

**First Parish United Church of Christ
(Congregational)**

P.O. Box 228, 176 West High Street,

Somersworth, NH 03878-0228

Rev. Mark Rideout, Pastor

Church Office: (603) 692-2057

An Open & Affirming Church

www.somersworthfirstparish.org

firstparishsomersworth@myfairpoint.net



FAITH FORMATION

A fun family event is being planned for Saturday, March 17 at The Gathering Place. We will be meeting from 1:30-3:00pm. We have three or four fun activities planned. This is a family event, and we are inviting families in the community to join us. Please plan to bring your family, neighbors, or friends as we look forward to the start of Spring.

Join us in church each week during Lent, as we follow the road signs to God.

Spring is on it's way, and with it come thoughts of summer fun. Horton Center is a summer camp run by the New Hampshire Conference of the UCC. Horton Center, in Gorham, NH, sits atop Pine Mountain, in the heart of the Presidential Range. It is surrounded on all sides by the National Forest. Horton Center offers activities for families, adults, children, and teens. See the bulletin board in the Sunday School hallway for more information, or speak with Sue Vollkommer or any member of the Faith Formation committee.



MISSIONS

Our delicious CHICKEN DINNER LUNCHEON will be served on Sunday, March 18, following worship. We will be serving this meal family style. This is an opportunity to invite a friend, relative, and/or neighbor. Anyone invited is welcome to join us for worship, or they can meet us in the church hall for lunch at 11:30. The cost of the lunch is \$5/person or \$20/family. The money raised will be going to help meet a need in Zimbabwe. With this money we can provide a month's worth of protein to the orphaned children at the Daisy Dube Children's Home at Mt. Selinda. The types of protein provided include: fish, meat, sausage, eggs, and peanut butter. Please plan to join us, and bring a guest!!

Just a gentle reminder that the medicine bottles we are collecting should be clean, with the label removed. We would also like to request that the bottles that are donated be the brownish colored ones. Thank you so much for all the medicine bottles that you are donating. They are greatly appreciated.



Dear Ones:

A colleague shared the following from the writing of Margaret Wheatley, an American writer and management consultant who studies organizational behavior. It is taken from *Turning to One Another*, 2002:

~ *There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about. Ask: "What's possible?" not "What's wrong?" Keep asking.*

~ *Notice what you care about. Assume that many others share your dreams.*

~ *Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters. Talk to people you know. Talk to people you don't know. Talk to people you never talk to.*

~ *Be intrigued by the difference you hear. Expect to be surprised. Treasure curiosity more than certainty.*

~ *Invite in everybody who cares to work on what's possible. Acknowledge that everyone is an expert about something. Know that creative solutions come from new connections.*

~ *Remember, you don't fear people whose story you know. Real listening always brings people closer to together.*

~ *Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world. Rely on human goodness. Stay together.*

Our community, First Parish Church, is leaning into, discerning together, how to best be the church, Christ's body, Jesus' friends, Spirit-fed, in our today. Join the conversation, reach inside your self, step beyond the circle. Together, let's be God's face in this world!

Leaning into Lent....Grace and peace

~ Pastor Mark



Holy Week Services 2018 included in this newsletter as an insert is a listing of Holy Week Services and events. You'll note that a carryover theme all through Lent, to Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and then on Easter Day is how "Signs Along the Way", common street signs, have asked a deeper relationship between us and God. You will want to be here for worship to hear and see which signs bring us to the joy and wonder of Easter—and then, where do we go from there?

On Maundy Thursday, all are invited to a simple soup and salad supper at 5:30PM in the church hall—then to come to 7PM worship—which includes symbolic foot washing. *You may choose to participate in foot washing following Maundy Thursday worship.*

The Good Friday Witness is in creative shape mode—with Prayer and Waves at 12NOON and 3PM, then a Good Friday Service at 5:30PM in the Chapel at Evergreen Cemetery, Berwick ME with the Berwick United Methodist Church. Other details will emerge via the Sunday Bulletin.

Remember: *every church activity is an opportunity for YOU to invite, include and involve someone who you know into our shared life here at First Parish Church. You are the face of First Parish Church!*

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

Thank you to everyone who helped with the last supper. We are so grateful to everyone who helped before, during and after the supper and also for the scrumptious desserts!

Our next supper is March 24th. Patty and Marc Cote will be away this month, so please contact Debbie Hall (207-698-1158 or 603-781-8230) if you have questions, would like to help or need to cancel. Since they will be away, we will need some extra hands during the supper!

We are always excited to get new volunteers. The jobs are easy and we are glad to help you learn. Another way to help is to make a dessert for the supper...pies, cakes or something gooey!



MINISTRY OF PRAYER & CONCERN

Lucille Berry, *Studley Home*, 15 Eastern Ave.,
Rochester, NH 03867 335-1241

Jinny Burgess, *The Residence at Silver Square*,
100 Sterling Way, Dover, NH 03820

Bertha Carr, *Rockingham County
Nursing Home*

117 North Road, Brentwood, NH 03833

Gail Day, *Langdon Place of Dover*, 60 Middle
Rd, Dover, NH 03820

Rev. Bill & Pat Hamel, *The Manor at Canyon
Lakes*, #210, 2802 West 35th Ave., Kennewick,
WA 99337-2583

Audrey Loika, 1 Huntington Common Dr., Apt.
208, Kennebunk, ME 04043

Bob Philbrick, *Berwick Estates*,
75 Portland St., So. Berwick, ME 03908

Dorothy Blaisdell, Janet Giffin,
Wentworth Home, 795 Central Ave., Dover, NH
03820

--and all who are residents in long-term care and



Craig Breden [health]

Eric Burgess [health] *Jinny Burgess's son*

Gail Day [health]

Mark Dudley [healing] *son of Carroll & Barbara Dudley*

Dan Gaudreault [healing] *Sue Boucher's nephew*

Gloria Martel [health] *Linda Farrell's mother*

The violence in Parkland, FL, and in any community - with
the prayer for peace, access to resources for affordable
healthcare - mental health, primary care, treatment and
recovery from addiction.

AND ongoing prayer focus during these days:

- For our Carroll-Strafford Association Churches, and specifically in March, First Parish Congregational Church, Dover, NH and their pastor the Rev. Jonathan Goodell.
- That God will bless and guide our Transitional Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Charles Buck, and Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Richard Slater
- Recovery effort for all natural disasters.
- For all those who are living with cancer; those who are living with mental health concerns, and those who support them as they walk pathways of healing.
- Faith formation ministries for all ages - for building strong faith foundations, at all ages and stages of life.
- Working together in community to address addiction to drugs, and anything that takes away from wholeness in life-and the building of community to implement strategies for prevention, while providing resources for treatment and recovery.
- Love God. Love Neighbor. Love Self.
- Those serving in the Armed Services and in support capacities around the world.
- Peace in our world; harmony in our relationships, hope in our active response for transformational change.
- The UKAMA Partnership between the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe and the NH Conference UCC.
- Continued invitational ministry and mission here at First Parish United Church of Christ: invite, include, involve in the good news way of Christ!
- Lenten Journey - watching for and discerning the Signs of the Journey, which the 40 days invite us to engage, and then respond to as the friends of Jesus Christ.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship - 10:00 AM

Sunday School - 10:00 AM

Fellowship Time Follows Worship

*Holy Communion is celebrated on the
first Sunday of each month.*

Ministers: The People of the Church

Pastor: Rev. Mark A. Rideout

Christian Education Coordinator:
Susan Vollkommer

Moderator: Richard Whitten

Co-Clerks: Patty Cote & Debbie Hall

Treasurer: Linda Farrell

Assistant Treasurer: Richard Shepherd

Organist/Choir Director: Bette Daley

Newsletter Team: Debbie Hall-Editor,
Priscilla Chellis-Calendar,
Luise Watman-Birthdays/Anniversaries



MARCH LECTIONARIES

Third Sunday in Lent - Violet

March 4, 2018

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalm 19

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

Fourth Sunday in Lent - Violet

March 11, 2018

Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

Fifth Sunday in Lent - Violet

March 18, 2018

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33

Sixth Sunday in Lent - Violet Palm/Passion Sunday

March 25, 2018

Liturgy of the Palms

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16

Liturgy of the Passion

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39, (40-47)



March CELEBRATIONS

March 2	Kaleigh Richer
March 3	David Arseneault
March 9	Priscilla Chellis
	Kelsey Conley
March 14	Becky Scribner
March 20	Gail Day
March 22	<i>Doug & Kelly Whitten</i>
March 24	Genevieve Allen
March 28	Jamie Conley
	Susan Sargent
	Don Whitten

A Gentle Reminder:

* Sunday Bulletin announcements/information needs to be in writing to the Church Office by MONDAY, or, you may e-mail it directly to Debbie Hall at kenanddebhall@comcast.net

* Monthly Newsletter items MUST be submitted by the 3rd Friday [OR as noted in the monthly newsletter calendar]. Earlier is better! Email directly to Debbie Hall at kenanddebhall@comcast.net Written items may be left in the pocket on the copy room door as well (just let Deb know!).

* Monthly calendar dates and times are submitted directly to Priscilla Chellis at prchellis@comcast.net

* Updates on birthdays, anniversaries may be sent to Luise Watman at lcwatman@comcast.net

Note: If you serve on a committee, please communicate directly with your Committee Chair if you are unable to attend a scheduled meeting or event.

Our Monthly Newsletter

can be accessed entirely online! Check it out: www.somersworthfirstparish.org. Paper copies are available in the Narthex. If you prefer to have the newsletter sent to you in the mail, please send \$20 with your name and address to: First Parish Church, P.O. Box 228, Somersworth, NH 03878, Attn: Newsletter Editor.



Jinny Burgess recently moved to her new home at The Residence at Silver Square. She would love to hear from you!

The Residence at Silver Square
100 Sterling Way, Apt. #202
Dover, NH 03820
Tel: (603) 343-5276



Thank you for the prayers and well wishes offered during my recovery from knee replacement surgery.

I am doing very well and am having physical therapy sessions for awhile.

It is GREAT to walk without pain in my knee! 😊

Fran Karlik

Remember, *every church activity is an opportunity for YOU to invite, include and involve someone who you know into our shared life here at First Parish Church.*

Caring Card Ministry

Nancy Brown is handling the Card Ministry. Please feel free to be in touch with Nancy who is to send out a card from the church—sympathy, thinking of you, get well, etc. Please contact directly 332-7610 or obrowski@aol.com to share the contact information for the recipient.



CANCELLATION POLICY

CANCELLATION POLICY Yes, we've had to do this before! The weather can, and does change. When at all possible, worship WILL take place. But, should the decision be made to cancel worship and/or Sunday School, every effort will be made to have this information available by 8AM Sunday on **radio station WTSN 1270 AM, AND television station, WMUR, Channel 9.** Every effort will be made to leave a message on the voice mail at the church [692-2057]. Please understand that if the church loses power, while voice mail may work; it still may mean that the church does not have electrical power. These decisions will be made taking into consideration the present or anticipated weather, traveling conditions and whether or not Pastor Mark [and others] can get out of their driveways! Please—use common sense in your decision to drive on a snowy Sunday!



The trustees are continuing to pursue changing the Peplar Trust Fund with the help of Pastor Mark and Gregg Fournier

The treasurer's report:

- * January income \$17,310 Expenses: \$10,105
- * Income is \$2,534 less than last year.
- * Expenses compared to last year are also \$524 down.
- * The net loss is \$2,010 when compared to 2017.
- * The mortgage balance as of January, 2018 is \$44,163.

Bruce Robbins is investigating the technology required to send out our Sunday service so more people can see what our church community does.

We will be sponsoring a table at the Somersworth Children's Festival this summer and are looking for help with this. If you have an idea, please share it with us.

Respectfully,

Ken Latchaw



Christian Sympathy is extended to the families of:

- **George Lelarge**, 97 years old [1/27/18] long-time volunteer in Somersworth Schools
- **Michelle Sirois**, 2/7/18, and her daughter, **Shelby Sirois-Myer** [12/7/17] sister and niece of Michael (Sharon) Sirois.
- **Dorothy Storms** [2/14/18], mother of Allen Storms

*~In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.
We are not alone. Thanks be to God~*

OPEN & AFFIRMING

Greetings from the Open and Affirming Committee.

We continue to work on the planning of several current and future events.

Who is my Neighbor?: These are brief stories that describe a personal moment we have had with a neighbor in our community. As an example, I would like share with you a story about a carpenter who was an immigrant. As a baby, he left his birthplace and hometown with his parents for a better life and to escape persecution. Would you welcome this immigrant into your community? What if you knew they didn't leave Central/South America for the United States but left Bethlehem and Nazareth for Egypt. And, they weren't trying to escape a Latin American dictator, they were escaping a Roman named Herod. Should that really make a difference?

Jesus of Nazareth pointedly teaches His followers to welcome and treat a stranger as they would Jesus Himself, "for I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me ...".

Educational events: These events are intended to provide helpful information about various topics related to being an Open and Affirming church. We have established several future dates so that you may plan to join us. The events will be held at 2pm to allow you plenty of time after worship.

- February – 11th: *Rejection by Church and Community: Why ONA is Important*

We had great attendance with several neighbor churches attending as well as members of First Parish. Gerri Cannon shared stories of real life situations about LGBT+ persons who were shunned by their Churches. They have been told that they are abominations and are not welcome to participate in church services, sacraments, and sometimes they are blocked from entering the Church or Church property. To make it even worse, many LGBT people are rejected by their own families. As part of the session we discussed how these people responded to such situations and how we might help.

Please put these up-coming events on your calendar:

- April – 8th: *Community Round Table with our community churches*
- June – 10th: *Topic of Interest based on input during the prior two sessions*

Conversations at the High School: Great progress has been made with the planning of this event. Mark and Gerri are collaborating with the High School Counselor Denis Pelletier and have been extremely pleased with the support and enthusiasm they have received. A 6-week framework has been developed and will be presented to Principal Sokul the week of February 19th.

If you have ideas, we would love to hear them. We would also appreciate your involvement, a little or a lot, with our committee.

Thank you

Geoff and Nancy Day

Open and Affirming Committee



Star Island

Star Island is one of the nine Isles of Shoals located seven miles off the coast of New Hampshire and Maine. All are welcome to explore the island for a day, enjoy a meal, spend the night, or attend a conference. Star is owned and operated by the nonprofit Star Island Corporation.

Star has a storied history: in the 1600's it was the busiest fishing port on the East coast. In the 1800's, artists, writers and intellectuals flocked to the Oceanic Hotel - one of the last of the original Grand Hotels. For the last 100 years, Star Island has offered an all-inclusive summer camp experience for families and individuals and hosted a wide variety of themed conferences and personal retreats. Whether you find yourself mesmerized by the sunset in a rocking chair on the porch, exploring Gosport Harbor in a kayak, or learning about our innovative environmental programs, Star Island is unforgettable.

Check out the bulletin board in the Sunday School hall for information on the various UCC conferences, Star Gathering. They are held July 28-Aug. 4; Aug. 4 -11, and the weekend of Sept. 1-3. If you have any questions, contact Priscilla Chellis.



EASTER FLOWERS

Order forms for Easter flowers will be available in the Narthex soon. The order forms are due by March 14th.

Easter Lilies: 6" for \$9 8" for \$22 10" for \$34

Tulips: 6" for \$7

Cala Lilies: 6" for \$18

Geraniums: 6" for \$11

Mixed Pot: 7" for \$14

Robin and Kim plan to set up the display on Friday, March 30th.

If you have any questions, please contact Robin Martin.



The women have spent the last month cleaning out the Women's Fellowship room and gearing up for this new year. Now we are working on making sure we have an activity to do each week.

We are currently making lap blankets for the Riverside Rest Home residents. Next, we will start collecting ideas and making items for the Holly Daze Fair. If you have a good idea and would like to share it, please let us know what your idea is. We are hoping to come up with new items for the fair.

We are looking for help with the Yard Sale which will be on June 16. Let Kathy Latchaw know if you can be of some assistance with this church wide event.

Most gratefully,

Kathy Latchaw

SOMERSWORTH PREVENTION COALITION

Somersworth Prevention Coalition will host a community coalition meeting on Tuesday, March 20 5:30-6:30PM, followed by a presentation to parents on Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Vaping by Officer Colton Deschenes, hosted by Somersworth Youth Connection, Somersworth Police Department and Somersworth Prevention Coalition. The presentation targets parents of students K-8 but coalition members and friends are welcome. Do you know a parent or family member who might benefit from this presentation—spread the word! Event to be held at Idlehurst Elementary School, Stackpole Road, Somersworth.

DIACONATE

In February your Deacons, and others, met and shared a wonderful meal prepared by the outgoing Senior Deacons, Nancy Brown, Linda Palmer, and Sharon Sirois. We then moved into an intentional time of discernment, facilitated by Pastor Mark. He used a devotion based on 1 Corinthians 12:12-26—about life in the Spirit, and that in the body of Christ there are “many parts—one Body—one Spirit.” We then shared conversation about our personal faith center. There are many questions that help us get more deeply into that center, our story of faith journey. The reason for doing this was to get a better handle on our individual/First Parish Church-community-purpose/direction.

Bruce Robbins and Pastor Mark each shared their perspective. Others were invited to do so as well. Using the image of the “hula hoop” raised in worship, we were challenged to see ourselves inside the circle. We each have a depth of “feel”, how can we bring others to our center? Then, how do we do this outside the circle—i.e. the four walls of our church.

Pastor Mark asked: What are our church’s strengths? To you, what is one strength of our church? Each person was then asked to take a post-it, write on it a strength—you could do two—and then come and post it on the easel picture of the church. *Responses included: love all around, welcoming-internally/externally, willingness to help, positive environment, generosity, channeling Good News, happy congregation, friendly people, strong faith, giving people-active, leadership, commitments, family-like feel, outreach, people, friendliness, pastor, Bible based, our mission to walk with Jesus Christ, church community/family, generousness of hearts.* Mark then asked, “Using this picture, these are inside the circle, these strengths, these named parts of your journey—how do we get these outside the limits of the circle?”

Unpacking these strengths, offered each person the opportunity to speak more deeply. We then asked “What is community to you?” How can we change the dynamic of making a difference in our church process of committees and working groups---how we name a goal and follow it through? The importance of generating ideas, initiating effort to implement, and then “how did it go, engage or let go and look further to implement another idea” to build the Good News message in our world.

One response, *“it is the activity oriented parts of what we do as a church that bring meaning to my life, and I know bring our church into the community.”*

We heard the statement, “We can’t do everything—but we can do something” goes back to the purpose of our “doing”, that is to express faith in action, which then brings opportunity for building relationship, sharing faith, inviting into community.

From the Deacons

March 4 following worship, we invite our wider church family to be present for a similarly focused time to unpack the concepts named above, so you can step into that deeper, personal look [inside the circle], to then engage and put action behind church work and witness [outside the circle]. Looking inside yourself, from a faith perspective, what ignites, what sparks your presence and participation in God’s world? What might be new, “outside the box”? What will inspire a “linking in”, what skill/grace can you leverage and share, what makes you more deeply joyful, passionate, hopeful such that you can become an example of the action for God’s light and love? **It only takes a spark....plan to stay.**

HOLIDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

HOLY WEEK begins on Palm Sunday and ends of Easter Sunday. **Make a choice to be present in worship with your faith family.** Gather for worship around the events of our Savior Jesus' last week. Share in remembering the events that shape and give meaning to your faith—and what you do in God's name in service to others. In others words, come as you are, but do come!



PALM/PASSION SUNDAY [March 25, 10AM] Today is the gateway to Holy Week. In worship, we will sing of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and share a Blessing of the Palms. During Lent, we've been using the theme of **"Signs Along the Way."** Common street signs we see [and often ignore] have helped us focus on deepening the message of the 40 days, by inviting us to engage and share with others, our relationship with God. These signs have been placed on the large, wooden cross in the Sanctuary.

The *Palm Sunday Gospel* for this year, is found in **Mark 11:1-11**. You are encouraged to read the ENTIRE Passion story found in **Mark 14:-1-15:47** to look at and reflect on Jesus' final week that leads to the Cross and Tomb.

PALM SUNDAY ECUMENICAL CANTATA [March 25] *"The Story". The cantata will be presented at Holy Trinity Church, 404 High St., Somersworth, NH at 6PM.* Some of our own First Parish Church Choir members are participating—plan to be uplifted by this community offering of music! This is coordinated by St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, Somersworth and St. Mary Parish, Rollinsford.

MAUNDY THURSDAY [March 29]

Simple Soup & Salad Supper [5:30PM, Church Hall]

The Vigil of Maundy Thursday, The Sharing of the Upper Room [7PM, Sanctuary] One of the few times we worship in the evening, will begin with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This was Jesus' last meal with his disciples. The reading of the Office of Tenebrae follows. This is drawn from the passion narratives in Matthew's Gospel. A moving, solemn time when the gathered church hears the scriptural witness of the shadows of separation from God.

During the Vigil Service, you will see a Deacon wash the feet of another Deacon. In John 13 (the only Gospel to record this), Jesus washed the feet of the disciples while they were gathered to share the Passover meal. Tonight, we include this symbolic action in our Vigil Service as a sign of the humility of Jesus to those he loved. At the conclusion of tonight's service, we are asked to leave in silence.

For those who choose, *you may remain following the service to participate in footwashing* by a team of our Deacons. There will be two foot washing stations in the front of the sanctuary, one for men, one for women. This will be done as quietly as possible. Foot washing can include a reflective moments before and after, as you ponder what it is that Jesus does for you, and then calls you to do for friend, neighbor, visitor, stranger.

GOOD FRIDAY WITNESS [March 30] *Prayers and Waves* 12 NOON and 3PM, in and around Somersworth and Berwick. This will be more fully explained in the Palm Sunday bulletin. We will join with Berwick United Methodist Church for a *Good Friday Service* at 5:30PM in the Chapel at Evergreen Cemetery, Cemetery Road, Berwick, ME.



EASTER DAY [April 1]

Sunrise Services



6:00AM First Parish UCC and Tri-City Covenant Church, Somersworth, NH, join together **outdoors in the upper parking area to the side** of the American Legion Hall, Somersworth [corner of Constitutional Way and Washington St.] This time of worship will include the sharing of Holy Communion. Light breakfast in the American Legion Hall follows.

Dress for the outdoors! In case of inclement weather, we will worship in the American Legion Hall.

6:00AM Berwick United Methodist Church Sunrise Service, Berwick Recreation Field, Sweetser St., Berwick, ME

Morning Worship

10AM Gather for worship on **Resurrection Day**, to celebrate God's renewing love in the Risen Christ. Continuing the theme of "**Signs Along the Way**", we will reveal the signs of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter. This is a specific opportunity to "tell the story, share the joy" and rejoice "in-the-worship-moment" picture of Easter joy! A special message of hope for children, youth and adults. The Adult Choir will sing...come, add your voice to the larger joy of this day! You will be invited to do a selfie—and post it for the world to see.

There is no Sunday School on Easter Sunday.

The Nursery [for toddlers and infants] will be open.

Families are encouraged to worship together.

Home Communion Pastor Mark will bring Holy Communion to home-bound members and friends. 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 gathered church on **Maundy Thursday, [March 29, 7PM]** to share in the *Sacrament of the Lord's Table*.

Easter Light



Because upon the first glad Easter day

The stone that sealed His tomb was rolled away,
So, through the deepening shadows of death's night,
[We] see an open door...beyond it light.

--Ida Norton Munson

If you have questions about any worship event, please contact the church office at 692-2057.