



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of First Congregational Church

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Bike & Build 20159-10



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The Pastoral Perspective

This past month, at the recommendation of the Mission & Social Action Committee, and after much consideration over many years, the Church Council voted to join the United Valley Interfaith Project (UVIP). By doing this, our congregation has chosen to join with fifteen other faith communities—Christian, Jewish, and Buddhist—in the Upper Valley and neighboring towns to work together for social justice locally and statewide.

“Social justice” is one of those terms that can be both frustratingly vague and politically charged—but that said, it remains a concept with deep roots in our faith tradition. For an example, open your Bible to the prophet Isaiah, so often an inspiration to Jesus, and you’ll read of calls to do the right thing by the poor, the outcast, the widow, and the orphan. In his own preaching and teaching, Jesus powerfully called for his followers to heed the words of prophets like Isaiah, Amos, and Micah, likening care for those in need and on the margins with care for him.

In doing so, Jesus taught that such caring in action is fundamental to the life of those who wish to be his followers. In fact, such work is not only central to being a disciple, it’s indispensable: recall how Jesus made clear, as had the prophets of ancient Israel before him, that showing up for worship is a waste of time if one isn’t helping the least amongst God’s people, for the Lord scorns the worship of those who don’t help and protect the vulnerable.

As Christians, we are called to stand with those who are without voice or influence. That we may disagree on how best to do this cannot be an excuse for inaction; instead, it should be a spur to find common ground. UVIP’s governing model is designed to do just that, seeking to encourage and empower each of its member organizations to help chart the way forward, aiming for a consensus that adds power to the group’s work and witness.

Continued on Page 8

SUNDAY SERVICE

PRAISE IN THE PARK!

Sunday, July 26, 10:00 am, Colburn Park

Plan to join us on the Lebanon Green for this annual ecumenical service with Lebanon's First Baptist and United Methodist Churches. Eliot Fay from FBC will preach.

A collection of non-perishable foods will benefit the Raven Food Pantry at First Baptist Church.

Participate in Worship!

Serve as a Liturgist or Greeter/Usher

No experience or training is required for these important roles in worship! If you'd like to serve either as a liturgist or as a greeter/usher, please contact the church office.

New Members Welcome!

Have you worshiped with us a few times? Have you returned because you've found a welcoming, spiritually nourishing church home here? We invite you to join our community of faith as a covenant member.

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



COMMUNITY DINNER

Sunday, July 26, 5:00 pm

Leader: MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Please participate in this vital service to our local community! Thanks to Men's Fellowship for leading this month's effort, but they'll need help providing ingredients, serving, and cleaning up.

Please sign up in the Parish Hall, or contact the church office.

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



Queued for Coffee Hour

July—Church Council

August—Christian Ed Committee

September—Diaconate

October—Mission & Social Action

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY! Steve Silver thanks Marcia Corkins, and the Jacobs and Braleys join Marcia to deliver supplies to David's House.

JULY 2015 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 10a Worship 11:15a Board of Governors 5p Community Dinner	29 7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert	30 10a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 7p Boy Scouts	1 6p UVPRN	2 9:30a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 12p/7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert 5p Headrest Support Group	3 (FCC office closed)	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY No Men's Breakfast No Bible Study
5 10a Worship (Communion) No MSA	6 7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert	7 10a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 7p Boy Scouts	8 8a-4p NH-WIC 6p UVPRN No Christian Ed Committee	9 No Grafton-Orange Assn 9:30a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 12p/7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert 5p Headrest Support Group	10	11 No Bible Study
12 10a Worship	13 7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert No Diaconate (moved to 7/27)	14 10a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 7p Boy Scouts	15 6p UVPRN	16 9:30a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 12p/7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert 5p Headrest Support Group	17	18 No Bible Study
19 10a Worship	20 7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert	21 10a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth No Church Council 7p Boy Scouts	22 6p UVPRN	23 9:30a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 10a-7p NH-WIC 5p Headrest Support Group	24 AUGUST NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE	25 No Bible Study
26 10a Praise in the Park! No Board of Governors 5p Community Dinner	27 7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert 7p Diaconate	28 10a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 7p Boy Scouts	29 6p UVPRN 7p Board of Trustees	30 9:30a (IF RAIN) WCBH Youth 12p/7p (IF RAIN) Leb Rec Concert 5p Headrest Support Group	31	1 No Men's Breakfast No Bible Study 10a Juneberry Music Community Sing!

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

COMMITTEE NOTES

CHURCH COUNCIL

At June's Council meeting, **Treasurer** Nan Parsons noted some serious challenges, such as relatively slow pledge progress compared to previous years. She distributed a spreadsheet surveying the past few years' pledges and expenses, cautioning that we can't indefinitely sustain our current pattern of drawing from endowment principal. More positively, though, the Treasury now owes itself much less than at the start of the year. (Nan has already convened the Finance Committee to address these issues.)

Ron Bailey noted that Stewardship Sunday seems to have been a more emphatic event in years past, and perhaps that could revitalize pledges. While we've tried to promote Stewardship Sunday, Steve Silver pointed out that the Stewardship Committee itself needs more support to strengthen that effort. And several noted that the decreasing size of our regular congregation has certainly affected pledge amounts.

Jon Scott noted that for most of the previous century we drew quite little from the endowment, which thus grew substantially. Thus, while our current rate of draw may not normally be advisable over many years, we should still rely on the stability of our endowment. We need to think creatively about the returns we can make on some up-front investments (in energy efficiency, for example). Jon again stressed the need for collaboration among Stewardship, the Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer, and a more general discussion about pledge practices followed.

Ron Bailey next brought a proposal that our church **become a full member of the United Valley Interfaith Project (UVIP)**. We have a history with this organization, which has worked for several years on issues such as aging with dignity and economic justice. Ron noted that the group is energetic and action-oriented; UVIP's executive council "doesn't just meet," it takes concrete steps toward attainable goals. While not yet a full member of UVIP, our church has informally been involved and nominated a "Micah Hero" last fall.

Ron observed that it would be advantageous to participate directly as a UVIP member, as this alliance of faith communities and service organizations can multiply the effects of its individual members' resources. Dues for membership in UVIP are based on a church's budget; for us, annual membership would cost around \$750.

In discussion, Jon Scott pointed out that the Diaconate could likely help fund this expense, and Warren Belding noted that it would be an appropriate use of the Dole Fund. Several observed that our absence among the organizations that are already UVIP members was now conspicuous—while that shouldn't be the first or only reason to join, it does reflect on our leadership among Upper-Valley churches. No one, moreover, has advanced any serious reason why FCC should not join UVIP. Steve Silver also pointed out that UVIP is one of the few contexts where truly multi-denominational, interfaith dialogue happens on a regular, formalized basis. Council unanimously voted

that FCC should become a full member of UVIP.

On behalf of **Christian Education**, Marcia Corkins thanked the entire congregation for so enthusiastically supporting the Church School children, both on Children's Sunday and throughout the year. The kids are very proud of what they've done this year.

For the **Stewardship Committee**, Jon Scott reported that the UCC had sent new stewardship materials which appear to be promising and effective. They communicate clearly and, Jon feels, would be worth a try in the fall, as we address pledge-season challenges.

Reporting for the **Music Committee**, Brian Clancy noted that he hoped to share details soon about Henry Danaher's plans for professional development, for which Henry

July Meetings

<i>Mission/Social Action and Stewardship</i>	(no mtg)
<i>Christian Education</i>	(no mtg)
<i>Church Council</i>	(no mtg)
<i>Board of Governors</i>	(no mtg)
<i>Diaconate</i>	7/27, 7:00
<i>Board of Trustees</i>	7/29, 7:00

August Meetings

<i>Mission/Social Action and Stewardship</i>	(no mtg)
<i>Diaconate</i>	(no mtg)
<i>Church Council</i>	8/18, 7:00
<i>Christian Education</i>	(tbd)
<i>Board of Governors</i>	(tbd)

COMMITTEE NOTES

hopes to receive financial support. Such training would be directly relevant to his work here at church, in worship and with the choir.

Brian also raised the possibility of accommodating a quintet for a Classicopia concert in August, for which Dan Weiser had inquired about moving Sanctuary pews. Brian explained that this temporary accommodation (not likely to be repeated often, if ever) would only involve sliding a couple pews back into each other, on one half of the Sanctuary. No pews would actually be removed from the space. Council members were satisfied that this wouldn't interfere with worship or other Sanctuary uses, and wouldn't have any permanent consequences.

Nan Parsons revisited the question of purchasing new **supplies for the child care and nursery area,**

wondering where this proposal now stood. The Diaconate has a donor for this expense; it seems we're waiting only for some initiative toward actually acquiring the items.

In his **Pastor's Report**, Steve noted that he was participating in several memorial services, both here and elsewhere, as well as in a wedding in Hanover. He also noted firmer plans for an all-church trip to the Congregational Library in Boston. He's working with local pastors to plan this year's Praise in the Park service (July 26), and he's planning to take summer vacation July 6-19 and August 24-September 7.

DIACONATE

In June the Deacons discussed communion assignments. The tablecloth that was given to us by

the church in San Jose Villanueva could not be located for communion on Children's Sunday, but it has since been found. Susan Montmagny volunteered to supply communion bread beginning July 5.

Jon Scott led further discussion on the church's safety policies. Steve Silver pointed out that there are two pertinent documents—the Safe Church Policy and the Sunday Morning Safety Protocol—available to anyone for review.

Jon also provided an update on the Facebook trials he has conducted in recent weeks.

In his pastor's report, Steve Silver confirmed his summer vacation dates, and the Deacons discussed arrangements for worship in his absence. Biff Simpson will lead worship on July 12, while Hilary

Call for Nominations — 4th Annual Micah Awards Sponsored by the United Valley Interfaith Project (UVIP)

The prophet Micah calls us to consider what it means to live into God's expectations for us, offering guidance on how to live up to those expectations: "And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (*Micah 6:8*)

UVIP's Micah Awards annually recognize local "Micah Heroes" who live into the prophet's words in some exemplary manner—people who contribute abundant time and energy to community service, who consistently volunteer themselves to work for a vital cause, who offer their community a living role model of faith in service. As our church joins UVIP as a full member this summer, our congregation is invited to choose its Micah Hero for the year.

All are welcome to nominate up to three members of our congregation who best represent the spirit of the Micah Awards (only last year's winner, Ron Bailey, is ineligible). The individual who receives the most votes will be our congregation's Micah Hero for 2015. Please keep in mind that this is an annual award, so nominations typically reflect service during the previous year (next year's Micah Hero will be someone new, and many will have an opportunity for this recognition).

Nominations (up to three per person) must be submitted to the church office no later than Monday, August 31. Please contact the office with any questions.

COMMITTEE NOTES

Ryder will do so the following week. We continue to seek guest preachers for August 30 and September 6.

Steve Teeter reviewed a presentation by Leah Torrey of UVIP after worship on May 31. He confirmed UVIP membership information prior to discussion at the June 14 MSA Committee meeting.

The Deacons agreed to meet next on Monday, July 27, in lieu of the regular July and August meetings.

MEMORIAL GARDENS COMMITTEE

The church's Memorial Gardens Committee reports that the two gardens in front of the church have been replanted and mulched by Nora and Todd Miller, who donated all the plants and materials. Many thanks from the congregation!

The Howard Garden, where the church sign stands in front of the church, was originally donated by the Howard children in honor of their parents. The Memorial Garden, where family ashes may be interred, was created in 2003. For more information about either garden, please contact a member of the committee or the Church Administrator.

MISSION AND SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Committee members met with Barbara Farnsworth, Executive Director of Second Growth, to talk about what we as a congregation can do to help her organization. She said that aside from donations, the best way would probably be to attend a training session for suicide prevention. FCC will try to host one

of these sessions and invite other local churches to join us.

The committee voted unanimously to recommend membership in the United Valley Interfaith Project, which we then brought to Council for approval. We look forward to working with UVIP on many projects, such as making the lives of senior citizens more dignified.

We hosted about 30 young adults from Bike & Build again this year. Many thanks to Amy Driscoll, Jon Scott, and John Gilliatt for organizing the build-your-own pizza dinner; to Steve Teeter for coordinating the visit and cooking breakfast; and to all who helped out with the ecumenical potluck supper and ice-cream-sundae party prior to their presentation.

We meet next in September, when the Crop Walk will be our focus.

Coming in September — Save These Dates!

SEPTEMBER 13 KICK-OFF SUNDAY!

Plan to join in the Blessing of the Backpacks, registration for Church School, pizza and ice cream, and lots of outdoor fun.

Until then, enjoy summer!

ALL-CHURCH RETREAT

Friday to Sunday, September 25-27
UCC HORTON CENTER, WHITE MOUNTAINS

Look for more information next month about this weekend experience of building community and faith in gorgeous natural surroundings. All are invited to come, especially families. The schedule is completely flexible and open; attending the whole weekend is not required.

Don't miss this incredible opportunity!

Community Dinner Fund Available

The Mission & Social Action Committee and the Treasurer remind the congregation that a fund has been established to encourage the provision of more nutritional and (when possible) locally-sourced food for our monthly Community Dinners.

To request reimbursement, Team Leaders should submit receipts to Treasurer Nan Parsons.

What's WIC?

Getting to Know One of FCC's Regular Guests

For almost a year now, First Congregational Church has hosted twice-monthly clinics operated by New Hampshire's Women, Infants, and Children Program—popularly known as WIC. Subject to certain income guidelines, families can obtain free health screenings, nutritional education and advice, breastfeeding support, and service referrals. (And despite the acronym, fathers routinely utilize WIC services too!) As an itinerant program with limited resources, WIC depends on sites across the state that offer enough space for its clinics at minimal cost.

Practicing responsible healthcare and nutrition can be challenging for any family, but without WIC's support it would be impossible for many parents with limited means and working multiple jobs. WIC offers these parents vital assistance, and they in turn are tremendously grateful. "Thanks to WIC," says a typical client, "my children's health is on track."

By offering this important program the space it needs, our congregation extends the love and compassion that Christ modeled and asked us to share with each other.

For more information, call 800-WIC-4321 or, for Belknap-Merrimack Community Action (which runs WIC clinics in Grafton County), 603-225-2050/800-578-2050. Alternatively, please visit www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/wic. Brochures are also available in the Parish Hall.

The NH Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

In addition to operating WIC clinics in Grafton County, the Belknap-Merrimack Community Action Program manages CSFP, a free healthy-food program for qualifying seniors. This state-funded resource offers up to \$50 worth of food monthly to anyone aged 60 years or older who needs help in stretching their food budget.

For more about CSFP, including required income guidelines, see the brochure in the Parish Hall or call Belknap-Merrimack Community Action at 603-225-2050 or 800-578-2050.

A Challenge from Women of the Church!

WISE Seeks Items for Safe-Home Welcome Packets

WISE offers a local residence as a **Safe Home** for women and children escaping domestic and sexual violence. To welcome families and make them feel comfortable, WISE provides items such as bed linens, towels and soap, and kids' games, puzzles, and activity books.

Women of the Church has committed to buying and assembling items for four of these much-needed Welcome Packets, which offer a touch of kindness to families in a very difficult situation. **They have challenged the congregation to match that with enough for four more packets**, so that we can give WISE eight complete packets by the end of the summer.

Please contribute as you can!! More information is posted in the Parish Hall.



end violence
wise
share hope ♦ change lives

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY! The Church School children sing *Put Your Hand in My Hand*—with sign language!



The Pastoral Perspective, *continued from Page 1*

Currently, UVIP is focusing on two issues that resonate with people of different faiths (and no faith) and across the political spectrum: enabling our elders to age with dignity and fighting the scourge of the automobile-title loan industry. By taking a public stand on these issues, and striving to develop practicable solutions, UVIP is showing that these matters are ultimately questions of faith, not politics—that they call out for both moral witness and concrete actions that affirm the God-given dignity of every woman and man, every boy and girl.

First Congregational Church of Lebanon has a long, faithful history of engaging in the work of mission and social action, here in the Upper Valley and in places farther away. By joining UVIP our church continues this tradition, writing a new chapter in our story of responding to God's call to care for his people. Let us hope and pray that those we seek to work with are blessed as much as we will be by engaging in this new partnership!

Yours faithfully,

Steve

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



Bike & Build June 18-20, 2015

Top: Shortly after the group's arrival, build-your-own pizzas are a huge hit for dinner (and not just with the bikers!). **Middle:** Valley Improv and Quicksilver Comedy offer a hilarious show, with plenty of audience participation. **Right and next page:** On their build day, one group makes quick work of a new roof in Charlestown. **Lower right:** The Executive Directors of both Cover Home Repair and Upper Valley Habitat for Humanity share some remarks as well as their gratitude to the Bike & Builders at Friday's potluck supper.



THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



“I ride because I believe in forward movement...”

23 June 2015

I ride because I believe in forward movement. I know exactly how far I have traveled. I can feel how far I have moved. And this movement brings freedom. For everyone. So thank you for opening up your hearts and homes to Bike and Build. Oh the places we'll go with your support. Please know that we are stronger because of you.

With gratitude.
and love + peace,
Sarah + NUSIS

First Presbyterian Church Lebanon,
We're not really naked, but we were definitely hungry and homeless. Thank you for showing us the hands and face of Jesus by feeding us, offering us your church home as our shelter, and showering us in your warm hospitality. Your kindness makes our trip and our investment in homes and communities possible. Thank you for hosting our 2015 Northern US Bike and Build team. We've enjoyed our stay in Lebanon, but we've especially enjoyed getting to know you. From roasting pizzas and eating sundaes together to dish-washing and general conversing, we're deeply grateful for your warmth, hospitality, and kindness.

Emily Tellez
Jophie Johnson
Thank
Shelby
Sarah
Roxan Wilkerson
Steve
Michelle
Wanner
Myra
Clay
Jessica
Emma
Laura
Ann
Jon
Scott

“Thank you for showing us the hands and face of Jesus...”



THANK YOU to all who helped out with Bike & Build's visit this year! In particular, we're grateful to Amy Driscoll, Corrine Erskine, John Gilliatt, Jon Scott, Biff Simpson, and Barb and Steve Teeter, but many others from our congregation (and others!) made this year's visit fun, successful, and richly rewarding for both hosts and guests alike! We wish the Northern Route biker-builders all the best, for the rest of their journey and beyond! (Follow the group's progress at <http://bikeandbuild.org/rider/route.php?route=NUS&year=2015>.)

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE

Juneberry Music— Lebanon Community Sing on August 1!



JUNEBERRY MUSIC

Choral Singing School

This summer Juneberry Music is hosting a series of free **Community Sing** events throughout the Upper Valley, and on August 1 they're coming to FCC! Led by Patricia Norton, Community Sings welcome all ages and skill levels—no advance registration or musical prep is required.
(Free-will donations will be accepted but not expected.)

Enjoy eclectic, accessible repertoire with laughter and serious surround sound,
and leave with energy and goodwill to spare!

Sing ...to build resilience, health, and wellness
in yourself and in your community!



Music
at the
Meetinghouse



GIVING HER REGARDS: Mezzo-soprano Erma Mellinger offering her highly entertaining, theatrical rendition of Broadway favorites with pianist Dan Weiser on June 20.

Classicopia In August!

QUINTESSENCE
Sunday, August 23, at 2:00 pm

A quintet at FCC! Dan Weiser welcomes violinists Ralph Allen and David Cassidy, violist Marcia Cassidy, and cellist Iris Jortner for two expansive selections from the Romantic period—Franz Schubert's beloved *Trout Quintet* and Robert Schumann's epic *Piano Quintet*.

Suggested admission \$20, FCC members \$10,
children 12 and under free.

For more information, call
603-643-3337 or visit
www.classicopia.org.

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 • 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



**Music
at the
Meetinghouse**

Juneberry Music Community Sing! — August 1, 10:00 am

Juneberry's Community Sings welcome all ages and skill levels—no advance registration or musical prep is required. Eclectic, accessible repertoire with laughter and serious surround sound. Leave with energy and goodwill to spare! Free-will donation. www.juneberrymusic.com.

CLASSICOPIA: QUINTESSENCE

Sunday, August 23, at 2:00 pm

Pianist Dan Weiser, violinists Ralph Allen and David Cassidy, violist Marcia Cassidy, and cellist Iris Jortner. Program includes Schubert's *Trout Quintet* and Schumann's *Piano Quintet*. Suggested admission \$20, FCC members \$10, children 12 and under free. www.classicopia.org.

PRAISE IN THE PARK!

Sunday, July 26, 10:00 am, Colburn Park

All are invited to join us on the Lebanon Green for this annual ecumenical service! Eliot Fay from First Baptist Church will preach. A collection of non-perishable foods will benefit the Raven Food Pantry.