



Parish Visitor

First Congregational Church UCC

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2021

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Well, we finally did it. We got hitched. I have always seen the Search and Call process as a courtship. Like so many modern relationships, it began on the internet. Church's list their profiles, and ministers list theirs. Listings lead to contact, which leads to conversations, eventually dates (in the form of interviews). Eventually things get serious. I think they reached mutually-interested conversations about this time two years ago. I think we first met in person in November of 2019, if memory serves.

After the courtship phase, the future becomes more of a topic of discussion. We meet each other's families. We discuss terms. We declare our intentions. When the Search and Call Committee submits a candidate's name to the Church Council, an invitation to come preach a candidating sermon, and a congregational meeting is called. It feels a little like auditioning for pastor. In February of 2020, less than a month before the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown began, Jane and I came to Walpole. I preached. You voted to call me to become the next settled pastor of the First Congregational Church of Walpole, United Church of Christ.

But that was not the wedding. This process is more like the European wedding process. Do you recall following a royal wedding, when the wedding couple go to the local government, city or town hall and get registered or licensed, or whatever they call it in their locale? As soon as the documents are signed and submitted, they are technically married. But are they? Marriage is a sacred covenant. God gave the commandments to Moses on Sinai, but the covenant was established when the Israelites affirmed the covenant out loud, in the presence of God and everybody. The installation is the wedding.

By the time I was installed, it was beginning to feel like so many couples who have lived together, even had children together before making their commitment formal in the covenant of marriage. Does it really have any meaning, given the situation of the ground, so to speak. The truth is it does matter. When a couple gets married, they make covenant promises to each other in front of God and everybody. It is made legal by the state in the form of the marriage license.

On the last Sunday of September, and the first Sunday of Autumn, we gathered on Zoom and in the sanctuary and we made it official. There were representatives from the New Hampshire Conference and the Southwest Association of the United Church of Christ. We made our promises to each other and established a sacred covenant. We already had a relationship, and we have been working together for sixteen months, but we defined our relationship and declared our commitment to each other and the rest of the world.

I was not prepared for how moving the service was. I was so emotional; I could barely finish saying the benediction. We did it. We are hitched. Our futures are now linked. What will we do now? God knows, in a world without end. Amen.

In Christ,
—Richard Malmberg



From the Council Chair(s)

Welcome to October, one of the most glorious months of the year. The air is fresher, colors are great, gardens are winding down as we gird ourselves up for winter.

The Council meeting in September was long but productive and illustrated how active the Church is despite the challenges of Covid, which continue to complicate our lives. On Sept. 17, at the request of Dale Woodward, we called a meeting of the Executive Board to discuss the increase of Covid in our area and decided to be more aggressive in our management. Masking continues to be essential.

All agreed that live services can still be held and are indeed vital. However, using the space in Fellowship Hall, we need to be more aware of safe distancing while masked when meeting. You will find the tables arranged in a way to accommodate about 20 people in the space nearest the kitchen. You will also notice more signage. We all need to be less confident that because we are vaccinated, we are safe. We are not; there have been several cases around vaccinated people contracting Covid. We must hang in there; we will get through this.

Permission to hold events at the church is on a case-by-case basis and will be granted by the Executive Board.

The installation of Pastor Richard is certainly something to celebrate, and will be accomplished using a hybrid service, with a limited attendance live, and other guests attending via Zoom. A reception will not take place at this time, but a celebration is being planned by the Transition Team for May, at the 2-year anniversary of Reverend Malmberg's arrival.

The calendar reviewed at the Council meeting was full. At this writing, some events have been postponed, others deemed safe to move forward. The overriding message found in all the events being planned is that the Church is alive and well. We thank all of you in the congregation for your continued commitment and enthusiasm. Your response is inspiring.

Hang in there, Everyone!!

Sue Krebs
Marilyn Shriver
Co-Chairs



Richard's Installation Flowers by Ellie Shaw



The Trustees like to refer to this as the “pending period”. Roof repair, steeple painting and repair, tree removal, shrubbery installation are all pending. Work is proceeding on painting the handicap ramp, perhaps done as you read this. All in God’s time!

New things:

-As requested, we have a plan in place to remove the wild lilies and replant the area by the back ramp door.

-Trustee of the Month has been re-instituted to be responsible for the Church facilities during weddings, funeral, events, etc.

-A plan was discussed to address the mold and odors in the Church basement. Prior work would include cleaning out of the choir robe room and the nursery room. Volunteers are welcome to assist and are needed! Our plan is to contract with Serv Pro to clean these two rooms. When cleaning is completed, we will install one or more dehumidifiers in the basement.

-Thank you to Jared and Tip Top Maintenance for outside/inside care. Trustees are happy with the work being done.

-First warning call for the Trustees Thanksgiving pie sale at the PO. Put November 24th on your calendar!

Peace and health to all!

For the Trustees,
Dale Woodward, Chair.



Terry Gulick by Dale Woodward

Terry just finished up this season of care for our perennial garden. He won the battle with witch grass this summer, but assures us “it will be back!”

Women’s Fellowship

Women’s Fellowship met on September 8, 2021, with an in-house “progressive supper” hosted by Peg Winnen, Betty Prentiss, Linda Graff, and Janet Martin. Seventeen women attended and enjoyed appetizers, salad, lasagna, and pie, set up at four different stations.

We discussed the possibility of putting on a revised version of Mistletoe Mart, sometime in December, more in the line of last spring’s cookie/pie sale with a few traditional items added. Considering the present uptick in Covid and tightened guidelines, that event has been put on hold for now.

The October meeting scheduled for October 13 has been canceled as well.

Submitted by Sue Krebs, Clerk





By the time you read this, the Reverend Richard Malmberg will be fully installed as the Pastor of our church. Congratulations to Richard, the search committee and to our congregation.

This Sunday, October 3rd, at 3:00 to 4:30, we shall be celebrating the Blessing of the Animals on the common in front of the church. All animals are welcome. The rain date will be October 17th, same time, and place. So, bring your cats, dogs, horses, cows or any other of your animals. We will have a table set up outside if you wish to bring the ashes of your deceased pets if you have them. If you do not have the ashes, you may bring a picture of your pet. Come one, come all. Let's make this a roaring success!

The deacons are always looking for liturgists and scripture readers to participate in Sunday services. If you attend services in the sanctuary, please consider being a reader.

The DOM for October is Jana Sellarole.

Enjoy the upcoming color of this autumn season.
Minna



Pastor Richard, Minna, and Luther!



The Mission Committee has again coordinated a backpack project for Walpole Schools. We delivered 13 packs and two boxes filled with school supplies. The school distributes these as needed to students who may not have a bag or who need one in good condition. Thank you to all of you for your generosity in contributing supplies for this project. The school was very grateful.

Dale and Bonnie drove 22 boxes of a variety of things to Rochester to be shipped to Zimbabwe with contributions from other NH churches. We were excited to send lots of sports equipment given to us by the rec department.

We have made the decision not to hold a fall yard sale. We will save what has been contributed and may hold a spring sale.

Missions has sent a donation to a fund for a local family whose home was heavily damaged in recent rains.

Opportunities to give in October:

Oct. 3 -- Neighbors in Need -- Church World Service fund for relief around the world.

Oct 24 -- Ukama Sunday -- This is a yearly special offering and missions will match congregation contributions.

All month -- Fall MT Food Shelf -- You may contribute cash or a check any time during the month. In November we hope to have a big food collection for the holidays.

Betty Prentiss



Peg Winnen, Blessing of the Backpacks
And the children!



Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering October 3rd

The 2021 Neighbors in Need “Unfailing Love” offering is focused on supporting organizations and projects serving our homeless and immigrant neighbors and communities. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC’s Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to provide funding grants to UCC churches and organizations leading justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects in their communities.

Peg Winnen



Beautiful Zimbabwe Candle





Summer Communion – Pastor Richard and Bruce



World Communion Sunday

Birthdays in October

Brody Keller, 10/1
 Rachel Watson, 10/2
 Chuck Shaw 10/5
 Brian Shriver 10/7
 Becky Hubbard 10/20
 Zachary Bemis 10/21
 Curt Congdon 10/24
 Cindy Westover 10/26
 Peggy Graves 10/28
 Sue Krebs 10/29

Anniversaries in October

Brian and Marilyn Shriver 10/12
 Paul and Ann Looney 10/15



Janet and our spring flowers

PLEASE POST THIS CALENDAR FOR EASY REFERENCE

OCTOBER 2021

Calendar subject to change due to challenges of Covid-19

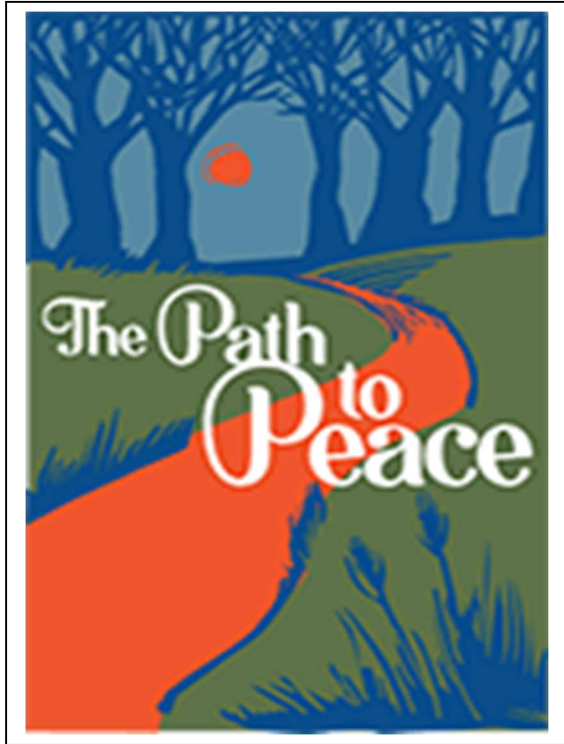
Sunday, October 3	Communion Worship Service live and online via Zoom * Neighbors in Need Offering *	10:00am
Sunday, October 3	Blessing of the Animals on the Common	3-4:30pm
Tuesday, October 5	Deacons meeting in Fellowship Hall	5-6pm
Wednesday, October 6	Bible Study on Zoom	4-5pm
Saturday, October 9	Council Meeting in Fellowship Hall	8:30-10am
Saturday, October 9	Grange Harvest Dinner- Curb Side Only- Pick Up at	4:30-6pm
Sunday, October 10	Worship Service Live and on Zoom	10am
Tuesday, October 12	Finance Committee Meeting	4:30pm
Wednesday, October 13	Bible Study on Zoom	4-5pm
Sunday, October 17	Worship Service Live and on Zoom	10am
Wednesday, October 20	Women of Walpole Meeting in Fellowship Hall	2-4pm
Wednesday, October 20	Bible Study on Zoom	4-5pm
Sunday, October 24	Worship service live and on Zoom – Ukama Sunday	10am
Wednesday, October 27	Bible Study on Zoom	5-6pm
Sunday, October 31	Worship Service live and online via Zoom & Halloween	10am

Friday, October 22nd Parish Visitor Deadline

Friday, October 22nd Clarion Deadline

Church Office Hours: 9 am to 12 noon, M-F

PARISH VISITOR



First Congregational Church
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