

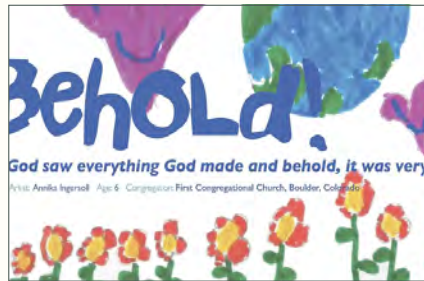


# Grace Notes

The Newsletter of First Congregational Church

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## The Pastoral Perspective

The epistle reading for Sunday, September 3, is from Romans 12. In it, Paul exhorts his readers:

<sup>9</sup>Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup>love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. <sup>11</sup>Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

<sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." <sup>20</sup>No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Paul cared about his churches. He cared about the people in them. Most of all, he cared about God made known in Jesus.

Knowing and loving God meant that one should be prepared to live life a certain way. Be kind, be generous, care for strangers, be strong.

Nowadays, when some people hear about being strong, they assume that one is being called to a life rooted in vindictiveness, in retribution, in just being mean. That's not what Paul wants from or for us. When he calls us to be strong, he is calling for us to be resilient. Paul recognized that life is not easy, that we will be challenged. How we respond is up to us.

It can be tempting to indulge thoughts of vengeance. We may want to "get back" at someone, to "teach them a lesson." Paul tells us to leave that to God, for vengeance is his (Deut. 32:35). God reserves the right to vengeance not out of sadistic pleasure, but because God is the one who will judge us and all the nations.

Continued on Page 6

# SUNDAY SERVICE



## SEPTEMBER 10—10:00 AM KICK-OFF SUNDAY!

Come share our annual inauguration of a new year for the **Children's Community Corner!** We look forward to supporting FCC's kids as they start the school year, with our Blessing of the Backpacks and a time of fellowship and fun outside after worship. **Plan to join us!**

### All Are Welcome to Worship at FCC

*Sundays at 10:00 AM (In-Person/Zoom)*

#### Coffee Hour (Usually) Served!

We've resumed this popular fellowship opportunity as often as possible; sign up in the kitchen. **New volunteers always welcome—on ANY Sunday!**

#### Zoom Greeters and Liturgists Needed!

Congregation members sing in the choir, serve as ushers and Zoom greeters, and read as liturgists. Additional options include reading prayers, sharing stewardship messages, or even leading children's moments. **All are invited to serve in these essential roles, and no prior experience is needed (though Zoom greeting requires some basic training).**

*If you're interested in these opportunities to serve, please contact the church office.*

### The 2023 Lebanon CROP Walk

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, AT 12:30 PM

Begun in 1969 in Bismarck, ND, the **CROP Hunger Walk** is now run nationally by Church World Service. CROP Walks across the country raise about \$9 million a year to fight food insecurity and poverty worldwide.

FCC will offer light food and refreshments to all participants on the front lawn, renewing our long tradition of post-walk fellowship and hospitality.

*YOU can help in any or all of these ways...*

**Walk!**—On your own or with a group.

**Serve!**—Contribute food or help with post-walk fellowship (*details TBD*).

**Donate!**—Sponsor a walker or give directly online using the link below.

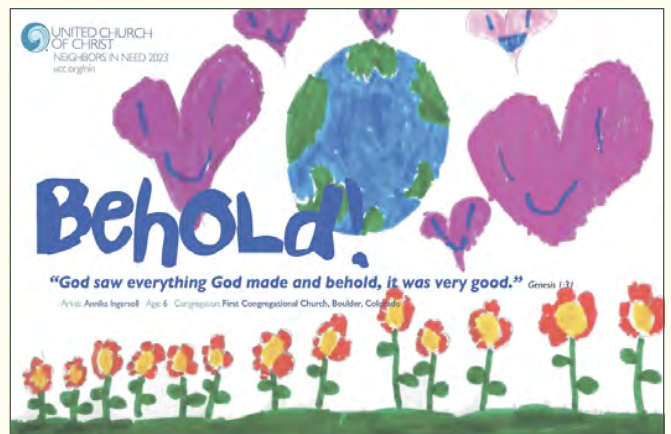


[www.cropwalk.org](http://www.cropwalk.org)

*Questions? Contact the church office or visit [crophungerwalk.org/2023/event/hanovernh](http://crophungerwalk.org/2023/event/hanovernh).*

### Neighbors in Need: Behold!—Special UCC Mission Offering This Fall

Neighbors in Need supports ministries of justice and compassion across the US. Two-thirds of the collection funds the UCC's **Justice and Witness Ministries** for local and national initiatives, advocacy efforts, and the fight against systemic injustice. The rest goes to the **Council for American Indian Ministry**, the voice for Native Americans in the UCC, sustaining a proud denominational tradition of assisting Native groups. **This year, NIN focuses on environmental justice, addressing the egregious inequities and ecological harm of waste-disposal practices worldwide.**



*Please contribute as you are able, either payable to FCC (memo "NIN") or online at [ucc.org/nin](http://ucc.org/nin).*

# SEPTEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>27</b> 10a Worship ( <i>Gail Dimick,</i> <i>guest preacher</i> )	<b>28</b> 6p Pastor-Parish Relations Comm	<b>29</b> 6:15p Contemplative Dance Practice	<b>30</b> 10a Cameo Baroque	<b>31</b> 7p NA Group	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> 10a Worship (Communion)	<b>4</b> <i>Labor Day</i>	<b>5</b> 4:30p FCC Choir	<b>6</b> 10a Cameo Baroque 6p Bel Canto CS Auditions	<b>7</b> 7p NA Group	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> <b>KICK-OFF SUNDAY</b> 10a Worship/CCC	<b>11</b> 4-9p UVMC Suzuki Program 7p Diaconate	<b>12</b> 10a-12p UVMC 4:30p FCC Choir No Church Council ( <i>moved to 9/13</i> )	<b>13</b> 8a-3:30p WIC 10a Cameo Baroque 3-6:30p UVMC 7p Bel Canto CS 7p Council	<b>14</b> 3-6:30p UVMC/ Children's Choir 7p NA Group	<b>15</b> 4-6p UVMC Suzuki Program 7:30p Anon Coffeehouse	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 10a Worship/CCC	<b>18</b> 4-9p UVMC Suzuki Program	<b>19</b> 10a-12p UVMC 1p Cameo Baroque 4:30p FCC Choir	<b>20</b> 3-6:30p UVMC 7p Bel Canto CS	<b>21</b> 3-6:30p UVMC/ Children's Choir 7p NA Group	<b>22</b> 4-6p UVMC Suzuki Program	<b>23</b> 8a-5p NH Button Society Exhibit
<b>24</b> 10a Worship/CCC 2p <b>Classicopia:</b> <b>By George!</b>	<b>25</b> 4-9p UVMC Suzuki Program	<b>26</b> 10a-12p UVMC 1p Cameo Baroque 4:30p FCC Choir	<b>27</b> 3-6:30p UVMC 7p Bel Canto CS	<b>28</b> 11a-6p WIC 3-6:30p UVMC/ Children's Choir 7p NA Group	<b>29</b> 4-6p UVMC Suzuki Program 6-9p Leb Rec Quilters Retreat	<b>30</b> 9a-5p Leb Rec Quilters Retreat 7:30p Anon Coffeehouse
<b>1</b> 10a Worship/CCC (Communion)	<b>2</b> 4-9p UVMC Suzuki Program	<b>3</b> 10a-12p UVMC 1p Cameo Baroque 4:30p FCC Choir	<b>4</b> 3-6:30p UVMC 7p Bel Canto CS	<b>5</b> 3-6:30p UVMC/ Children's Choir 7p NA Group	<b>6</b> 4-6p UVMC Suzuki Program	<b>7</b>

If you have questions or corrections regarding any event, please notify us at [church@fccleb.org](mailto:church@fccleb.org) or 603-448-4281.

# MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



## Music at the Meetinghouse

## Early Fall Events

All in the Sanctuary. Masks welcome but optional.

### **The Anonymous Coffeehouse: Season Four!**—Friday, Sept. 15, and Saturday, Sept. 30, at 7:30 pm

Our comfy community venue for live folk music returns for its fourth season! An informal “listening room” for emerging musicians, each show features several acoustic acts. Come and go as you please; baked goods and hot drinks available. *Free admission, donations welcome. For performers and more, visit [anoncoffee.org/](http://anoncoffee.org/).*

### **Classicopia: By George! The Life and Music of George Gershwin**—Sunday, September 24, at 2:00 pm

Pianist Dan Weiser explores the tragically short but incredibly productive life of George Gershwin, one of the greatest American composers. Amid the chaotic energy of early-20th-century New York, Gershwin drew from traditional Jewish music and the popularity of blues and ragtime to help produce the new sounds of jazz and Broadway. In addition to Gershwin’s piano repertoire, the program will offer a selection of his iconic songs with mezzo-soprano Laura Compton. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; more at [classicopia.org](http://classicopia.org).*

### **Cameo Baroque: The Music of Georg Philipp Telemann**—Saturday, October 14, at 7:00 pm

This excellent Baroque ensemble (Ernie Drown, Beth Hilgartner, Leslie Stroud, and Laurie Rabut) shares a selection of pieces from the rich and immense output of this German composer, the most accomplished contemporary and friend of J. S. Bach. *Free will donation for VT flood relief; more at [www.cameoarts.org](http://www.cameoarts.org).*

### **Classicopia: The Mendelssohns and the Schumanns**—Sunday, October 29, at 2:00 pm

Cellist Jacques Pierre Malan joins Dan Weiser for a program exploring the connections between these two musically prominent families in the early-Romantic period. While the men gained wider fame as composers, Felix’s sister Fanny and Robert’s wife Clara also distinguished themselves from a young age as composers, performers, and musical advocates. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; more at [classicopia.org](http://classicopia.org).*



**SUMMER FESTIVALS AND CAMP.** Despite a generally lighter concert schedule, FCC hosted plenty of musical activity during July and August—the Oak Hill Music Festival, the NH Music Festival’s chamber series, and Classicopia’s lively camp for young musicians aged 8-15.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### DIACONATE

Bob Gerlach opened the July Diaconate meeting by reading Maya Angelou's poem "Savior." The group then discussed the **congregation's approach to welcoming visitors**, emphasizing that Deacons and others should try to connect with visitors after the service, or even before if possible. The Deacons considered various strategies to ensure that these connections happen and continue beyond Sunday mornings. They also

supported offering a mix of both old and new music during worship, including the prelude and postlude.

The Deacons also recognized the need for further clarity about the operation of the Sanctuary sound system and the remote camera and equipment.

The Diaconate is pursuing the production of **T-shirts**, featuring various colors and simple messages of volunteering and service. The group will consider several potential designs (e.g., mountain landscape,

a Celtic knot), and share with the congregation. Contributions may be needed to subsidize production. The T-shirts could be worn for a potential service project along the rail trail this fall.

The Rev. Steve Silver reported on readings he had pursued during his study leave and noted ongoing wider-church activities. He discussed plans for a retractable banner, and has contacted the West Lebanon Congregational Church about reviving our pulpit exchange.

## Send Us Your Photos!

### Information and Photos Needed for FCC Directory

Our last printed directory was published in 2016, over seven years ago! We'd like to make a newer version available—one that can be more easily and regularly updated with current information and photos. **But we need your help!**

Please check the contact information the church now has for you (attached as a PDF document in current "This Week @ FCC" emails), and submit any corrections to the Church Administrator. Photos should be JPG or PNG files, in a frontal, head-and-shoulders format clearly showing faces (like these fine examples!).

*EVERYONE who feels connected to FCC's congregation is invited to be listed in the directory—regardless of whether or not they have formally joined the church as a covenant member.*

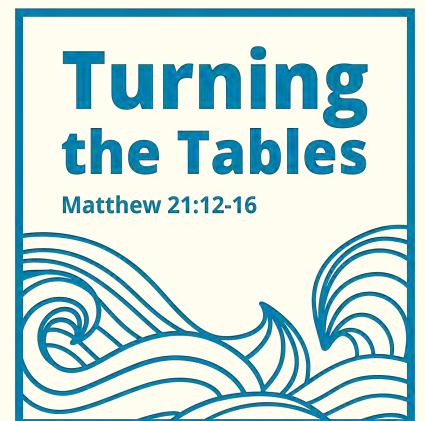


## NHC-UCC ANNUAL MEETING 2023

All are invited—lay or ordained leaders, congregation members, friends, and visitors—to participate in the **222nd Annual Meeting** of the NH Conference of the UCC. The theme this year, "**Turning the Tables**," draws inspiration from Matthew 21:12-16, and the keynote speaker is Bekah Maren Anderson, a prominent queer disabled writer, theologian, and activist.

In addition to worship, the business meeting, and other plenary events on October 21, optional connecting sessions online run October 10-26. For complete schedule and details, visit [www.nhcucc.info/annualmeeting](http://www.nhcucc.info/annualmeeting).

*FCC will pay for up to four delegates to attend (either in person or via Zoom); registration is open until 5:00 pm on Thursday, October 5. If you're interested, please contact the church office.*



## Meet Our Epilogos Students!

Each year half of our Lenten Lunch Bag offering collection funds scholarships through EPILOGOS CHARITIES, INC., serving the town and school of San Jose Villanueva, El Salvador. (The other half of the Lenten offering supports WISE of the Upper Valley.) FCC's 2022 donation has supported three students—Rafael is in his first year of high school, Sergio and Mario are in their second and third years, respectively.

In 2023 Epilogos is supporting more scholarship students in SJV than ever before—a total of 134 recipients, including 63 in high school, 57 in K-9th grade, and 14 special-needs students.



Rafael  
Alejandro



Sergio  
Porfirio



Mario  
Alexander

*Thank you for so generously supporting this important relationship with San Jose Villanueva each year! For more information about Epilogos Charities, please visit [www.epilogos.org](http://www.epilogos.org).*

### The Pastoral Perspective, *continued from Page 1*

Now, I don't know about you, but knowing I'm going to be judged can be unnerving. God will see through my excuses, and my equivocation. Before God, I will stand exposed. You, too. We'll all be judged. The good news is that God is just and, Scripture tells us, merciful. I honestly do not believe that God has it in for us. God just wants us to live good, decent lives. We can do that by heeding Paul's words.

Yours faithfully, *Steve*

### Committee Meetings

The following regular meetings will happen remotely via Zoom:

**Diaconate** 9/11 and 10/9, 7:00

**Council** 9/13 and 10/10, 7:00

**MSA** 9/25 and 10/23, 7:00

*For information on other groups' plans to meet, contact the church office.*

## Subscribe to the NHC-UCC Weekly Newsletter

If you'd like to receive weekly news from the NH Conference of the UCC, including information about the Horton Center, the annual conference in October, and other topics, please contact [communications@nhcucc.org](mailto:communications@nhcucc.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@fcclb.org](mailto:church@fcclb.org) • [www.fcclb.org](http://www.fcclb.org)  
Rev. Stephen R. Silver: [silver@fcclb.org](mailto:silver@fcclb.org) • Music: [music@fcclb.org](mailto:music@fcclb.org) • Newsletter Submissions: [church@fcclb.org](mailto:church@fcclb.org)




**First Congregational Church of Lebanon**

10 South Park Street  
PO Box 230  
Lebanon, NH 03766

DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

<p><b>SEPTEMBER 10</b> <b>KICK-OFF SUNDAY</b> <i>Join us to start a new school year!</i></p>	<p><b>Neighbors in Need:</b> <b>BEHOLD!</b> <i>Special UCC Mission Offering This Fall</i></p>	<p>NHC-UCC <b>Annual Meeting 2023</b> October 21</p> 
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<p align="center"><b>First Congregational Church of Lebanon</b>  The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor  Ernie Drown, Organist and Choir Director • Nancy Parsons, Children’s Community Corner  Jon Scott, Chair of Church Council • Linda Gerlach, Chair of Deacons • Barbara Jones, Moderator  Brian Clancy, Church Administrator</p> <p align="center">603-448-4281 • church@fccleb.org • prayer@fccleb.org • music@fccleb.org • www.fccleb.org</p>	
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