



# First Church

## CONNECTION

First Congregational Church, UCC  
Hopkinton, NH

July/August 2023  
Vol. 64 • Issue 7

### Small Talk

During these spectacular summer days I try to stop a moment and be aware of the presence of God in my heart and in all that surrounds me. That Loving Presence is also there on the coldest days of the winter or on a day with pouring rain, but I admit I am reminded of IT more often on these beautiful days.

When I take the time to feel that Presence I am filled with gratitude. As many of my days now involve First Church work, I am grateful for tremendous blessings there. We have been handed down an amazing sanctuary and parish house. A physical plant that has been cared for by hundreds of people for hundreds of years. We also have inherited a sacred spiritual tradition which has also required so many years of prayerful discernment and trust. The beautiful music which fills our worship ranges from historic to innovative. When I take a moment to reflect I am deeply grateful for all those people from years past, but moreover all those people right now who are giving their heart and soul to support First Church. I am especially grateful for Rev. Richard Slater and Rev. Jim Howard stepping in to lead our worship through the summer.

During the month of August we will be experimenting with a new worship format. Wednesday services will bring a camp like feeling to our worship and remind us that there are many ways to commune with The Spirit. In September we will be postponing Rally Sunday from its usual place on the second Sunday, to September 24th so that we can enthusiastically welcome Rev. Lexi Boudreaux on her first Sunday as our settled pastor. Please take a few minutes to read carefully through the pages that follow. There are great plans for the coming months.

As we embark on a new chapter in the long story of The First Congregational church of Hopkinton, UCC, it is with a very grateful heart that I say we are the church together.

Becky Ewing,  
Church Moderator



**JULY/AUGUST**

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

# WEDNESDAY SERVICES

## WEDNESDAY IS THE NEW SUNDAY !!

Your deacons, working with Rev. Jim Howard, decided to try something completely different for First Church worship this August: **NO SUNDAY SERVICES, but instead, WEDNESDAY SERVICES at 6 PM.**

Services will be informal, outside (weather permitting), interactive, and short (30-40 minutes). Wear comfy clothes! We encourage you to bring your own chairs (for use indoors or out), though we will have some folding chairs available.

Each service will have a theme, and include a “field trip” or “special event” (see below).

The overarching theme for August will be **“GOD’S CAMPFIRE”** as each service will be in the style of being at a church camp, gathering around a campfire! Most songs will be “camp songs” led by guitar (mostly); Thank you Sarah Ames! Each week will feature a special Children’s Message from Trish Walton!

**PLEASE NOTE: THERE IS NO SUNDAY SERVICE ON JULY 30 OR SEPTEMBER 3 (The Wednesday services for August 2 and August 30 will cover for those two Sundays).**

**SERVICES WILL NOT BE STREAMED LIVE ON WEDNESDAYS, but will be posted online (details will be emailed)**

Here are the Weekly Themes and details

**August 2 – “Fully Alive” with Communion** (Graham crackers and chocolate milk or water) Rev. Jim has been watching his 22-month-old grandson rapidly stamp his feet and screech when something excites him. What makes you “jump for joy?” What summer sights grab your attention and delight? We will share our experiences. Sarah Ames is providing special music.

**FIELD TRIP** to Contoocook for the Hopkinton Town Band concert at 7 pm (weather permitting)

**August 9 – “God sightings”** Have you glimpsed God at work just in a normal day’s events? Perhaps a shadow was cast and its beauty caught your attention? Maybe you observed someone being kind and thoughtful? Perhaps you were stopped short by ?? and you caught “the joy as it flies” (William Blake). We will share and discuss how God speaks to us in everyday subtle ways. Special music by Sarah Ames.

**FIELD TRIP** to Contoocook Fire Station to observe a Firefighter Training Session.

**August 16 – “Hi God! - Talking with God”** How do you converse with God? Like talking with a friend? A parent? A co-worker? A boss? A teacher? There is no right or wrong way, but God is always listening and eager to speak with us! O, yeah, talking with God is sometimes called, “prayer.” We’ll share about this! Special music by Mike Metcalf and Jim Loft.

**SPECIAL EVENT** – Ice Cream Social (at the church). Make your own Sundaes.

**August 23 – “Observation – Taking-in what’s right in front of you”** How do you take notice of your surroundings (see, hear, smell, touch)? Wisdom from your body: breathing, being quiet, slowing down, connecting with what’s around you. Getting in touch with the “this-ness” in the space and objects, persons and nature, close to us. We’ll practice seeing plants, trees, others, clouds, bugs, and daytime turning into twilight. Special music by Lindy & Charlie Head and friends.

**SPECIAL EVENT** – S’Mores (make your own, inside or out depending upon the weather)

**August 30 – “Those Who Sing Pray Twice!”** – Suggest your favorite hymn (both our *Chalice* and *Pilgrim* hymnals will be available) or camp song--we’ll sing a verse or two--and tell us why you like/love it! Special Music by Larry Shaltis.

**SPECIAL EVENT** – Goodies and drinks will be provided for everyone!

## 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](mailto:dcbnh@comcast.net)

### Friendly Kitchen

Charles and Maxine Petruccelli

[MaxinePet@gmail.com](mailto:MaxinePet@gmail.com)

203-313-3893

### Head Usher

Sue Mitchell

603-470-6754

[spmitchell43@gmail.com](mailto:spmitchell43@gmail.com)

### Sanctuary Flowers

#### Coordinator

Carol Howard

[caroldawson640@comcast.net](mailto:caroldawson640@comcast.net)

(preferred)

603-496-5365

## FAMILY PROMISE

Thank you, FFCH, for a successful and very hospitable week of hosting our Family Promise guests from July 16-23. The menu was a hit thanks to our food preparers. The upstairs air conditioning was working and very much appreciated, thanks to Brad Watson. We are grateful to all our volunteers who filled the slots during a hot July week! Those serving our Family Promise guests include: Sue Kurtz, Elizabeth Sides, Missy Dustin, Barb and Larry Shaltis, Carolyn Keilig, Beth Spaulding, Marie Martel, Elizabeth Hodgdon, Margaret Serzans, Sara Baroody and Bella, Pam Manus, Carol Sweeny, Lisa Parker, Roberta Brunelle, Eric Schlepffhorst, Maxine Petruccelli, Brenda Quinn, Lynn Hughan, Mary Beth Masci, Lissa Jones, Beth Dermody, Cate Cushing, Kim Burgess, Jill Buelte, Lisa Beelle, Trish Walton and crew, Nirmala Slater, Nancy Emery, and Dawn Berry. We thank those who also served in more than one position during the week. A special shout out to Lynn Hughan who served as a Day Leader giving Nancy and me a complete day break!

We served a family of three, John, Nancy, and 15-year-old Nicholas; and another family of three, Mikala, 6-year-old Tyler, and 2-year-old Jackson. Reliable transportation seems to be a critical need for John and family as he looks for a job. If anyone has a reliable used car to donate, call Family Promise and ask for Steve Croke, 603-856-8490.

Our next hosting date is November 26 – December 3. We are looking for more people willing to be a Day Leader. A Day Leader contacts all the people serving that day with information received from Nancy and me regarding the number of people to be served and pertinent information provided. This helps meal preparers with portions and evening and overnight hosts with information about ages and what activities might be enjoyed. The Day Leader opens the church at 5:30 pm, keeps a check on the Family Promise phone for messages about possible late arrivals, and sets up for supper served at 6 pm. When all are settled with the Evening Hosts, the Day Leader leaves at 6:30 or earlier, unless signed up for another responsibility. If there are changes in the number of guests before the scheduled day, the Day Leader communicates that to the rest of the day's crew. Everything else is already organized by Nancy through Sign-Up genius.

The joy of serving families during a critical time in their lives is a good reward! For more information about any position in the roles of serving our guests, contact Dawn Berry [dcbnh@comcast.com](mailto:dcbnh@comcast.com) or Nancy Emery [nemery015@gmail.com](mailto:nemery015@gmail.com). Thank you!

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Mission Board: Got Lunch

This is the third year the Mission Board has partnered with Hopkinton Social Services (administered by Judy McPhail) to provide food for Hopkinton residents with children who normally would be getting school lunch free. One reason we like this program is it is local. This year Sue Callahan and Maxine Petruccelli shopped for the meals and dropped the ingredients off at St. Andrew's. Typically we provide a protein (usually eggs or tuna) cereal, and five servings of fruit or vegetables for each child, We provided lunch for eight families and 17 children for the weeks of July 1 and July 8.

## Congratulations, Graduates!

**Claire Buelte**, granddaughter of Jill Buelte, graduated from Hopkinton High School on June 9th. She will be attending the University of New Hampshire in the fall.

**Robert Rinden**, son of Dan and Yoly Rinden, has been accepted to University of New Hampshire, but has deferred for a year because he has joined the NH Air National Guard as a Medic and will be going to Boot Camp and then Technical School for his new job before attending UNH studying Bio-Medical Science.

*Dear friends,*

*Many thanks for the cupcakes and cards, poem and farewell wishes that marked the conclusion of my service as First Church's interim pastor. As a congregation, you are ready to begin writing the next chapter in FCCH's story of mission and ministry. May the Spirit guide you and your new settled pastor!*

*Peace,*

*Jill*

# FROM THE ARCHIVES

## Turning the Acorn

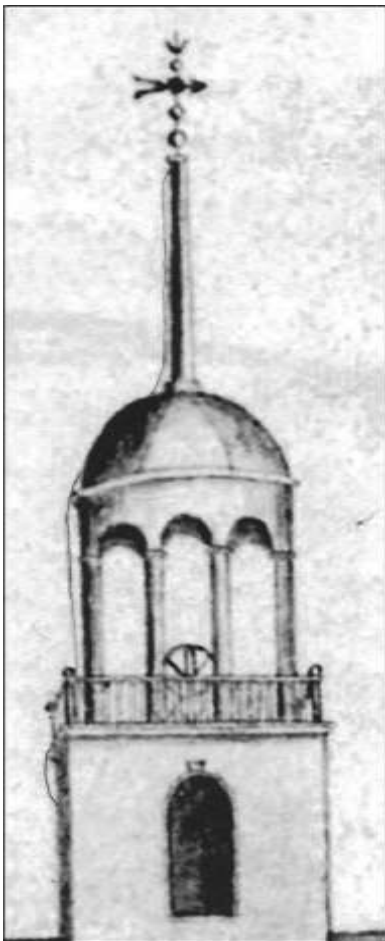
First Church is most fortunate to have a copy of this 1828 sketch by Edward Ballard (1804-1870), son of Hopkinton teacher John Osgood Ballard, made for the Reverend Roger Conant Hatch, Pastor of First Church 1818-1832. Essentially this building, with modifications, is the same church building on the same site, today.

This sketch proved very helpful to me when in my research I came across the following entry in the (often somewhat haphazard and incomplete) records of the First Congregational Society of Hopkinton at the N.H. Historical Society Library:



Sep 8	1852	pd.	Cross & Warren for turning Acorn	\$3.00
Sep 18	"		George Main for gilding* Vane & Acorn	10.13
			Moore, Cilley & Co. for Iron	.49
Sep. 21			A. Hardy for work	1.50
Sep 22			G.G. Stephens for lightning rod	24.00
		"	for work	3.00
Sep 21			H. Edmunds for iron work	2.25
			Daniel Hoyt 2 trips to Concord	2.75
			Timothy Colby, Jr. for timber	.50

\*i.e. gilding



(For comparison purposes, for the period ending March 1853 the Society paid Mr. Marshall B. Angier \$636.00 for supplying the pulpit for 53 Sundays - preaching both a morning and an afternoon sermon - at the rate of \$12.00 a Sabbath. He was settled and ordained ("Reverend") here afterwards on June 8, 1853. Day laborers were paid .80 - 1.00 per day)

The cast in this episode includes: Samuel P. Cross, 41, and John G. Warren, 31, both Concord carpenters, and George Main, 33, Concord, an ornamental painter; Moore, Cilley and Company, in Stickney's Block, opposite the State House, Concord, selling hardware; Horace Edmunds, 47, a Hopkinton blacksmith; Timothy Colby, Jr., 34, Hopkinton, farmer, member of the Church and Society. The only G.G. Stephens I turned up in my research was Gustus [perhaps nickname for "Augustus"?] G. Stevens, of Nashua, 20 years old, a civil engineer and son of a civil engineer (who perhaps sold lightning rods, or not).

And the props for this maneuver: the (probably) copper roofed cupola atop the tower with the bell wheel within; the tall lightning rod (two thirds the height of the cupola itself); the iron pole with two glass balls, one or both of which would break to indicate a lightning strike (should no one be there to observe it, or in the night); the vane with its arrow and "tail" (the rods holding the N,E,S, and W figures apparently not present); above the vane, the metal "acorn" (the item being turned by Cross and Warren on September 18,

perhaps bringing its less weathered side around toward the sunny side but then discovering it too was somewhat worn, leading to the order to have George Main gild the acorn at the same time he gilds the vane; and finally, George Main to gild as well (as part of the vane) what appears to be perhaps a rooster at the top (“Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.”)

And the wonderful detail that young Ballard did not overlook — the ground wire leading from the rod down over the roof of the cupola, down beside the cupola out over the railing and down past the tower before disappearing behind it and thence down to the ground rod sunk deep in the earth. (I went over it with a pencil.)

Now, if you thought the title of this piece was a reference to a long-forgotten nineteenth-century dance step or to a dance itself, you stand corrected. Day by day, through all the years of First Church, from 1757 to this very hour, many, many, many members and attenders were and are lending their expertise, spending their time and energy and financial support to keep it all alive and well. Blessings upon all, those gone up and those still in the field.

*Steve Thomas, Historian*

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### **Youth Group Summer Service Week**

8 youth group members and 4 adults spent a week in July volunteering on a house renovation project in Pittsfield with Habitat for Humanity. The weather was hot and the work was hard but everyone stepped up and put in a ton of effort and elbow grease! Thank you to: Edward Blagriff, Matthew Dermody, Ryan Dermody, Grace Hodgdon, Jack Kohl, George Kohl, Sam Kohl, and Jackson Nyland, plus Ed Blagriff, Beth Dermody, Chris Hodgdon, and Trish Walton.

### **Waffle Church returns**

Thank you to all who came out for waffles, songs, stories, and fellowship this past year during our monthly Waffle Church. We were able to provide an early-morning opportunity for busy families to connect with their church family, and so we will joyfully continue Waffle Church on the **first Sunday of the month** starting **Sunday, October 1, 8:30 am**. All are invited and welcome!

### **A Joyful Path Sunday School classes - Opportunities for children and adults**

All children are invited to join Sunday School classes during the school year. We are delighted to once again offer the Joyful Path program: “A truly progressive curriculum that is nature centered, joy-full, compassionate, and intelligent.” YOU can help make sure we are as welcoming as possible by offering to help out with Sunday School and/or nursery care. Please contact Trish at [Twalton65@gmail.com](mailto:Twalton65@gmail.com) to receive updates and news about children and youth programming, or to let her know you would be willing to help out with nursery care or Sunday School classes on an occasional (or regular!) basis.

# MUSIC & ARTS NEWS

The Music and Arts Board has been busy this summer!! In June, our Handbell Choir Director, Mindy Wolfe, retired from her role of directing. She directed the choir for 11 years, and she did a wonderful job of teaching us new skills, advocating for equipment, and purchasing new music, and directing beautiful choir music. The choir provided wonderful pieces during worship and special services. We are so grateful for all she has done. Mindy does love the bells and will continue to be part of the choir in the future. We had a wonderful recognition/thank-you for Mindy during worship and at our fellowship time.

## **THANK-YOU MINDY!!**

We were also blessed to learn about someone who was interested in our Handbell Choir Director position and had significant musical experience: Nancy Steen. Nancy attended a bell choir rehearsal, submitted her resume and references, and she was interviewed by a committee from our choir and board. We are delighted to announce that we offered her the position, and Nancy accepted!! She will begin her position here on September 1. Please read Nancy's bio in this newsletter. All of us are grateful for her interest in and willingness to lead our Handbell Choir. To any of you reading this: if you are interested in playing in the choir, please let us know! You don't have to have bell experience—just a willingness to learn. More information will be provided in the future regarding the beginning of bell choir rehearsals.

## **WELCOME, NANCY!!**

After much discussion with the Trustees, the former Quilt Room/classroom, will become the Music and Arts Room. All of the choral and bell sheet music file cabinets are already in the room, and the bell choir tables, instruments and supplies will be moved into the room. Sarah Ames, our Music Director, has been very busy cleaning a closet for music supplies and has been going through our sheet music, to make sure our data base is up to date. Mindy Wolfe is going through the bell choir music to also update the data base. We are excited to have all of our instruments and supplies consolidated into one dedicated room. The former bell choir room will be used as a meeting room. All of this is in process, and we hope to be ready for fall. Thank you to all of you who have been involved in making this happen.

Our church has so much to look forward to, and the Music and Arts Board is thrilled to continue to provide and to promote ministries, for the congregation and beyond. Our goal is to share love and faith in a variety of ways. "Stay Tuned" for more updates!

*Barb Shaltis,*

*Chairperson, Music and Arts Board*

# MUSIC & ARTS NEWS

## Meet Nancy Steen, Our New Handbell Choir Director!!

As a child, I lived amongst music. My dear aunt was an opera star and attended many wonderful events, while meeting famous opera celebrities at the post-opera gathering. Our friend, Becky was a cellist and after hearing her play, I took cello lessons, giving those up when I became active in choral singing and decided I was better at that, than the cello. Choral music took over for me in Junior High and High School. I joined the select chorus group and the general chorus groups. We put on some wonderful productions and I performed in my first full orchestral work of Handel's Messiah.



Moving to New Hampshire, I was able to continue my vocal classes, as well as theory and dynamics. I also learned conducting. I participated in the New Hampshire Music Festival for several years, as well. As an adult, I became an 'older, wiser learner,' OWL, as I earned my Bachelor's degree at Keene State College, on my way to earn my Master's Degree in English. I taught English for 25 years, in New Hampshire, Abu Dhabi, and Amman, Jordan. But I did miss the bells while I was away, despite the fact that I was active in church choirs and also musical theater in Abu Dhabi.

In 1985, it was a natural progression when my church incorporated handbells into our music repertoire. I was able to begin taking courses in conducting at the national handbells conventions with AGEHR (American Guild of English Handbell Ringers.) I took on an interim position at Smith Church as substitute handbell conductor and directed the vocal choir for six years, and conducted at Henniker Congregational Church. This was a thrill for me, as following a community Christmas Concert, one of the professors from New England College, stopped by to praise my ability and choice of music I became active in the online music director's forum and attended a workshop in Rhode Island to give me more knowledge of the craft of conducting.. Most recently, I restarted the handbell choir as an interim director at Smith church for the Christmas 2022-January 2023 season.

I am delighted to join First Congregational Church of Hopkinton as your handbell director and hope to meet many new folks and to grow our handbell choir as well.



# PHOTOS



*On June 11, the congregation voted to accept Pastor Lexi Boudreaux as First Church's new minister. Following the unanimous vote, the children's choir sang a song of welcome and Pastor Lexi delivered her first sermon to the congregation.*



*Handbell Choir Director, Mindy Wolfe, retired in June from her role of directing the choir for 11 years. We had a wonderful recognition/thank-you for her during worship and at during our fellowship hour.*





## Red Cross Blood Drive

### St. Andrew's Episcopal Church



354 Main St. Hopkinton, NH 03229 - Great Hall

**Wednesday, August 16, 2023, 1:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.**

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

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 commonly transfused blood component.

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

 <small>Scan to schedule an appointment.</small>	<p><b><i>All who come to give will get a \$10 e-gift card to a movie merchant of your choice.</i></b></p>	 <small>can be directed to RapidPass®</small>
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Schedule a blood donation appointment today:

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

To **sign up to volunteer** on the day of the drive go to

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

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and the First Congregational Church of Hopkinton UCC sponsor an American 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 as 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 as they freely give their blood to save others.

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

2023 dates for Red Cross Blood Drives at St. Andrew's:  
Wednesday October 18 and Wednesday December 20

# TRUSTEES UPDATE, SUMMER 2023

Like everyone at First Church, the Trustees are eagerly anticipating the arrival of our new settled pastor, Rev. Lexi Boudreaux, in September. In preparation, we are hustling to be sure the buildings and grounds are as welcoming as possible. The Parish House has been reroofed, hopefully eliminating years of interior water damage. Water damage from both long-term roof problems and the spring flooding in the basement are being addressed. The Music and Arts Board is consolidating their materials (music files and hand bells) into what has been the “quilt room” freeing up the bell choir room for use by small classes and meetings.

The Parish House currently contains quite a lot of under-utilized space. The Trustees are planning a Building Use Assessment over the coming year. Architect Jim Loft has agreed to assist with the work. The goal is to determine if there are different ways the Parish House (and sanctuary) could be used to further benefit the congregation and the community. What are the pros and cons of various possibilities? What changes would be needed to accommodate a different use?

We are seeking input from members of the congregation. If you have ideas about how the building could be used differently, please share them with me ([dijit.t.taylor@gmail.com](mailto:dijit.t.taylor@gmail.com), (603) 496-1605) or leave a signed note in the Trustee’s mailbox in the Parish House corridor.

Thanks for your help with this!

Shalom,

*Dijit*

Dijit Taylor

Chair, Board of Trustees

1548 Hopkinton Rd.  
Hopkinton, NH 03229

*Address Service Requested*

# First Church

NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST

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**Deadline for September newsletter: Wednesday, August 23**

