

Pastor's Reflections

The season of Lent has begun, 40 days from Ash Wednesday (which was February 22) to the Thursday of Holy Week, not including Sundays. A time of the year that embraces the meaning of the word 'Lent', which is lengthening. The days are getting longer each day allowing for more light to enter our winter world.

Lent, in the Christian church, is noted to be a time of repentance, reflection, and meditation. That is not a feeling of shame but an awareness that there are things that separates us from God. I consider it a time to take a deep look at my own journey of faith. An opportunity to contemplate what Jesus really did for me on the cross. Lent is an excellent time to give up on one's own resolutions and listen for God's leading. It is always possible that where God leads might be more difficult but with the realization that only the grace of God is sufficient to serve him.



**FROM OUR
PASTOR**



As your worship leader through this season of Lent, the focus will be "Lookin' for Love In All the Wrong Places". The scriptures each week are filled with images of where love, grace, forgiveness, righteousness, and healing can really be found. It is not in the "usual places". I find that we look for wholeness and happiness in places where we find only temporary "good feelings" and satisfaction. It is my prayer that we, as the community of faith, will take this time for reflection as well as a time to reassess where we are searching for meaning and purpose. The stories of Jesus are offered as a way to find out the real deal.

Each week during March and April leading to Easter on April 9th the focus will be "Lookin' for"... for the Resister, for the Helper, for the Thirst-Quencher, for the Shepherd, the Liberator, and the Unexpected.

The Christian traditions of Lent include prayer, fasting, and giving. Many choose to enter this season by the giving up of something as a practice of self-sacrifice, denial, and repentance. Lent is an opportunity to grow closer to God, to remember Jesus' life and death, and to focus more on him and less on ourselves and our own busy-ness. Fasting or abstaining from certain activities and items in our lives can help us focus on the life and love of Jesus. Have you ever thought of giving up or giving as a daily practice during Lent? Some suggestions - Giving up: social media, sugar, online shopping, clutter, complaining, TV, soda, etc. Giving to: a daily contribution either monetary or material good to a food pantry, donating a piece of no longer worn clothing to a thrift store, or placing a quarter a day in a blessing jar to be donated at the end of the season.

Whatever or however you choose to move through this season, may it be one of meaning, reflection, direction, and experiencing the presence of God.

Pastor Sue Davidson

Inside this Issue:

Pastor's Page	1
Vaughan	2
Music	3
Deacon's Page	4
Mission Comm. And Survey	5
One Great Hour of Sharing	6
Flowers in Church White Elephant	7
Calendar	8
Learning Ctr and Lectionaries	9
Windham Chambers Singers	10
Birthdays, Anniversaries, Prayers	11
Staff Music Sunday	12

“The View from My Window”

By Jennifer Perkins, Vaughan Administrator

May Wisdom Shine

*“May wisdom shine through me,
May love glow within me,
May strength permeate me,
That in me may arise
A helper of mankind
A server of holy things,
Selfless and true.”*

Rudolf Steiner

The Vaughan Food Pantry continues to be very busy serving the food insecure in our area. Our pantry was visited by a representative from the New Hampshire Food Bank who inspects our site yearly, and I am pleased to note, we passed with flying colors! Also, the Vaughan Food Pantry has been invited to join the NHFB’s 2023 Nutrition Pantry Program, we are one of three pilot pantries participating. This program will work with us bringing best practices of healthy pantry work by offering support, resources, idea sharing, and connection throughout the network.

Pantries participating in this program will receive certification and we are striving for, not **Bronze**, not **Silver**, but **GOLD!**

I will be sure to keep you posted on our progress.

Warmly,
Jennifer



Pictured above is the Mt. Washington Valley Women’s’ Hockey League who had a raffle during their yearly tournament.. Each year they choose a non-profit to support. Last year they raised \$1,500.00 for Jen’s Friends and this year they raised \$2,270.00 for Vaughan Community Services.

LORD, WHO THROUGHOUT THESE FORTY DAYS
A LENTEN HYMN

By Muriel Magg - Music Team Chair

One of the most meaningful hymns of Lent is “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” written by Claudia Frances Hernaman and signals the beginning of Lent. Claudia Hernaman (1838-1898) was born in Surrey, England, and died in Brussels, Belgium. She was the daughter of an Anglican minister, and she married a minister. Like so many other women hymn writers of the nineteenth century, she devoted her life to teaching children about the Christian faith. Not much else seems to be known of Claudia’s life except the more than 150 hymns she wrote or translated from Latin, were mostly for children.

Our congregation often sings this simple, yet earnest hymn found on page #211 in The New Century Hymnal almost every Lenten season. “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” was not included in hymnals until the mid-twentieth century, when it first appeared in the Irish Church Hymnal (1960) and Hymns for Church and School (1964). By the 1970s, it was a standard hymn in most hymnals in the United States. It is based on the account of the temptation of Jesus found in the three Gospels - - Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13. As is the case with many hymns, Christ’s life becomes a model for how his followers should confront temptation.

The verses of “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” track closely with our own Lenten journey. Forty is a number which recurs throughout the Bible with special significance.

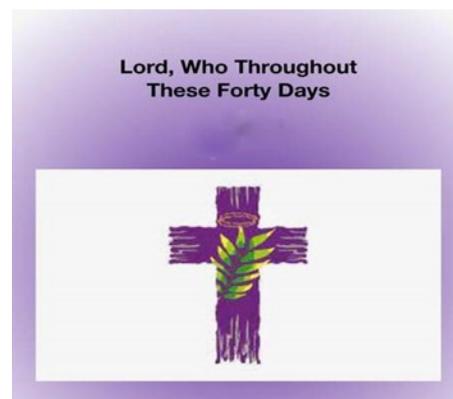
- Noah’s flood: It rained for 40 days, and Noah waited another 40 days before opening the window of the Ark.
- The Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years;
- Moses, Elijah, and Jesus fasted in the desert for 40 days each; and
- Jesus was seen on earth, 40 days after the resurrection.

Today, Hernaman’s text is considered an “adult” hymn. The lyrics composed by Claudia Hernaman are set to the tune of ST. FLAVIAN which first appeared some 300 years earlier than this text, published in 1562 to which it is most commonly played and sung. The harmonies you hear today were written by English church organist and composer Richard Redhead in 1856. The hymn is so full of scriptural truth that one barely needs to read the Gospel to understand the full story. This brings to light the value of sound, doctrinal hymns that were the mainstay of many persecuted Christians of the Reformation and pre-Reformation era who had no access to the Bible. They could remember the Bible truths through the words of great hymns and psalms. Isn’t it amazing that a text and tune written so many years apart could eventually be placed together in such a beautiful way? Also consider how a new generation is interpreting this historic hymn with the American folk tune LAND OF REST.

The first two lines of each stanza tell us of Jesus’ temptations, and the last two lines encourage us to model our behavior on Christ’s example. The themes of Lent are in each stanza: fasting and prayer; struggle with Satan and sin; meditation on scripture and penance; and looking toward the joy of Easter.

Just as we prepared for Christ’s birth during Advent, let us prepare for his death and resurrection during the season of Lent.

It was for us that Jesus came; for us that he fasted in the Wilderness; for us that He prayed; for us that He bore the humiliation and passion of the cross; and it was for us that He rose again from the grave that wonderful Spring morning in the Garden.





Deacon's Corner

Deacon's Corner...

Whether March comes in like a lion or a lamb, we will be bustling in the **Lenten Season** at First Church of Christ! **Pastor Sue Davidson** is back and has so many wonderful plans to lead us on to Easter. If you can possibly come back to church, now is the perfect time. We are gaining momentum every Sunday and there are so many opportunities to be part of our community of faith.

Your Diaconate has continued their usual duties and has had some enlightening monthly meetings. We realize that winter is the most difficult time for everyone dealing with weather or illness, but so far we have been fortunate to continue our church services with everyone being respectful and taking proper precautions as COVID is ever present.

Pastor Sue has willingly joined our monthly meetings and taken the time to explain her vision for Lent with details on the flow of worship, music, and the decoration of the sanctuary. It has been our pleasure to work with her and learn from her spiritual path.

The website has been cleaned-up to include the weekly posting of the worship bulletin. We welcome **Barbara Sisson** back to build a new refreshed site and to help us get back to the use of Mailchimp for blasting out informative email information with the hope of a weekly newsletter to come with our next settled pastor. Barbara has the patience of Job and Denise and her elves along with the Trustees are very appreciative of her answering the call once again!

You will want to mark your calendars now for **Music Sunday** that will be on **April 30th**. **Carl Lindblade** will be our guest lay pastor on that Sunday and we are all looking forward to his message, in addition to the wonderful musical offerings from Floyd, Anne, the choir and the handbell ringers. It will be a service of celebration in so many ways! Please plan to come and witness the spirit of music in our midst.

We wish to graciously thank those individuals who have stepped-up to help with greeting, ushering, and reading scripture. You know who you are! We are most grateful to you for your desire to become involved as disciples of our church.

Come to hear and feel where you might find **LOVE** in just the right place!

Faithfully,
Your Diaconate -
Helen Goss, Chairperson
Julie James, Vice-Chairperson and Scribe
Lee Coffield
Laurel Ekberg
Muriel Magg
Fred Starkey
Gerry Tilton, Deacon Emeritus

“Blooming Crafts Workshop”
Missions Committee Fund Raiser
Led by Mary Lou Waite
(Would Welcome a Crafty Co-Leader)

Join us Mondays 6:30-8 p.m. – Howard Room
(No workshops on Monday Holidays)

Come weekly or whenever convenient

Part-time Crafters or Newbies welcome



Keep your eyes out for the **Church Survey** concerning our next settled pastor. We truly need your responses as we enter a new chapter in the life of our church.

The survey will be out in the mail shortly and we would appreciate its return by March 20th.

Any questions when you are completing this survey, please contact Helen Goss at 603-520-6891.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING = THOUSANDS OF LIVES CHANGED

What is One Great Hour of Sharing®? One Great Hour of Sharing, part of Our Church's Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. One Great Hour of Sharing also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

Who participates in One Great Hour of Sharing? Several Christian denominations – *American Baptist Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Church of the Brethren, the United Church of Christ, and Church World Service* – work together to develop common promotional materials thereby sharing ideas, costs, and a commitment to faithful service. Each denomination receives and manages its respective One Great Hour of Sharing offering.

How is the United Church of Christ's offering used? Over fifty-five percent (55%) of the UCC's offering supports international development initiatives. The offering also funds refugee resettlement, disaster preparedness and response, and disaster-related volunteer initiatives in the U.S. and internationally.

Where and how are OGHS funds shared? The United Church of Christ responds to humanitarian and development needs in the world. Specifically, the UCC supports sustainable development and refugee needs internationally and provides disaster relief and immigration assistance in the United States. The United Church of Christ responds as a member of organizations such as Church World Service and the ACT Alliance. We also support the direct mission efforts of churches and church-based organizations that the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have direct partnerships with through Global Ministries. Nearly one-fifth of the UCC's OGHS offering is shared through Church World Service to support refugee, and disaster programs worldwide.

What percentage of OGHS donations are used directly for mission? On average, of every dollar given to One Great Hour of Sharing, 95 cents is used directly for mission programming; and 5 cents for interpretation materials. The associated administrative costs are paid by gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission National Basic Support.

How are decisions made to fund the various projects? Most of the expenditures are put into the budget to support long-term sustainable development. All funding is reviewed and monitored by a leadership committee that also reviews grant requests for long-term disaster rehabilitation initiatives and refugee support.

We will collect the 2023 One Great Hour of Sharing Offering on March 19, but you may make a contribution at any time by making a [check payable to First Church of Christ, memo: OGHS, SEE OFFERING ENVELOPE INCLOSED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER.](#)

Information directly from [HTTP://WWW.UCC.ORG/
OGHS RESOURCES FREQUENTLY-ASKED-QUESTIONS.](http://www.ucc.org/oghs-resources-frequently-asked-questions)



FLOWERS IN CHURCH...

Having flowers in church in honor or memory of someone is a wonderful way to express your feelings without having to say a word. This can bring great joy to the person(s) being honored, or family that has lost a loved one. It will also warm your heart in making the presentation. These flowers can then be enjoyed by the giver or shared with another in need of love.

Flowers can be ordered from the local florists (they all have keys to the church for delivery) or you can bring your own flowers purchased at the grocery store or from your own garden, when in season. There are no size requirements. It is whatever you want to share.

The Flower Chart is posted in the Vestry with many spots to fill! We can also double up on a Sunday if you have a particular date that is meaningful to you where there is already a name in the slot. We can always put small arrangements on the organ or on a stand next to the piano or pulpit if the altar already has flowers.

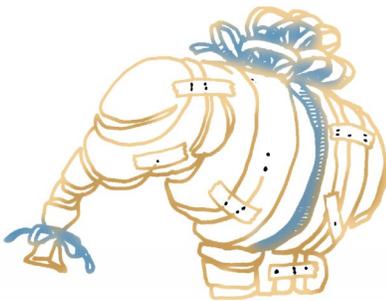
The dedication for your flower arrangements needs to be to Helen Goss 603-520-6891 or into the Church Office by Wednesday. That completes the process of having flowers in church.

Pick a Date...Sign-up...Choose your flowers...Express your dedication.



Four steps and you are done. It's a pretty easy way to make someone smile, or remember a loved one!

Vaughan Community Service will be having their 9th Strawberry Festival on June 24th.



**White Elephant
Sale**

The church will be heading up the White Elephant Table this year.

So start saving your good clean treasures that you would like to donate for this benefit.

You can call the church office or Vaughan if you need to drop-off items as we get ready for the Festival.

All proceeds will be split between the church and Vaughan as our mission outreach.

We will need volunteers to help that day, so if are available, please call the church office and let Denise know.

March 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>26 First Sunday in Lent 10:00am Worship Celebration 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship</p>	<p>27 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Blooming Crafts Workshop - Howard Room 6:30pm - 7:30pm Women's AA Step Group</p>	<p>28 12:00pm - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2 1:00pm - 2:45pm Food Pantry Open 4:00pm - 4:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:45pm - 5:45pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>3 World Day of Prayer 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5 10:00am Worship Celebration 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship 2:00pm - 5:00pm REVOLVING CLOSET-TEENS</p>	<p>6 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Blooming Crafts Workshop - Howard Room 6:30pm - 7:30pm Women's AA Step Group</p>	<p>7 12:00pm - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9 1:00pm - 2:45pm Food Pantry Open 4:00pm - 4:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:45pm - 5:45pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>10 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12 Daylight Saving Time Begins 10:00am Worship Celebration 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship</p>	<p>13 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Blooming Crafts Workshop - Howard Room 6:30pm - 7:30pm Women's AA Step Group</p>	<p>14 12:00pm - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16 1:00pm - 2:45pm Food Pantry Open 4:00pm - 4:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:45pm - 5:45pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>17 St. Patrick's Day 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19 One Great Hour of Sharing Offering 10:00am Worship Celebration 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship 2:00pm - 5:00pm REVOLVING CLOSET-TEENS</p>	<p>20 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Blooming Crafts Workshop - Howard Room 6:30pm - 7:30pm Women's AA Step Group</p>	<p>21 12:00pm - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open 3:30pm Music Committee meeting 4:00pm Trustees meeting 5:00pm Diaconate meeting</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 1:00pm - 2:45pm Food Pantry Open 4:00pm - 4:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:45pm - 5:45pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>24 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26 10:00am Worship Celebration 11:00am Coffee Hour After Worship</p>	<p>27 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm Blooming Crafts Workshop - Howard Room 6:30pm - 7:30pm Women's AA Step Group</p>	<p>28 12:00pm - 1:45pm Food Pantry Open</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 1:00pm - 2:45pm Food Pantry Open 4:00pm - 4:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4:45pm - 5:45pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>31 12:00pm - 1:00pm AA meeting</p>	<p>1</p>

Vaughan Learning Center

By Heather Ouellette, Director

Vaughan Learning Center is having a “Little Caesar’s” fundraiser. This is an online fundraiser where you can order and have it shipped directly to your house. The link is below or you can see Heather at the Center and she can help with the ordering. We are raising money to purchase a Montessori Pickler Triangle which is a climbing structure that helps growth and development.

<https://fundraising.littlecaesars.com/fundraisers/support/e9d34300-16cf-478e-897b-c1b35a28a181>



Remember to set clocks ahead on Saturday March 11th before retiring for the evening. We don't want you to be late for church!!!

LECTIONARIES READINGS

MARCH 5, 2023

Second Sunday in Lent

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalter Reading: Psalm 121

New Testament Reading: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

Gospel Lesson: John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9

MARCH 12, 2023

Third Sunday in Lent

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 17:1-7

Psalter Reading: Psalm 95

New Testament Reading: Romans 5:1-11

Gospel Lesson: John 4:5-42

MARCH 19, 2023

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Old Testament Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalter Reading: Psalm 23

New Testament Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

Gospel Lesson: John 9:1-41

MARCH 26, 2023

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Old Testament Reading: Ezekiah 37:1-14

Reading: Psalm 130

New Testament Reading: Romans: 8:6-11

Gospel Lesson: John 11:1-45

April 2, 2023

Palm/Passion Sunday

Communion Sunday

(Liturgy of the Palms)

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Matthew 21:1-11

(Liturgy of the Passion)

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Pslam 31:9-16

Phillipians 2:5-11

Matthew 26:14-27:66 or Matthew 27:11-54

THE WINDHAM CHAMBER SINGERS AWARD WINNING CHOIR TO APPEAR IN NORTH CONWAY ON APRIL 12th AT 7:00 PM

First Church of Christ, Congregational - 2521 White Mountain Highway
This event is free with donations gratefully accepted.

The WINDHAM CHAMBER SINGERS under the direction of Dr. Richard Nickerson, have captured the hearts of audiences throughout the Northeastern United States and beyond with music ranging from sacred a cappella to iconic rock sounds.

As part of their upcoming Spring Tour, the Windham Chamber Singers will spend 5 days performing throughout the Northeast, presenting assemblies and workshops at area schools in addition to public concerts.

The choir first gained international attention when they won the Prize of Vienna in 1996, the highest award of the International Youth Music Festival in Vienna, Austria. Since then, they have thrilled audiences throughout the Northeastern United States, appearing at Carnegie Hall, the White House, and St. Patrick's Cathedral to name just a few.

They have appeared with artists including John Rutter, Josh Groban, Lakisha Jones, The Celtic Tenors, Lindsay Mendez and Norm Lewis. They have made 4 guest appearances at the Magic of Christmas concerts with the Portland Symphony Orchestra and most recently as special guests of Friends of the Kotschmar and Portland Municipal Organist James Kennerly at Merrill Auditorium.

The Chamber Singers accomplishments have been recognized on the Today Show, CBS This Morning and in their own prime time holiday special broadcast on WGME TV.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW and plan on attending an evening of music you will thoroughly enjoy.





March

BIRTHDAYS

- 03-01 Jeanne Twehous
- 03-04 Kelly Jordan-Kelley
- 03-09 Ken Schiller
- 03-11 Kelsey MacMillan
- 03-13 Jacqueline Howe
- 03-14 Joshua Leighton
- 03-15 Elizabeth Howland
- 03-15 Karen Davenport
- 03-16 Rob Upton II
- 03-17 Margaret Perkins
- 03-19 Maureen Garrette
- 03-19 Ryan Garrette
- 03-20 Mona Ames
- 03-28 Lee Cornish
- 03-29 Tegan Jones



March

ANNIVERSARIES

- 03-16 Harry & Debbie Smith
- 03-19 Ron and Sally Kratt

PRAYER

list...

Please pray for those dealing with illness, surgery or recovery, especially: **Ken Schiller; Bob Borchers; Lynn, Jennifer Terry's father; Melissa, daughter of Louise Gardner, friend of Lee Cornish; David Tilton; Bob and Evelyn Porter; Sandy and Greg George; Linda Hyde; Glenna Tibbetts brother George Fernald and Audrey Vorperian.**

Remember those in our extended care facilities. They are - *At Merriman House:*
Liz George-Hussey; Cynthia and Conrad (Connie) Briggs; and Marilyn Elliott.

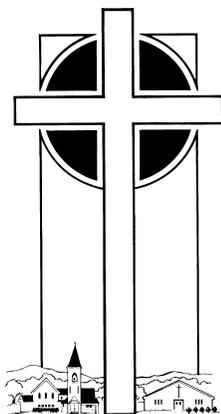
At St. Vincent DePaul Recovery & Nursing Center **Jodie Neal**, 29 Providence Avenue, Room #206 Berlin, NH 03570.

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

The Congregate Tidings
First Church of Christ, Congregational
United Church of Christ
PO Box 401
N Conway, NH 03860-0401



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



TO:

Preview of Coming Attractions

April 30th - Music Sunday
Carl Lindblade, Officiating

Come join us for a memorable
worship and musical
experience!



CHURCH & VAUGHAN STAFF

Church Administrator/Editor: Denise Leighton

Vaughan Administrator: Jennifer Perkins

Vaughan Learning Center Director:

Heather Ouellette

Organist: Floyd W. Corson

Associate Organist: Muriel Magg

Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir Director:

Anne W. Polak

Church Sexton: Mark Schiller

Worship Service at 10 A.M.
Church Office (603)356-2324
Fax Number (603)356-2106

E-mail address:

churchoffice@firstchurchnc.com

Website: www.northconwayucc.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/firstchurchncnh