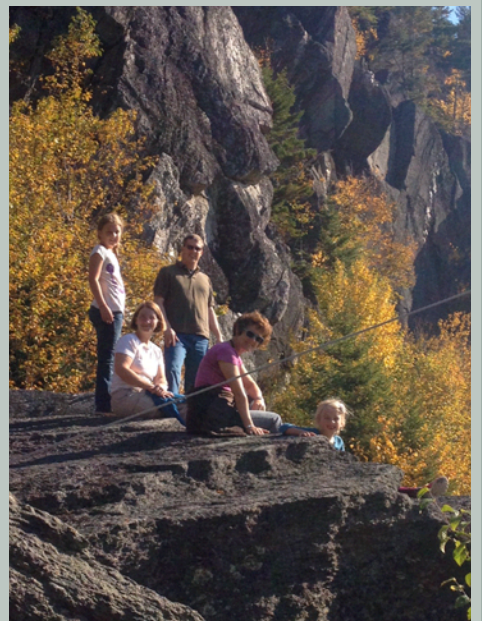
THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



FALL RETREAT AT THE HORTON CENTER

On September 26-28, fifteen members of the FCC community joined about forty others from the Meriden and Hooksett Congregational Churches for another richly rewarding retreat in the White Mountains.

We enjoyed delicious meals together in the dining hall; gathered around a campfire at night; hiked along Pinkham Ledge and the caves; and worshiped on top of Chapel Rock. **And the weather was perfect!!**



OUR CHURCH'S LOCAL MISSION

Volunteer with WISE!

Fall Advocate Training Oct. 7–Nov. 13

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00–8:30 pm

Saturday, October 25, 9:00 am–2:00 pm

The WISE 24-hour crisis line is available to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence thanks to a group of dedicated, empathetic Volunteer Advocates, who dedicate over 6,000 hours each year to this vital service. Advocates respond to crisis-line calls after hours, offering empowerment-based support, connections to resources, guidance to local police and hospitals, and facilitation of emergency shelter.

If you'd like to learn more about becoming a WISE Volunteer Advocate, contact Chelsea Williams at 603-448-5922 (x120) or chelsea.williams@wiseoftheuppervalley.org.

end violence
wise
share hope ♦ change lives



www.cropwalk.org



2014 Upper Valley CROP Walk

Sunday, October 5 – Registration 12:30 / Walk 1:00

Organized by Church World Service, this nationwide event annually raises substantial funds to combat hunger locally and globally.

Walk!—Participate in the walk itself and get pledges and donations.

Serve!—Our church will once again host a post-walk meal. We need help!

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

Participant materials and volunteer sign-ups are still available in the Parish Hall.

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



KICK-OFF SUNDAY!

What would the Church School year be without its inaugural bounce party? Note the participation of both organist and pastor...

And yes, that is indeed Wendell Smith.

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

FALL CONCERTS

All in the Sanctuary, First Congregational Church

Friday, October 3, 7:30 pm—Classicopia: Triple Threat

Dan Weiser, piano; Tim Schwarz, violin/viola; Soo Goh, clarinet. Music of Mozart, Bruch, Milhaud, and Schickele. *Suggested donation \$20, church members \$10, children free.*

Saturday, October 11, 7:30 pm—An Evening with Aged to Perfection

Come enjoy this sensational women's quartet (featuring former members of Zazzle Quartet) and special guests The Honeymooners, A Cappella Addiction, and the NoNameYet Quartet. The evening's entertaining program will offer tight, rhythmic *a cappella* harmonies in a variety of musical genres, including gospel, doo-wop, jazz standards, and barbershop. *Free-will donation.*

Sunday, November 2, 1:00 pm—Classicopia: Beethoven's Cello

Pianist Dan Weiser joins cellist Lawrence Stomberg for an all-Beethoven program. *Suggested donation \$20, church members \$10, children free.*

And coming during Advent...

Saturday, December 13, 7:30 pm—Christmas with Counterpoint

Vermont's premier professional chorus brings its superb ensemble sound to Lebanon to celebrate the season.

Sunday, December 14, 4:00 pm—Will Ögmundson's The Night of Las Posadas

Local favorite Will Ögmundson revives this Christmas musical, based on Tomie de Paola's book.

Tuesday, December 16, 7:00 pm—Lebanon High School Choral Concert

Support the various ensembles of our local high school's fine music program (Dan Signor, director).

Sunday, December 21, 6:00 pm—Messiah Sing!

Join the chorus (or just the audience!) for a complete run of Handel's beloved oratorio, with local soloists.



Called to Care offers special assistance to those in our congregation who need it, for whatever reason—illness, loss of a loved one, loneliness, depression, aging issues, and divorce, to name a few. We offer support in the form of cards, phone calls, visits, meals, and transportation.

Now with just eight caregivers, Called to Care needs help! If the Spirit moves you to join this rewarding group, please contact Linda Jacobs (mrandmrs.j@comcast.net / 802-296-8251) or Steve Silver.

First Congregational Church of Lebanon

Weekly Worship and Church School: Sunday, 10:00 am • Office Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9-12
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Rev. Stephen R. Silver — silver@fcclb.org • Newsletter Submissions — church@fcclb.org