

First Church

CONNECTION

First Congregational Church, UCC
Hopkinton, NH

December 2022
Vol. 63 • Issue 11

Small Talk

Advent is here, leading us to the birth of the Messiah! This is a season of anticipation, of thankfulness, of hope, peace, joy, and love. Those gifts cannot be bought in a store or online. They cannot be put in a box or tied with a bow. They don't need batteries and they never are out of fashion. They are gifts from one heart to another. First and foremost, they are gifts from God's heart to humanity.

As we look forward to the decoration, the music, even the snow that signals the coming of Christmas, Advent calls us to appreciate the journey to Bethlehem. It's a journey guided by candles and starlight.

In poignant counterpoint, the nighttime grows until there is as much darkness as the world can hold. Then, and only then, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, and the Light of the world begins to grow again.

It's easy to get caught up in the rush of baking and buying, of caroling and cleaning, all the activity of the public observation of Christmas. There's nothing wrong with that, unless it overtakes preparing to welcome the Christ into our hearts.

My prayer for each of us, for all of us, is that we will share the wonder of the Advent season together. May hope, peace, joy, and love dwell in our midst, now and always.

Faithfully,

Jill

The Reverend Dr. Jill H. Small

DECEMBER

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



SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE, DECEMBER 2022

I am pleased to report that the Search Committee is very close to completing the Church Profile! By the time you read this, it may be completed. As I have said in earlier updates, the Church Profile is an extensive document that seeks to introduce our church to pastors who are seeking a new position. The profile follows a template provided by the national United Church of Christ. Using this format makes it easier for candidates to review and compare congregations.

The writing committee of Louise Dartnell, Janny Foster and Brenda Quinn have done an amazing job of capturing the practices, dreams and spirit of our church in words responding to the questions and prompts in the template. Here is one example. This paragraph is the first text a candidate will read about First Church, right on the first page of the Profile.

Summary of Ministry Description

First Congregational Church of Hopkinton UCC is a forward-moving church open to change, with sensitivity and compassion for the heritage that is an important part of our identity. This community values a balance of tradition with sermons that challenge us, music that moves us, and a healthy dose of lightheartedness. We are seeking a minister who is inspired and committed to accompanying us on a journey of learning, compassion, and action as we strive to live into the words we proclaim at the end of our worship services: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind; love your neighbor as yourself; and love and care for the earth and all that dwells therein."

The photo team of Paula Demers, Heather Hearne and Mike Metcalf have collected a couple dozen photos from which they will select those that best demonstrate the beauty of our church, the many and varied activities of our congregation and some of the fine features of the Hopkinton area. Kathy Barnes, who frequently helps with the First Church website, as agreed to help with the final layout of the many words and associated photos.

The Trustees have approved a compensation package that meets the conference guidelines, pending a stewardship campaign that supports the package and some possible areas of negotiation within the compensation package. Of course, we want to provide salary and especially housing allowance that allows the new settled pastor to obtain housing in the greater Hopkinton area.

Jill has been extremely helpful reviewing drafts of the profile as it evolves and sharing her experience of how other churches in the search process have handled various situations.

Excitingly, if the Profile is posted sometime in December, we may see candidates starting in January. We are all eager to see how many candidates, and what kind of candidate, will respond to the opportunity at First Church.

Shalom,

Dijit Taylor

For the Settled Pastor Search Committee of Louise Dartnell, Paula Demers, Jenny Foster, Charlie Head, Jim Lewis, Nan McNicholas, Mike Metcalf, Heather Bigelow Hearne, Brenda Quinn, Ruth Sanchez, Eric Schleppehorst and 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



Blood Drive

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

354 Main St. Hopkinton, NH 03229 - Great Hall

Wednesday, December 28, 2022

1:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Sponsored by St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and the First Congregational Church of Hopkinton.

Maximize your donation. Help more patients. If you are an eligible type O, B-, or A- donor, consider making a Power Red donation. Red blood cells are the most transfused blood component.

Give Something That Means Something

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: HOPKINTONNH to schedule an appointment.



Shake up your traditions! Come give Dec. 18-Jan 3 for a NEW long-sleeved Red Cross T-shirt, 100 qty!



Schedule a blood donation appointment today:

Download the Blood Donor App | RedCrossBlood.org | 1 800 733 2767

To sign up to volunteer at the drive go to

<https://standreshopkinton.org/blood-drive> and click on the volunteer link

American Red Cross Blood Drive
December 28, 2022

St. Andrew's and the First Congregational Church of Hopkinton sponsor a Red Cross Blood drive every other month.

Volunteers are needed to:

- Set-up the Great Hall
- Greet and Register blood donors at the Registration Desk
- Provide hospitality and a watchful eye in the Canteen Area
- Serve a Volunteer Supervisor (fill in volunteer jobs as necessary and interact with the Red Cross team leader)
- Restore the Great Hall space after the drive is completed.

Jesus gave his blood for our life and salvation.

What an honor it is to serve people who give their blood to save others.

To sign up to volunteer at the drive please go to <https://standreshopkinton.org/blood-drive> and click on the volunteer link

2023 dates for Red Cross Blood Drives at St. Andrew's:

Wednesday February 22,

Wednesday April 19,

Wednesday June 21,

Wednesday August 16

Wednesday October 18

Wednesday December 20

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR DONATION DRIVE

During the month of December, we will invite members of First Church to participate in a "Reverse Advent Calendar" donation drive. All donated items will be delivered to the Hopkinton Food Pantry to help families in need this holiday season. Each day leading up until Christmas you will find a new item to collect. Stay tuned for more information about how to participate and where to drop off the donated items.

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Please join First Church Hopkinton in our "Reverse Advent Calendar" donation drive. Each square represents an item to collect for each day leading up to Christmas. Items will be donated to the food pantry to help families in need this holiday season.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Do you love Christmas Carols? What about Christmas cookies? Pizza? What about bringing a smile to someone's face and joy to their day?

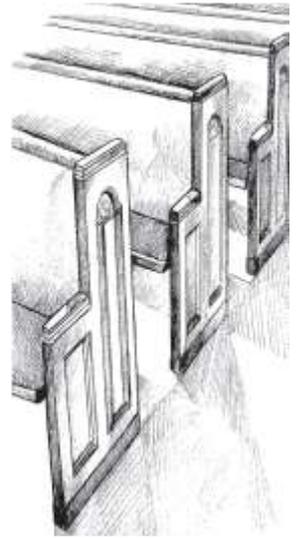
First Church has an annual tradition of brightening the day of some beloved members by going Christmas Caroling. It is honestly my favorite church activity of the year, and honestly, it does not feel quite like Christmas until we go caroling! We bring home-made cookies to those who we visit, sing a few of our favorite carols, give some much needed cheer, and then afterwards we meet to enjoy some pizza fellowship, and eat the left-over cookies. What could possibly be more fun! Can't sing? No worries, we love to make a joyful noise! The noisier the better! Can you harmonize? If not, no worries! Remember that joyful noise?

Would you like to join us? Carolers of ALL ages and abilities are welcome! We are tentatively planning on caroling Saturday, December 17th. We will gather at the church at 4:00, please bring 1-2 dozen of your favorite Christmas cookies to share! After caroling, we will gather for some fellowship time, so bring a little money for pizza.

Please let Melissa Cook know if you would like to join, or if you have any questions or comments!! (mcookedctr@comcast.net)



DEACON'S BENCH



Warm, sunny fall day
Awake to a white landscape
God surprises us!

Charlie Head

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Children and adults enjoyed a fun afternoon of pumpkin carving outside church on October 29. Thanks to all who came and shared snacks, tools, and pumpkins.

First Sunday Waffle Church is going very well! Kids and adults alike are loving the food and fellowship. Thank you to the many middle and high schoolers who have been showing up to cook and serve and clean. All are welcome to Waffle Church on the first Sunday of each month at 8:30 am.

The Youth Group gathered for service and fellowship in November with trips to volunteer at the Friendly Kitchen on November 23 and a November 27 bowling outing. Stay tuned for more opportunities for middle and high schoolers to connect.

Eager elves are working to bring you the annual Advent Workshop after worship on Sunday, December 4 (also a Waffle Church Sunday). All are invited in the Great Hall to make Christmas crafts and enjoy hot cocoa together.





Invitation to First Church's 3rd Annual Cookie Swap

ALL ARE INVITED!

When and where:
Sunday, December 11 2022 , 11:00am
During Fellowship Hour in the Parish House



If you want to bake, please bring:

- 2-3 Dz Cookies to swap
- Printed copies of your recipe
- Share a special Christmas item or a story of a great family tradition.

Drop off:

Sat, Dec. 10 5-6pm in the Parish House or
Sunday before the service

RSVP

*Please let Ingrid Dinter know what
you will bring:*

(603) 731-1846 or email:

Ingrid@IngridDinter.com

*Hand sanitizer will be available.
Please consider wearing a mask*



FROM THE ARCHIVES

PARSONAGES AND “PARSONAGES’ (5)

Here’s the final installment of our look at houses where some of our First Church pastors have lived in Hopkinton, this one at 21 New Road. Known at first as “the new road to Dunbarton,” this roadway branches left off South Road about 600 feet south of Main Street and ran originally (but no longer) to the Dunbarton line.

The house was built perhaps around 1800 or some years later, possibly embracing two “apartments”, the first photo taken about 1900. You will note the two front doors, the two chimneys, and the somewhat unbalanced arrangement of windows. One of the owners along the way added the second floor. The barn is long since gone.

Following a vote of First Church members, the Board of Trustees (Wendell Purington, Chair) purchased the property from owner George McArt, in April 1969 for \$14,000 as mythical as that price seems today. Parsonage Fund Chairman Dick Gourley had charge of the fund drive. The second photo shows the property at that time.



“Many long hours of labor were donated by members and friends of the Church,” wrote Wendell, in his 1969 Annual Report, “to renovate this old house for our minister. Work accomplished at the parsonage includes, papering painting all twelve rooms, plastering and [restoring] stenciling [in] the living room, retiling the second floor bathroom, removal of a partition and adding a closet on the second floor, insulating the attic floor, building a utility room on first floor, remodeling the kitchen, with new cabinets, sink, and dishwasher, installing a new furnace and new heating ducts, and a complete new electrical wiring job.”

The house needed new window shades, screens for the porch and a utility shed. It had an underachieving hot water heater and rust water to go with it.



In April 1969 the *Concord Monitor* carried a short article about the house and the work with a photo of members Henry Condon and Dick Mitchell at work on the walls.

Pastor the Reverend Stephen Frederick Garvey (“Steve”), his wife Diane (Giardina), and son six-months-old Shawn moved in during June 1969 (they’d been living in one of the apartments on the second floor of the Parish House since June 1968), and made their home here until September 26, 1971, Steve’s last day.

The Reverend Norman Charles Middaugh (“Jack”) [pronounced Middaw] and his wife Barbara (“Barby”)

moved in during March 1972 with Nancy, 18, a high school senior, Susan, 16, high school junior, Tim, 13, an eighth grader, Matthew, 8, in second grade, and six Malamute puppies. Elsewhere were Stephen, 23, and Faith, 21, a student at Michigan State. The Middaughs were resident until May 1975.

They were followed by the Reverend Robert Bradford Daggett (“Bob”) and his wife, Virginia M. (Cole) (“Molly”) called to our pastorate in May 1976. Their sons, Robert, Junior, and Tim and Tom were adults living elsewhere. “Bob” retired from the Hopkinton pulpit and from the ministry in Jun 1986.

First Church welcomed the Reverend Edward George Horstmann (“Ed”) and his wife Margaret Morris (Gibson) (“Meggie”) a Scottish lass, in the summer of 1987. Catriona and Kyle came home to the parsonage from Concord Hospital in October 1988 and October 1991. After eleven years with First Church, “Ed” closed his pastorate here in January 1999.

After thirty years and many positive changes and upgrades to the parsonage (see the photo showing it in 1990), First Church members voted to sell it; many pastors and their spouses were electing to purchase their own homes, allowing them to accumulate some real equity during their careers. For this, and other considerations, it was placed on the market and was sold for \$140,000, ending a chapter in First Church history.



Steve Thomas

Historian

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERVICE SUNDAY January 29, 2023

Please mark your calendar and join in our first Service Sunday! We will begin in the Sanctuary at 10:00 a.m. for an abbreviated worship service. We’ll move to the Great Hall to begin a **hands-on, intergenerational project** by 10:30. If you want to come just for worship, that’s fine.

Under the combined support of the Christian Education Board, Mission Board, and the Diaconate, we will be preparing Blessing Bags.

Blessing Bags will contain useful, comforting items for someone who is homeless: socks, antibacterial wipes, tissues, adhesive bandages, a comb, a soft protein bar, packet of cheese and crackers, box of raisins, thermal handwarmer.

You can keep Blessing Bags in your car to offer to someone in need. The majority of the Blessing Bags we prepare will go to local organizations providing direct outreach to the area’s homeless population, including the Slusser Center in Hopkinton and the Friendly Kitchen in Concord.

If you’d like to contribute toward buying Blessing Bag supplies, please reach out either to Pastor Jill or to Margaret in the office.

UPDATE FROM THE TRUSTEES

Church added to State Register: The Trustees are pleased to announce that our historic church building has been added to the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places. Listing on the State Register is one of several ways to acknowledge a property's historical significance. Listing on the State Register does not restrict renovations on the building and has several benefits, including:

- Public recognition that a property is significant to a community.
- Consideration and advocacy in the planning of local and state funded or otherwise assisted projects.
- Qualification for state financial assistance for preservation projects, when funds are available.
- Special consideration or relief in the application of some access, building and safety code regulations.

The Trustees express their gratitude to Church Historian, Steve Thomas, who compiled the extensive history of the church and detailed description of architecture that were required for the successful application.

Examining Church's Financial Records: The Trustees are reaching out to the congregation to find an individual who can fulfill the following requirement from our Bylaws:

“The Trustees shall engage a qualified person with training or experience in financial matters, who may or may not be a member of the Congregation, to examine the Church's financial records from time to time but no less often than every three years, and submit a report to the Trustees”.

If you can help, or can recommend someone outside the Congregation who is qualified, please contact Lucia Kittredge (lucia.kittredge@comcast.net)

The Parish House Needs a New Roof: The Trustees are working hard to address recent roof leaks and water damage at the Parish House. The problem areas will be sealed to prevent further damage while Trustees select from the bids solicited to re-roof the entire building. Thanks to the capital campaign of 2019-20, we have the funds to cover this expense. You will be hearing more in the coming weeks about a special meeting to approve the expenditure.

FAMILY PROMISE UPDATE

Early in November First Church welcomed two homeless families into our Parish House for a week. We prepared rooms and meals for them, and shared evenings of good conversation with the three adults as well as fun and games with their three children.

To be successful, this ministry of offering radical hospitality requires the open-hearted participation of many members and friends of our church family. Thirty-two of us joined to serve, giving our time, talent and treasure to help ensure that our guests were embraced, cared for, and given hope. First Church's response is yet another indication that we are moving from our past into our future with grace and generosity of spirit.

FCCH Family Promise coordinators Dawn Berry and Nancy Emery extend our gratitude to Allita Paine, Carol Sabol, Pam Manus, Carol Sweny, Sue and Tim Kurtz, Lisa Parker, Marie Martell, Lynn Hughan, Shirley Quinn, Yoly and Dan Rinden, Elaine Lessels, Carolyn Keilig, Maxine Petruccelli, Jenny Mullins, Roberta Brunelle, Lissa Jones, Missy Dustin, Margaret Serzans, Brenda Quinn, Janet Ward, Barbara and Larry Shaltis, Jill Small, Greg Berry, Jill Buelte, Diana and Teagan Collins, and Nirmala Slater for your generosity of spirit.

Thank you!

Nancy and Dawn

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Address Service Requested

First Church

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER

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Deadline for January newsletter: Wednesday, December 21