

NORTH STAR

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

April 2015

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UCC

April 2015

Gathered Since 1730

Serving, Welcoming, Growing in Christ

COME TO WORSHIP



177 North Main Street

Concord, NH 03301

Phone: 603-225-5491

Email: secretary@concordfirstchurch.org

Website: www.concordfirstchurch.org

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday: 9 am - 1 pm

Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

Jazz Sanctuary every third Sunday at 12:30 pm

Ministers of the Church

All the People

Senior Minister

Rev. Emilia Halstead

Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Dr. Donald F. Jennings

Director of Music

Mr. William Metevier

Church Secretary

Shelley Westenberg

Treasurer

Linda Baines

Financial Secretary

Carolyn Andrews

Sexton

AJ Adjutant

North Star Editor

Linda Sims

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FROM THE PASTOR

Greetings Beloved in Christ,

HAPPY EASTER!! *Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her. [John 20:15-18]*

Jesus calls each of us by name. It is the sweetest sound you'll ever hear. When Jesus calls us by name, in that moment we understand that we are known. In that moment we feel that we are loved. In that moment we feel that we are cherished. When Jesus says our name, the darkness disappears and is no longer. God opens the tomb of the darkness in our lives and lets us see the Light.

We are a resurrection people. In order to follow Jesus, we cannot stay at the cross. In order to follow Jesus, we cannot stay in the tomb. Jesus said, "I am going ahead – follow me." To follow Jesus means to live in the light. It means to live with the understanding that the darkness is not our home. We are people of the Light.

Have you ever wondered why stained glass windows are so prevalent in many churches across the world? It is true, they tell the stories about the people in the Bible. It is true, they are often created in memory of someone or an event. It is true, they help us remember whose house we are in and why we are there. Those are all important truths about stained glass windows. But the real reason (to my mind) that there is stained glass in God's house is because they serve the Light.

It's true! Have you ever seen a stained glass window when it is dark outside? It is pitch dark itself! The stained glass only comes alive when the light shines through it. They serve the light. The same is true for each of us. If we only live in the darkness of the tomb, surrounded by our fears, our anger, our shame, our regret, and our pain, then we will never serve the Light. However, when the Light of Jesus Christ shines through the windows of our soul, we light up!

We then are able to tell the story of Jesus and his love. We then are able to teach others why we celebrate Easter. We then are able to feel God's love for us and for everyone. Serve the Light.

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." [Luke 24:1-7]



Easter Blessings,
Pastor Emilia

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THE CABINET

Annual Meeting is quickly approaching and it's time to focus our attention on preparing reports, presenting a budget, presenting a slate of nominations for officers and boards, and all other items brought forth at the meeting. Annual meeting is a very unique part of our Congregational polity. It's a time when we exercise our self-governing principles as an autonomous body only accountable to Christ. We accept this responsibility to conduct the meeting in covenant with each other for the service of God.

Our quarterly meeting in March was well attended, very productive and positive. The focus was on next year and the years to follow, reflecting on who we are, where we want to go, and how we going to use our building, as well as reorganizing the boards to better utilize our resources.

The personnel committee has been busy conducting annual reviews of our staff. Pastor Emilia, Shelley, AJ, Carolyn, Bill and Jen all have had their reviews. Terry Blake and Linda Baines are scheduled for their exit reviews soon. Feedback has been very positive with the reviews. It's been a job well done by our Personnel Committee, Sandy Metevier, Linda Sims, Ellie Wells and Pastor Emilia. The Budget Committee is now meeting and preparing our FY15-16 budget.

Here is an update on Concord's 250th: Our "Concord Chat" evening is April 16th, 6:00PM to 7:30 PM, and it is open to all. The chat is entitled "In the Beginning," and it's a narration about the settlement of Penny Cook and our involvement in the early days. Other activities are being planned during the year. Anyone interested in researching some our history please see Pastor Emilia, Shelley or me. I need history about the Women's Guild, the Food Pantry, the Cold Weather Shelter, and the Walker chapel. We are currently working on getting formal portraits of Don Jennings, David Keller and Pastor Emilia, thanks to the efforts of Bill Swenson.

Everett Sims, Cabinet President

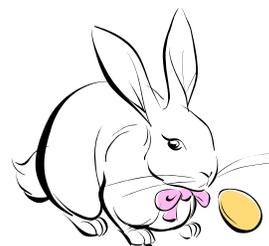
THE DEACONS

It's hard to believe Lent is almost over, which means Easter will be upon us soon. The Deacons have planned a fantastic series of events for Holy Week: Palm Sunday is on March 29, and then on April 2 we have a Foot Washing ceremony at 6:30 pm in the Chapel and a Maundy Thursday Service of Tenebrae with Communion at 7:00 pm. Easter is April 5. We are planning a joyous Easter celebration, complete with Communion and First Church's traditional lily decorations. Word from our music director, Bill, is that we have a beautiful slate of music lined up for that service. We hope you'll be able to join us on April 5!

One other item: With Easter fast approaching, the Deacons are looking for volunteers to help us on that day. Jobs include serving Communion, setting up/taking down decorations, and serving coffee hour. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer, please speak to one of the deacons, or contact me directly at jmurphy8289@gmail.com.

We look forward to sharing Easter with you!

Jon Murphy, for the Board of Deacons



BOARD OF MISSIONS

Emergency Clean up Buckets

We have three complete buckets! How about filling a fourth? A bucket has been purchased and sits in the assembly room awaiting your contributions. These supplies enable people to begin the overwhelming job

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of cleaning up after a flood, hurricane, tornado, or other disaster here in the United States.

We need:

- 4 scouring pads
- 5 sponges
- 16 cleaning towels (reusable, like Easy Wipes)
- 50-78 oz. box of dry laundry detergent
- 1 clothesline (50 ft.)
- 2 pairs latex gloves
- 24-28 bag of heavy duty 30-45 gallon trash bags

Magazines

The Huntoons have been bringing your donated magazines to the Merrimack County Nursing Home. The MCNH will accept this year's magazines and now only want National Geographic, bird-, animal- or car-related ones.

Sara Nichols and the Board of Missions

FOOD PANTRY

The calendar is telling us it's spring, and, I don't know about you, but I wish the weather would hurry up too!

We have slowed down a bit at the pantry and I really think a lot of it is because of the weather—people just don't want to go outside. However, the New Hampshire Food Bank sent out a notification that they have reached 11 million pounds of food that they have distributed to the different agencies. That sounds like a lot, but there are many times when Terry Blake tries to get meat and they have none, so our clients just do without. We are glad they are there to help us out because if they weren't our clients wouldn't have as many different items to choose from.

I hope all of you with gardens will remember us again this summer, and put in a couple of extra rows when you plant.

Thank you!

Linda Strand for the Food Pantry Volunteers

FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

TO ALL CHURCH MEMBERS - SAVE THE DATE!

On Sunday, April 12th, the Cabinet will be hosting a luncheon to celebrate the completion of the Stewardship Campaign. Early indications are that this year will be successful – we have already received over \$48,000.00 from 40 pledgers. We have received four new or renewed (meaning that individual has not pledged in the past two years) pledges. Although the majority of pledges have remained the same, we have had only two individuals decrease their pledge. We salute the eight individuals who increased their giving.

Electronic giving is an option that the church offers. For further information contact me, Carolyn Andrews, Financial Secretary. I can be reached at 224-0185 or at ndrws12@yahoo.com.

Carolyn Andrews



BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sunday School will not be offered on Easter morning, as the children are invited to worship with the grownups in the sanctuary. School will now be offered every other Sunday, starting April 12, but nursery care is available every Sunday.

Betty Blackey, Shelley Huntoon, Susan Lauze, Sheila Swenson, the Board of CE

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THE BEYER GROUP

We shall meet on Thursday, April 9th at 2 pm in the Guild Room. Joan Wiggin has devotions, and Harriet Bailey and Jeanne Cate will be our hostesses. At this meeting the Group will be assembling the School and Health Kits for Church World Service.

To assemble a School Kit we will need:

- One pair of blunt metal scissors (rounded tip)
- Three 70-count spiral notebooks or notebooks totaling 200-210 pages (**no loose-leaf or filler paper**)
- One 30-centimeter ruler (12")
- One hand-held pencil sharpener
- One large eraser
- Six new pencils with erasers
- One box of 24 crayons (only 24)
- One 12" x 14" to 14" x 17" finished size cotton or lightweight canvas bag with cloth handles.

To assemble a Health Kit we will need:

- One hand towel measuring approximately 16" x 28" (no fingertip or bath towels)
- One washcloth
- One wide-tooth comb
- One nail clipper
- One bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- Six standard size Band-Aids®

Note: All of the above-mentioned Health Kit items are to be placed in a one-gallon zippered plastic bag.

All church family and friends are cordially invited to participate in the project. Please bring any donations to the church by April 9th, as that is the day we will be packing the kits at 2 pm.

Joan Wiggin and Jeanne Cate for the Beyer Group



DID YOU KNOW...

Look for this new monthly column letting you in on some of the lesser-known facts about First Church! This month....A few words about membership:

It is the responsibility of the Board of Deacons to review the membership of our church on a yearly basis. This is done for a number of reasons: to keep an accurate count of the number of members; to be able to present an accurate profile of our church in the national UCC office; and to be able to project what our needs might be when preparing the annual budget.

\$2166.00 - This is the amount we are required to pay to the NH UCC Conference for our yearly contribution to support their work. This figure is based on the per capita fee of over \$10.00 per member (active and inactive) of our church.

Membership in our church is a covenantal relationship and requires very little to maintain a current, "active" membership. According to our bylaws, membership will remain active if the member attends worship, participates in a church related activity, *or* contributes in a way that can be documented (check or money in an envelope with your name on it) once a year.

Work is currently being done to identify people we haven't seen for more than a year and who have not otherwise contributed to the support of our church. Those people will receive a letter explaining what is required of active membership and giving a certain period of time for that person to respond – either by donating money or coming to church. Otherwise, that person will be put on the inactive member list. After a two year period, people who have done nothing to re-activate their membership from the inactive status will be removed from the ranks of membership.

Linda Sims

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Easter Sunrise Service

A joint service between First, East and West Congregational Churches at 6:00 am on Easter morning. Location: West Congregational Church, 499 North State Street, Concord. It will be followed by an Easter brunch!



It's time to THINK SUMMER!

Plan now to attend a UCC summer conference on beautiful Star Island in the Isles of Shoals off Portsmouth, NH.

UCC offers three family conferences:

- Star Gathering 1 (Aug. 2-8, 2015)
- Star Gathering 2 (Aug. 8-15, already wait listed)

(Both of these also include Youth Weeks for those entering 9th grade through the summer after high school graduation), and

- Laity Family Weekend (Sept. 4 or 5-7, 2015)

Check out the details for each conference, and register online, at www.starisland.org.

NH VOICES OF FAITH PRAYER BREAKFAST AND VIGIL ON APRIL 1

The New Hampshire House of Representatives is scheduled to debate the state budget on April 1 and 2. Their proposal is certain to contain cuts that will put at risk many of the state's essential human services, as well as programs needed for public safety, transportation, and protection of the environment.

As people of faith, we call on our lawmakers to approve a humane budget, one that promotes the well-being and fair treatment of all people, especially those among us who are the most vulnerable and whose dignity is threatened by irresponsible public policy choices.

Join NH Voices of Faith on Wednesday, April 1, for a prayer breakfast and vigil calling for a humane budget.

8 am – Prayer Breakfast, St. Paul's Church, 21 Centre Street, Concord

10 am – Prayer Vigil, State House second floor.

For more information, contact Maggie Fogarty at (603) 224-2407 or at mfogarty@afsc.org.

“Any proposed budget, then, should take particular care to adequately provide for those who are dependent on the state for their standard of life.”

-NH Council of Churches

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SANCTUARY

First Church, Third Sunday

April 19
12:30 pm

This month's theme:

Consider the Mustard Seed - When Small is AWESOME!

Special Guests:

Rev. Rebecca Mancini

&

Rev. Nancy Talbott

on

The Power of the Diminutive

12:30- Jazz Set featuring **Pastor Emilia**
and the house band, **WildVine Jazz Trio**
with musical guests the
Prodigal Jazz Ensemble

1:00- Worship Service

*Reminder: Normal worship services will be held at 10:00 am on
Jazz Sanctuary days!*

PRAYER CONCERNS & PASTORAL CARE

If you or someone you know is in need of prayer and would like their name included in our Sunday prayers or put on the church prayer list, please contact Sally Kelly (salking2@yahoo.com) or Pastor Emilia (pastor@concordfirstchurch.org or (603) 225-5491). If you would like a member of the Pastor's Aid Visitation Team to visit with you, please contact Barbara Carlstrand at (603) 224-9792.

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

Harriet Bailey
Avery, Michael and Tara Brooke
Helen Dymont
Ginny Gove
Elizabeth Hardy
Rose Kachadoorian
Norma Ordway
Mary Pilsbury
Dot Riley
Nancy Sanborn
Janet Smith
Gertrude Taylor
Julia and Milton Tasker

**The Coffee Hour will be provided by the
Deacons during the month of April
Please consider volunteering to help the
Deacons serve in the Guild Room on Easter
Sunday, when they will be well occupied with
many other tasks!**



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FOR APRIL

- Mon., Tues. & Thurs.:** Food Pantry 9:30-11:30am
- Every Monday in April:** Counting Committee 9:00 am
- Every Tuesday:** Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm
- Thursday, April 2:** **Maundy Thursday:**
 -Foot Washing in Chapel 6:30 pm
 -Service of Tenebrae 7 pm
- Sunday, April 5:** **EASTER SUNDAY!**
 -Joint Sunrise Service at West Congregational Church, followed by Easter brunch-- 6:00 am
 - Choir 9:00 am
 -Worship with Communion 10:00 am
- Monday, April 6:** Faith Formation 6:30 pm
 Budget Meeting 6:30 pm
- Tuesday, April 7:** Communion Visitations 9:30-3:30
 Female Charitable 1:00 pm
 Choir 6:30 pm
- Wednesday, April 8:** Cabinet 6:30 pm
- Thursday, April 9:** Beyer Group 2 pm
- Monday, April 13:** - *Coffee with the Pastor* at Panera 11:30-1:30
 -Women's Guild at Havenwood 7:00 pm
- Tuesday, April 14:** -Female Charitable Banquet at Alan's 6 pm
 -Choir 6:30 pm
- Wednesday, April 15:** All Boards 6:30
 (Missions at Havenwood)
- Thursday, April 16:** "Concord Chat" 6-7:30 pm
- Sunday, April 19:** Jazz Sanctuary 12:30 pm
- Monday, April 20:** -Spiritual Directors 12 pm
 - *Coffee with the Pastor* at Gibson's 2-4 pm
- Tuesday, April 21:** Choir 6:30 pm
- Monday, April 27:** - Faith Formation 6:30 pm
 - *May North Star articles due*
- Tuesday, April 28:** -4th Tuesday Prayers in Chapel 1:00 pm
 Choir 6:30 pm
- Wednesday, April 29:** Faith Formation 6:30

NHCUCC State Women's Fellowship

The annual Spring Gathering for the State Women's Fellowship will be held in East Derry on Saturday, April 18, with registration starting at 9:30 a.m. The theme for the day is "Recharging our Spiritual Batteries." Guest speakers will be Rev. Dr. David Reynolds, "Replenishing Spiritual Energy;" and Debbie Gline Allen, "Recharging our Singing Spirits." The program will end around 3:00 p.m. The \$12 registration fee includes coffee in the morning and lunch. Registration forms are available from Trudie Bergeron. Please make check payable to NHCUCC Women's Fellowship, and mail to Trudie Bergeron, 46 Nantucket Place, Greenland, NH 03840 by April 10.



Robert Nichols, 4/4

Marjorie Cary, 4/6

Eileen Heath, 4/8

Janet Smith, 4/9

Heather Clar, 4/17

Helen Livingston, 4/20

Richard Clar Jr., 4/23

Robert Johnson II, 4/29

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Holocaust Remembrance Week

Concord

April 12-20, 2015

April 13-20

Holocaust Book Displays at Concord Library
and Gibson's Bookstore

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Monday, April 13, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Holocaust Victims Name-Reading
at Eagle Square, Concord

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Monday, April 13, 5:30 PM

Holocaust Memorial Service
at Temple Beth Jacob
67 Broadway, Concord
Guest Speaker: Tom Weisshaus
Holocaust Survivor

~

Sunday, April 12, 6:00 PM

Screening of "Europa, Europa"
at the Red River Theatre

The true story of a young German Jew who
survived the Holocaust by joining the Hitler Youth.
A Q&A Session follows with Paula J. Mercier Trained
Holocaust Educator

Tickets: \$5:00 from Red River Theatre Box Office

www.redrivertheatres.org

