



"Unwrapping our Spiritual Gifts and Igniting our Passion"

Each one of us, beloved of God, has been gifted with many gifts. Some of our gifts have been with us our whole lives, and others develop as we develop. We may find that things that we are passionate about change as life goes on. And although we may feel like we know our fellow congregants very well, we may be surprised at some of the gifts they have we may not have known about! Sometimes our gifts need to be unwrapped and used! In March we'll spend some time together learning about spiritual gifts – our own and the gifts others have. Please join us Unwrapping our Spiritual Gifts and Igniting our Passion! We'll have two workshops, Part 1 on March 10th from 11:30AM-1:30PM, and Part 2 on March 24th from 11:30AM-1:30PM. Please save the dates and plan to join us; it will be fun and enlightening!!

"Mary Oliver and the Poetry of Lent"

Instructions for living a life:

Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it.

(Mary Oliver, *Sometimes*)

As I write this note, the snowbanks are piled high on each side of my street, and I can hardly see out my driveway when I get to the bottom. It's hard to imagine that under all that snow, there are daffodils and lilies and new acorns and beechnuts getting ready to grow again. Soon the sap will be running and we will be getting ready to greet the warmer weather.

As a special spiritual practice for Lent, we will be engaging with the poetry of Mary Oliver. Mary Oliver expressed beautifully in her work the link between the natural world and the spiritual world. Indeed, she would see them not as two linked worlds, but as one. We'll be reading Bible texts and poems to shed light on this beautiful world that we live in and the beloved people with whom we share it. How can we make more room in our hearts for God's grace and the things God loves so? Where will we find courage to act as God would have us act? Can we cultivate practices to help us notice the miracles around us every moment? How can we best praise God?

The book that we'll be using is *Devotions*, by Mary Oliver ©2018. It's available from Amazon. (The poems can all be accessed online, for anyone who does not want to purchase the book.) Our guide will be a printed Lenten devotional that will be available Sunday, March 3rd (the Sunday before Ash Wednesday) for anyone who wishes to participate. In April, we'll have an afternoon of reflection where we can go a bit deeper and/or share together what our experience has been!

"Ash Wednesday and Good Friday Services with Berwick UMC Church"

I'm delighted to let you know that I've been coordinating with the pastor of the Berwick United Methodist Church and we are working together on an Ash Wednesday service and a Good Friday service for both communities together. The Berwick UMC will host the Ash Wednesday service on March 6th at 7 PM, and we will be hosting the Good Friday service on April 19th (time not yet set). Please come and bring a friend to hold in our hearts together the sacred time of these holy days.

Offering Lenten prayers of growth and new life,
Pastor Norma



The First Parish's Table of Plenty team needs volunteers. Would you like to be part this very easy and rewarding job which includes helping prepare the meal which begins at 3:30PM, serving the meal at 5PM and clean-up at 6PM?

The Table of Plenty serves every Wednesday at the Berwick Methodist Church. First Parish Church is one of several teams who take turns serving each week. The next times we serve will be on April 17th and June 26th.

Please speak with our team coordinator, Laurel Curtis if you are interested in helping. You can reach her at: dlc2069@gmail.com or 603-969-1815.

Faith Formation

Thank you to all who attended our Soup Luncheon. It was great to see so many people!! Thank you also for the great variety of soups to try. They were delicious! Thank you for the donations, the money collected will go into our budget to be put towards the children's Lent and Easter activities.

The information from Horton Center is on the Bulletin Board in the Sunday School hallway. Check out the wonderful programs being offered for adults. If you have any questions, please speak with Sue Vollkommer.



*Sympathy is extended
to the families of*

Rick Brown [Jan. 16] *Nancy Brown's step-brother*

Betty Ann McGuire [Feb. 5] *Robin Hamel's aunt*

Francis McFarland [Jan. 30] *Geoff Day's aunt*



MARCH LECTIONARY READINGS

Transfiguration Sunday - White

March 3, 2019

Exodus 34:29-35

Psalm 99

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Luke 9:28-36 (37-43a)

Ash Wednesday - Purple

March 6, 2019

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 *or* Isaiah 58:1-12

Psalm 51:1-17

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

First Sunday in Lent - Purple

March 10, 2019

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

Romans 10:8b-13

Luke 4:1-13

Second Sunday in Lent - Purple

March 17, 2019

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalm 27

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 13:31-35 *or* Luke 9:28-36 (37-43a)

Third Sunday in Lent - Purple

March 24, 2019

Isaiah 55:1-9

Psalm 63:1-8

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Luke 13:1-9

Fourth Sunday in Lent - Purple

March 31, 2019

Joshua 5:9-12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

MISSIONS

Thank you for the donations of hats and mittens. They are being donated to local elementary schools. They appreciate your kindness.

We will be collecting items to be put into Ditty Bags for Seafarer's Friend. These are handmade bags filled with requested items that will be given to mariners through Seafarer's Friend. The items we will be collecting are toothpaste, toothbrush, floss, comb, deodorant, soap, pen/pencil, nail file, razor, Kleenex, nail clipper, band aids, sewing kit, scarf/knit hat, socks, memo pad, and playing cards. We will have a sign up list in the Narthex in early March. If you would like more information, please speak with any member of the Mission Committee.

In April we will be holding a luncheon to raise money for a (soon to be decided on) outreach mission. In the past we have supported various projects in Zimbabwe, and local community needs. If you have a suggestion please speak with any member of the Mission Committee.



March 2 Kaleigh Richer
March 9 Priscilla Chellis,
Kelsey Conley
March 14 Becky Scribner
March 20 Gail Day
March 22 *Doug & Kelly Whitten*
March 24 Genevieve Allen
March 28 Don Whitten,
Susan Sargent, Jamie Conley

A Gentle Reminder:

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

* Monthly Newsletter items MUST be submitted by the 1st 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 Debbie Hall at kenanddebhall@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.



PRAYER GROUP MINISTRY

Do you know someone who needs prayers? Please contact one of the Prayer Group members listed below.

The Prayer Group will meet on Thursday, March 7th at 1:00 PM.

Prayer Group Members:

Carol Cummings, 6 Bennett St., Somersworth, NH 03878
(603) 692-2450 Email: johnandcarol55@comcast.net

Dottie Douglas, 20 Columbus Ave., #213, Rochester, NH 03867
(603) 332-6113 Email: dottiedouglas@metrocast.net

Fran Karlik, 15 Church Hill Road, Durham, NH 03824
(603) 397-5674 Email: kinross2@comcast.net



MINISTRY OF PRAYER & CONCERN

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

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

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*

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

--and all who are residents in long-term care and assisted living facilities in our area.

Please do send your cards and greetings.

Be the Church

Protect the environment. Care for the poor.

Forgive often. Reject racism.

Fight for the powerless.

Share earthly and spiritual resources.

Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life.

God is still speaking

The **Purpose Statement**, the UCC reason for being, is drawn from a passage in Matthew's Gospel: *To love God with all our heart, mind soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.*

The **Mission Statement**: *United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.*

The Vision: *United in Christ's love, a just world for all.*



IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Wendy Alves (St. Jean) [health]

Nancy Anderson [health]

Craig Breden [health]

Eric Burgess [health] *Jinny Burgess' son*

Diane Chessman [healing]

Patty Cote [healing]

Gail Day [health]

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

Betty Foley [health]

Kathe Johnson [health] *Geoff Day's sister*

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

Marie Pelloni [health] *Allen Storm's sister-in-law*

Lindsey Richesin [health] *Linda Palmer's daughter*

Susan Sargent [healing]

Leann Schwartz [healing] *Gregg Fournier's sister and Barbara Dudley's daughter*

Luise Watman [healing]

Those who walk with mental health concerns, those who walk the pathway of treatment and recover from addiction.

AND ongoing prayer focus during these days:

- *For our Carroll-Strafford Association Churches.*
- *That God will bless and guide our new Interim Minister, Rev. Dr. Norma Brettell*
- *That God will bless and guide our Conference Minister, Rev. Gordan Rankin, and Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Richard Slater*
- *Faith formation ministries for all ages - for building strong faith foundations, at all ages and stages of life.*
- *Working together in community - to build community - and to implement strategies for prevention, while providing resources for treatment and recovery from substance misuse and its stigma.*
- **Jesus said: 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!*

DIACONATE

Sr. Deacons Priscilla Chellis and Bill Voye wrapped up their final month. The Sr. Deacons provided us with an excellent meal - thank you so much! Nancy Day, Robin and Dave Hamel and Diane Chessman join us as new Deacons in February – welcome!

Pastor Norma has been actively engaged with the Diaconate and a pleasure to work with.

The Deacons continue to work on several initiatives. These are:

Lent - Lent begins in March and we are beginning our preparations. Here is the high-level schedule of events.

- Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6th
- Palm Sunday - Sunday, April 14th
- Holy Week – begins on Palm Sunday and ends on Easter Sunday. We hope you will make the choice to be present in worship with your family.
- Maundy Thursday – Thursday, April 18th
- Good Friday – Friday, April 19th
- Easter – Sunday, April 21st – The sunrise service will be held at 5:45am at the American Legion Hall on the corner of Constitutional Way and Washington St. in Somersworth. We are collaborating with the Tri-City Covenant Church and the Berwick United Methodist Church
- Pastor Norma will be leading two “Unwrapping our Gifts” workshops after worship service on Sunday, March 10th and Sunday, March 24th. The program will start at 11:30AM with a light lunch served.
- Upper Room – we receive 10 large print copies of the Upper Room publication. Please feel free to take a copy.

Somersworth T-Ball: The Church will be sponsoring a Somersworth T-Ball team once again. Please keep this on your radar for next spring!

If you have questions, comments or concerns for the Diaconate please feel free to contact one of the Deacons and we will do our best to help.

Geoff Day, for the Diaconate

ALL ARE WELCOME!

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship & Sunday School- 10:00AM

Fellowship Time Follows Worship

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

Ministers: The People of the Church

Interim Pastor: Rev. Norma Brettell

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, Luise Watman-Birthdays/Anniversaries

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 Norma [and others] can get out of their driveways! Please—use common sense in your decision to drive on a snowy Sunday!





Would you like to join the church? Pastor Norma is setting up a New Member orientation session. If you are interested in joining, please speak with Pastor Norma or any of the deacons.

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.



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

Please join us for a meal of all-you-can-eat, mouth-watering spaghetti with a hearty meat sauce, coleslaw or 3-bean salad, your choice of three different types of bread: garlic herb, garlic-buttered or white bread, and drinks. Top it off with a delectable dessert. Gluten free pasta and bread are also now available upon request.

As always, we have several easy but very important jobs that need to be filled to make this supper a success. If you can help, please add your name to the sign-up sheet that will be passed around during worship service or talk with one of the committee members.

Thank you to everyone who helped with our January supper. We greatly appreciate everything you did! After over \$300 in expenses, we were able to contribute \$362 toward the church's general account.

Our next supper will be held on March 23rd (4th Saturday of the month). Please join us and bring your family and friends.

EXPENSE REPORT FOR JANUARY

	<u>JANUARY, 2019</u>	<u>JANUARY, 2018</u>
Income	\$13,801	\$17,330
Expenses	\$17,848	\$10,125
Net	(\$4,047)	\$7,205
Checkbook Balance	\$29,778.27	\$33,875.56
Checkbook Funds Available	\$18,401.11	
Memorial Fund Checkbook Balance	\$16,570.34	
Mortgage at Service Credit Union	\$39,444.43	