

NORTH STAR

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
November 2022

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Gathered Since 1730

**Serving, Welcoming, Growing in
Christ**

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Interim Musician
Annelise Papinsick

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Kathleen Akerman

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Everett Sims

Financial Secretary
Carolyn Andrews

Council Chair
Susan Lauze

Council Vice Chair

Council Recorder
Sara Nichols

Technology Integrator
Jock Irvine

North Star Editor
Linda Sims

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From The Pastor

Greetings Beloved in Christ,

*Listen! I am standing at the door,
knocking; if you hear my voice and open
the door, I will come in and eat with you,
and you with me.*

[Revelation 3:20, NRSVUE]

"God Asks Us to...Open the Box"
(Prayer/Poem by Arlene L. Drennen)

Don't limit my being;

Untie the ribbon.

Don't restrict my presence;

Remove the lid.

Don't be afraid to see what I am;

Let me sit in your hands.

Don't keep me quiet;

Let me use your voice.

Don't lead me in your ways;

Let me guide you in our journey.

Don't harden your hearts;

Let me grow in you and transform your life.

Open the box you keep me in;

Let me open your life.

As we enter our fifth month of leasing space from Wesley United Methodist Church, I find myself reflecting on the ways that God has already shown up to our congregation, blessing us with space, community, accessibility, technology, mission opportunities, and more. God is standing at the door of the heart of our congregation and knocking - will we hear God's voice saying, "I here!" and let God into our discernment?

Of the 69 written service offerings folks have put in the offering plate since September, 5% (which is the largest single amount) have been to "assist with those who are ill/healing," with the second largest at 3% have been to "serve those who are currently homeless." Additional ones with at least four offerings include: "Assist the elderly," "Donate Clothing," "Help a friend," and "Self-Healing Work."

This tangible practice of giving our service to God, not only opens our hearts to the MUCH wider definition of "giving of ourselves," it also helps us to see where our passions lie for ministry - right now, as we are, in this moment of our congregational life together. This then also helps to guide us in our discernment about what ministry we are excited to engage with God in, during this season of the life of First Church, Concord.

To that end - I will conclude with a reflection question: What would it look like if we direct the bulk of our time, money, and energy to the ministry of "Assisting those who are currently ill/healing?" Not just in our congregation, of course, but also in the wider Concord community, and beyond?

A system of making meals?

Paying off a person's/family's medical debts?

Making and blessing prayer shawls and giving them away?

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Ministry of Outreach

Lighting candles for each person/family we are assisting in worship each week?

Visiting/listening/praying with those who are ill/healing at home or in the hospital?

Paying for cleaners to clean the homes of those ill/healing?

Running errands for those who are currently ill/healing?

[What others come to your heart?]

“When I was sick and you looked after me...” (Matthew 25)

God is knocking. Do we have the courage to answer?

Blessings,

Pastor Emilia



School Kits and Clean Up Buckets:

A lot of people have been devastated by the recent hurricane Ian. It is times like these that the CWS kits and clean up buckets are used. Let's work to fill a bucket and continue to make school kits. That is the least we can do to help those in need.

Crop Walk: Crop Walk was very successful. Donations can still be made. The total for Concord, NH was \$10,255.84. The total from our church was \$528.10. Thank you to all who donated money, time or walking. Our effort to end poverty and hunger around the world will make a difference!

Neighbors in Need: Totals of the amount raised will be reported soon.

Salvation Army: Please watch for a return of an angel tree this year. Before COVID, we would have a tree with children's request for gifts. One would take a tag, buy the gift and return it by a specified time. Hopefully, we will be able to resume this worthwhile way of helping the Salvation Army help children have a merry Christmas.

Sara Nichols, Outreach

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Technology Corner

Our new sound system was delivered on October 18 and I received about two hours of training in how to use it. Over the next few weeks, I'll be working to get it set up for both use in the chapel, and in Hanna Hall for Jazz Sanctuary. More training, which was included in the purchase price, will be taking place over the next couple of months.

Jock Irvine, Technology



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PRAYER CONCERNS

If you would like your name included in the weekly bulletin prayer list, please contact our church administrator, Kathy.

(secretary@concordfirstchurch.org)

The Prayer Circle asks you to keep in prayer for the following members and friends:

- Elizabeth Hardy - Hope
- Deborah Goodwin - Healing
- Faith Clark - Healing
- Kellie Heath - Healing
- Nancy Sanborn - Healing
- Dot Cassady - Hope
- Doug King - Healing

- The family of Betty Andrew
- The family of Susan Butts - Peace
- Everett Sims - Healing
- Family of Cedric "Dusty" Dustin, Jr. - Peace
- Ed Raczka - Healing
- Family of Shelley Huntoon - Peace
- Carolyn Andrews - Healing
- Sara Nichols - grandson baby - Peace
- Marjorie Colby - Healing

November Birthdays

Kellie Heath - 11/2

Irene Park - 11/2

Nancy Sanborn - 11/13

Faith Clark - 11/28

