

APRIL 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 Choir 8:45am Sun. Sch. 10:00am Worship 10:00am</p> <p>Communion Sunday</p> <p>Palm Sunday</p> <p>No Confirmation</p>	<p>2 Food Pantry 10am-Noon</p> <p>CE 6:30pm</p>	<p>3 Fair Workshop 9-11:30am</p>	<p>4 Food Pantry 6-8pm</p> <p>Adult Choir, 7pm</p>	<p>5 Food Pantry 3-5pm</p> <p>Deacons meet At 6pm Quartet meets At 6pm</p> <p>Maudy Thursday Worship, 7pm</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Prayer Vigil See details inside newsletter.</p> <p>Good Friday Worship, 7pm United Methodist Church, Berwick</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Choir Meets 10am (tentative)</p> <p>Church open To drop off Easter flowers 10-11am</p>
<p>8 Sunrise Service 6am Adult Choir 8am</p> <p>Easter Sunday</p> <p>9am Worship</p> <p>Contemporary Choir 10:15am</p> <p>11am Worship</p> <p>No Confirmation</p>	<p>9 Food Pantry 10am-Noon</p> <p>Diaconate 6:30pm</p>	<p>10 Fair Workshop 9-11:30am</p> <p>Silent Auction & Dessert Smorgasbord 6pm, All are invited</p> <p>Trustees 6:30pm</p>	<p>11 Food Pantry 6-8pm</p> <p>Contemp. Choir 6:30pm Adult Choir, 7pm</p>	<p>12 Food Pantry 3-5pm</p> <p>Healing Service 7pm, Chapel Caregivers lead Theme: Renewal</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 Memorial Service, 11am, for Leona (Lee) Keith Reception follows</p>
<p>15 Choir 8:45am Sun. Sch. 10:00am Worship 10:00am</p> <p>Stained Glass Window Re-Dedication Service, 3:00pm</p> <p>Confirmation 6-7:30pm</p>	<p>16 Food Pantry 10am-Noon</p> <p>New Member Session, 7pm</p>	<p>17 Fair Workshop 9-11:30am</p> <p>Church Council Meeting 6:30pm</p>	<p>18 Food Pantry 6-8pm</p> <p>Beacon Charitable Corp., 10am</p> <p>Contemp. Choir 6:30pm Adult Choir, 7pm</p>	<p>19 Food Pantry 3-5pm</p>	<p>20 May Newsletter Items Due</p>	<p>21 Church Clean-up 8am-12Noon</p> <p>Come lend a hand!</p>
<p>22 Choir 8:45am Sun. Sch. 10:00am Worship 10:00am</p> <p>New Members Received</p> <p>Confirmation, TBA</p>	<p>23 Food Pantry 10am-Noon</p>	<p>24 Fair Workshop 9-11:30am</p>	<p>25 Food Pantry 6-8pm</p> <p>Contemp. Choir 6:30pm Adult Choir, 7pm</p>	<p>26 Food Pantry 3-5pm</p> <p>C-S Clergy 9:30-11am Rochester</p>	<p>27 Spaghetti Supper Prep, 3pm</p>	<p>28 Public Spaghetti Supper</p> <p>4-6pm</p>
<p>29 Choir 8:45am Sun. Sch. 10:00am Worship 10:00am</p>	<p>30 Food Pantry 10am-Noon</p>	<p>April Fellowship: YOUTH GROUP</p>		<p>April Acolytes April 1 – Bethany Fournier, Nick Farrell April 8 – Easter : 9am – Gabby Rouleau, Jordan Brown 11am – Leo & William Hurley April 15 – Mathew St Jean, Gregg Mathews April 22 – Jamie & Michael Maryak April 29 – Lauren O’Connor, Steven Desjarlais</p>		

FIRST PARISH NEWS

First Parish United Church of Christ (Congregational)

P.O. Box 228, 176 West High Street, Somersworth NH 03878-0228

Rev. Mark A. Rideout, Pastor

Church office: (603)692-2057

www.somersworthfirstparish.org



April 2007

Take an hour and watch with the Lord

Once again, First Parish will be holding a Prayer Vigil following worship on Maundy Thursday (April 5) and continuing to Easter Sunrise Service (April 8).

This year we will try a little different format in the hope that more of you will participate in this special and very meaningful event. This year, part of the Vigil will take place here at the Church and part will take place in your own home.

From 9pm on April 5 to 6pm on April 6th, the Vigil will take place in the Sanctuary. You may come alone or bring someone to share your time. The church will be locked and secure. (If you'd like, another adult can be in the church with you should you feel uncomfortable about being alone in the building.) Devotional resources will be available, or you may bring your own. There will be a CD/tape player, with some music to listen to or you may sit in silence. Those who have participated in the past have found this to be a special time.

From 8pm on April 6 to 6am on April 8th, the Vigil will take place in your home. We

will be encouraging you to take time for prayer in your own surroundings. With this "stay at home" option, we hope it will encourage you to sign up for an hour or two and focus and pray in your own comfortable setting.

Everyone is encouraged to take part in this offering of time to the Lord. You are asked to sign up for specific one-hour, or more, time slots. See the Narthex display or contact Prayer Vigil Coordinator, Priscilla Chellis. 207-698-5977
prchellis@comcast.net



In The Sanctuary:

April 5, 9pm through April 6, 6pm

In Your Home:

April 6, 8pm through April 8, 6am

Riverside Rest Home Pen Pal Program



Spring is here! Time to celebrate and spread some Easter Joy! So many residents of Riverside Rest Home in Dover have no family nearby - or no family at all. They long for contact with another person. Wouldn't *you* like to be the one to surprise and brighten up someone's life? For many years, Connie Ricker has paired up residents of Riverside to those at First Parish who'd love to send an occasional card throughout the year. It doesn't take long and it sure puts a smile on someone's face - even your own! You don't have to sign your name if you don't want to - a Secret Pal is fun, too. Speak to Connie if you'd like to be a Pen Pal to someone special. She'll even save you a stamp and deliver it, if you wish. Call Connie at 335-1242.

Save Your Soda Can Tabs



Rochester Assembly No. 11 of the International Order of the Rainbow Girls continue to collect the tabs from soda cans. Each little tab helps the Shriners fund cancer research and enables them to purchase medical equipment. We are blessed by your continued donations of hundreds and hundreds of tabs. Please drop your tabs in the plastic container in the church hall. Any questions, see Linda Breden. Every little tab helps.

DELEGATE NEWS

March 4, 2007, saw the celebration of the Installation of Reverend Mary James as Pastor and Teacher of the First Congregational Church of Wakefield, United Church of Christ. Performing the Service of Installation, was the Reverend Ellen Lankhorst. Assisting in the Installation were: Reverend Larry Brickner-Wood, Reverend Mark Hamilton, and other dignitaries.

The sermon, "Called to be Friends", given by the Reverend Gary Schulte, New Hampshire Conference Minister, extolled those present to "be there" for one another in God's service.

The choirs, quartet, and hand bells lent an enchanting air to the celebration.

Representing First Parish UCC Somersworth were: Reverend Mark Rideout, Brenda Davidson, Marc & Patty Cote.

APRIL CELEBRATIONS

- Apr 1 - Rachel Fournier, Andy Allen,
Shawn Richer
Apr 3 - Jenny Jeffers
Apr 4 - Eden-Faith Trussell
Ed & Helene Courier (anniv)
Apr 8 - Leah Trussell
Apr 9 - Clay Oelkuct
Apr 10 - Marc Cote, James Maryak,
Lauren O'Connor
Apr 11 - *Art & Daryll Wasson (their 10th)*
Apr 14 - Linda Burk,
Christine Boucher
Apr 17 - Bob Hess, Jan Monbleau
Apr 19 - Christina Chellis
Apr 20 - Glenn Scott
Apr 23 - Peggy Goodrow
Terry & Linda Burk (anniv)
Apr 24 - Mark Rideout
Butch & Sue Boucher (anniv)
Apr 26 - Barbara Pay
Apr 27 - Gayle Stofanak
Apr 28 - Nancy Powers, Joe Peterson
Apr 29 - Larry Hudon

2007 Women's Fellowship Memorial Scholarship

Information and applications for the First Parish UCC Women's Fellowship Memorial Scholarship are available in the Narthex. Completed forms must be returned no later than Sunday, May 6th, 2007 in order to be considered. Please return the form to the Scholarship Chair, Carol Cummings.

2007 Scholarship Committee

Jinny Burgess
Toni Rhode
Carol Cummings, Chair
6 Bennett Street
Somersworth, N.H. 03878-2104

Women's Fellowship

On March 11th, a group of around 35 enjoyed a fabulous Pot Luck dinner with gingerbread and cool whip/ice cream for dessert. Marc Cote led us in prayer and the guest speaker was the Rev. Dr. Nash Garabedian, Jr., Missions Director of the Seafarer's Friend out of Portsmouth. We heard interesting stories and a brief history of their mission. Rev. Nash was once asked by a seaman why they come aboard ship with magazines, ditty bags, bibles, etc.. His reply was, "To share God's love, grace and understanding to strangers". It was great to hear how much our hats, mittens and scarves meant to the men aboard ship and how much those donations were appreciated. A list of requested magazines, devotional material, Upper Room, Readers Digest etc., will be posted in the church hall. If you can donate some reading material, it would help pass the long months at sea. A special *Thanks* to those who donated, set-up, prepared and cleaned up for the supper. Thanks also to Ken Hall for his good work in the kitchen.

Our Spring Fair was snowed out on Saturday, March 17th. Were the Leprechauns at work?? Sales were brisk following worship on the 18th and the items will be set up again following the spaghetti supper on the 24th.

It is nice to have Bertha Carr, Doris Hayden and Reta Lowery back with us. Keep well! And greetings also to Ferne Fogg, who is home in MT and feeling better. Keep these people in your prayers, as well as Eden-Faith Trussell.

Mark your calendar for April 10th at 6pm--Silent Auction and Dessert Smorgasbord. Please give your treasures to Esther (Toddy) Eastman. A sign-up sheet for desserts is posted.

Quilting? Are you interested???-day or night??? To be held at Gayle Stofanak's in South Berwick. Please speak to Gayle or Helene.

What we are....is God's gift to us. What we become....is our gift to God.....

~~ Helene

Have you picked up the new E-Mail Directory yet?



If not, look for it on the table in the Narthex. If you picked one up earlier, you may want to note that there are two corrections (so far). The copies on the table now reflect the changes, but if you grabbed a copy early on, please make note of the following corrections:

Dee Drake has changed to:

deedrake@verizon.net

Ele Janetos has changed to:

elelj@comcast.net

If your e-mail has changed from the one listed, please contact Priscilla Chellis. We can only keep the list up to date if you let us know. Thank you.

United in Christian Marriage

by Pastor Mark:

2/17 **Jennifer Harris & David Pfeiffer**

May God's richest blessing be with this newly married couple.



Special Event! Re-Dedication Of Our Stained Glass Windows

Join us on *Sunday, April 15th at 3pm* for the special service of re-dedicating our recently restored stained glass windows. Let us rejoice in their beauty and uniqueness. Fellowship will follow. Watch for more details in your Sunday bulletins.

In Our Thoughts And Prayers

Jim & Helen Stewart; Marilyn Whitcomb & friends of *Riverside Rest Home*

276 County Farm Rd., Dover, NH 03820

Leta Flint *The Wentworth Home*

795 Central Ave., Dover, NH 03820

Bob Philbrick *Berwick Estates*

75 Portland St., S. Berwick, ME 03908

In Our Prayers For Strength and Health

Rob & Cynthia Barnhart (health) Jinny Burgess' sister and brother-in-law; Dorothy Blaisdell; Ed Breden (surgery), Craig Breden's father; Bertha Carr; Jamie Conley; Ray Crouse; Patricia Dupuis (healing); Ferne Fogg (home after hospital stay); Cinny Gangeux (health) Jinny Burgess' daughter; Bea Gardner; Eric Glidden (ongoing therapy-Butch & Sue Boucher's grandson); Peggy Goodrow; Priscilla Guppy (serious health) Nancy Power's mother; Ray Harmon; Doris Hayden; Roger Horton; Dale Mailman (serious illness-Ray Crouse's nephew); Andy McDonough; Lois Monaski; Winnie Ostrander (back problems); Laurie Parzyck (tests—possible surgery) Bertha Carr's granddaughter; Rev. Aaron Pfaff (burned in fire at St. Martin Rectory) home; Rev. Jim Pirie (recent heart surgery-home, doing well); Esther Polsin (serious illness-Leah Trussell's Aunt); Eden-Faith Trussell (recent hospital stay, now home with continuing health concerns); Rev. Lea Ann Tung (rehab at Spaulding Rehab. Hospital, Boston); Art & Daryll Wasson (health).

It's been good to see Bertha Carr, Doris Hayden and Roger Horton back to worship on Sunday. And Andy McDonough had positive test results recently.

Send your prayers of support to:

Rev. Lea Ann Tung:

Home: 238 Middle Road
Dover, NH 03820

Rehab: Spaulding Rehab Hospital
125 Nashua St., Boston, MA 02114

Rev. Aaron Pfaff:

St. Martin Church,
120 Maple St., Somersworth, NH 03878

Mrs. Ferne Fogg

130 Wrangler Trail, Roundup, MT 59072

A card or phone call is always appreciated. Why not brighten someone's day and share God's love! *Remember, Marion Burnham (692-4169) sends cards on behalf of the Church Family.* Let Marion know if a card would be welcomed.

Christian Sympathy is
extended to the families of :

--**Beatrice Turgeon**, Reta Lowery's
daughter-in-law

--**Alice Kelley**, Bertha Carr's niece

--**Mrs. Charles (Mary Lou) Mansfield**,
Ada & Bob Hess' sister-in-law

May God's peace surround these families.

Home Communion

Pastor Mark has been bringing Holy Communion to home-bound members and friends during Lent. If you would like to set up a specific time, please call the Church Office (692-2057). In these days before Easter, this holy sharing can deepen your relationship with the Lord. If you are able, do join the larger church on Palm Sunday (4/1-10am), or on Maundy Thursday, (4/5-7pm) to share in the sacrament of the table.



Ongoing prayer focus during these days:

-**Peace!** Pray for peace, work for peace, live out peace! See copies of **POINTS FOR PEACEMAKING**, generated through Massachusetts Council of Churches (www.masscouncilofchurches.org), available in the Narthex.

-**NH Conference Partnership with the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe.**

--**Maranatha Indonesian United Church of Christ, and their pastor, Rev. Sandra Pontoh.**

--**Our Sunday School and Youth Programs**, that they may be blessed in the sharing and shaping of our faith in Jesus Christ. May God guide all who share their time and talent with our children.

--**Our Confirmands**, and their adult mentors who journey with them: Bethany Fournier (Mentor-Cori Brown); William Hurley (Mentor-Tom Allen); Gregory Mathews (Mentors-Marc & Patty Cote).

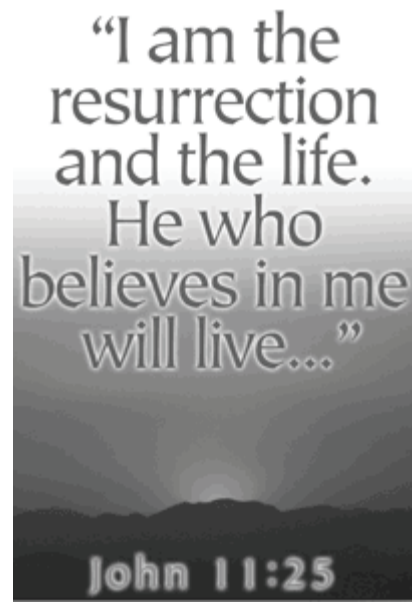
--**Those serving in the Armed Forces**, and in support capacities.

From Our Pastor...

As a community of faith, we've been enjoying the weekly Lenten Prayer Services, with goodly attendance, fellowship, and always, opportunity to gain a little more insight into the hosting church. We've also had some lively discussion with the Adult Lenten Study Group with the theme, "On the Road Again - A Faith Journey". We've touched some places of spiritual depth that none of us expected - and listened to each other's "journey", with respect, caring and discernment.

The journey is an apt image for these unfolding days just before, and just after resurrection. Disciples of Jesus the Christ continue to place a framework of belief on what resurrection means, and I must confess, my heart is touched by most, if not all of these insights, because my life experience has revealed to me the same 'grace points' in many and varied ways.

William Barclay wrote: *"It may well be that the world is denied miracle after miracle and triumph after triumph because we will not bring Christ what we have and what we are. If, just as we are, we would lay ourselves*



on the altar of service of Jesus Christ, there is no saying what Christ could do with us and through us."

Miracles and triumphs for yourself and your discipleship in this community called First Parish, means giving of self. This is what Jesus did, and the joy of new life, resurrection was revealed. I believe this happens over and over and over again, as, open to God's living Spirit, I am willing to be changed.

May this holy season bring to you changes, wherever and whenever, to feed your desire to serve and be served. Alleluia! To God be the glory!

~ Pastor Mark

Lectionary for April 2007

April 1

Palm Sunday

Liturgical color: Violet

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 22:14-23:56

April 8

Easter

Liturgical color: White

Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

I Corinthians 15:19-26

John 20:1-18

April 15

Second Sunday of Easter

Liturgical color: White

Acts 5:27-32

Psalm 118:14-29

Revelation 1:4-8

John 20:19-31

April 22

Third Sunday of Easter

Liturgical color: Purple

Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)

Psalm 30

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19

April 29

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Liturgical color: White

Acts 9:36-43

Psalm 23

Revelation 7:9-17

John 10:22-30

Silent Auction and Dessert Smorgasbord

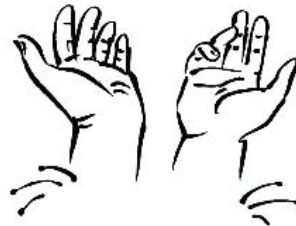
Don't miss out on this annual Women's Fellowship event, April 10 at 6pm. There'll be *lots* of items up for auction and we anticipate many yummy desserts. How could you not want to attend?? Please give Toddy Eastman your auction items and sign up to provide a dessert. Please bring a dessert that can easily be cut. And be creative. Maybe try something new and fancy. For questions on the desserts, see Sherie Dinger or Priscilla Chellis.

**THANK
YOU**

A much belated, but deeply appreciative 'thank you' to the choir for my Christmas gift.

More than the gift itself, I treasure the feelings behind it. Your patience for my work schedule that causes me to change the usual choir practice, your determined enthusiasm when I feel like trying something new and maybe not so easy, and the laughs and cookies we share on rehearsal nights. I might add, that although I generally kill any green thing that enters my home, the poinsettia is alive and well, and still flowering. It must be blessed, as I feel I am. A special thank-you to Jeff Mitchell for picking up my slack over the past few months when I took on way too many other things. God put you where I needed you.

~Chris Stolpe



A Healing Service

led by the Caregivers will be held on Thursday, 4/12, 7PM in the Chapel. The theme for this service is: **Renewal**. A healing service is a time of worship. Often this will include prayers for healing, scripture, singing, silence. It becomes an opportunity to come before God to hear with "the ears of our heart". All are invited to attend.



Looking for that special summer job?? There are Summer Camp

Job Opportunities at Horton Center in Gorham, NH. Check the NH Conference Website: www.nhcucc.org OR the Horton Center Website: www.hortoncenter.org Beth Martindale is the Director of Outdoor Ministries and may be contacted at: 603-225-6647 X 112, or bmartindale@nhcuss.org A card is posted on the Narthex bulletin board.

Deadline

For May 2007
FIRST PARISH NEWS:
Friday, April 20

Contact Priscilla Chellis
(207)698-5977
prchellis@comcast.net

Come Celebrate Diversity Day—

draw your circle wider! Saturday, April 21, 9AM-3PM, hosted at the Congregational UCC, Keene. Early registration (\$10) is requested; Registration at the door (\$12). This day is sponsored by the Open and Affirming (ONA) Committee of the NH Conference, United Church of Christ, to offer enlightenment, guidance and support for GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender) concerns. There will be a program to help us listen more closely to the message that God's love is for everyone. See the Narthex Bulletin Board for a complete list of the program and workshops.

Diaconate

Our Lenten season continues to fly by as we begin April with Palm Sunday, followed by our Holiest of weeks, culminating in the joyful celebration that is Easter, the day of our risen Lord. Please check the weekly bulletin for the updated schedule of services and keep the insert found in this newsletter, handy.

On **Palm Sunday**, the children/youth will be present for the Blessing of the Palms and they will lead us in a procession to celebrate Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem.

Our **Maundy Thursday** service is to commemorate our Lord's last supper with his disciples, and we will share in the sacrament of Holy Communion, with the Deacons participating in the office of Tenebrae.

Good Friday finds us sharing services at Berwick United Methodist Church at 7 pm.

Please consider where you might participate in the **Prayer Vigil** which follows the Maundy Thursday service up to Easter Sunday morning. See the front page of this newsletter for all the details.

And then, our Lord has risen, he has risen indeed. On **Easter Sunday** we will have our three traditional services at 6am (Sunrise Service), 9am, and 11am. Come and celebrate and participate when the spirit moves you!

Upcoming events include a 'new member class' on Monday, April 16, at 7 pm, culminating in a service and reception for these new members at the Sunday, April 22nd service. Please welcome all you see as we gather this month to celebrate the gifts of grace and forgiveness in our risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

Respectfully submitted,

David Stolpe
207-698-9771

Board Of Trustees

- **Mark your calendar!** In celebration of Earth Day, our Spring Church Clean-up date has been set for Saturday, April 21, 2007 from 8am -12noon. Look for a sign-up sheet in the next few weeks. Your assistance with the clean-up helps reduce our church expenses and makes the church look great as well.
- The refinancing of our **mortgage** should be completed with all paperwork reviewed and signed by the end of March. Look for the church roof replacement project to begin in the coming months.
- The Building and Grounds folks have started the improvements to the **kitchen**. The color choices have been made for the walls and painting has begun. Please see one of the Trustees if you are available to help with the kitchen improvement projects.
- **Yard Sale ~ June 2, 2007**, has been selected as the date for the next church yard sale. We are looking for 2-3 people who would be willing to co-chair the yard sale event with the assistance and guidance of the Trustees. There is an outline available detailing how to proceed with 'making it all happen'. Please speak with one of the Trustees if you are interesting in co-chairing the yard sale.

The Church Media Center is open on Wednesday evenings (4-7PM), Thursdays and Fridays (10AM-3PM). Volunteers are needed! Jessica McClain, until recently the Director of the Media Center, is back on part-time basis, primarily to complete the computer catalogue of the Center's collection. If you want more information, or to volunteer, contact Celeste Hemingson (603-224-2523) or by e-mail: chem-ingson@stpaulsconcord.org See the Narthex bulletin board for a written piece about the Church Media Center.

COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

Here we are, coming into April and we still have full shelves and full storage areas. Granted there have been a few holes, but the Hussey School in Berwick has amply filled those for a while. We haven't had shelves looking so good at this time of year for a long time.

Our numbers are down, for a change. Why, I don't know, but for the past several months, we've been serving about 150 families a month, rather than the 200 plus we had been earlier. Maybe people have moved, maybe jobs are better - I have no idea. However, if the pantry closes for lack of interest on the part of the clients, I'd be the happiest person in the world!

We've had a few new volunteers recently! Since we've lost a few, the new ones are very welcome. We are still in need of more to work in the pantry itself, as well as people to help with getting the food from the storage area to the church. This is done, generally on Wednesday mornings, about 8:30am, and takes about an hour from start to finish! If you have a spare hour once a week, join us at Queensbury and be welcomed with open arms!

The second Saturday in May brings the Postal Service Food Drive - a once a year drive that is held country wide. Anything we get helps keep those shelves filled during the summer. While summer is generally an easier time, those families with children have two meals to worry about - breakfast and lunch - while the schools are closed.

Please be generous, and thank you from all the pantries in the area! We appreciate all that you contribute.

~Pat Whitten

From the Music Committee

New music continues to roll in from the subscription we have, now going into its second year. Some of the pieces are challenging, yet worth the effort when finished. The subscription always includes piano and organ solos, as well as children's and contemporary pieces; the congregation will hear more and more of these as time goes along.

A special, and belated thank-you to William and Leo Hurley for "O Holy Night," the piano duet piece they did for both Christmas services. Hauntingly beautiful, and done with such feeling, you reduced most to tears. Thank you, as always, to the Parish Brass for your musical contribution, and to Jeff Mitchell for sharing the role of director/organist/pianist. We are truly blessed to have such talent among us.

As spring approaches, I hope to be doing more and more with the children of our church, as well as starting up the Contemporary Choir once again. I had no idea the effect of going to work 'full time' outside of the church would have on my energy, but I'm working to better manage my time and devote the time to the choirs that they deserve. In the meantime, Jeff has been a true Godsend, to share his talents. I have joked with him that between us, we make one really great choir director.

As our numbers are dwindling somewhat, once again I want to extend an invitation to anyone who would like to sing every Sunday, or 'once in awhile,' to please join us on Wednesday nights at 7 pm. We really do have a lot of fun, and you would be welcomed with open arms. You won't have to sign a lifetime contract – 'when you feel like it' works just fine. Please see the calendar for listings of Contemporary Choir rehearsal as well.

Jeff and I have plans to 'tag' some folks that like to sing but can't be with us all the time and form various quartets for a change of pace. This will, of course, also give the Adult Choir a break here and there. If one of us approaches you with a purposeful gait, be assured this will be a fun and rewarding experience for all.

Blessings this Easter to all, and please, if you have a favorite piece or a suggestion, feel free to contact any of the music committee – Laura Mitrovich, Jinny Burgess, Patty Cote, or Jeff Mitchell or myself.

Respectfully submitted;
Chris Stolpe
207-698-9771 (home)
603-767-2319 (cell)
cdstolpe@comcast.net

The Outdoor Ministries Board of the NH Conference UCC invites you to a **Service of Thanksgiving & Celebration of Gregg Pitman's Ministry.** 2PM, Saturday, March 31st, at the Congregational Church of Laconia, UCC. Donations for a money tree are welcomed, as well as written affirmations. Send these to Rev. Mel Burrowes, Canterbury United Community Church, P. O. Box 274, Canterbury, NH 03224. Complete information and directions are posted on the Narthex Bulletin Board.



On behalf of my family I would like to thank everyone in our First Parish Church Family for the prayers for my brother Max Francis (in Nova Scotia) over recent weeks. Max and his wife and children were aware that people from our church here in NH were praying for his return to good health. He was very grateful and deeply touched that prayers were being offered for him from afar. Max passed away peacefully on January 29 in the presence of his loving family. As for me, I was able to spend three precious days with him prior to his passing and I am confident that your prayers helped to make that possible. Please know that your prayers made a difference to Max and to all of us who were so blessed to have him in our lives.

Sincerely,

Karen Mac Rae



Easter Flowers

SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR ANYONE WISHING TO SHARE FLOWERS OR PLANTS ARE LOCATED IN THE NARTHEX AND NEXT TO THE FLOWER CHART DOWNSTAIRS

THE FLOWER COMMITTEE WILL BE AT FIRST PARISH ON **SATURDAY, APRIL 7TH, FROM 10-11AM**. PLEASE BRING YOUR PLANTS AND FLOWERS TO THE CHURCH THAT MORNING OR DROP THEM OFF EARLIER.

THANKS,
ROBIN MARTIN

A LOVE OFFERING is received every Communion Sunday, in the basket which is provided in the Narthex. The next offering will be received on **Sunday, April 1, 2007**. The funds received will be used at the pastor's discretion for LOCAL needs of people in our community. As you can imagine, there are many requests during these cold Winter months. Often the church is approached to help meet a particular need (medication, fuel oil, utility bill, security deposit, immediate clothing need, gasoline to get to work). It is totally up to you how often and what you give. The basket is ALWAYS in the Narthex, and people have always been very generous. The Love Offering is a way to share with a neighbor you've not met. The Deacons developed this idea several years ago and support it's work.



Christian Education

Nancy Day * Rachel Fournier * Julie Mathews
Gayle O'Connor * Leah Trussell
Holly Rouleau, Coordinator

- It is time again to make plans for summer camp! The Christian Education Committee and Youth Group have funds available to help with the cost of camps such as Horton Center, Star Island and The Deering Center. If you are interested in sending your child, please notify Christina Chellis, Holly Rouleau, Julie Matthews, Rachel Fournier or Gayle O'Connor by April 22nd.
- On Palm Sunday, the children will portray Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem with song and dance, in the sanctuary. Be prepared for an uplifting event! Following the presentation the children will view a short movie, have cake, and receive Easter Eggs filled with candy and other goodies.
- Easter Sunday children will worship with their parents/caregivers at each service. There will be nursery coverage for infants and toddlers at both the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services.
- Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Ark. The \$197 collected will go to the Florida Relief Fund for tornado victims. Future contributions will be donated to Habitat for Humanity.
- We are looking for Sunday school teachers in the Drama and Temple rooms for the upcoming session, April 15th through May 6th. We truly appreciate the support of everyone who has helped out so far this year. Please bless us with your continued assistance in teaching our youth. Remember - all the planning for the classes is done for you. You can just step right in!



Celebration of the 50th anniversary of the United Church of Christ continues as planning for the upcoming General Synod picks up speed.

The Twenty-sixth General Synod will take place in Hartford, CT, June 22 - 26th. The 50th Anniversary celebration will play a role in the Synod - a celebration that will be long remembered. Those who have attended Synods before will find some changes since part of the time will be devoted to anniversary activities. We'll look forward to who we are as the United Church of Christ and explore who God is calling us to be and to become in the next 50 years. Come prepared to worship, to study, to interact, to celebrate and to Let It Shine!!

General Synod will officially convene on Friday afternoon, June 22nd and will adjourn on Tuesday evening, June 26th following the closing worship. Synod is in downtown Hartford, Connecticut at the Hartford Civic Center. It's an arena designed primarily for sporting for events, but it will be the Synod's home for five days. There'll be the usual exhibits, worship, music and workshops. The good news is that the Civic Center seats over 14,000 people so there is plenty of room to make this the biggest Synod ever.

Registration continues for this special event. Registration is mandatory in order to enter the Civic Center. Sunday worship on June 24th however, is open to any and all who wish to attend and registration is not needed for that day. Would a group wish to attend from First Parish??

If you'd like to be present for all or some of the Synod and be a part of this special 50th anniversary, log on to the website and check out all the programs along with the entire schedule.

<http://www.ucc.org/synod/>

The UCC at 50 years! *Let It Shine!!*

Spaghetti Supper

Two more suppers - April and May, and we are done for the summer. (Of course there's the March 24th supper, should you get this newsletter in time.) We have the new cup caddies and that will make one job a lot easier and safer. Any time we have to move all the cups (or even a couple of trays), I envision a disaster. Fortunately, it hasn't happened, but my imagination often works overtime!

Our thanks to all who have made the suppers possible. It is definitely an *all church event* and one that has helped tremendously with the finances over the years. Hopefully we can continue!

We still need at least one more person on the committee, and preferably two. It really is not a difficult job, but it is necessary for others to be aware of all that is happening and know who does what, when, and where. Please, help us by taking a very few hours of time, eight months of the year, and join the committee!

Pat Whitten

CONGRATULATIONS

We celebrate with Christina Chellis, who graduated from the Univ. of NH in December 2006 with a degree in English Teaching. The Diaconate surprised her with a party during the February meeting. As she weighs her options, she currently works as a department supervisor at Target. Congratulations, Christina!



Will your son, daughter, grandchild - or even yourself - be graduating from high school, college or grad school this May or June? Please let us know so that your First Parish Family can celebrate your accomplishments. Please inform Priscilla Chellis at 207-698-5977 or pchellis@comcast.net A clipboard will also be located on the table in the Narthex.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2007

HOLY WEEK begins on Palm Sunday and ends on Easter Sunday. Plan to join your faith family as we gather for worship around the events of Jesus' last week.

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY [April 1, 10AM] This is the gateway to Holy Week. In worship, we will focus on Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. During worship the Sunday School will present a Palm Parade, with a "Hosanna Palm Song" in the early part of worship. Palms will be distributed following worship.

The Palm Sunday Gospel for this year, is found in Luke 19:28-40. You are encouraged to read the ENTIRE Passion story found in Luke 22:14-23:56, to look at and reflect on Jesus' final week that leads to the Cross, and the Tomb.

MAUNDY THURSDAY [April 5, 7PM] A vigil, with celebration of the Lord's Supper, which was Jesus' last meal with his disciples. A reading of the Office of Tenebrae (drawn from the passion narratives in Matthew's Gospel), is a part of this evening worship. This is a moving, solemn time when the gathered church remembers that which can separate us from God. The service is led by the Deacons and Pastor with musical participation.

PRAYER VIGIL Part of the Vigil will take place here at the Church, and part will this year, be taking place in your home.

At the Church: we begin following worship on Maundy Thursday on April 5th and continue just prior [6PM] to Good Friday Worship (which is hosted this year at the United Methodist Church, Berwick). This part of the Vigil will take place in the Sanctuary. You may come alone or bring someone to share your time. The church will be locked and another adult can be elsewhere in the church at the same time, if you'd like. Those who have participated in the past have found this to be a special time. Devotional resources are available, or you may bring your own. There will be a CD/tape player, with some music to listen to or you may sit in silence. Everyone is encouraged to take part in this offering of time to the Lord. You are asked to sign up for specific one-hour time slots.

In Your Home: Between the Good Friday Service-Easter Sunday Sunrise Service [6AM] we will be encouraging you to take time in your home setting for prayer. We hope this will help you to focus and pray in a comfortable setting. Again, sign up for specific one-hour time slots.

Sign-up in advance to "take an hour and watch with the Lord." See the Narthex display, or speak with Prayer Vigil Coordinator, Priscilla Chellis.

GOOD FRIDAY [April 14, 7PM] We will join with The United Methodist Church, Berwick, ME in their church on School Street (Rte 9) in Berwick.

EASTER DAY [April 8]

Sunrise Service 6AM We'll gather here at First Parish UCC, and walk out to the outdoor worship area. Light breakfast will follow in the Church Hall. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear. If we have inclement weather, we will worship inside.

Morning Worship Similar services that are festive and joy-filled will take place at:

9AM including a special Children's Message.

11AM including a Children's Message, and the Adult Choir, with special musical offerings.

There is no Sunday School on Easter Sunday.

The Nursery will be open and STAFFED by Amanda Hayward for BOTH SERVICES. Families are encouraged to worship together.