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The Pastoral Perspective

Recently, we read an abbreviated version of the Book of Jonah during the Children's Moment. What we read was, I suspect, familiar to all: Jonah was called by God to preach repentance to the people of Nineveh, lest the city be destroyed in a fit of divine wrath; Jonah instead fled to Tarshish; a storm engulfed his ship; Jonah was thrown overboard and swallowed by a great fish (sorry, not a whale), in whose gut he had the opportunity to contemplate his situation over three days; he yielded to God, went to Nineveh, and there successfully called the people to repent. God, moved by their change, decided to spare the city. Hooray! All was well!

Well, not quite. You see, the version we read that morning, and what most people recall, took in the first three chapters of the book. There is, however, still the little matter of Chapter Four. Jonah, having retreated east of the city, goes into an unseemly, epic sulk, and waits to see what fate will befall the metropolis. Though God has already forgiven the people of Nineveh, Jonah appears to think they might still be punished. Indeed, his attitude suggests that's what he wanted to happen.

Observing this, God decides to help Jonah develop a measure of empathy. He causes a *qiqayon* (most likely a castor oil plant) to grow up behind the prophet, providing him shade as he sits his vigil. Jonah is quite grateful. But the next day God fells the tree, and Jonah is beside himself—furious in the way a petulant child deprived of his or her favorite toy can be infuriated. He'd come to care for that plant! Its demise seems blatantly unfair! Jonah is in a snit, more than ready to stew in his disappointment. The *qiqayon* deserves better! Well, God retorts, if you can feel that way about a plant, imagine how I might feel about a city of 120,000, even if its inhabitants are clueless about right and wrong.

Continued on next page

SUNDAY SERVICE

The **Pastoral Perspective**, *cont. from Page 1*

We never learn whether Jonah got the message. We hope he did, but it's just as possible that he didn't: the people of Nineveh, after all, were Assyrians. Not only were they foreigners; they were the enemy. Many of Jonah's contemporaries believed that the God of Israel was supposed to crush the foes of his people, not show them mercy. Yet rather than punish them for their sins, God offered them a chance to get things right.

The lesson of this story, that God loves all his children whatever their race, creed, or nationality, goes beyond the universal nature of God's love and speaks to each of us on a personal level. We, like Jonah, are constantly presented with a choice: to accept that God's love is for all, and to follow that cue, letting it shape and inform our lives, or to turn away and burrow deep into our own anger and disappointment.

We can choose the freedom of forgiveness or the prison of resentment. On Nineveh's outskirts, and later on the cross, God made clear the path he would have us follow: that of the open heart, the second chance, the new beginning. It may not be the easy way, but it's the only way to the new life that God wishes for each of us, for all of us.

Yours faithfully,

Steve

COMMUNITY DINNER Sunday, July 28 at 5:00 pm

Team Leader: John Bourgon
(*And he's planning to barbecue!*)

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

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.

**Sign up in the Parish Hall or
contact the church office.**

A Community Dinner Appeal

We still need team leaders!

We are looking for Team Leaders for our Community Dinners from September onward. If you're interested in taking on this important role, or if you have any questions about what it involves, please sign up in the Parish Hall or contact the church office.

Praise in the Park!

**Sunday, July 21, at 10:00 am
Colburn Park**

Join us on the Lebanon Green for this annual ecumenical service with the United Methodist Church. Steve Silver will be preaching.

Queued for Coffee Hour

July—Church Council

August—Christian Education

September—Diaconate

JULY 2013 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 10a Worship	1	2 7p Stewardship Committee 7p Boy Scouts	3 6p UVPRN	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY <i>(FCC office closed)</i>	5	6 No Men's Fellowship Breakfast No Bible Study
7 10a Worship (Communion)	8 7p Diaconate	9 7p Boy Scouts	10 6p UVPRN	11 9:30a-4p Grafton-Orange Association	12 7:30p Classicopia: Czech Please!	13 9a Bible Study
14 10a Worship	15	16 7p Church Council 7p Boy Scouts	17 6p UVPRN No Christian Ed Committee this month	18	19	20 9a Bible Study
21 10a Praise in the Park! 11:15a Mission & Social Action	22 7p Board of Governors	23 7p Boy Scouts AUGUST NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE	24 6p UVPRN	25	26	27 No Bible Study
28 10a Worship 5p Community Dinner	29	30 7p Boy Scouts	31 6p UVPRN	1	2	3 No Men's Fellowship Breakfast No Bible Study

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

DIACONATE

At its June meeting the Deacons continued conversations about Growing Deeper that we had developed at our April retreat. Ron Bailey reminded us that Growing Deeper happens most often when we also Grow Outward.

Community Dinners have brought members of the church together, as we serve neighbors beyond the congregation. Mission projects take us away from home and out of our comfort zone, moving us outward, but they also bring powerful experiences of reflection when we are touched

by the Spirit. Passing the peace during communion worship gets us up out of our pews, turning left, right, and behind to greet those around us, sharing the Peace of Christ and deepening our sense of communion with one another.

Spiritual Walks, such as the one led by Ron Bailey and Jennifer Grant on June 23, provide another opportunity to get out into nature and deepen relationships with fellow hikers and picnickers, in conversations and shared experience.

An all-church retreat at the Horton Center planned for September 27-29 will offer

another opportunity for families and individuals grow outward and deeper. Our group will share experiences of learning and recreation in this beautiful natural setting run by our UCC conference. And we will mingle with members of two other churches also on retreat. Mark your calendar now and plan on sharing a weekend of fellowship, worship, and devotion!

As Karen Morganelli moves to her new home in Maine, and into a new chapter for herself and Peter, we express our gratitude for her service on the Diaconate, and for her years of faithful work recruiting ushers and greeters for worship. Thanks, Karen!

July Meetings

<i>Diaconate</i>	7/8, 7:00
<i>Church Council</i>	7/16, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	(no mtg)
<i>Mission & Social Action</i>	7/21, 11:15
<i>Board of Governors</i>	7/22, 7:00

August Meetings

<i>Diaconate</i>	8/12, 7:00
<i>Mission & Social Action</i>	8/18, 11:15
<i>Church Council</i>	8/20, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	8/21, 7:00
<i>Board of Governors</i>	8/26, 7:00

Got Keys?

Two years ago the Board of Governors undertook a comprehensive re-keying of the church facility, in part to keep better track of keys distributed to members of the congregation who need them for various committee responsibilities. Only certain positions require access to the building or church office; most committee members and others in the congregation do not need such access.

If you finish a term as a committee chair or another “key” position, you are required to return your key to the church office. In addition to helping us keep track of our keys, this policy ensures that new officers may be given keys without making new copies. Your cooperation is very much appreciated—as is your willingness to serve!

SAVE THE DATE!

All-Church Retreat

Friday to Sunday, September 27-29, 2013
UCC Horton Center, White Mountains

Look for more information next month about this weekend experience of building community and faith. The retreat schedule will be flexible to allow participation in particular activities as you're able; attending the whole weekend is not required.

Children's activities and supervision will be provided.

Please join us!



Above: Women's Fellowship explores Zentangle
Top Left: Harry Reed visits Norm Dubie at Genesis
Left: Zazzle Quartet sings for coffee after church

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION

A Spiritual Walk with FCC's "Outing Club"

Following our mission to grow deeper as a faith community, the Diaconate has revived an activity that our church has embraced in one form or another in the past, the "spiritual walk." On the steamy afternoon of June 23, Jennifer Grant and Ron Bailey—Lebanon's Park Ranger!—led a group of about 20 people (and one dog!) up to Boston Lot, where we enjoyed a picnic and a hike around the lake. Immersing ourselves in the beauty of God's natural creation and building relationships with other church members, we happily overlooked stifling humidity and muddy trail conditions.

More spiritual walks are sure to come this summer and fall, so be prepared to take this opportunity to grow deeper!



From Church School to David's House

On June 2 a group of children and adults from FCC visited David's House at DHMC, in order to deliver supplies purchased with the Church School's Lenten lunch bag offering. The group enjoyed a tour and learned about the history, operations, and mission of David's House.

This impressive facility serves the families of children being treated nearby at CHAD with lodging, meals, and other resources. Founder Dick Cyr—whose adopted son David died in 1984 at the age of five after a prolonged battle with leukemia—has devoted his life to these families, who would otherwise be unable to visit their children or consult with doctors during prolonged treatment.

During our visit, as we appreciated the house's amenities and wandered through its welcoming, comfortable spaces, Dick moved all of us with his own story and his tireless service to these families. This miraculous house, inspired by a tiny boy and sustained by boundless generosity, truly testifies to God's abundant grace, hope, and love.

For more information about David's House, visit www.davids-house.org... or just stop by!



FCC Hosts Bike & Build Group for Fifth Year

When we welcomed this year's Bike & Build group to FCC on June 22, two perennial partners in this effort were missing. Barb and Steve Teeter, who have so eagerly and dependably served as hosts for the group in past years, were unable to do so this year, and a scheduling conflict prevented the United Methodist Church from offering its usual ecumenical support. With the Nancy Brown workshop and a monthly Community Dinner on the same weekend, we were challenged to accommodate and feed 30 college-age bikers. What happened, however, confirmed that our partnership with Bike & Build is indispensable to our annual mission effort.

Founded in 2002, Bike & Build sponsors ten cross-country trips to raise money and awareness for affordable housing issues. Joining construction projects along the way, these college-age riders experience first-hand the considerable need for affordable housing nationwide. They also meet with community leaders to learn about and discuss housing and related issues. Each biker must raise at least \$4,500 to help fund the organization's grant programs, in addition to their individual trip costs. (For additional information, visit www.bikeandbuild.org.)

Bike & Build's northern route runs from Portsmouth to Vancouver, passing through Lebanon on the way. Arriving on Saturday afternoon, the group enjoyed snacks provided

by Trish Heatherton and settled into their accommodations here, managing to store all their bikes in one of the downstairs classrooms. Trish then served dinner of beef stew and quinoa "mac"-and-cheese, with a salad donated by Lebanon resident Ann Hess, whose daughter is riding on another of Bike & Build's routes this summer. Amy Driscoll made blueberry crisp for dessert, and Brian, Katie, and Grace Clancy and Steve Silver all served.

The next morning the group awoke to a full, hot breakfast provided by Jon Scott, Ike Jacobs, and Brian Clancy, before heading out on two projects directed by COVER Home Repair in Vermont. Despite heat, humidity, and some rain, they managed to



Above: Group leader Josh Torr (Rochester, NH) enjoys the best spot in a back-rub line

Right: They wash and dry dishes, too!



STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION

work a full day on a roofing project and an elementary school's community garden.

Sunday evening brought our Community Dinner, led this month by the Teeters' daughter Erin and her excellent chili (in both regular and vegetarian versions). With a contingent of dependable church members lending cornbread and helping hands, we managed to feed both our usual group of around 40 guests plus our biker-builders, who were more than happy to share in the fellowship of this community event. After dinner four of the bikers shared photos, descriptions, and stories from their experiences with the Bike & Build program, and we learned that the group includes both New Hampshire residents and a native of Turkey.

Throughout the weekend, these bikers offered a model of service and generosity that was truly inspiring—whether working with COVER in Vermont or washing dishes and cleaning the Parish Hall. We surely wish them well as they continue westward, and we look forward to seeing another group next June. **Many, many thanks to all those who so generously offered their time, help, food, and support on this busy weekend!**



Jon Scott cooks breakfast



Josie Hall, Cathy Bourgon, Roberta Connolly, and Edith Wheeler serve dinner

Are You Ready for a Mission to El Salvador?

So are we!! The Mission and Social Action Committee has informed us about construction and education projects in El Salvador organized by Epilogos. Now we're getting serious about planning a trip there, either on our own or with another Epilogos group—and we need to know who would be interested in coming! If you would consider making a commitment to this trip, or if you have questions first, **please contact Wendell Smith at 603-632-1117 or polestar3056@gmail.com.**

C2C CALLED TO CARE

Called to Care, a program sponsored by the Diaconate, started in March 1996 with thirteen caregivers who attended training sessions with pastoral counselor Charles Lindner. Laura Place was the first coordinator, and I have recently become coordinator for the second time.

We offer special assistance and support to those who need it, for whatever reason—illness, loss of a loved one, divorce, aging issues, depression, and loneliness, to name a few. We offer care in the form of cards, telephone calls, personal visits, meals, and transportation. Our numbers have dwindled to just eight caregivers, so we really would like more of you to serve with Called to Care. It is a very rewarding group!

If the Spirit moves you to join us, please contact Linda Jacobs (mrandsmrs.j@comcast.net / 802-296-8251) or Steve Silver.

Trish Heatherton's Cheddar Pear Pie

Served at coffee hour, June 23

For the Crumble

1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1/4 cup butter

For the Pie

6 cups peeled and sliced pears
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1/2 cup brown sugar
3 tablespoons corn starch
3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
unbaked pie crust

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. To make crumble, combine flour, 1/2 cup brown sugar, and cheddar cheese. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
3. Toss sliced pears with lemon juice. Combine 1/2 cup brown sugar, corn starch, and cinnamon in separate bowl. Add sugar mixture to pears and toss to coat.
4. Transfer pears to pie crust and top with crumble mixture. Bake about 45 minutes, until top is golden brown.

Congratulations

**Ethan Guyer
Emma Petersson
Eric Petersson**

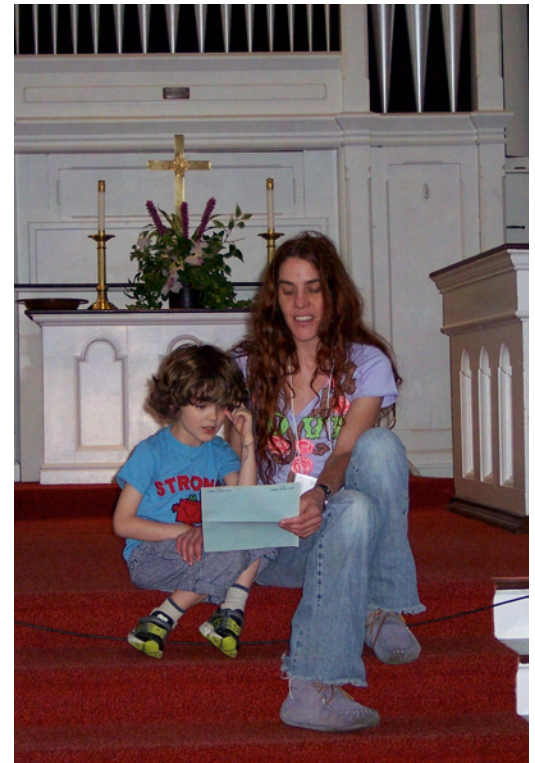
for completing the Confirmation Class process. While Emma chose not to be confirmed at this time, all three have made their own commitment to pursue a life of spiritual inquiry. The congregation celebrates their commitment and pledges to support them in their future growth.

Thanks to Ron Bailey, Linda Oronte, and Pete Mason, who served as their mentors.

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



Children's Sunday!
June 9, 2013



THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



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

Rev. Stephen R. Silver — silver@fccleb.org • Newsletter Submissions — church@fccleb.org



First Congregational Church of Lebanon
10 South Park Street
PO Box 230
Lebanon, NH 03766

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Music *at the* Meetinghouse



Classicopia!

Their final performance until the fall!

CZECH PLEASE

Friday, July 12, 7:30 pm

Pianist Dan Weiser, violinist Omar Chen Guey, and cellist Patrick Owen offer a provocative contrast in piano trios by the two great Czech nationalists Antonin Dvorák and Bedrich Smetana.

For over ten years, Classicopia has offered an engaging combination of brilliant musicianship and informative discussion in a relaxed atmosphere.

Don't miss this wonderful concert!