



**First Congregational Church
of Lebanon**
United Church of Christ

JANUARY 2014

News and Events

What's Inside

Community Caroling7



Christmas Eve7



Will Ögmundson8-9



Sunday Service2

January Calendar3

Committee Notes4-5

Annual Meeting Notice.....5

The Pastoral Perspective

With the arrival of a New Year, the time to make some resolutions has arrived. And since this is a church publication, I invite you to consider taking up a commitment or two relating to the life of faith. Perhaps you'll pray more. Or maybe read your Bible more regularly. You might feel called to participate in a service ministry like the Community Dinner, or to engage in pastoral care work through Called to Care. Whatever it is, this is the time to make your resolution.

But some might protest that resolutions are hard to keep. By the time this newsletter has gone to press in the first week of the month, millions of people around the world will have already broken their New Year's resolutions—evidence, some might suggest, that resolutions aren't worth the effort. If they can't be kept for even a week or two, why bother?

The fallacy in this way of thinking, of course, is that fault is assigned to the resolutions and not to the one keeping them. The planned commitment to lose weight, exercise more, be kinder to others—or to pray intentionally, study Scripture, or serve one's neighbor—is commendable, regardless of whether the one who sets out do so succeeds or fails. The onus isn't on the resolution; it's on those making resolutions: you and me.

Fortunately, we're not alone as we consider our faith resolutions for the coming year. We've got the church to support us, people who will pray and learn and help out alongside us. Even more powerfully, we've got God, who will walk with us, encourage us, and hold us as we try to live the Christian life more fully.

Jesus never promised us that following his way would be easy. On the contrary, his invitation to be disciples is filled with challenges. The life of faith takes work and effort and dedication. That's where resolutions can actually help. The commitment we make

Continued on Page 6

SUNDAY SERVICE

COMMUNITY DINNER—Sunday, January 26, at 5:00 pm

**** We still need a team leader for this month's dinner! ****

Whether leading it or not, please plan to participate in this vital service to our local community. Volunteers are always welcome to donate ingredients and help with cooking/prep, set-up, serving, and clean-up. **To offer your help, please sign up in the Parish Hall or contact the church office.**

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

Thanks to Our Team Leaders for a Great 2013!

We are blessed and grateful to have such a dedicated group of church members who have generously committed their time and resources to our Community Dinners in the past year:

John Bourgon, Marcy Chong, Marcia Corkins, Corrine Erskine, John Gilliatt, Linda and Ike Jacobs, Barb Laro, Nan Parsons, Jon Scott, Erin Slayton, Barb and Steve Teeter, and the Christian Education and Mission & Social Action Committees... and special mention to Ron Bailey, our chief dishwasher!

We would LOVE to have new volunteers join this group in the New Year!

If you're interested in organizing a dinner, or if you have questions about what it involves, please contact the church office or talk to someone who's done it before.

Participate in Worship!

Serve as a Liturgist or a Greeter/Usher

Ever wonder how your friends ended up handing out bulletins at the door on Sunday morning? 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're interested in serving as a liturgist, please contact the church office.

If you're interested in greeting/ushering, please contact Carolyn Crocker (603-448-9410/carolyn.crocker@gmail.com).

Your congregation will thank you!

All-Church Forum and Potluck!

Sunday, January 12, After Worship

Mission Opportunities at FCC

The Diaconate and Mission and Social Action Committee invite the congregation to an informal, open discussion of FCC's mission programs, near and far. In particular, we'll learn more about plans for a summer mission trip to El Salvador.

Afterward, we'll enjoy the fellowship of an **international-themed potluck lunch!**

Please bring a dish to share.

Queued for Coffee Hour

January—Stewardship Committee

February—Christian Education

March—Diaconate

JANUARY 2014 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 10a Worship/ Church School	30 5:30p Wolf Cubs	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE No Boy Scouts	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY <i>(FCC office closed)</i> 6p UVPRN	2 No Choir	3 6p Bear Cubs 7p Cub Scouts Committee	4 8a Men's Breakfast 9a Bible Study
5 10a Worship/ Church School (Communion)	6 3p WCBH After-school 5:30p Wolf Cubs 6p Tiger Cubs	7 7p Boy Scouts	8 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto	9 9:30a-4p Grafton- Orange Assn 7p Choir	10 6p Bear Cubs	11 9a Bible Study
12 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a All-FCC Forum and Potluck!	13 2013 ANNUAL REPORT CONTENT DUE 5:30p Wolf Cubs 7p Diaconate	14 7p Boy Scouts	15 6p UVPRN 7p Christian Ed Committee 7p Bel Canto	16 7p Choir	17 6p Bear Cubs 6-9p Leb Rec Dept Quilters' Retreat	18 9a Bible Study 10a-5p Leb Rec Quilters' Retreat
19 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a Mission and Social Action	20 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY 12p WCBH After-school 5:30p Wolf Cubs	21 7p Church Council 7p Boy Scouts	22 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto	23 7p Choir	24 FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE 6p Bear Cubs	25 9a Bible Study
26 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a Will Ögmundson Farewell 5p Community Dinner	27 3p WCBH After-school 5:30p Wolf Cubs 6p Tiger Cubs 7p Board of Governors	28 7p Boy Scouts	29 6p UVPRN 7p Bel Canto	30 7p Choir	31 6p Bear Cubs	1 8a Men's Breakfast 9a Bible Study

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

COMMITTEE NOTES

CHURCH COUNCIL

At its December meeting Council heard from Todd Heatherton, who has been working (with his wife Trish) to review the church's books and accounts status. Todd explained and proposed several issues for discussion and asked for feedback. Council voted unanimously to authorize the payment of a \$10,000 pledge for 2013 to the NH Conference of the UCC. The treasury required additional cash for remaining 2013 expenses, for which Council unanimously approved a transfer of funds by the Trustees.

Trish Heatherton reported for the **Board of Governors** that our insurance carrier has asked us to finish painting the east side of the church exterior. Don Collins has submitted a proposal of \$17,500, for which Council voted to use the Waldo trust allocation for 2014. We will arrange to have Don complete the project in the spring. Trish also noted that Chimney Savers has installed stainless-steel liners in both the church's chimneys. They are now protected and should function effectively for years, with regular maintenance.

Amy Driscoll reported that the **Nominating Committee** has made progress toward filling available committee and leadership positions. She expects to have most, if not all, current

vacancies filled in advance of the annual meeting.

Brian Clancy reported that the Music at the Meetinghouse fall series ended successfully, with several well attended concerts, great music, and good feedback. He added that the **Music Committee** has collected almost 40 music ministry surveys, which will be particularly useful now, with the imminent departure of Will Ögmundson in February.

There will be a reception during coffee hour sometime in January to thank Will and wish him well. The committee is looking for an interim musician for Sunday mornings, and the search for a new permanent music director will begin early in January.

For the **Stewardship Committee**, Jon Scott reports that the church has received just over 30 pledges for 2014, totaling approximately \$40,000. We continue to accept pledges into the new year.

On January 12 there will be an "international" forum and potluck lunch after church, to raise awareness and interest in a mission trip to El Salvador.

Steve Silver reminded Council of the variety of services and events leading up to Christmas—the Blue Christmas Service, the NH homeless memorial vigil, and three services on Christmas Eve. He also reported that Robert

Grabill, from the UCC Church at Dartmouth, is eager to preach as our guest on December 29.

DIACONATE

At their December meeting the Deacons considered our response to neighbors in need during this hard time of year. The church's Back-Door Ministry, supported with funds from the monthly Communion Offering, enables the church to distribute gas cards and food vouchers to a number of community members. People in need of shelter or fuel assistance have also been aided by these funds in the past, when emergencies arise.

The Deacons also provided year-end support to the two local agencies with whom we partner, WISE and Second Growth. As many are aware, WISE "provides advocacy, crisis services, and community education to those affected by domestic and sexual violence and stalking throughout the Upper Valley," while Second Growth's mission is "to create, deliver, and evaluate innovative programs that reduce the risk for adolescent substance abuse and violence, and to train others to replicate those programs."

There are also opportunities to serve within our church. The Prayer Team was for many years led by Betty Tedeschi, who has

COMMITTEE NOTES

now stepped down—thank you, Betty! Deb Scott is now serving as the team's facilitator, and Called to Care is headed by Linda Jacobs and Barb Teeter. If you wish to join these ministries, please speak to Barb, Linda, or Deb.

Another after-worship forum and potluck lunch, to encourage open conversation about the life and programs of our church, will be held January 12. Bring a dish and share your thoughts!

January Meetings

<i>Diaconate</i>	1/13, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	1/15, 7:00
<i>Mission & Social</i>	1/19, 11:15
<i>Church Council</i>	1/21, 7:00
<i>Board of Governors</i>	1/27, 7:00

February Meetings

<i>Diaconate</i>	2/10, 7:00
<i>Mission & Social</i>	2/16, 11:15
<i>Church Council</i>	2/18, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	2/19, 7:00
<i>Board of Governors</i>	2/24, 7:00

PLEASE NOTE:

CONTENT FOR THE 2013 ANNUAL REPORT
must be submitted to the Church Administrator no later than
MONDAY, JANUARY 13

Please submit your material in electronic format, preferably as a Word document; a pdf file is also acceptable.

2014 ANNUAL MEETING—SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

The Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Lebanon, NH, will be held in the church sanctuary on Sunday, February 9, 2014, immediately following the worship service, for the purpose of:

1. The election of all officers provided for under the CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of the church.
2. To hear the reports of all officers, committees, and organizations, as required under the CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of the church.
3. To consider and act upon any other matters relating to the general church welfare that may properly come before this meeting.

Volunteer Opportunities Still Available!

Church Council and the Nominating Committee remind you to consider committee service as an opportunity to contribute your skills and interests to the church's mission and ministry.

If you're interested in learning about a particular committee or opportunity, please contact Amy Driscoll (603-448-0976/amykdriscoll@gmail.com).

Blessed by God, Blessed to Give—Stewardship 2014

We have been blessed by God, most powerfully through the gift of Jesus. Created in God's image, we are blessed to give, too, sharing our time, our skills, our money—sharing the hope and promise we have known in the church. To date, we are grateful to have received over 30 pledges for 2014, and we continue to welcome new pledge forms. Thank you to all, for your faithful response to God's call of service in and through First Congregational Church!

Offering envelopes for 2014 are still available in the Parish Hall, on a self-serve basis.

Please take whichever available box you wish, and record your name and box number on the list.

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2013



Decorating Party. Steve Teeter hangs Advent banner wires just two weeks before (successful!) heart surgery; Ike Jacobs stands ready to serve hot cocoa; Ron Bailey, Carol Stone, Barb Jones, and Rebecca Woodward work on the sanctuary tree (donated in memory of Marie B. Yeager by her family); and Brian Clancy hoists a wreath above the altar.

The Pastoral Perspective, *continued from Page 1*

can help us to focus our attention productively. It can help us remember that the question before us isn't "What Would Jesus Do?"—which can set a seemingly unattainable goal—but rather, "What Would Jesus *Have Me Do*?" That question calls on us to be the people God would have us be, something that may require a stretch and extra effort.

So let's join together, and let's make some faith-related resolutions for the New Year, knowing that even if we stumble and falter, the Holy Spirit will be there to help us get up and get going again.

Yours faithfully,

Steve

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



Community Caroling. Over 20 church members joined this festive outing, visiting Rogers House, Genesis, Harvest Hill, and the home of Closey Dickey. **Top right:** Closey sings along in her living room, while Kailyn Rappaport makes a new friend. **Bottom left:** FCC children share a moment with Norman Dubie at Genesis. Norm and Doris were both delighted to visit with friends, old and new; we also spent time with Helen Wallace, Gwen Stewart, and Ginee Hough.



Christmas Eve Pageant. Mason, Jaden, and Shawn Poirier, Michael and Erin Thompson, Chip Silver, and a host of "angels" tell the story of Christ's birth. Ethan Guyer read scripture, while Rob Anderegg offered stage direction from the Narthex.

Thanks and Best Wishes,

Will Ögmundson

As most of the FCC community now knows, we learned last month that Will Ögmundson was offered and has accepted a position as organist and choir director at the Congregational Church of Henniker, NH. This was not an easy decision for Will, who has truly enjoyed making music for and with our church community, but it is the right move for him, personally and professionally. His new church is much closer to his home in Sutton, surely making it an appealing opportunity for his whole family.

In his seven years here, Will has thrived as the leader of our music ministry, enriching our lives both musically and spiritually. To say that we have been fortunate to have him at FCC is rather an understatement—even as he brought such musical depth to our worship service every Sunday, he has remained constantly active and in demand as a composer, performer, and producer throughout the region. His leadership, encouragement, good humor, and spontaneity have made Thursday evening choir rehearsals a pleasure. More than anything, we have come to appreciate and treasure



Will's facile virtuosity as a pianist. Whether during a prelude or offertory on Sunday morning, or at one of his thoroughly enjoyable concerts, Will's mastery of his instrument has always seemed to produce just the right mood for the situation, season, or liturgical moment.



Scenes from Will's highly entertaining "Playathon," November 2012



THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION

We will miss Will for his music, and for his quiet warmth and humility. The entire FCC community joins in thanking him for his years of ministry and service, and we wish him, Sara, Chloe, and Tristan the very best in their years to come.

And you'd better come back to play for us—often!



A casual moment at Will's last Christmas concert on December 21.



Tristan and Chloe in a typical spot during coffee hour. We'll miss you, too!

Please join us after worship on Sunday, January 26, for an informal farewell reception in Will's honor.

This will be his last Sunday at FCC.

Save the Date!—Sunday, February 23

9TH BIENNIAL LEBANON AREA CHOIR FESTIVAL

West Lebanon Congregational Church, 18 Maple Street

Combined Choirs Rehearsal 2:00, Individual Choir Rehearsals 3:00, Full Concert 4:00

Participating churches include First Congregational Church of Lebanon, Lebanon United Methodist Church, Canaan United Methodist Church, West Lebanon Congregational Church. Music of Thomas Tallis, Felix Mendelssohn, Harry Burleigh, Mark Hayes, and many, many others!

All Are Welcome!

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 St., P.O. Box 230, Lebanon, NH 03766 • 603-448-4281 • church@fccleb.org • www.fccleb.org
Rev. Stephen R. Silver — silver@fccleb.org • Newsletter Submissions — church@fccleb.org