

The Congregate Tidings

Volume 40 Issue 5

May 2026

What's Next???

By Helen Goss, Diaconate Chair

Ahhhh May!!! The month where it feels like spring has truly arrived! The daffodils, jonquils, and crocuses are holding on in full blossom, with the dandelions smiling on the front lawn. It's that refreshing new birth we all want to enjoy in Eastertide.

We just had a wonderful uplifting service with **Tivvi Paré**, Executive Director at Horton Center. It took 18 months for this to finally happen, and I knew she wouldn't disappoint. Her message of "Miraculous Abundance" was beautifully intertwined into the experience of camp at Horton Center and how each of us should be optimistic in the abundance we have to share, and not focusing on what we don't. Will any of us forget Anthony and his inventive word for his camp experience? "Helloness," being so warmly welcomed and accepted no matter what your differences are, and being accepted in spite of your uniqueness; not excluded because of it. If you couldn't make the service, you really missed feeling the love of the Spirit in this place. It brought back special camp memories for many of us. Tivvi advised of the opportunities to experience the Spirit for ourselves on Pine Mountain for youth and young at heart alike. I will try and have Tivvi back each year as her schedule permits. Those who got to know first-hand why she is in such demand!

Going forward this month, the team working with **Rev. Paul Nickerson** for the healing of First Church will have had their first meeting and begin to share with us. I have asked that they come up with a name for their group, so that we can make proper reference to the work they will be doing. This is a very positive step for us to be making together. I am most grateful to those in our faith community who have stayed the course and are willing to do this work together.

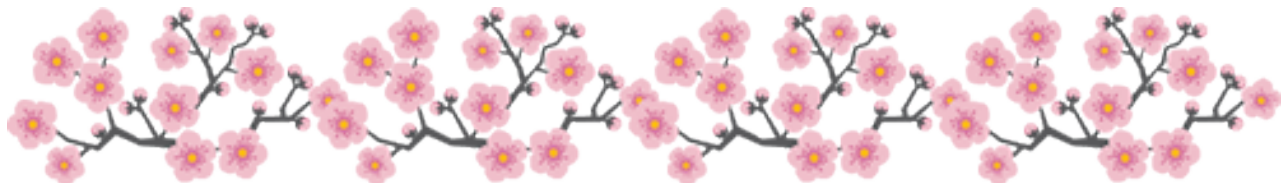
Here is the Sunday schedule of those serving in the month of May. If you have found your voice and would like to share a message, please let a Diaconate member know – Muriel, Chris, Eve, Trina, or me. We love to hear from new voices!

May 03 – Pastor Sue Davidson, Communion Sunday
May 10 – Helen Goss, Mother's Day
May 17 – Eryn Morency
May 24 – Pastor Sue Davidson, Pentecost Sunday (Wear red!)
May 31 – Christopher DeVries

With the better weather months here, we hope to see more of you back at church. Campus will be buzzing with spring clean-up and the revitalizing projects planned for the Memorial Garden. There are also rumors of activity in the parsonage, so come and join us and help to share the good news of what is happening at First Church!

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BREATHE ON ME, BREATH OF GOD

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CHURCH!

By Muriel Magg - Music Team Chair

Celebrated fifty days after Easter, Pentecost is one of the great feasts of the Christian year. The name of the day itself is derived from the Greek word “pentecoste,” meaning 50th. The story of Pentecost, found in the book of Acts (Chapter 2), tells of the dramatic birth of the early Christian church when the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples.

This year, on Sunday, May 24th, Christians will celebrate Pentecost; the culmination of Eastertide that leads into the longest season of the liturgical year, which stretches all the way to Advent. The day of Pentecost is known as the day God sent His Holy Spirit to His church, providing Christ’s disciples with the power, love and understanding to carry out the work of the church’s mission to the world; on which, under Peter’s preaching, thousands realized the truth of his words and became followers of Jesus in Jerusalem.

From a historical point of view, Pentecost is the day on which the church was started. It is described by some Christians today as the “BIRTHDAY OF THE CHURCH.” The symbols of Pentecost are those of the Holy Spirit and include flames, wind, the breath of God, and a dove.

At First Church of Christ, it’s our tradition to wear red, the liturgical color of the day; to use red decorations, vestments, and altar cloths to represent the fire and energy of the Holy Spirit.

The hymn, “Breathe on Me, Breath of God” #292 in The New Century Hymnal, is typically sung in many churches on Pentecost. It is based on John 20:22, which records how Jesus met with his Apostles, Mary, and the first followers of Jesus, who were gathered together in the Upper Room after his resurrection.

A “strong, driving” wind filled the room, and tongues of fire came to rest on their heads, allowing them to speak in different languages so they could understand each other. It was such a strange phenomenon that some people thought the Christians were just drunk, but Peter pointed out that it was only morning, and said the phenomenon was caused by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also gave the Apostles the other gifts and fruits of the Spirit necessary to fulfill the great commission, to go out and preach the Gospel to all nations.

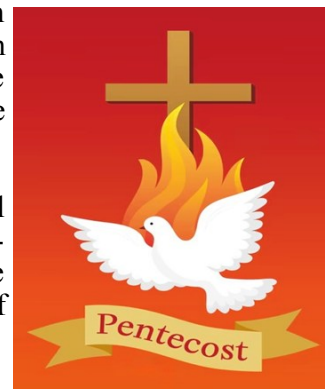
Edwin Hatch, (1835-1899) was a great scholar, an English theologian and author born in Derby, England. There is no detailed account of his childhood, but we know of his pursuit of knowledge about the Church of England, and the relationship he felt everyone should have with God the Creator. An esteemed member of the Oxford University faculty, Edwin was ordained an Anglican priest in the Church of England.

Edwin Hatch is best remembered as the composer of the hymn “Breathe on Me, Breath of God.” The text of Hatch’s hymn prays that God will breathe on us and fill us with life anew. It prays that God will breathe on us until we are completely devoted to Him. It prays that God will breathe on us so that we may never die. This hymn is a prayer for God’s help in this life and throughout eternity.

The tune most often used for this hymn is TRENTHAM, named after a small village in Staffordshire, England. TRENTHAM was composed by Robert Jackson (1842-1914) in 1888. Robert was gifted with musical talent and was taught by his father. He attended the Academy of Music and served as organist at St. Mark’s Church in London. In 1868, he took over his father’s position in Oldham and played organ there for 46 years.

“Breathe on Me, Breath of God” appears in hundreds of hymnals because of its powerful and overwhelming invitation of God’s spirit into the body. The lyrics seem amazingly simple and sensitive for a man who was so intensely educated and driven. The gentle tune swells and falls gracefully, almost like it is breathing itself. “Breathe on Me, Breath of God” has uplifted the hearts of many Christians and remains an immortal favorite.

As Christians, we continually need to ask the Holy Spirit to lead us, and guide us to help us do the things God wants us to do. Only then will the “fruits of the Spirit,” **LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS AND SELF-CONTROL** be evident in our lives.



12th Annual North Conway Strawberry Festival June 27th



Vaughan Community Service will, once again, present the **Strawberry Festival** on Saturday, June 27th from 11AM until 4PM on the historic grounds of the First Church of Christ, Congregational. The 12th Annual Festival will feature fresh strawberries in a variety of sweet treats including; smoothies, strawberry shortcake, and hand-dipped chocolate strawberries. The **Strawberry**









Festival is one of our largest fundraisers for the work of the **Vaughan Food Pantry (VFP)** and **Vaughan Learning Center (VLC)**. It is a great way to spend the day in North Conway on a beautiful summer afternoon.

All activities will take place, rain or shine, under the tent at the First Church of Christ, Congregational. Besides strawberry treats, the event also provides entertainment with live music, character visits for great family photo opportunities, displays of antique vehicles, free balloons, craft vendors, and more.

Please contact Denise Leighton in the church office at 603-356-2324 to volunteer to help. It's always a fun time, so come out and be part of this event that benefits our community!



May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 10:00am Worship Celebration - Faith Led 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship	27 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting	28 11:30am - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open	29	30 12:00pm - 2:15pm Food Pantry Open 3:00pm - 4:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	1 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting	2
3 10:00am Worship Celebration and Communion - Pastor Sue 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship 2:00pm - 5:00pm Revolving Closet-Teens 	4 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Scouts of America Troop 150 and Pack 150	5 11:30am - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open	6	7 9:30am - 2:30pm WIC Program 12:00pm - 2:15pm Food Pantry Open 3:00pm - 4:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:00pm - 5:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	8 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting	9
10 10:00am Worship Celebration - Faith Led 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship 11:30am Mission meeting 	11 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Scouts of America Troop 150 and Pack 150	12 11:30am - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open	13 9:00am - 11:00am Senior Non-Food Pantry 1:00pm Music Team meeting 	14 12:00pm - 2:15pm Food Pantry Open 3:00pm - 4:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:00pm - 5:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	15 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting	16 12:00pm Mason Interment Reception
17 10:00am Worship Celebration - Faith Led 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship 11:30am Church Council meeting 2:00pm - 5:00pm Revolving Closet-Teens 	18 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Scouts of America Troop 150 and Pack 150	19 11:30am - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open 4:00pm Trustees meeting 	20	21 12:00pm - 2:15pm Food Pantry Open 3:00pm - 4:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:00pm - 5:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 	22 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting	23
24 Strengthen The Church offering 10:00am Worship Celebration - Pastor Sue 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship 	25 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Scouts of America Troop 150 and Pack 150	26 11:30am - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open 5:00pm Diaconate meeting 	27	28 12:00pm - 2:15pm Food Pantry Open 3:00pm - 4:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:00pm - 5:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	29 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting	30
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- 05-02 Jim Umberger
- 05-03 Evelyn Porter
- 05-06 Brian Croce
- 05-14 Carston Porter
- 05-16 Henry Smith
- 05-17 Sara Bechtold
- 05-23 Andy Beeler
- 05-25 Sharon Seaman
- 05-29 Mark Porter
- 05-29 Lisa Donabedian

We will be celebrating Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May like most of the world.

May 10th is a day to honor your Mother or that person who has been like a "mother" to you.

We are fortunate to have **Steve & Denise Woodcock** offer to provide flowers every year to anyone in the church that would like them. You are welcome to take this flower for yourself or to give to a friend or relative to recognize the day.

We thank them for their kindness in sharing a little love with all of us to help honor our Mothers on this special Sunday.



- 05-18 Mark and Sonya Porter
- 05-19 Craig and Carol Fillmann



NH Gives will be happening on June 9th at 5pm to June 10th at 5pm. Each donation will be matched. So please consider giving to the Vaughan Community Service.



Please pray for those dealing with illness, surgery or recovery, especially:
Lee Coffield, Evelyn Porter, Deb Smith, Mike James, Corinne Vermouth (Denise Leighton's sister), and Frances Richardson.

Remember those in our extended care facilities:

Mineral Springs: **Liz George-Hussey**

Mountain View: **Jean Smykla**

Please call the church office with prayer concerns if you wish names to be listed in the next *Congregate Tidings*.

Mission Happenings

By Christopher DeVries, Mission Chair

"You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence."
Acts 2:28

Salutations! I hope that you all had a wonderful Easter season! It was so nice to celebrate this holiest of times with you all. Christ has risen! Amen!!

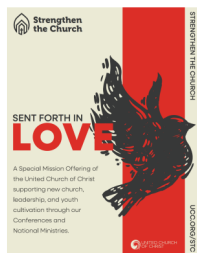
It's really great to see the inspirational hearts that some of you have put up on the 'Heart Board' in the Fellowship hall. Keep'em coming! Mission is striving to direct our efforts to serve our local community, UCC initiatives, as well as actions that can be of service globally. So please, if your heart knows of an area where First Church may be of help, let us know, or put it up on the board!

Upcoming opportunities:

Rally at the Alley

May 3rd at 1pm and May 4th at 11am

This is a really awesome benefit for the Way Station that is being organized by the First Christian Church of Freedom. They are inviting Businesses, Churches, or Organizations of all kinds to form a TEAM. All information was shared last month in the *Congregate Tidings* and has been mentioned in church.



Strengthen the Church May 24th Offering

From the United Church of Christ.....

"The Holy Spirit gathers us together. From across the country and the spectrums of human experience, we become united in Christ. And, united, the Spirit commissions us to work for a more just world for all.

The Strengthen the Church Offering supports congregations and leader across the United Church of Christ as they respond to the Spirit's call to be united in Christ for a more just world for all. The challenges our congregations face vary:

- Some seek ways to strengthen youth ministry
- Some hope to start new congregations
- Some look for innovative ways to renew existing congregations
- Some need help developing leaders

The giving in your congregation can ensure congregations get the help they need from their conference and the national ministries of the UCC. Together we can answer the Spirit's call to be united in Christ for a just world for all."

Keep your eyes peeled for envelopes for your contributions in upcoming bulletins!

Another event in the not to distant future is Mt Washington Valley Pride Festival. It will be wonderful to have a visible and welcoming presence at this awesome event. I know we have some dedicated individuals in our congregation who are committed to walking it like we talk it, and showing that First Church is truly an open, welcoming and affirming church! More to come on this....

It's a blessing and a privilege to be a part of such a wonderful faith community. May we all continue to lift one another up and help who we can, when we can, how we can.

Peace and God bless you all!

PRIDE FESTIVAL 2026!

By Eryn Morency and Helen Goss



We will again be participating in the **White Mountains Pride Festival Saturday June 27, 2026 from 10am - 4pm**. We will be sharing with the other area churches in the valley that offer an extreme welcome to everyone! There will be free Pride swag for everyone who visits our area along with information about our church.

If you are able to help by volunteering time at our table in the park of the North Conway Community Center, please contact Denise in the Church Office (603-356-2324) and she'll let Eryn and Helen know.

Yes, this is the same day as the Vaughan Strawberry Festival, but there are ways you can support both events. We have done it before, so don't let that stop you from making the call to help. We will have chairs, so that you can offer a warm welcome to the visitors to our table from your seat. Please come and join in the fun! It's a lively group of attendees and we become one with the other church folk in our valley.

LECTIONARIES

May 3, 2026

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 7:55-60
Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
1 Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14

May 10, 2026

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 17:22-31
Psalm 66:8-20
1 Peter 3:13-22
John 14:15-21

May 17, 2026

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 1:6-14
Psalm 68:1-10, 33-35
1 Peter 4:12-14, 6:6-11
John 17:1-11

May 24, 2026

Pentecost Sunday

Strengthen the Church Offering

Acts 2:1-21 or Numbers 11:24-30
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21
John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39

May 31, 2026

Trinity Sunday

First Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 1:1-2:4a
Psalm 8
2 Corinthians 13:11-13
Matthew 28:16-20

The Congregate Tidings
First Church of Christ, Congregational
United Church of Christ
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N Conway, NH 03860-0401



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



TO:



PLEASE NOTE...This will be the last time you receive the ***Congregate Tidings*** by mail, unless you call Denise in the Church Office (603-356-2324) to request otherwise.

All ***Tidings*** can be viewed via the website:
www.firstchurchnc.com

Thank you and **Happy Mother's Day!**

(Image by Harryarts on Freepik)

CHURCH & VAUGHAN STAFF

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Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir Director:

Anne W. Polak

Vaughan Administrator: Jennifer Perkins

Vaughan Learning Center Director:

Heather Ouellette

Church Sexton: Mark Schiller

Worship Service at 10am

Church Office (603)356-2324

Denise Ext. #1

Fax Number (603)356-2106

Vaughan Food Pantry (603)602-1801

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