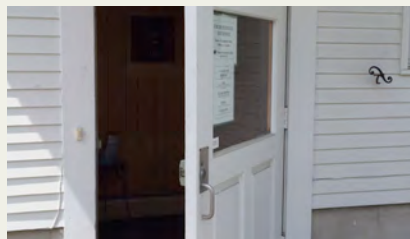


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The Pastoral Perspective

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. (Acts 2:1-4)

Light and noise, fire and the Spirit: these are the things that stand out in Luke's account of the emergence of the early church. The gathered company of disciples, hailing from the four corners of the earth, was touched by God's presence, drawn together in a new community. Each person present was able to transcend his or her own limitations, background, experiences, and perspective, to enter into a new relationship with brothers and sisters from near and far.

I've always loved this passage for its dramatic imagery. Luke brings the moment to life with his description of the flames of holy fire dancing atop each person, the roar and impact of the onrushing Spirit, and the startling ability to converse in foreign languages.

And it's that last bit that I believe we in the Christian church are called to focus on today. Thanks to the wonders of modern technology, we can find software online that is able to rapidly, if imperfectly, translate texts from one language to another. Meanwhile, companies like Google are busy working on instantaneous translation devices that will allow people to communicate with anyone, anywhere. Still, if we are to truly understand and appreciate one another we will need the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Recognition of words and language is not the same as comprehension, let alone a willingness to let what another is saying enter into our hearts.

This is a time of rapid, dizzying change in our faith communities, just as it is in society at large. The world today looks different from that of

Continued on Page 8

SUNDAY SERVICE

Mother's Day is Blanket Sunday

On Sunday, May 10, we are pleased once again to participate in Church World Service's **CWS Blankets Program**, a special mission opportunity that provides blankets and other essential relief supplies to people in crisis around the world (for details, please visit <http://www.cwsglobal.org/get-involved/cws-blankets/>). Please consider making a contribution of any amount to this project, in honor or memory of the mother(s) in your life. *Dedications will appear in the bulletin on May 10.*

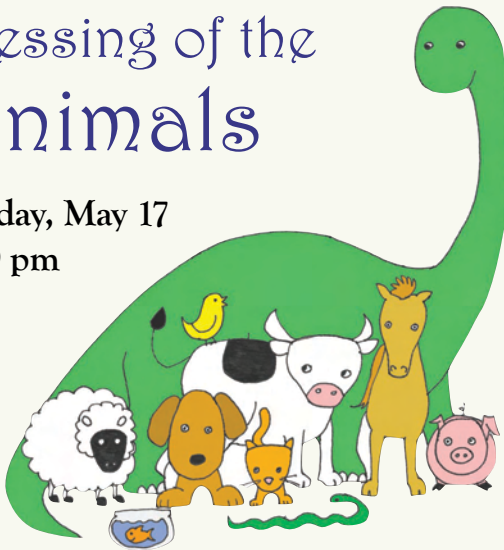
To contribute, please complete and return the bulletin insert or contact the church office directly with your contribution and dedication information (no later than Thursday, May 7).

"GREEN-LETTER BIBLE" – SUNDAYS, MAY 10 AND 17, AT 9:00 AM

What does it mean for a Christian to be a "steward of the environment"? See page 8 for details...

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, May 17
1:00 pm



Join us on the front lawn of the church with your animals of all shapes, sizes, and species! Photos, mementos, and stuffed friends are also welcome to this brief service in the spirit of St. Francis. **Treats afterward for both people and beasts!**

COMMUNITY DINNER

Sunday, May 24, 5:00 pm

Leaders: JON SCOTT/MISSION-SOCIAL ACTION

Please participate in this vital service to our local community! The Mission and Social Action Committee will prepare and serve the meal, but they do need some help providing ingredients.

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

Queued for Coffee Hour

May—Women of the Church

June—Board of Governors

July—Church Council

August—Christian Education Committee

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY!!

JUNE 7, 2015

Presentations to Children and Volunteers during Worship

Exhibits Exploring "God's Big World"

Special Coffee Hour Food and Activities

Please join us for this celebration of our Church School! The children will share what they have learned, discussed, shared, and made while exploring this year's theme, "God's Big World." See you in June!

MAY 2015 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a Board of Governors 5p Community Dinner	27	28 11a Senior Luncheon 7p Boy Scouts	29 6p UVPRN	30 11a-3p UVIP Exec Council 5p Headrest Support Group 5:45p Choir	1	2 8a Men's Breakfast Spring Clean-Up No Bible Study this month 10:15a Juneberry Music
3 10a Worship (w/ Communion)/ Church School 11:15a MSA 1p Classicopia: The Art of Music	4 3p WCBH After-school 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bear) 6:15p Cub Scouts (Wolf)	5 7p Boy Scouts	6 6p UVPRN	7 11a-3p UVIP Exec Council 5p Headrest Support Group 6p Student Recital: Lisa Amundsen 7p Choir	8	9 No Bible Study this month 10:15a Juneberry Music
10 9a Adult Ed: Green Letter Bible 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a MSA	11 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bear) 6:15p Cub Scouts (Wolf) 7p Diaconate	12 7p Boy Scouts	13 8a-4p NH-WIC 6p UVPRN 7p Christian Ed Committee	14 9:30a-4p Grafton-Orange 5p Headrest Support Group 7p Choir	15 7:30p An Evening with Will Ögmundson	16 No Bible Study this month 10:15a Juneberry Music (last class) Heifer Farm Visit (to MA)
17 9a Adult Ed: Green Letter Bible 10a Worship/ Church School 1p Blessing of the Animals	18 3p WCBH After-school	19 7p Church Council 7p Boy Scouts	20 6p UVPRN	21 5p Headrest Support Group 7p Choir	22	23 No Bible Study this month
24 10a Worship/ Church School 11:15a Board of Governors 5p Community Dinner	25 MEMORIAL DAY	26 JUNE NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE 7p Boy Scouts	27 6p UVPRN	28 10a-7p NH-WIC 5p Headrest Support Group 7p Choir	29	30 No Bible Study this month
31 10a Worship/ Church School 3p UVMC Youth Choral Concert 5p Student Recital: Carol Hartman	1 3p WCBH After-school 5:30p Cub Scouts (Bear) 6:15p Cub Scouts (Wolf)	2 7p Boy Scouts	3 6p UVPRN	4 5p Headrest Support Group 6p Boy Scouts Supper 7p Choir	5	6 8a Men's Breakfast 9a Bible Study (resumes) 7p Harmony Night Concert

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

COMMITTEE NOTES

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors has set a Spring Clean-Up Day for Saturday, May 2. Everyone is invited to share in this important work—bring a rake, some gloves, a cloth, and a helpful spirit!

The planned **energy audit** still needs to be researched, but we are hopeful that it can be scheduled early in 2016. One of the Sanctuary storm windows was broken by falling ice; Portland Glass has been contacted to repair it. Don Collins will repair ice-related water damage at the Parsonage.

The Board has also discussed improving the signage around the church property to direct visitors to the office, Parish Hall, and access ramp. We will also revisit our fire-evacuation plan and review our snow-removal practices (prior to next winter).

CHURCH COUNCIL

At Council's April meeting, Barry Schuster gave a **pastoral report on behalf of Steve Silver**, who was attending to a personal matter in MA. Steve noted a fulfilling Holy Week experience, with especially great energy on Easter Sunday. He thanked the Deacons and others for making events successful. Steve is now programming the "third liturgical season" (Easter through Pentecost and early summer). He has worked with Marcia Corkins to schedule a special weekend on May 16-17 with a trip to Heifer Farm in MA and a Blessing of the

Animals service. Pastoral work and wider church activities continue.

Steve also requested that a transfer of \$1,000 be made from the Dole Fund to the Mission and Social Action account, so that he can continue to respond effectively to community requests for assistance. Council unanimously approved the transfer.

Treasurer Nan Parsons reported that our books are balanced. Pledges remain on target, but to ensure that payroll expenses are met, another transfer has been made from the Trustees. Also, the Treasury still owes itself around \$6,000, and ideally we'd like to have an additional \$10,000 set aside for emergency.

Considering our apparently tight budget, Corrine Erskine wondered whether we should pull back on some projects. (She mentioned mission trips as an example.) Her question required more discussion about both the Treasury and the investments managed by the Board of Trustees.

Speaking for the **Trustees**, who had held their quarterly meeting the previous week, Valerie Nevel recommended that this year's **Waldo Trust** funds be allocated roughly in thirds—for repaying the Treasury's escrow funds, building this year's escrow, and setting aside emergency funds. These purposes addressed the concerns Nan had brought forward. Barry Schuster explained that since we are the sole remaining beneficiary the Waldo Trust, it produces a fairly

predictable income each year. The Trustees and Council annually determine how to allocate it. It was also pointed out that the need to replenish our escrow accounts is only temporary.

Valerie further elaborated on the **Dole Fund**, income from which is annually designated for capital improvement (69%) and mission purposes (31%). Because of these designations, it's not always possible or applicable to compare expenses for missions with more general expenses for church operations. (This discussion in part responded to Corrine's earlier question about the budget.)

Valerie also pointed out that the mission portion of the Dole Fund is sufficiently funded at this point for disbursements to the Mission and Social Action account. (The Dole Fund feeds the MSA bank account by way of transfers approved by Council.) It was additionally explained that the MSA account funds **community assistance** for rent and utilities, while the Diaconate fund pays for the gas and grocery cards that complement our community assistance ministry.

Valerie reported the challenges of managing our trustee accounts without the proper **authorization with Vanguard**. To address this difficulty and ensure that Valerie would be able to access and move funds appropriately, a resolution was brought forward to grant both her and Barry Schuster the proper authorization. Council members

COMMITTEE NOTES

generally agreed that while we've been quite fortunate to rely on so many experienced and trustworthy officers in the past, requiring two signatures was standard practice for fiduciary responsibility.

At the request of the Assistant Treasurer (Susan Montmagny), Council also discussed the current process for **collecting, depositing, and accounting for Communion offering**. The Diaconate treasurer collects this offering and reports to the Assistant Treasurer, but there has been some confusion about how those funds are deposited. Nan Parsons reported that she and Susan have worked to clarify this procedure; Valerie Nevel, who once served as Diaconate Treasurer, offered to meet with current treasurer Ginger Smith to improve the process.

Reporting for the Diaconate, Barb Jones brought forward the need to evaluate our current **safety-monitor practices during worship**. Linda Oronte explained that these include surveying the church property prior to and during the service as well as locking all doors except the front Sanctuary door. As some have been temporarily locked out of worship services, many wonder whether this practice may be too strict, sending the wrong impression to both the regular congregation and visitors from the community at large.

In discussion, all agreed that maintaining a safe and secure church space was of paramount importance, and some system of inspecting interior spaces should continue (perhaps modified as to who does the inspections and

which spaces are included). All, however, felt that the ramp door should remain unlocked during worship, particularly as it is the only accessible entrance to the building. All agreed that we could and should find a balance between our need for safety and our desire for an open, welcoming church.

Lastly, Corrine Erskine reported for Mission and Social Action that the **Bike and Build** group would again be staying at the church while in Lebanon in June. Steve Teeter will be coordinating their visit.

DIACONATE

At their April meeting, the Deacons discussed changing the name of our community assistance from the "Back-Door" to "Open-Door"

From Christian Education

Come Visit Heifer Farm!

Rutland, MA—Saturday, May 16 (exact times TBA)

For several years the Church School has supported the work of Heifer International, which has fought hunger for 70 years by empowering farmers and communities worldwide. We'll help Heifer celebrate its birthday with activities, treats, music, and of course, live animals!

The Heifer event is scheduled for 1-4 pm; plans are still in the works for a cookout before or afterward.

RSVP to the church office.



a GRAND in the bag!

Congratulations to the children of our Church School for raising an even \$1,000 with this year's **LENTEN LUNCH BAG OFFERING**—and **many thanks to all those who so generously participated!**

The total will be split between supplies for David's House and support for the schoolchildren of San Jose Villanueva.

COMMITTEE NOTES

May Meetings

Mission/Social Action and Stewardship	5/3, 11:15
Diaconate	5/11, 7:00
Christian Education	5/13, 7:00
Church Council	5/19, 7:00
Board of Governors	5/24, 11:15

June Meetings

Mission/Social Action and Stewardship	6/7, 11:15
Diaconate	6/8, 7:00
Christian Education	6/10, 7:00
Church Council	6/16, 7:00
Board of Governors	6/28, 11:15



Spring Clean-Up Day!

On a gorgeous May 2, Don Rowell helpfully hauled away debris in his trailer...

ministry. The Communion offering supports this ministry with gas and grocery cards and other needs.

In a discussion about the nursery, Mark Yeager reaffirmed his offer of a contribution for new supplies and toys. The group also discussed the church's fire evacuation plan, agreeing that all church members should be reminded of it. The Board of Governors will revisit this plan.

Deacons also discussed challenges facing the Safety Monitor program: different opinions of its purposes, concern that it sends an excessively defensive message to visitors and the congregation, and the lack of willing volunteers to serve as monitors. Barb Jones will bring this discussion to Council.

Reviewing Called to Care, the Scotts circulated cards for both the Moseses (whose business recently had a fire) and the Snellings (who suffered a death in their family). Susan Montmagny added that Ron Carr had surgery on April 15.

Jon Scott reported from Council on open communication among the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Stewardship, and the Pastor. That discussion arose mainly regarding families who rarely attend church but still pledge and consider FCC their home church. Jon urged all of us to have confidence and trust in the discretion of church leadership, and he made clear that no one saw any connection between financial support and pastoral care. All were encouraged to welcome concerns brought to them, assuring church members that those would be heard, appropriately considered, and kept confidential as needed.

The Deacons heard from Brian Clancy about recent conversations with LifeTouch regarding a new directory. The project would cost the church nothing, relying instead on individual photo purchases. It might also offer online directory access and a phone app. Families would be able to sign up for photo

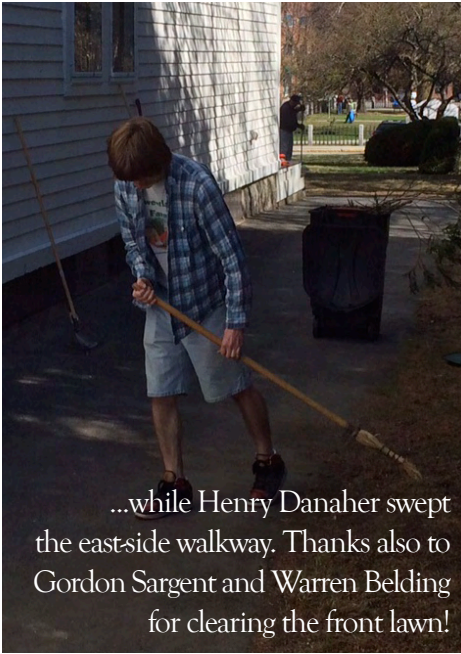
times online. The project could also offer an opportunity to invite people to return to the congregation.

Steve Silver reported on a rich Lenten season and Holy Week, noting the popularity of the rainbow bread baked by Church School children and served for communion on Easter. Steve is looking forward to this third season of the church year, which will include an adult education series on the four Gospels. He also hopes to take a group to Boston.

Steve also noted that Mark Rowell had again met with the Committee on Church and Ministry, and after much deliberation, prayer, and discernment, it was decided that he is not being called toward ordination. Steve discussed Mark's other options at this point, and he encouraged everyone to continue supporting him and Marty in any decisions they make from here.

The Deacons continued to review their individual member lists, as

COMMITTEE NOTES



...while Henry Danaher swept the east-side walkway. Thanks also to Gordon Sargent and Warren Belding for clearing the front lawn!

well as those in the congregation who aren't yet assigned to a deacon. (A few of these were claimed in the discussion.)

Deb Scott expressed her opinion that adult deacons should participate in the laying on of hands for new deacons, concerned that children weren't sufficiently engaged or informed about the meaning of the commissioning ceremony. Steve Silver noted his conviction that it's essential to involve the children, helping them develop belief and values at a young age, and new deacon Biff Simpson appreciated

the Biblical basis of Jesus' invitation to children. Jon Scott added that planning such events should always be a collaboration, and Steve invited future participation from the Diaconate, mentioning a potential Commissioning Service in the fall that would charge the congregation to serve in its diverse ministries.

Susan Montmagny noted that she's received a few of the surveys she distributed on the UCC's Open and Affirming policy. She asked everyone to return their surveys as soon as possible.

FCC's Fire Evacuation Plan—A Reminder

From the Safety Committee, Board of Governors, and Church Council

In 2012 the Board of Governors asked the Church Safety Committee to develop an evacuation plan to be followed in an emergency during any service in the church. The Safety Committee developed the plan, which was then approved by the Board and Church Council.

We have had a safety monitor at every service, whom the staff and teachers in the Nursery and Church School can contact with a signaling device. This has been used several times in recent years—fortunately, not for serious situations.

The Safety Monitor sits in the front, left side of the Sanctuary, so that he or she can immediately answer a request, for any reason, from the Nursery or Church School. In the event of a fire alarm, the Monitor is in charge of the evacuation of all children downstairs, according to the following plan:

The Safety Monitor will immediately go downstairs, assess the overall situation, and make sure that everyone is following instructions. He or she will also assist with the smallest children, as needed. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, all children will be taken out up the stairway in the church office wing of the building and out the rear office door. This stairway does have an emergency light.

Using the ramp door stairway and the ramp door would result in congestion with people exiting the Sanctuary that way. There is an EXIT sign over the door in the Sanctuary, so it would be appropriate for the congregation to use it.

The children will be escorted or carried outside to the front of the church to meet their parents. If the nature of the alarm makes that option too dangerous, they will

instead be taken to the far end of the church parking area. Both of these routes are cleared of snow in the winter.

In the event of a serious medical emergency in the Nursery or Church School, the parent(s) will be notified immediately by the Safety Monitor or Church School staff. If the situation involves an urgent condition such as choking, stoppage of breath, or serious bleeding, the Church School staff is instructed to pull the fire alarm to summon a paramedic from the Fire Station immediately. As this occurs, the Safety Monitor will inform the pastor as he or she is notifying the parents. The Fire Department recommended this procedure as the fastest way to get help.

(Reprinted and revised from the November 2012 Newsletter.)

ADULT EDUCATION

ADULT ED FORUM – SUNDAYS AT 9:00

May 10 and 17—“Green-Letter Bible”

What does it mean for a Christian to be a “steward of the environment”? Join us for this lively exploration of Scripture and a discussion of how we are called, both as individuals and as a community, to care for God’s good earth.

June 14 and 21—“The Gospel According to...”

Just what is a Gospel? Who gets to decide which ones count? This two-part series will examine the formation of the scriptural canon and consider why a few decisions made at a church council long ago, in a place far away, are so central to the way we live our faith today.

The Fab Four

A Sermon Series on the Evangelists

This four-week preaching program will explore what makes each of the Gospels distinctive and how the witness of the four evangelists can shape and inspire faith for modern Christians.

May 31—Mark: Rebel with a Cause

June 14—Matthew: The Insider

June 21—Luke: The History Guy

June 28—John: Word

New Members Welcome!

Have you worshiped with us a few times? Have you returned because you found a welcoming, spiritually nourishing church home here? We warmly invite you to consider joining our community of faith as a covenant member. **If you would like to learn more about this invitation, please speak with Rev. Steve Silver or contact the church office.**

The Pastoral Perspective, *continued from Page 1*

twenty years ago; this will only be more so two decades hence. Now, more than ever, if the Christian church is to be an effective witness to God’s love and grace, whether here in Lebanon or on the far side of the globe, those who call themselves followers of Jesus Christ will have to pray that hearts and minds and souls will be open to the work of the Holy Spirit. That work may empower us, encourage us, or challenge and transform us.

Before he preaches, the Rev. Sam Lloyd, the rector of Trinity Church in Boston, offers the following prayer:

Take my lips, O Lord, and speak through them; take our minds and think with them; take our hearts and set them on fire.

These are apt words with which to enter into a sermon. They are also appropriate and powerful words with which to enter into the season of Pentecost. Let us pray that the God who came to the church in flame and with wind will take our hearts, set them on fire, and in doing so enable us to hear and hold one another so that we might be a living, Spirit-led church.

Yours faithfully,

Steve

OUR LOCAL MISSION

Our “Open-Door” Ministry *Renewing FCC’s Community Outreach*

Upper-Valley residents routinely call or visit the church office to ask for help with gas, food, and other living expenses. FCC has responded to these needs for years, but demand has increased considerably in the recent past. Supported by our Communion Offering, the Diaconate funds the distribution of \$25 cards for Jake’s and Price Chopper, while the Mission and Social Action Committee, funded by the Dole Trust, offers additional assistance in modest amounts for rent and utilities.

This community program was long known as the “Back-Door” Ministry, a reference to our office location at the rear of the building. At its April meeting, the Diaconate voted unanimously to rename it the **Open-Door Ministry**, removing any possible hint of secrecy or shame from this assistance in favor of a more inclusive, welcoming spirit. *For more details, please contact your Deacon or the church office.*



*Are you 55 or older?
Do you enjoy working with children?*
You Can Help Change Lives!

A long-standing federal program invites seniors to serve as tutors and mentors to local children. The Friends Program, a non-profit organization in Concord, has sponsored this initiative in NH since 1970. Working with the age group of their choice, seniors read and listen to children, help them adjust to school-day activities, share their experience and encouragement, and offer guidance during a critical developmental period. They receive a modest, tax-free stipend (without affecting social-security or other benefits), training and support, and meals—as well as an invaluable sense of satisfaction and connectedness.

For more information and to enroll, visit www.friendsprogram.org or call 603-228-1193.

Volunteer at DAVID’S HOUSE!



David’s House is the dream of a boy named David Cyr, who passed away in 1984 after struggling with leukemia. In the past thirty years this inspiring residence has welcomed over 12,500 families from around the world, while their kids get the specialized treatment they need at DHMC next door.

David’s House is supported by many sources—including our own Church School children!—but volunteers are essential to its operations.

If you’re interested in volunteering, contact Georgie Sawyer (603-643-2298/georgie.sawyer@davids-house.org).

COMMUNITY DINNER Leaders Needed!

5/24	Jon Scott/M&SA
6/28	Erin Slayton
7/26	(open)
8/23	(open)
9/27	Women of the Church
10/25	Christian Education
11/22	Nan Parsons
12/27	Nan Parsons
<i>Please consider joining this group!</i>	

THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



A Colorful Easter and a Perennial Feast

On Easter Sunday we greeted the Resurrection with gorgeous altar flowers and rainbow communion bread, which had been baked by Church School children. On April 28, Trish Heatherton and several able assistants prepared and served a spectacular and delicious Senior Luncheon, while guests once again enjoyed the voices of the LHS Superlatives.



THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION



MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



Music *at the* Meetinghouse

An Evening with Will Ögmundson

Friday, May 15, at 7:30 pm

Former FCC music director Will Ögmundson returns to share his piano virtuosity and repertoire from classical to ragtime—along with original pieces and one of his signature audience-request medleys!



Also at the Meetinghouse in May and June

UPPER VALLEY MUSIC CENTER SPRING CHILDREN'S CONCERT—Sunday, May 31, at 3:00 pm

Support our local music school and enjoy the achievements of its young students. *Free.*

AN A CAPPELLA SHOWCASE WITH HARMONY NIGHT—Friday, June 6, at 7:00 pm

Dan Signor brings his community *a cappella* group Harmony Night to our Sanctuary for a program of upbeat rhythm and richly harmonized chords. *Free-will donation to benefit summer music scholarships.*

CLASSICOPIA

For thirteen years Marcia Colligan, pianist Daniel Weiser, and Classicopia have offered an engaging combination of brilliant musicianship and informative discussion in a relaxed atmosphere.

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

Saturday, June 20, at 7:30 pm—Broadway Melodies

Dan Weiser accompanies the wonderful mezzo-soprano Erma Mellinger for a stroll through the years along the Great White Way.

Friday, June 26, at 7:30 pm—A-Cello-Rondo

Cellist Patrick Owen once again joins Dan for a lively program of folk-influenced music by Grieg, Schumann, Piazzolla, and more.

STUDENT RECITALS

Piano Students of Carol Hartman—Sunday, May 31, 5:00 pm

Voice Students of Jennifer Hansen—Sunday, June 14, 5:00 pm

Piano Students of Sarah Slater—Sunday, June (date/time TBD)

All Concerts in the Sanctuary, First Congregational Church

First Congregational Church of Lebanon

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