

First Church

CONNECTION

First Congregational Church, UCC
Hopkinton, NH

September 2022
Vol. 63 • Issue 8

Small Talk

My mother collected Hummels. Her first one was a little Christmas ornament that was given to her at a friend's baby shower. From that, a whole collection grew. She had figurines, dolls, bells, plates, a nativity set - if it was a Hummel, there was a good chance it was in her collection. When she moved to Maine, the Hummels came too.

My mom thought her collection was valuable, and I suppose it is. Their value, really, was that these little painted figurines brought her joy. She loved hunting for the elusive "one I don't have", she loved displaying them, she loved talking about the ones that had special meaning for her, and she loved it when she got lucky and found one unexpectedly.

There are a few Hummels on display in my house but my mom's enthusiasm for them didn't rub off on me. When I look at them, I see my her. For me, that's their greatest value.

Real collectors are intentional. Sometimes, a collector gets lucky but more often, building a collection takes focus and it takes time. The same is true for building a congregation. We are unique individuals, gathered by the One into the Church Universal: a collection of singers and students and skeptics and servants.

We're also members of a particular congregation, one that is its own collection of unique figures who bring energy and joy to one another.

Every congregation I've served has indicated that it wanted to grow. If a church wants to grow, it will. The operative word is "if". A congregation grows because it plans to grow and then it implements those plans. Growth also takes time, and the good news is that time can start right now.

Regathering Sunday, September 11, would be a great day to gather a wonderful collection of longtime members and newcomers. So invite your friends, co-workers, neighbors, people you chat with at the gym, and your online contacts to join you for worship, education, fellowship, and mission.

We're not sitting on a shelf, collecting dust. We are the people of God, out and about, each and every one special and beloved in the eyes of the Creator.

Faithfully,

Jill

The Reverend Dr. Jill H. Small



SEPTEMBER

**Growing Deeper in FAITH
Looking up in HOPE
Reaching out in LOVE**

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Search Committee has continued to meet every two weeks throughout the summer and is planning meetings on a similar schedule for the fall. As I wrote in the summer newsletter, we are currently focused on preparing the Church Profile, a document that will describe First Church to prospective candidates.

We are still assimilating the information collected to help us understand the congregation's vision of ourselves and dreams for the future. One of the most important of these is the Transition Team's report "Observations and Reflections on 3 Conversations" from listening sessions with parishioners. Special thanks to those of you who participated in that process. This describes the church members' own perspectives on the past, present and future of the church. The entire congregation will have an opportunity to hear a summary of the Transition Team report at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, September 18.

A subcommittee of the Search Committee is working to assemble responses to the "easiest" questions for the church profile, elements that can be counted or presented as numbers. These deal with demographics, activities we engage in as a church community, a robust summary of church finance and lists of all ministers for the past thirty years, all staff and all ordained clergy within the church community.

At the Search Committee meetings in September, we will consider the best approaches to responding to the remaining more challenging essay questions, such as:

- Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.
- How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?
- How are young people in leadership?

It seems likely at this point that the Search Committee will use other subcommittees to draft responses to all the questions. We expect this to be an iterative project – responses will be drafted, shared, discussed and modified as the discussion suggests, then shared again. At some point, someone(s) will have to do some serious editorial work to make sure pieces composed by different authors fit together well and sound as if from a unified voice.

We are happy to share what we are doing with you while we are working on the Church Profile. However, once the Profile is posted and candidates begin to respond, we will have to become extremely confidential. We'll be able to say that we are reviewing candidate profiles, but no information about the number, gender, qualifications or current location of candidates can be shared.

The Search Committee appreciates your interest and ongoing prayers as we work our way through this extensive process.

Shalom,

Dijit Taylor



Contribution Contacts

If you would like to help or contribute to any of the following regular activities, here are the people you need to contact:

Family Promise

Dawn Berry
746-5033
dcbnh@comcast.net

Friendly Kitchen

Charles and Maxine Petruccelli
MaxinePet@gmail.com
203-313-3893

Head Usher

Sue Mitchell
746-3685
spmitchell43@gmail.com

Sanctuary Flowers

Coordinator
Carol Howard
caroldawson640@comcast.net
(preferred)
603-496-5365

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hope Food Basket Donations

The Mission Board will be relaunching Hope Food Basket Donations. Donated items are delivered to the Hopkinton Food Pantry, located at the Slusser Center in Contoocook. Volunteers will donate food and other non-perishable items on the Sunday that they sign up. Interested individuals can use the following link via Sign Up Genius to select the date they would like to donate.

Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F49AFAE2FA1FFC25-hope>.
Questions? Feel free to contact Pamela Keilig at pamela.keilig@gmail.com

Bible Study to resume on Monday, September 12 on Zoom.

All are welcome to join in this study whether or not you have participated in a study before!!

Kathi Dustin, Jim Howard, and Barb Shaltis will be leading our exploration of the Letter to the Hebrews.

Classes will be on Mondays from 7-8:30 pm on Zoom (we'll send Zoom info out to everyone in advance, so if you plan to join us, please let Jim know - his email is below).

Our book for the class will continue in the Abingdon Press series, From Genesis to Revelation, which we used last year for our study of Acts. This time, though, we are asking you to purchase the Leader Guide. As Hebrews is a short letter, it is included along with studies of James, 1-2 Peter, 1,2,3 John, and Jude. (We may choose to follow up later this year with studies of some of these books).

So, the full title of the book is: Genesis to Revelation: Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 1,2,3 John, Jude; Leader Guide: A Comprehensive Verse-by-Verse Exploration of the Bible by Keith Schoville. It costs \$14.99, though you may be able to order for less from Gibsons or MainStreet BookEnds in Warner by identifying yourself as a member of our church Bible Study group. To be sure you are ordering the correct book and edition, here is the ISBN: 1501855395.

Our first class will mostly be a time for us to catch up with one another, but you may want to read Chapter 1 in the book.

Any questions, please feel free to email Jim (jimh.nh@rcn.com) or Kathi (kathidustin@gmail.com).

Bible Study with Pastor Jill

After a summer hiatus, Bible study with Pastor Jill resumes on WEDNESDAY, September 7th at 1:00 p.m. IN THE GREAT ROOM.

We're beginning at the beginning, with GENESIS! If you've studied this book before, we'd benefit from your knowledge, but no experience is expected or necessary. Our conversation will be focused and far-reaching, relaxed and fun.

If you can't make it every week, that's OK. You are welcome. Please bring a Bible; any version that you like is fine. Bring a friend too!

Volunteers Needed!

We have been so fortunate these past two years to have live streaming and/or recordings of our worship services. Rick Desmarais has put his time and talent into setting up a system so that we are able to join in worship from the comfort of our home. He has some help from other volunteers on Sunday mornings, but more help is needed if we want to continue having this worship option! If you think you may be able to help, please contact Jenny Mullins.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rally Sunday Picnic

at Gould Hill Farm

Sunday September 11

Immediately following worship - 11:30-1:30

Please bring a dish to share, along with necessary serving utensils. The Diaconate will provide plates, cups, napkins, plastic cutlery and drinks and ice. Please bring a lawn chair.

Everyone is welcome! Invite a friend or a neighbor to come along!

See you at Gould Hill Farm on Sunday, September 11!!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BOOK GROUP 2022-23 NEWS

A warm welcome is extended to all First Church Book Group members and anyone wishing to join in the conversations which take place each Thursday from 9:30-11 am. This year we will gather, via our easily accessible Church Zoom link, beginning on Thursday, September 15.

Our first book selection is **THE BOOK OF JOY: LASTING HAPPINESS IN A CHANGING WORLD**. Co-written by close friends the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Emeritus of Southern Africa Desmond Tutu with assistance from Douglas Abrams, **THE BOOK OF JOY** was published in 2016. This book was chosen as our first selection because, though it is “a lighter read than many we have read...the subject is a serious one, especially for today, with the pandemic and civil unrest. It was a New York Times best-seller and is an in-depth look by two religious leaders on what joy means to humanity and how to achieve joy.” The book arose out of a week the two spent in Dharmasala, India, home to the Dalai Lama. The two friends met for birthday celebrations, but also to “create something special that [they] hoped would be a birthday gift to others.”

Book Members old and new are invited to purchase **THE BOOK OF JOY** from the source of their choosing. At both Gibson's in Concord and MainStreet Bookends in Warner, customers identifying themselves as members of a book group will receive a discount.

Several Book Group members have already volunteered to facilitate our discussions of several chapters of **THE BOOK OF JOY**. For those interested, opportunities to facilitate available remaining chapters will be discussed at our first meeting on Thursday, September 15.

We look forward to having you join us for another season of meaningful, enlightening and just plain fun conversations. Just send an email to Barb Shaltis – bshaltis@att.net to have your name included on our Book Group emailing list.

THANK YOU NOTE

Dear Friends,

What a lovely surprise it was to receive the beautiful flowers from you! What a nice surprise! Thank you so much! I appreciate your thoughtfulness.

I look at the flowers every day and am thankful. I think of all of you and am grateful.

My daughter and her husband brought me a bulletin board with pictures on it, especially some of my granddaughter's wedding. They were really good.

I'll let Margaret know if my address changes.

Love and peace,

Betty French

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFIRMATION 2023

As another program year begins, all youth in grades 8 and above are invited to participate in Confirmation.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CONFIRMED?

Confirmation at the First Congregational Church of Hopkinton, United Church of Christ (FCCH) is a way to claim full membership in a community of faith. For most Confirmands, it is a reaffirmation of vows made on your behalf when you were baptized.

In the FCCH confirmation program, youth examine their faith, values, and beliefs with the support of the pastor and another adult member of the congregation who serves as a mentor.

THE CONFIRMATION PROCESS

In a world rich with religious tradition, our confirmation program gives youth space to reflect on what they believe and what they question.

How is Christianity similar to and different from other faiths? What about the Bible? How are its stories relevant today? Why do we give time or money to the church or to others through the church? What does it mean to serve on a church committee?

Each Confirmand will write a faith statement and will share that statement in the Confirmation rite in the spring of 2023. The congregation pledges its support to the Confirmands as all parties continue to grow in faith.

WHY BE CONFIRMED?

In many cultures and contexts, there is a recognition of 'coming of age' around age 13. Confirmation is one such recognition. It's helpful to have intentional conversations when you think about God, Jesus, the Spirit, the Church, life and death, mission and ministry. Confirmation provides the framework for those conversations. Mentors often learn as much or more from the Confirmand as the Confirmand learns from the Mentor!

TO BE CONFIRMED

Confirmation requires a commitment. It's important that youth, their parents/guardians, and their mentors make Confirmation activities a priority. If this is not a good time to make that commitment, it's fine to wait for a future Confirmation class.

I look forward to the coming year and to getting to know the 2023 Confirmands! Please email me (jhsmaill@firstcchurchhopkinton.org) if you have questions.

RACIAL JUSTICE MISSION GROUP

Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of their Runaway Slave Ona Judge by Erica Armstrong Dunbar and Slavery & the Underground Railroad in New Hampshire by Michelle Arnosky Sherburne are two books with NH historical roots. The Racial Justice Mission Group invite you to read both or one, or just join us for a campfire discussion at Brenda Quinn's. Date and time to be announced.

Dates to hold are October 18-23 when FCCH will co-hosting The Sacred Ally Quilts with the First Congregational Church, UCC of Wilmot. We are both NH Conference Racial Justice Churches. The quilts were created by nine congregations in response to the murder of George Floyd. The theme of the quilts are Mr. Floyd's last words. A display and program will be presented at both churches.

Dawn Berry

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The CE Board is excited to get back to more frequent in-person gatherings with church children and youth! We will be having in-person Sunday School again this year on most Sundays, and we will be trying some new fellowship activities outside of Sundays at 10 in order to include more families with varying schedules. Stay tuned for more details. Our first fellowship activity will be....

Waffle Sunday! Join us at 8:30 a.m. on Rally Sunday, September 11, in the fellowship hall, to make and enjoy waffles together. We are hoping to make this a monthly event, as a fun way for the children and youth to gather together and enjoy cooking and sharing a meal together. Please come with your children, or if you'd like to come enjoy waffles with children! Please note: for this particular Sunday, this is the children's activity. There will be no Sunday School during the worship service.

Nursery Volunteers Needed. We would appreciate volunteers who could sign up to play with toddlers and preschoolers in the nursery on Sunday mornings. This is a wonderful opportunity to ensure we are a church that welcomes new families and makes it easy and enjoyable for them to come church. Please email Trish at Trishwalton65@gmail.com if you would like to offer your time and service, whether it's one Sunday or a handful of Sundays. Thank you!

Youth Group Room Donations

The Youth Group is looking to revive the Youth Room. To do so, we are looking for donations:

- Futon mattress (we have a frame)
- Couches
- Table and chairs for games (This could be a longer white plastic table or someone's kitchen/dining room table that they are giving away.)
- Games
- Bluetooth speakers
- Wii or Nintendo Switch
- Video games that are church appropriate
- TV and TV stand
- Ottoman or bins for storage/seating
- Pillows/blankets
- Beanbag chairs or similar "lounging" chairs
- Paint (enough to paint the room, which is pretty large)

If you are interested in donating items, please take a photo of them and send it to Trish Walton at 603-491-796 or trishwalton65@gmail.com. We want to avoid getting too many of any given item. You can also make a monetary donation that the teens can use to purchase items by making a check out to FCCH and putting "Youth Room" in the memo. Thank you.



Public Flu Clinic First Congregational Church of Hopkinton

Ages 3 and Older



First Congregational Church of Hopkinton

1548 Hopkinton Road, Hopkinton

Sunday, October 16
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Masks Required.

Immunizations are offered at no charge with an ID card from Medicare B, Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, Harvard Pilgrim, Tufts, or Anthem.

\$30 (cash or check) for all others.

Published rate is \$45.

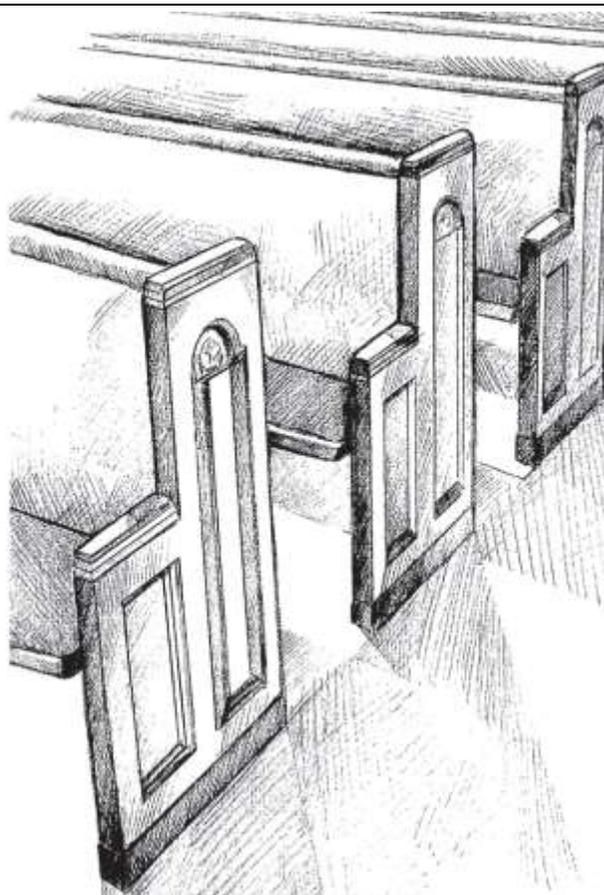
This year, we are offering the standard quadrivalent influenza vaccine.

For more information, please visit www.granitevna.org/fluclinics
or call (603) 224-4093, ext. 85815

50 Pillsbury Street | Concord, NH 03301 • (603) 224-4093 | (800) 924-8620 • www.granitevna.org
Offices in Lantzville and Wolfeboro

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FROM THE DEACON'S BENCH



I am embarrassed to admit this, but I am a pack rat with a few sentimental items in my life. One of the things that I have collected and saved over the years are the First Church Newsletters. I have kept them because I love this community! As I sat down to write this month's newsletter, I looked to my saved newsletters to find inspiration. What struck me while going through the newsletters were the numerous pictures (thanks to Ruth Ricker), inspirational messages, thank-you's and many articles (thanks to Steve Thomas, Dijit Taylor and Bill Siff and many others!). The newsletters represent the community we have at First Church. I realize that the past two plus years have made a big change in our lives, but re-reading the articles and seeing the pictures of mission trips, flea markets, game nights, variety shows and many more events gave me hope. At the Annual meeting in June, Lindy Head reported on the findings of the Transition Team. In short, that committee was tasked with talking to First Church members about what they cherished most about our church. The theme of Lindy's message at that annual meeting was that our Church values "light hearted togetherness". As I look forward to this year at church, I am looking forward to spending time with my First Church family, having the choir return and creating many new memories that will fill up our future newsletters with hope and inspiration and lots of "light-hearted togetherness".

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up on meeting together... but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see as the Day approaching.

I look forward to seeing everyone at church this fall. And don't forget about the Rally Sunday Picnic, on September 11 at Gould Hill! Hope to see you there!

Jenny Mullins

FROM THE ARCHIVES

PARSONAGES AND “PARSONAGES” PART II

(Where in town did our First Church pastors live?)

THE REVEREND MOSES KIMBALL

Our sixth pastor, the Reverend Moses Kimball (1834-1846) was a Hopkinton native, but his father had died when he was a few weeks old; his mother had married another Hopkinton man who lived in Grantham and young Moses grew up there. After a pastorate in Vermont he accepted a call to Hopkinton, and he and his wife, Abigail Osgood Bartlett, came to a town filled with many Kimball relations of various degrees, including his 97-year-old maternal grandmother, Widow Rachel Herrick. The Kimballs, like their ministerial predecessor family, the Reverend Ethan Smiths, made their home on (now) Hawthorne Hill Road then part of the road from Concord. Whether they were in a separate house or in part of a house, the Census of course does not detail, but there were First Church households in the neighborhood – the William R. Storys and the William Stockers, (Mrs. Stocker was the former Phoebe Kimball, a second cousin). Also nearby lived Deacon Isaac Smith of the Baptist Church. First Church did not provide housing for the Kimballs, and so we may conclude they did not live in a parsonage.

THE REVEREND CHRISTOPHER MINTA CORDLEY

English-born the Reverend Christopher Minta Cordley (1849-1852) supplied the pulpit for many Sabbaths prior to his ordination and installation on 5 September 1849 at First Church Hopkinton, aged 28 and single. We find him in the 1850 Federal Census living with Church members Stephen B.

Sargent and wife Betsey (Eaton) Sargent, who were paid by the Society for boarding him. Both Hopkinton natives, both baptized at First Church

and later married by Reverend Roger Hatch, the Sargents had no children. Mr. Sargent was a trader in whale sperm oil for lamps, glass lamps, wicks, wicking, brooms, roping, firewood, screws and nails, and the like, a kind of forerunner of today's hardware store. He owned a large house — immediately west of St. Andrews church — that had been the tavern of the Hon. Benjamin Wiggin (1742-1822). C.C. Lord tells us that Mr. Sargent kept his store in the westerly part of his residence (with living quarters on the easterly side). Mr. Cordley thus had only a short walk around the corner to services and meetings in the meetinghouse. Brother Sargent was an active and prominent financial supporter of the Society - clerk, assessor, treasurer - and he and Mrs. Sargent provided “entertainment” (read “accommodations and meals”) for a Council that sat to ordain Mr. Cordley's successor, Mr. Angier. The house, along with several other buildings, was destroyed in a bad fire in 1927. Although our parson lived there, and was no doubt well cared for, the Sargents' house was not a parsonage.

Steve Thomas, Historian



*“Wiggin Tavern” ca. 1910
Courtesy: Hopkinton Historical Society*

FAMILY PROMISE

Another family of four is in their own home! Family Promise now has two families we are hosting. Nancy Emery and Dawn Berry serve as hosts with St. Andrews in August. Our two churches are supportive of each other and help the other when hosts are needed. FCCH next hosting date is November 6-13.

Below is the resignation letter of Executive Director Liane Kerbyson. We have certainly appreciated her work, even under the difficult circumstances of Covid. She has gone above and beyond to provide for volunteers, families, and funding for the continuity of the program. We shall miss her and are thankful for her leadership.

Dawn Berry

To our FPGC Community,

It is with mixed emotions that I am announcing my resignation as executive director of FPGC. Over the last four years it has been my honor to serve in this position and to lead this incredible organization. I have watched families enter our doors scared and defeated and have also watched those same families leave for their new homes proud of what they had accomplished during their months with FPGC. With each and every family I have been humbled by their strength and resilience and learned that empathy is the greatest gift we have to give.

This has been, by far, one of the most difficult decisions for me to make. I have witnessed the organization change over the last four years and been awestruck by our FPGC community and its rally through some of the most challenging of times. From our previous space at IHM to our current home in Wesley Methodist Family Promise of Greater Concord has grown in strength, staff, and programming and I believe that this will only continue with a fresh set of eyes to lead this organization to its next steps.

You, my friends, are all amazing individuals. I genuinely mean that, and I consider it a great honor to have served in this position with you all at my side. Your hearts are some of the biggest that I have ever seen, and it gives me hope that humanity is alive and well. I have watched you stand by our families even when you felt worn from the pandemic knowing that no matter how challenging life has been as of late, being homeless with children is even more overwhelming. As volunteers, you are the backbone to FPGC and the reason that we exist.

In closing, please know that I will be helping in the search for the next executive director and will make sure, to the best of my ability, that FPGC is left in good and capable hands. We will continue to grow and to serve the less fortunate because it is our mission. Family Promise of Greater Concord will always hold a piece of my heart.

In unity,

Liane

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staying Well During the Cold Weather Season

As the weather cools off this autumn and we move more of our activities indoors the risk of exposure and transmission of viral illnesses such as COVID and influenza increases. What follows are some reminders of how we can reduce that risk.

1. Get your flu shot. While influenza cases have been low in the last two years there are concerns that rates will be higher this flu season.
2. If you have not been vaccinated against COVID you can reduce your risk of severe illness or death by getting vaccinated.
3. If you are vaccinated against COVID stay current on boosters and updated versions of the vaccine to maintain effectiveness.
4. Wash your hands frequently.
5. The risk of transmission of COVID is higher indoors due to less ventilation and closer contact between individuals. You can reduce this risk by opening windows, using portable HEPA air purifiers, maintaining social distance and wearing a high quality, well-fitting mask.
6. In terms of worship services, if you are feeling unwell, stay home until you have sorted out your situation. Take advantage of First Church's live streaming of Sunday worship services.
7. We are all trying to learn how to live with COVID. As we gather for worship, fellowship and service let's strive to keep ourselves and each other well.

First Church Safety Committee

Annual Community Event in Concord, "Walk a Mile in Their Shoes"

Mission Board Member Susan Garofalo will be participating in the Crisis Center of Central New Hampshire's (CCCNH) annual community event in Concord, "Walk a Mile in Their Shoes" or WAM. The event will take place on October 5, coinciding with Domestic Violence Awareness Month. You can learn more about the event here:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/event/wam2022/?fbclid=IwAR2wNAESOsPGVdBplwHQ7W6eH2w2aW7rLoVtvxkiMWKrS9LmSlfEfcVWqco>

We would be delighted to have other members of First Church participate in this event too. There are several different ways that you can be involved: 1) Register to walk in the event on your own; 2) Join Susan as a Team Member; 3) Join in sponsoring Susan's walk; 4) Donate to CCCNH.

Donations from WAM help sustain critical services for survivors like emergency shelter, counseling, hospital accompaniment, court advocacy and hotline advocacy.

Last year the Mission Board provided financial support to CCCNH so that they can continue to serve survivors in Merrimack County. The Board has also donated bed sheets to their emergency shelter and assembled blessing bags for the shelter guests so they had some basic needs. We are excited to share this new way to support this important initiative with the Congregation.

For questions, please contact Susan Garofalo at slancaster224@gmail.com or 585-545-0601.
Thank you!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Friendly Kitchen

We have had a busy season at Friendly Kitchen. We have returned to many pre-Covid procedures such as real flatware and plates. We still have a plastic barrier between servers and guests.

In May, the Demers family and friends served 48 meals of Chicken Lentil Vegetable stew with rolls, coleslaw and cookies. Their amazing team consisted of Dale Roberts, Lissa Jones, Elaine Lessels, Alita Paine, and Chris and Paula Demers.

In June, the Lewis family and friends served pork chops, cold slaw, and mashed potatoes to 65 guests. It was inspiring to see how many volunteers turned out to prepare the meals.

In July, Elaine Lessels led Paul Martell, Louise Dartnell, and Maxine and Chas Petruccelli, and Cynthia Marpel. Sixty - three meals of breaded perch, roasted potatoes and mixed vegetables were served.

We are always looking for new and additional volunteers. It is a very rewarding experience and the comradery among the volunteers makes it lots of fun. We need volunteers for September 28th. Please contact Maxine Petruccelli (203) [313-3893](tel:313-3893)/maxinepet@gmail.com.



The tree to honor Gordon Crouch's long pastorate at First Church was planted this summer. It is a red maple, selected for its expected capacity to withstand climate change better than some other species. Thank you again to all who contributed to the gifts and commemorations for Gordon and Robin. The granite maker at the base of the tree reads:

Rev. Dr. Gordon L. Crouch
Pastor and Teacher
2000 - 2021

1548 Hopkinton Rd.
Hopkinton, NH 03229

Address Service Requested

First Church

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER

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Deadline for October newsletter: Wednesday, September 21