



# First Church of Christ, Congregational

United Church of Christ

*Welcome All,*

*Grow in Faith,*

*Joyfully Serve*

## September 2017 Newsletter

### Pastor's Message



Throughout my twenty years as a pastor, I've had one consistent piece of advice from parishioners, "don't get political!" For the most part, I've taken that advice to heart. One piece of our mission statement is "welcome all." This means, welcoming people regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender preference, etc. But often we don't mention their political affiliation. This is just as important as anything else. It is my deepest desire to have a congregation that respects political and cultural diversity, that can contain a wide range of opinions yet find a unity, a one-ness in the Spirit. Our community is a spiritual community that transcends all the categories our world places upon us, including our political affiliations.

It is with this in mind that I approach my first sermon series of the church year, "What Does the Bible Say?" Throughout the year, I have become acutely aware that we live in times of heightened anxiety about our world. Somehow, the stakes have gotten higher on many issues. An overwhelming number of people have shared their political opinions, especially on social media,

*continued on page 2*

### Christian Nurture



September marks the beginning of a new church school year. Many things this year will feel just like last year. Other things will feel new and different. This is especially true for our youth. Over the summer, Nurture revamped our youth program to better meet the needs of our youth. We are no longer looking at youth as middle schoolers and high schoolers. Instead we are taking a more comprehensive approach and looking at the specific youth in our church. Be sure to check out the youth section for details. There are fewer changes for our elementary school children. The biggest changes the elementary school youth will experience are in all church activities. This fall we are trying a new inter-generational activity. On September 30<sup>th</sup>, we will gather at church for a day of service. This event seeks to connect us with one another, with the community, with our mission, and with our faith. All ages are invited to spend the day in service, fellowship,

*continued on page 2*

### Homecoming Sunday, September 10, 2017

Join us **September 10th at 10:00 a.m.** for worship as we return to the Sanctuary and celebrate the start of a great year of ministry here at First Church. If you haven't already "preregistered," you will be able to register your children for Sunday School and Youth Groups. We will also register adults planning to teach, assist or lead a group, including filling out a CORI form.

After worship, we will go to the church steps for our annual photo, and then enjoy an after-church lunch. We will provide the hot dogs, drinks and paper products. Feel free to either bring a salad or dessert. Hope to see you all there!

*~ Pastor John*

### Sunday Worship 10:00 am

**Church Office Phone:** 781-275-7951

**Church Office Hours:** Monday-Friday 9:00 am-3 pm

**Church Office Email:** fchurchb2@verizon.net

**Website:** www.firstchurchbedford.org

**Senior Pastor:** *The Reverend John Castricum*  
cell phone: 857-939-0711

**Director of Christian Nurture:** *Kate Byers*

**Music Director:** *Susan Capestro*

**Church Administrator:** *Suzie Barry*

continued from front page:

quoting the Bible or another Christian figure, to put forth their opinion. Our Facebook pages are bombarded with “memes” containing scripture quotes.

As potent as these quotes may be, often it does not necessarily represent the whole truth of what the Bible says on any given issue. The Bible was written by many different authors, over thousands of years. Each one had their particular point of view, based on the culture they lived in. Since the Bible was written long ago by people different from us, a lot of the issues we deal with today would never have been on the minds of the writers. Biblical authors never wrote directly about climate change –how could they?

One of the great observations made by N.T. Wright, one of the great biblical scholars of our day, is that the Bible, although filled with individual stories, has bigger stories. There is a huge story of what God is doing with humanity and the world that starts from Genesis and ends with Revelation. Yet often, do not connect the little stories to the bigger biblical story. Instead, we connect these little stories to our own stories. We use them to support our cultural or political beliefs. Jesus turns into a political revolutionary or pop psychologist or a provider of goods and services.

From Homecoming Sunday through Columbus Day weekend, we will offer this sermon series to take a good look at what the Bible actually says about the “hot-button” issues of the day, such as income inequality, climate change and racism. I am working hard to make sure these sermons are not about politics, but about the Bible and how we can best use scripture to help us understand these issues.

I will also be starting a series of “sermon talk back” sessions this fall, so that anyone interested in further pursuing these issues will have a chance to respond as well as ask questions. I’m looking forward to this series and hearing from you. I hope and pray it will result in all of us having a better understanding of how scripture works and can be used to make sense of our lives and our world.

~ Pastor John

## New Fall Sermon Series “What Does the Bible Say?”

Beginning on **September 10<sup>th</sup>**, Homecoming Sunday, Pastor John begins a six-part sermon series called, “What Does the Bible Say?” Each Sunday, he will be taking an important current topic and showing how the Bible can be used (and misused) to address the topic. Since the Bible was written long ago by people different from us, the Bible often does not have clear answers to the great questions of our day. Often, small passages can be taken out of their context to prove one point or another, without looking at the whole story the Bible tells.

As much as the series will be addressing important topics like climate change and racism, it will mainly be about how important it is to interpret the Bible in the best possible way.

---

### Sermon Talk Back Sessions

Have you ever wanted to ask Pastor John about a point he made during the sermon? Do you have another idea about what the scripture passage was about? Do you think he just plain got it wrong this Sunday? Here’s your opportunity to talk back!

Beginning on **September 24<sup>th</sup>**, we will be meeting in the Church Parlor on the **second and fourth Sundays** of the month, about 15 minutes or so after coffee hour begins for a sermon talk-back session. This will be a great opportunity to start a conversation about what was preached on Sunday morning.

All are invited, and no knowledge of the Bible or faith is required. Join us for another opportunity to “Grow in Faith.”

### September Deacon’s Offering

on September 3, 2017 is for:

**Doctors without Borders**



## **Bible and Bagels**

### **A New Bible Study Opportunity**

Pastor John is introducing a new Bible Study opportunity this year, "Bible and Bagels." Beginning on **Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>**, he will be at the Bedford Bruegger's Bagels on Great Road on **Thursdays** from **7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.** for a breakfast bible study. This is a drop-in bible study: show up anytime you're free to go over a Bible passage with John. No prior knowledge of the Bible is necessary. This is an introductory session aimed at those who don't know much about the Bible, but are curious to learn more.

So join us and get your day started right, with a good dose of inspiration. And bring a friend, too!

---

### **Coffee, Conversation and Bible Study at Bruegger's - an hour earlier**

Pastor John will be continuing his "Coffee and Conversation" this fall, but at a new time. He will be at Bruegger's Bagels on Great Road on Tuesdays an hour earlier, from **9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.** He will be available to talk about anything you want: faith, Red Sox, weather or anything else on your mind.

On Thursdays, John will be continuing his "drop-in" Bible Study session, but an hour earlier, at **9:00 a.m.** Starting on September 14<sup>th</sup>, This is an open, introductory Bible Study – no prior knowledge of the Bible is needed – just an open and curious mind, and all the questions that you have stored up in the back of your head. If you want to talk to John about other things, he will be around for about an hour after the Bible Study.

Come with your questions and bring a friend!

---

### **Visual Choir**

Last Spring, we formed a "visual choir" in church, charged with making visual art for the sanctuary. The first piece completed by the "choir" was a Pentecost banner that has continued to be in the Music Chapel during the summer months.

Now, the visual choir is making plans to create a new Advent banner for the sanctuary. If you would be like to be a part of this project, or any other future visual choir projects, please talk to Pastor John.

## **First Church Day of Service**

Join nurture and outreach on **Saturday, September 30, 2017** for an intergenerational day of service! We will gather at 9:00 am for a light breakfast before heading out to work on a range of projects in and around Bedford. Some projects will help our town; others will help our local mission partners. Some projects will be outdoors, others will be inside. Some projects will require standing or walking, others will be perfect for people who need to sit. All projects are designed for people between the ages of 3 and 103. No matter our age, we all have something offer and something to learn. The day of service will conclude with a time of worship and reflection to ground our work in God's love. Bring your friends, bring your family, bring a sack lunch and if you can a donation for the food pantry.

Schedule:

- 9:00 am Breakfast
- 9:30 am Pray and send
- 9:45-11:45 am Service
- 12:00 pm lunch (bring your own bag)
- 12:30 pm worship and reflection

### **SPAN Health Kit Drive**

During the Frist Church Day of Service, we will be assembling health kits for SPAN. SPAN is an agency that does tremendous work, helping formerly incarcerated people reintegrate into the world. They provide food, clothing, toiletries, substance abuse support, counseling and other critical needs to this vulnerable population.

SPAN is in constant need of toiletries, particularly for men. One of our Day of Service activities is assembling health kits for SPAN. How does it work? When you go out shopping, pick up some extra: Toothpaste, Toothbrush, Soap, Deodorant, Shaving cream, Disposable razors, One gallon ziplock bags.

Bring these items to church any time before September 30. There will be a special basket in the Vestry to collect the toiletries. During the day of service volunteers will sort the items and assemble health kits. We look forward to delivering as many toiletry kits to SPAN as possible. Thanks to everyone for their support!

## First Church Mission Trip Recap- July 8th - 15th, 2017



At the start of July, sixteen faithful souls went down to West Virginia for the third annual mission trip to that state. The trip was the culmination of a year's worth of planning and fundraising. The Mission Team was composed of old and young, men and women, experienced construction people and total newbies. What brought us together was a commitment to serve and a spirit of courage to go into new and different places to meet new and different people.

Each work day had a rhythm. After breakfast, we gathered in a circle to pray, meditate on a piece of scripture and prepare our spirits for a day of service. We then got into

our vans and traveled 1 ½ hours to a small village named Wyco. There, we found Mount Grove Baptist church, set on a small hill. It is the last active black coalminer's church in the county. The church was in need of painting and repairs. As it was coming up on its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018, it was very important to the parishioners that it be restored.

Everyone found a job to do during the work day. Some spent the days cleaning, caulking and painting the sanctuary. Some went up on ladders to paint the outside. Some went to the basement, and set themselves the ambitious task to totally transform the kitchen and bathrooms as well as provide some critical painting and waterproofing. After a long, hard day, the



crew found ways to refresh and relax, either by enjoying some ice cream at a local Dairy Queen or by enjoying cool mountain water being poured over them at a local waterfall. After another 1 ½ ride home, we quickly got dinner casseroles in the oven, ate and gathered again in a circle for reflections on what happened during the day. Then it was time for much-needed rest.



Yet the week was not just about doing projects or service. It was about forming relationships, turning strangers into neighbors. We had the pleasure of meeting Miss Margaret and her daughter Geneva that week. These two women took it upon themselves to care for the church, and did so in the most loving, faithful way. Miss Margaret was 93-years-old, yet didn't look a day over 75. She told stories of a long life of struggle and triumph, spanning the Great Depression, World War II,

the Civil Rights Movement and the forming of the United Coal Miners. We listened to her stories and shared our lives with her. We sang hymns with her and prayed with her. The hospitality, love and appreciation that Miss Margaret and Geneva showed will stay with us forever.

There are so many stories to tell and pictures to share from our trip. We are looking forward to talking about our experience with as many people as possible, in many different settings, whether after church, during a Wonderful Wednesday, at Sunday School and during a special "Mission Trip" Sunday in October, with worship led by the mission team and a program after church. If you haven't read the Mission Trip Blog, please go to <http://firstchurchbedfordmission.blogspot.com/> to read about their amazing experience. For those without computers, paper copies of the blogs are also available.

Even now, plans are being made for next year's Mission Trip. Do you feel God calling you to go down to West Virginia? Do are you looking for something that's going to transform your faith? Consider being part of the 2018 Mission Team going down! If you are interested or have any questions, please feel free to talk to Pastor John or any other member of the team.



## Faith at Home

This fall's sermon series brings up many challenging topics. These topics are very present in our national conversation. Often they get left to secular spaces out of the fear of bringing politics into church. This approach might keep things feeling copasetic but it does little to help us wrestle with our faith in the in world. The truth is Christianity has always been a little political. By political, I don't mean Democratic or Republican. Rather I mean our faith influences the way we live in this world. Politics influences the way our society is organized. Anything that influences the way we live in the world is eventually going to bump up against the way the world is organized. No matter how hard we try, it is impossible to live faithfully and avoid politics. The good news, is we can talk about our faith and important world issues while avoiding partisanship. This sermon series is not an attempt to divide the congregation or an attempt to support any particular political party (last time I checked, Jesus was not running for office). Rather this series is designed to help us wrestle with important issues and to help us see the diversity of the bible's message around many modern issues.

Topics like racism, immigration, poverty, and LGBT equality are not only import for the adults to think about with an intentional faith lens. They are also important topics for our children. In Sunday School, we won't be shying away from the hard topics. The elementary schoolers will be looking at racism and immigration. The youth will cover all of the same topics as the adults. Just as adults need an opportunity to look at world issues with a faith lens, our children need time and space to think about the way God and faith interact with challenging topics. We often try to shelter kids from some of these issues. The truth is no matter how hard we try to shelter our kids, stuff seeps in. They hear news snippets, their friends bring things up, topics are covered in school, and they hear our conversations. What they don't often hear is how our faith intersects with these challenging topics. That can leave our kids without a guiding rudder. We assume they know what we believe and how we feel about issues. They need to hear specifically from us. They need conversations about race, different religions, immigration, poverty, and LGBT issues to be normal parts of their faith and family life. We will be having some of these conversations in Sunday School. The Sunday School lessons will go much further if they are paired with conversations at home.

I have little kids. I know it can be hard to figure out how to start a conversation. It can also be hard to figure out what is developmentally appropriate. How much should we tell them? When should we talk about these issues? I don't have all the answers. Honestly the answers will vary from family to family and from kid to kid. No two kids grow and develop at the same rate. I can give you a few guiding principles.

1. The conversations can't be one and done. We learn through repetition. Children need to hear things multiple times in order for the information to stick. They also need to gradually receive information digging deeper into topics as they gain maturity and understanding. I mean, how many times have your kids actually listen to and remembered something you said the first time you said it?
2. Media helps start conversations. From books to movies to games, it helps to have something to get a conversation going. There are many great books, movies, film clips, and other resources out there. Some are specifically designed to help parents have conversations with kids. Others are just great stories that share messages.

I can only help so much with the first item. I can help a lot more with the second point. Every week, you will get a list of media and resources to help you have conversations at home. There are resources out there for every age. Hopefully together we can help each other have important conversations with our kids. The kinds of conversations that nurture faith.

*~Kate Byers, Director Christian Nurture*

## Church School for 2017-2018

On September 10, all children are invited to our first week of Church School. In addition to starting our first unit we will share fun summer stories with one and write our 2017-2018 Church School Covenant. Children will begin in worship with the congregation. Following the Children's Time, pre-school, and Elementary school students will gather with their church school teachers in their age specific classrooms. Parents should pick up their children downstairs following worship.

- **Nursery:** Children zero through five years old are welcome to join Samalie in the nursery at the beginning of worship. They are also welcome to start worship with their family and to join Amy in the nursery following Children's time or to remain in worship for the entire service. Parents you know your kids best. Please do whatever work best for your family and let us know how we can support you in caring for your children.
- **Elementary School:** This year our Elementary Students will use curriculum from Spark House to explore Bible Stories. This is the curriculum we used last year. Our children will continue to learn through workshops in Art, Computer, Cooking, Drama, Game, and Movie. While the church is moving on from Bible Top 40, our children will continue learning through Bible stories. The selected stories will coordinate but not exactly match the congregation's topic driven focuses. The year will start with The Woman at the Well and end with the Fruit of the Spirit. In between we will talk about Ruth, the Widow's Offering, the birth of Jesus, Solomon building the Temple, Love is..., Holy Week and Easter, and Lydia. Our first unit on the Woman at the Well will talk about expanding God's extravagant welcome, and about our natural desire to stick with our tribe. This unit will pair nicely with John's sermon "What Does the Bible Say About Racism."
- **Teach:** Would you like to work with our children this year? Nurture is looking for nursery volunteers, 6-8 elementary teachers, and 3-4 Youth Forum leaders. There are lots of big and small ways to help our children and youth grow in faith. Let Kate know what you might be interested in doing.

### Youth Forum

All 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to Youth Forum. Youth forum will meet in the library/parlor following the reading of scripture. This new program replaces middle school Sunday school but should not be confused with Sunday school. Rather than a class set on teaching, it is a drop in style chance for youth to engage in the week's scripture lesson. The gathering will almost always focus on the day's scripture passage and topic. There will be adults in the room but conversation and learning will be youth lead. Some weeks there might be a video or an activity around the topic but only if it helps engage youth in the topic of the week. This structure recognizes that most of our youth are participating in either confirmation or OWL. It is designed to give all youth a chance to engage scripture in a meaningful way while acknowledging their most significant religious education this year is happening outside of Sunday Morning!

### Register for Church School

This year Church School registration is moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To register your child for the nursery or for Sunday School please follow the link below. (have no fear there are paper versions available)

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfi\\_HLN89oQ5TxLcm3rqwjtLK-DrRoLDQWtpVc95lt8ng6jhg/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfi_HLN89oQ5TxLcm3rqwjtLK-DrRoLDQWtpVc95lt8ng6jhg/viewform?usp=sf_link)

If you have any questions, contact Kate Byers at: [kathryn.byers@gmail.com](mailto:kathryn.byers@gmail.com)

### Can you help?

Would you like to work with our children this year?

Nurture is looking for nursery volunteers, 6-8 elementary teachers, and 3-4 Youth Forum leaders.

There are lots of big and small ways to help our children and youth grow in faith.

Let Kate know what you might be interested in doing.

You can reach Kate by email at: [kathryn.byers@gmail.com](mailto:kathryn.byers@gmail.com)

## Youth for 2017-2018

This year we are completely revamping our youth program. For many parts of this program we are integrating middle and high school youth. For other parts of the program, we are keeping the youth in age specific clusters. This should allow us to meet all of our youth where they are while also allowing programs to have enough people to be fun.

All youth will be engaged in service projects and fellowship events. All youth are invited to participate in Youth Forum. All youth are invited to participate in the life of the church including church events and activities. Each age cluster will have a special focus:

**12 Graders/Post Confirmation High Schoolers:** Our post confirmation students will spend the year focused on a learning a service weekend. The weekend is tentatively scheduled for March and will involve all 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders. Where we will be going, what we will be doing, and how we are going to get there will all be up to our seniors. As a group seniors get to think about where they want to go and who they want to serve, then they get to plan a trip around their interests. Our first meeting is from **6:30-7:30pm on Sunday September 17**. Dinner will be provided. All future meeting dates and times will be determined by the group.

**9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> Graders:** All 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> graders were invited to confirmation. You should already have significant detailed information about the confirmation program. If for some reason you don't please talk to Pastor John or to Kate. The first confirmation class is September 10<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-7:30pm. Dinner will be provided.

**7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Graders:** All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders received information about three different local Our Whole Lives (OWL) programs. You should already have significant detailed information about your child's OWL program. If for some reason you don't please talk to Kate.

These focuses all require a significant commitment from our youth. We know they won't work for all of our teens. That is where regular youth events and Youth Forum conversations come into play. At least every other month, there will be an event specifically for youth. All youth are invited to participate in as many or as few of these events as works for them. The first event is a hike on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Members of the hiking club are going to lead our 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders on a hike. This was a great even last year and should be a meaningful experience again this year. You will get an email with more details by September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### Draft Youth Group Calendar:

- September 16<sup>th</sup> - Hiking
- October 14<sup>th</sup> – Serving at Turkey Dinner
- October 29<sup>th</sup> – Trick Or Treating Food Drive for the Bedford Food Pantry
- November 3 – Helping with the Holiday Craft Fire Sale
- November 19<sup>th</sup> – Making care packages for college students
- December 3<sup>rd</sup> – Shopping and Swapping holiday service meets holiday fun
- January 19<sup>th</sup> – Movie Night or Lock-in
- February 4<sup>th</sup> – Snow fun (tubing or skating)
- March 10<sup>th</sup> – Helping with the Mission Fest
- March ?– Youth Service Weekend
- April 1 – Egg Hunt
- May 5<sup>th</sup> – Helping with the Rummage Sale
- May 19<sup>th</sup> – Fun event chosen by youth
- June 9<sup>th</sup> – Marching in Boston Pride

**Register:** This year registration is moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To register your teen for youth programming please follow the link below. (have no fear there are paper versions available) [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc\\_oFrOzgzZo6fn-xdeeMjoKIWDgJmHP2TsoJYsciX5Fc79yA/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc_oFrOzgzZo6fn-xdeeMjoKIWDgJmHP2TsoJYsciX5Fc79yA/viewform?usp=sf_link)

**Help:** In order for these events to occur, we need adult leaders. All events need at least one more additional leader. Off sight and overnight events need at least two additional leaders. Does something look like fun to you? Can you help lead an event? Is there some other event you would like to lead? Talk to Kate.



## Music Notes

**Children's Choir:** Calling all young music lovers, ages 4 and up! Even those who've never sung or played a note before are invited to participate. This year, you can sing, play percussion instruments, even ring hand chimes! We'll play and/or sing in church, mostly on *the first Sunday of each month*. To prepare, come to rehearsal at 11:30, mostly on *the last Sunday of each month*. Adding more rehearsals is also possible, however, we're being sure to start nice and easy. On rehearsal Sundays, we'll practice special songs, anthems, and pieces, just to include each and every child who loves to sing, play percussion, even speak a line.

### The Children's Choir Fall Schedule:

<b>Sunday, September 24:</b>	Mini-rehearsal 11:30 am
<b>Sunday, October 1:</b>	Children's Choir/Ringers in Worship Service - 9:30 am call
<b>Sunday, October 29:</b>	Mini-rehearsal 11:30 am
<b>Sunday, November 5:</b>	Children's Choir/Ringers in Worship Service - 9:30 am call
<b>Sunday, November 26:</b>	Mini-rehearsal 11:30 am
<b>Sunday, December 3:</b>	Children's Choir/Ringers in Worship Service - 9:30 am call

**Jubilee Ringers:** 2017-18 brings plenty of chances to play lots of varied repertoire and ensemble pieces. We've even got a bell anthem or two in the loop, that were favorites of our conference attendees! There are three Sunday services this fall that provide particularly wonderful ringing opportunities, including Bell Sunday, December 10. After we establish all our ringers and subs, a schedule will be posted on the Music Room board. The first rehearsal's Monday, September 11. If you love bells, even if you've never rung before, this would be a terrific year to begin to participate!

**Adult Choir:** We're really looking forward to a very special and unique singing group this year! There will be lots of opportunities for varied and different small ensembles, trios, duets and solos. I can't wait for our first rehearsal, when we can begin to try out some of the new music I've been discovering. You will love it (at least I do)! The first full rehearsal's on Thursday, September 14. We're singing in church Homecoming Sunday, September 10, an anthem so (truly!) simple, you could all sing it in your sleep. See you at mini-rehearsal at 9 am.

### The Adult Choir's September Schedule:

<b>Sunday, September 10</b>	Mini-Rehearsal 9:00 am
<b>Thursday, September 14</b>	Full Rehearsal 7:30 pm
<b>Sunday, September 17</b>	Mini-Rehearsal 9:00 am (Susan away)
<b>Thursday, September 21</b>	No Rehearsal (Wonderful Wednesday Week)
<b>Sunday, September 24</b>	Full Rehearsal 8:30 am
<b>Thursday, September 28</b>	Full Rehearsal 7:30 pm

~ Susan Capestro, Music Director

## Save the Date

**Friday, February 9 thru Sunday, February 11, 2018 is the All Church Retreat!**

The retreat will engage people of all ages around Sacred Conversations.

Gather your family and friends, coming for the whole weekend or just for the day. (details to follow)

## 8:15 Group

The 8:15 Group will start the Fall season on **September 10**. We will be finishing our current book - *Between the Dark and the Daylight* by Sister Joan Chittister and then picking a new book. We welcome anyone who would like to join the group and have a chance to be part of selecting the next book. The Group meets at 8:15 on Sunday mornings in the Vestry and has a light breakfast and conversation before the discussion. For more information please contact Ken and Pat Konkle at 781 275 7332 or [kpkonk@verizon.net](mailto:kpkonk@verizon.net)

---

## Flowers for Sunday Worship



Enjoy the beauty of your and others' donations each week from September to June as a beautiful part of our worship together. Flowers may be donated in memory of a loved one or just because the Spirit moves you! We will order flowers for you unless you prefer to do it yourself. The cost is \$50. There is a signup sheet in the Vestry on the bulletin board, or you may contact Betsy Cogliano at 781-275-9462 or at [laxmom5@aol.com](mailto:laxmom5@aol.com) or signup online at: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20foe49aaab22a6f49-flowers>

---

## Coffee Hour



Is making coffee a Ministry? Absolutely! Coffee hour after church is as important as anything else we do as a church. Where else do you get to check in with your church friends, deepen your relationships and create a stronger sense of "joyful fellowship?" Please sign up to help on the bulletin board in the Vestry or online at this link: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20foe49aaab22a6f49-coffee>

## Yuletide Treasures Grand Finale Save the Dates ~ November 3 and 4, 2017

For decades the Yuletide Treasures Room has been a major attraction at our Fall Fairs. This year, though we are not having a fair, we are having the *Yuletide Treasures Grand Finale* on Friday evening, November 3<sup>rd</sup> from 6-9 PM, and on Saturday morning and early afternoon of November 4<sup>th</sup>. The Handicrafters will also be selling items.

On Friday evening we will also be having a Simple Supper, open to the public, and on Saturday we will have a Simple Tea. Margie Burke, Kate Trigg, and Peter Gerrish have volunteered to be in charge of the Simple Supper. Allyson Printz is in charge of the tea. Susan Wingfield is coordinating the Yuletide sale.

Details will appear in the October newsletter, church bulletins, and Constant Contact notices. In the meantime, if you would like to help staff the events, help with the events by baking, setting up, etc., please contact Allyson Printz (Dinner/Tea at [allyson@printzfamily.us](mailto:allyson@printzfamily.us) or (978) 667-2052) or Susan Wingfield (Yuletide) at [susanw1@verizon.net](mailto:susanw1@verizon.net) or (781-275-9389).

---

## Wonderful Wednesday

In June we had a great conversation about Wonderful Wednesday. Due to that conversation, we are trying new things with scheduling, programming, and food for Wonderful Wednesday. These changes should allow Wonderful Wednesday to remain a vibrant ministry of the church while lightening the cooking load. Our first gathering is **pot luck on September 20, 2017 from 6:00-8:00 pm**. The program for the evening will be about our recent mission trip to West Virginia. So come catch up with friends, enjoy good food, and here about our churches work in the wider world.

### 2017-2018 Wonderful Wednesday Dates:

September 20, 2017  
October 4 & 18, 2017  
November 8, 2017  
December 6, 2017  
January 17, 2018  
February 21, 2018  
March 21, 2018  
April 4 & 18, 2018  
May 16, 2018

## Our Church Gardens

Those of us who maintain the church gardens do so with our mission statement in mind. We want the gardens to be a welcome to all, whether they come to church or are just passing by.

We joyfully meet each spring to plant, then meet weekly during the summer and fall to weed and water. It is not all work. We do take time to visit, rehydrate, and sometimes have a snack, as we get to know each other better as we share our joys and concerns.

When we garden, we are helping with God's beautiful creations, and we grow in faith as we see tiny plants become beautiful flowers, some like the beautiful and complex daylily which only blooms for a day. Have you ever paused and taken a moment to look at a flower? They are so complex, with so many parts to them. The Easter lilies we planted a couple of years ago survived another winter and gave us beautiful blossoms in July. The perennials donated by many of us continue to thrive and multiply.

God also challenges us with weather, garden pests, and even town projects! This year we were blessed with almost weekly rain, plus the sprinkler system in the front gardens that worked until late July. At that time the town began their project of redesigning the road and sidewalk area in front of our property. The grass was removed almost to the edge of the sign and the equipment damaged the sprinkler system. (The town will work with the company that originally installed the system to fix this when the project ends).

Thank you to Steve and Carol Jamison who donated and installed the drip system and timer along the side of the church to water the perennials that Nat Brown donated last fall. The plants are all thriving and weeds in this area are now minimal.

Thank you to Nancy McKinney, Carol Jamison, and Judy Watkins who joined me each week when they were in town, to weed and deadhead the plants. And thank you to Kate Trigg who was able to help us when she was here. Many thanks to Nancy McKinney for sharing the cost with me for the annuals we planted.

One of the urns near the front door of the Sanctuary broke this year and for the summer we planted flowers in the remaining one. We soon will be purchasing two sturdier urns for the front of the church.

~Susan Wingfield



continued from front page:

and worship. October will bring the familiar and beloved Turkey Dinner. In November there is another new event on the calendar as we seek to make good use of unsold Yule Tide Treasure items with a sale and tea. In February we will go on another all church retreat. March brings the return of the Mission Festival. The rummage sale, the variety show, and the Strawberry Festival will all return later in the spring. There is still space on the calendar for new ideas. Is there something you would like to see the church try this year? Let try to make it happen.

Community office hours are back! In September, I will be at Bedford Farms Wednesdays from 12:30 to 2:00. Stop by for conversation and an after school snack. You can also find me online. Feel free to friend me (Kate A. Byers) on Facebook, or to follow me on twitter @KateAByers.

~ Kate Byers

---

## Women's Fellowship: Ice Cream & Summer Sharing

First Church Women's Fellowship/Soul Sisters (WFSS) will kick off the year with an ice cream social at **7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 26**, in the Vestry. Bring a souvenir, photo or anecdote about "what I did over summer vacation." And – to celebrate the gardens of summer – please don your flowery apparel! All church women are invited – and feel free to bring a friend!

Allyson Printz ([allyson@printzfamily.us](mailto:allyson@printzfamily.us))

Kathy Register ([registerk11@gmail.com](mailto:registerk11@gmail.com))



### With Sympathy

To Cathy Gray and family  
death of Cathy's mother, Anne Carroll  
on Friday, July 28, 2017 in Connecticut

~~~~~

To Carol Jamison and family  
on the death of Carol's mother, Nancy V.A. Taylor  
on Monday, August 14, 2017 in Towson, MD

~~~~~

To Ruth Gural and family  
on the death of her husband, Mike Gural  
on Tuesday, August 22, 2017  
Mike's Memorial Service will be  
on Saturday, September 9, 2017 at 2:00 pm  
at First Church

## Highlights from June 4, 2017 Annual Meeting

At least 39 members counted. A quorum was present. Moderator Alison Weaver called the meeting to order at 11:25 a.m.

**MOTION:** To waive the reading of the warrant. **VOTE:** Aye. Unanimous.

In Memoria. Dotty Blake asked for a moment of silence. The Church gave thanks for the lives of Bill Byam, Max Underwood, Jean Dacey, and Ruth Pike, who died this past year.

### **Article 1: To hear reports from --Pastor, Director of Christian Nurture, Music Director, Church Officers, and from representatives from Boards and Committees of the Church**

Recap of the Year. Staff Reports. Alison asked that anyone giving a report highlight written report, and add if needed. Pastor – no additions; Christian Nurture Director Kate Byers – no additions; Board Reports – no additions: Deacons, Outreach, Stewardship or Christian Nurture – no additions. No one at the meeting had question, comment or concern relative to the reports.

### **Article 2: To vote to confirm a slate of Church Officers, Cabinet and Board members as presented to the congregation by the Nominating Committee.**

Peter Gerrish, Allyson Printz, Dotty Blake presented proposed slate of officers and board members. Peter reiterated the mission statement, and thanked all who have offered to serve the church as presented. Asked for two members at large for Cabinet. Alison/Dotty looking for Stewardship support.

**MOTION:** To accept the slate of officers, boards and committee as offered by the Nominating Committee.

**VOTE:** Aye. Unanimous.

*[Note: After meeting, Kelly Woessner offered to serve as Cabinet member at large. Vote to accept will be taken during early 17-18 Cabinet meeting.]*

### **Article 3: To vote to pass a budget that outlines expenditures and projected sources of income for the 17-18 fiscal year.**

Discussion/Comments. Budget for 17-18. Rick Burke let budget summary stand. FY 2018 budget – (\$88,216) deficit. Current fiscal year 16-17 budget passed with similar deficit. As of date of annual meeting (\$24,113). Pastor John: Current interest and investment income more than covers need. Budget presented in Annual Report

**MOTION:** To adopt the budget for the period July 1 2017 – June 30, 2018 as presented by Treasurer Rick Burke.

**VOTE:** Aye. Unanimous.

### **Article 4: To vote to allocate a percentage of pledge income to Outreach and Mission**

**MOTION:** To appropriate 5% to Outreach, 5% to MACUCC **VOTE:** Aye. Unanimous.

### **Article 5: To transact any other business that comes before the meeting.**

- Moderator Alison Weaver thanked church for efforts at May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting to start schedule for 17-18. Room for more. Lots of exciting things happening. There will be a Mission Festival in March. Emily O'Hara is helping with Homecoming Sunday in September.
- **MOTION:** That the treasurer be authorized to cover any operating deficits with withdrawals from appropriate Equity Fund transfers. **VOTE:** Aye. Unanimous.
- Pastor John: Alison became Moderator the same year as John became Pastor at FCOC. Praised her efforts, her efficient running of Cabinet meetings, and, most importantly with the way she caught the Spirit and facilitated the energy of the congregation as the mission of the church was formed and began to be lived out.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Terry Gerrish, Scribe**



~ September Worship ~



<b>September 3</b> Communion	<b>9:30 am</b> Koebele Music Chapel	<b>"The Rhythm of God" - Sacred Drumming</b> Rev. John Castricum, Sr. Pastor	<b>Psalm 150</b>
<b>September 10</b> Homecoming Sunday	<b>10:00 am</b> Sanctuary	<b>"What Does the Bible Say? Rich and Poor"</b> Rev. John Castricum, Sr. Pastor	<b>Luke 16: 19-31</b>
<b>September 17</b>	<b>10:00 am</b> Sanctuary	<b>"What Does the Bible Say? Climate Change"</b> Rev. John Castricum, Sr. Pastor	<b>Genesis 1: 26-31</b>
<b>September 24</b>	<b>10:00 am</b> Sanctuary	<b>"What Does the Bible Say? Racism"</b> Rev. John Castricum, Sr. Pastor	<b>John 4: 1-15, 27-30, 39-40</b> <b>1 John 1: 8-10</b>

Thank you for your help in publishing our newsletter on time. Our next Newsletter deadline is **September 5, 2017**. Our next mailing is **September 20, 2017**. Please send you email articles to: fchurchb2@verizon.net. Thank you.

Please let us know if you change your address.  
If you do not want to receive newsletters, check this box   
and mail this page to us at the above address or email the  
office at fchurchb2@verizon.net.

**Join Us for  
First Church Day of Service  
Saturday, September 30th...see page 3 for details**



Non Profit  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Bedford, MA  
Permit #18

The First Church of Christ, Congregational  
25 The Great Road  
Bedford, MA 01730-2192  
"Address Service Requested"



~ September 2017 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<b>1</b> Pastor John Day Off 6a AA (UFH) 6p AA (Beginner Mtg) (UFH)	<b>2</b> 6a AA (UFH)
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Labor Day	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
COMMUNION 6a AA (UFH) 9:30a Summer Worship (Koebele Music Chapel)	Office Closed 6a AA (UFH)	6a AA (UFH) 6:45p AA (12 Step Men) (Room 5)	6a AA (UFH) 7a Men's Group (Vestry) 7p Deacon's Meeting (Vestry)	6a AA (UFH) 7:30p AA (UFH)	Pastor John Day Off 6a AA (UFH) 6p AA (Beginner Mtg) (UFH)	6a AA (UFH) 2p Mike Gural Memorial Service (Sanctuary) 3p Mike Gural Collation (UFH)
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
HOME COMING SUNDAY 6a AA (UFH) 8:15a 8:15 Discussion Group (Vestry) 10a Worship (Sanctuary) 11a Church Picnic	October 2017 Newsletter Deadline 6a AA (UFH) 10a La Leche League (Vestry) 7p Jubilee Bells (Music Room)	6a AA (UFH) 7:30a Women's Fellowship Breakfast (Riverview-Billerica) 9a Coffee & Conversation (Bruegger's Great Rd) 6:45p AA (12 Step Men) (Room 5) 7p Cabinet (Music Room)	7a Men's Group (Vestry)	6a AA (UFH) 7a Bible & Bagels (Bruegger's Great Rd) 7:30p AA (UFH)	Pastor John Day Off 6a AA (UFH) 6p AA (Beginner Mtg) (UFH)	6a AA (UFH)
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
6a AA (UFH) 8:15a 8:15 Discussion Group (Vestry) 10a Worship (Sanctuary)	6a AA (UFH) 7p Jubilee Bells (Music Room)	6a AA (UFH) 9a Coffee & Conversation (Bruegger's Great Rd) 6:30p Outreach Board (Outside/Vestry) 6:45p AA (12 Step Men) (Room 5)	6a AA (UFH) 7a Men's Group (Vestry) 6p Wonderful Wednesday (UFH/K/V)	6a AA (UFH) 7a Bible & Bagels (Bruegger's Great Rd) 7:30p AA (UFH)	Pastor John Day Off 6a AA (UFH) 6p AA (Beginner Mtg) (UFH)	Bedford Day 6a AA (UFH)
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
6a AA (UFH) 8:15a 8:15 Discussion Group (Vestry) 10a Worship (Sanctuary) 11:30a Children's Choir (Music Room) 11:30a Sermon Talk Back (Parlor)	6a AA (UFH) 7p Jubilee Bells (Music Room)	6a AA (UFH) 9a Coffee & Conversation (Bruegger's Great Rd) 6:45p AA (12 Step Men) (Room 5) 7p Women's Fellowship (Vestry) 7:30p NAMI (Room 4)	6a AA (UFH) 7a Men's Group (Vestry) 10a Newsletter Folding (Music Room)	6a AA (UFH) 7a Bible & Bagels (Bruegger's Great Rd) 7:30p AA (UFH)	Pastor John Day Off 6a AA (UFH) 6p AA (Beginner Mtg) (UFH)	6a AA (UFH) 9a Church Service Day

## Daily Lectionary Scripture References September 2017 (Year A)

### **Fri., Sept. 1**

Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b  
Exodus 3:16-25  
2 Thessalonians 2:7-12

### **Sat., Sept. 2**

Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b  
Exodus 4:1-9  
Matthew 8:14-17

### **Sun., Sept. 3**

*Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Exodus 3:1-15  
Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b  
Romans 12:9-21  
Matthew 16:21-28

### **Mon., Sept. 4**

Psalm 83:1-4, 13-18  
Exodus 4:10-31  
Revelation 3:1-6

### **Tues., Sept. 5**

Psalm 83:1-4, 13-18  
Exodus 5:1—6:13  
Revelation 3:7-13

### **Wed., Sept. 6**

Psalm 83:1-4, 13-18  
Exodus 7:14-25  
Matthew 12:22-32

### **Thurs., Sept. 7**

Psalm 149  
Exodus 9:1-7  
2 Corinthians 12:11-21

### **Fri., Sept. 8**

Psalm 149  
Exodus 10:21-29  
Romans 10:15b-21

### **Sat., Sept. 9**

Psalm 149  
Exodus 11:1-10  
Matthew 23:29-36

### **Sun., Sept. 10**

*Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Exodus 12:1-14  
Psalm 149  
Romans 13:8-14  
Matthew 18:15-20

### **Mon., Sept. 11**

Psalm 121  
Exodus 12:14-28  
1 Peter 2:11-17

### **Tues., Sept. 12**

Psalm 121  
Exodus 12:29-42  
Romans 13:1-7

### **Wed., Sept. 13**

Psalm 121  
Exodus 13:1-10  
Matthew 21:18-22

### **Thurs., Sept. 14**

Psalm 114  
Exodus 13:17-22  
1 John 3:11-16

### **Fri., Sept. 15**

Psalm 114  
Exodus 14:1-18  
Acts 7:9-16

### **Sat., Sept. 16**

Psalm 114  
Exodus 15:19-21  
Matthew 6:7-15

### **Sun., Sept. 17**

*Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Exodus 14:19-31  
Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21  
Romans 14:1-12  
Matthew 18:21-35

### **Mon., Sept. 18**

Psalm 77  
Joshua 3:1-17  
Hebrews 11:23-29

### **Tues., Sept. 19**

Psalm 77  
Nehemiah 9:9-15  
Romans 14:13—15:2

### **Wed., Sept. 20**

Psalm 77  
2 Kings 2:1-18  
Mark 11:20-25

### **Thurs., Sept. 21**

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45  
Exodus 15:22-27  
2 Corinthians 13:1-4

### **Fri., Sept. 22**

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45  
Exodus 16:1-21  
2 Corinthians 13:5-10

### **Sat., Sept. 23**

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45  
Exodus 16:22-30  
Matthew 19:23-30

### **Sun., Sept. 24**

*Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Exodus 16:2-15  
Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45  
Philippians 1:21-30  
Matthew 20:1-16

### **Mon., Sept. 25**

Psalm 119:97-104  
Exodus 16:31-35  
Romans 16:1-16

### **Tues., Sept. 26**

Psalm 119:97-104  
Numbers 11:1-9  
Romans 16:17-20

### **Wed., Sept. 27**

Psalm 119:97-104  
Numbers 11:18-23, 31-32  
Matthew 18:1-5

### **Thurs., Sept. 28**

Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16  
Isaiah 48:17-21  
James 4:11-16

### **Fri., Sept. 29**

Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16  
Numbers 20:1-13  
Acts 13:32-41

### **Sat., Sept. 30**

Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16  
Numbers 27:12-14  
Mark 11:27-33



*Revised Common Lectionary Daily Readings*, copyright © 2005 Consultation on Common Texts. [commontexts.org](http://commontexts.org). Used by permission. This resource may be reproduced by congregations for their own worship and educational activities. Provided by the Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ – made possible by Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support and Fellowship Dues.