

Steeple Minute

First Congregational Church of Littleton
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September 1, 2024

Issue 9

God has work for us to do.

It is funny how certain things stay with you and impact how you move forward in life. For me, even though it was a year ago, the National UCC Synod is still with me and lessons keep popping up from my time there. Today it is the theme song that we sang at every worship gathering. "God Has Work Us to Do." It seems that it is never time to sit back and coast to the finish line. Old and young and everyone in between has a gift to give, a job to do, a lesson to teach, loving care to be given and a prayer to be prayed. In our small church we see this happening all the time, but it seems like there is always still more to do.

The chorus of this song is:

*God has work for us to do,
God has work for us to do,
'til God's will is done, and all things are made new,
God has work for us, work for us to do!*

So, yes. There is still more work to do. And God is with us in the process. Perhaps the most recent demonstration of this is the hiring of a new director for Shining Lights Learning Center. We knew Melissa was leaving and we prayed long and hard. Maybe it was down to the wire, but God provided us with a wonderful candidate in Vanessa Neuroth (see article about SLLC in this issue). I bet you can think of many other times in our recent church history that it seemed like the hand of God was reaching down and providing us with what we needed when we needed.

Why, you might ask? Well, I believe God has a plan for us. In the past two years, we have learned a lot about ourselves through various gathering and retreats as we work on who are we, who is our neighbor and who is God calling us to be. We have experimented with new worship styles and increased our lay participation in worship. We have let go of some of the things 'we always do' to make room for new things. But we still cherish our history and traditions. We have welcomed new members. We have gotten to know each other better through our series on 'Why Church'. (By the way, if you haven't had a chance to share your story and are willing to do so, please let Pastor Peter know.)

Our next steps involve fine tuning a new mission statement which will then lead to a 'right-sized' structure that will help us in our efforts to answer God's call. We have an amazing opportunity on **September 29 up at Horton Center** (<https://www.hortoncenter.org>) to worship together and work together on taking these next steps. Watch for more information on this. The author of Psalm 121 seems to say that there is nothing like being in the mountains to clear the way for the Holy Spirit to remind us who God is and what he has promised us. What, then, will our response be?

*By praying through our doing,
and singing though we fear,
by trusting that the seed we sow
will bring God's harvest near:*

*God has work for us to do,
'til God's will is done, and all things are made new:
God has work for us to do!*

Alice Muh, Moderator

First Congregational Church

September 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 AM-Worship Service <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i> Happy Anniversary! Pam & Jeff Nute	2 OFFICE CLOSED SLLC CLOSED 7:00 PM – AA - FH	3	4 Pastor Away 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	5 Happy Birthday! Bob Warden Pastor Away 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	6 Pastor Away	7 Pastor Away 7:00 PM-AA-FH
8 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class – Major Prophets 10:00 AM- Worship Service <i>Amy Greene</i>	9 Pastor Away 6:00 PM – SLLC Board –CR & Zoom 7:00 PM – AA - FH	10 Pastor Away 6:00PM – Eastern Star – FH	11 Pastor Away 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	12 Happy Birthday! Laurie Boswell Pastor Away 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7 :00 PM-AA-FH	13 Pastor Away	14 Pastor Away 7:00 PM-AA-FH
15 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class – Major Prophets 10:00 AM-Worship Service - Joining Sunday <i>Mary Menzies</i>	16 Pastor Away 7:00 PM – AA – FH	17 5:00 PM – Dinner Bell Host All Saints' Church	18 Pastor Away 1:00 PM – Finance – CR 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	19 Pastor Away Noon – Council – FH 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7 :00 PM-AA-FH	20 Pastor Away Happy Birthday! Joan Buffington	21 Happy Anniversary! Elaine & Emil Pollak 7:00 PM-AA-FH
22 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class – Major Prophets 10:00 AM-Worship Service <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i> <i>Little Free Pantry Special Offering</i>	23 Pastor Away 7:00 PM – AA - FH	24 Pastor Away	25 Pastor Away 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM – AA – FH	26 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7 :00 PM-AA-FH	27 Pastor Sabbath 5:00 PM – SLLC Open House	28 7:00 PM-AA-FH
29 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class – Major Prophets 9:45 AM- Depart for Worship Service at the Horton Center! <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i> Happy Birthday! Barbara Holland Tim Gould	30 7:00 PM – AA - FH			KEY: FH - Fellowship Hall LP - Ladies Parlor CR - Classroom		

Financial Report

July 31, 2024	YTD
Member support:	\$87,289
Scheduled w/d from trust funds	\$ 0
Other Income:	\$ 7,211
Total Income:	\$94,500
Total Expenses:	\$112,984
Net:	\$ -18,484

Wireless Guest Account
SSID: FCC Guests
Password: fcc189main

Ham and Baked Beans Dinner October 5th

Please mark your calendars and get your bean pots out! We are organizing a classic New England favorite that will provide an opportunity for us to work together, and to close the budget gap! The dinner will be similar to the former ham dinners but will have continuous serving from 5-7 pm and will feature a slightly different menu. A sign-up board will posted at the back of the sanctuary for donations and workers, and you're encouraged to do both!

Laurie Boswell and Bob Muh

Adult Bible Study

Adult Bible Study resumes on Sundays starting September 8th at 9am in the classroom. If anyone needs a remote option, please let Linda know so she can set up *Google Meet* as an option. Everyone is welcome to join the class. They will be studying the major prophets and Linda is ordering the study guides now. Looking forward to learning with you!

If you would like to join or have any questions, please contact:

Linda Warden
 603-444-2337
ldwarden@roadrunner.com

New Dinner Bell Season Approaching!

September 17th

November 26th – *Thanksgiving meal ~ all churches and organizations participate*

2025: January 7th and May 6th

Dinner Bell will resume sit down meals at the All Saints' Church in September. Take-out meals will also be available for those who request it. We will be planning on serving 80-100 people. Help is needed on the above dates for the cleanup which includes loading the dishwasher and stacking chairs and general cleanup.

Drop off of food is 4pm. Dinner Bell starts at 5pm.

Help will be gladly appreciated from anyone who is interested in cooking, serving or cleaning up for any of the meals!

If you have any questions or want to know more about the dinner, please call **Cynthia Nielson at 603-616-6705**.

There will also be a sign-up sheet at the back of the sanctuary.

Shining Lights Learning Center ~ Changing of the Guard



Shining Lights welcomes new Director, Vanessa Neuroth! She comes to us with a B.A. in Elementary Education, several years of public-school experience and enthusiasm for Children's church ministries and will also serve as a Lead Preschool teacher. We will have an official presentation/dedication on September 22nd to introduce ourselves to her.



We have increased to seven very capable staff and have been able to once again occupy our three rooms in the center (Preschool, Toddler and Young Toddler).

Nicole Willis has been promoted to Assistant Director and is also a Lead Teacher. She has been with the center since August of 2020. Alexis Oakes has been a Lead Teacher in the Toddler Room since September of 2023. Cheyenne Winchester, an Associate Teacher who leads "Dottie's Room" (young toddler), and Christine Slater, also an Associate Teacher, both joined us back in February. Haley Dexter just joined us at the end of May as an Assistant Teacher. We also have a new hire, Miranda Young, another Lead Teacher, whom we're waiting to join the center soon. Rounding out the team, Pam Nute, continues to support the center as the bookkeeper, office support and all-round cheerleader since 2015. Many thanks for their hard work and dedication.

We send Melissa Kam off with prayers and appreciation for the thirteen⁺ years she has shared with our church congregation and the families of SLLC to become a kindergarten teacher at Lyndon Town School this fall. She will be missed and will always be welcomed as a vital contributor.

You are invited to Shining Lights Open House on Friday, September 27th from 5 to 6:30pm! There are currently 10 openings in the Preschool room, so please help spread the word.

Board of Directors: Su Schott, Chair; Alice Muh, Karen Lord, Amy Greene (church representatives) Jen McMahon, Tom Adamick, and newcomer, Stephanie DeWolf (parent representatives).

As a ministry of the First Congregational Church of Littleton, Shining Lights Learning Center is dedicated to nurturing the spiritual growth of each child enrolled, while providing opportunities for optimal social and emotional growth, as well as development of physical and cognitive skills. In a nurturing, safe, and healthy environment, children will have opportunity to understand and see their world, life and education through a Christian perspective. We seek to enable each child together with his/her family to develop a Christ-centered world view.



[Shining Lights Learning Center & Child Care At FCC | Littleton NH | Facebook](#)

Donations are gratefully accepted to assist with the programming at Shining Lights Learning Center!



From the desk of Pastor Peter

Sunday, September 1st 1 John 5:14-21

We conclude our summer worship series today on 1 John. Thanks to Lars Nielson for being our worship leader. We'll celebrate communion today and share our special offering for the Little Free Pantry. You can bring a food item for the pantry or make a financial contribution – thanks!

Our Fall Worship Series of Old Testament Readings from the Narrative Lectionary begins on September 8th**Fall Narrative Lectionary: Old Testament Readings**

Sunday, September 8 – Creation and Fall (Genesis 2:4b-7, 15-17, 3:1-8)

Welcome Back Choir!

Thanks to Worship Leader Amy Greene for preaching this Sunday! Peter will be away.

Sunday, September 15 – God's Promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:1-6) Peter will be away.

Friday, September 20 – 6:00pm Shabbat Service, Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation: Come join us for an all-church outing to the synagogue (39 Strawberry Hill Road). It was such a gift of connection and support to attend Shabbat last summer together and I hope you might like to join us this year. There is no special dress code for attending Shabbat, modest attire befitting a holy space. No need for suit coats or ties for me or dresses for women, however.

Sunday, September 22 – God Works Through Joseph (Genesis 37:3-8, 17b-22, 26-34, 50:15-21)

Little Free Pantry Special Offering (one week early)

September 29 – All Church Field-Trip to our UCC Church Camp, The Horton Center in Randolph! The Promise of Passover (Exodus 12:1-13, 13:1-8)

We'll meet at church at 9:45am this morning and carpool to the Horton Center for worship, lunch, conversation and time to explore the short and beautiful trails. No extra walking is needed for those who'd like to stay rocking on the porch overlooking Mount Madison for worship and lunch! A wonderful chance to be together and see our church camp at the top of Pine Mountain overlooking the Presidential Range.

September Cohos Trail Adventure!

Ever since I moved to the North Country, I've been wanting to explore the Cohos Trail, a 170 mile hiking trail from the Canadian/New Hampshire Border to Crawford Notch. I've saved some dates in September to see how far I get and would love to have you join me! I'm definitely into trail immersion, exploring and having fun. Day-packing, overnight at a shelter or camping, meeting for lunch along the way can all work depending on what's good for you!

Here's my dates:

September 4 to 6

September 9 to 16

September 18 to 20

September 23 to 25

Ecumenical Lay Worship Leaders Gathering - Our lay worship leaders from First Congregational, First United Methodist and Community Church of Christ are meeting on Saturday, September 21 at 10am in Franconia at the Community Church of Christ to talk about our experience with monthly joint-worship this summer and brainstorm ways we might continue to support each other and lay worship leadership. If you are interested, come join us!

(Soft) Plastics Recycling

Our church has been asked to join an effort to recycle **soft** plastics that are then used to make hard plastic furniture. The Episcopal Church is leading this effort. Included in this issue of SteepleTalk on pages 8 & 9 you'll find a two-page handout that is a helpful guide. It is remarkable how much soft plastic we encounter daily: store bags, wrappers, Amazon packaging, bread bags, and so on. I make a very conscious effort to avoid all non-essential plastics and yet in one month I have filled a large paper bag.

There is a QR code on the handout for additional information. To use the QR code just point your phone's camera at the QR code as if to take a picture. You'll see a yellow oval with a website listed. Click on the yellow oval.

After you have collected some plastic, bring it to the church. A temporary cardboard box is located downstairs near Reggie's closet where you can place your plastics. Thank you and so does Mother Earth!

Laurie Boswell



Calling all Singers!



Choir rehearsals start on Wed, September 4th at 6pm

It's hard to believe that summer is almost over and fall is coming soon. We have enjoyed such beautiful music this summer. Thanks to Kristjar Nielson, Fran Day, JoBeth Dudley, Cynthia Wysocki, Bill Tobin, Chris Sundman, Suzan Derby and friends Tim Berry, Lee Baker and Joanne Gilman for being such a special part of our worship services.

September is the start of choir rehearsals. We will begin on September 4th at 6:00pm with flatbreads and salad in the Ladies Parlor and a short rehearsal at 6:45. We welcome new members! You don't need to try out, just have a love for music and singing. Come join us! We are a friendly group!

Dottie

If you have any questions regarding joining the choir, please contact

Dottie Morton, Music Director

802-684-1174

momssuzuki@gmail.com

October 6th

M E N T A L H E A L T H J U S T I C E F O R A L L

Mental Health is a Universal Human Right

*“God will not falter or lose heart until
justice prevails throughout the earth.”*

(Isaiah 42:4)



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
NEIGHBORS IN NEED 2024
ucc.org/nin

In 2024, the Neighbors in Need theme is **“Mental Health Justice For All!”** This year’s focus is on Mental Health Justice. In 2015, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a resolution to become WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health.

A just world for all is a world where the human rights and well-being of people with mental health challenges are respected, no matter who you are or where you are in life’s mental health journey.

Please join us in promoting this year’s NIN **“Mental Health is a Universal Human Right”**

As you may recall, one-third of the offering supports [Council for American Indian Ministry \(CAIM\)](#). Two-thirds are used by [Justice and Witness Ministries](#) to provide [grants](#) to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

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- ✗ Lamination film
- ✗ Silage and hay bags
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- ✗ Shiny, crinkly films like floral wrap
- ✗ Backyard ice rinks

DON'T SEE YOUR ITEM ON THE LIST?

Try these tests to see if your plastic is acceptable or not.

See if the package will stretch when you pull it. If yes, it can be included. If it tears like paper, then please don't put in the bin.

Is the package shiny or does it make a crinkly/crunchy sound in your hand? If yes, do NOT recycle in the NexTrex® bin.



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First Congregational Church, UCC
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STEEPLE MINUTE

SEPTEMBER 2024



Steeple Minute

A brief newsletter of the
First Congregational Church
of Littleton

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www.1stconglittleton.org

Church Staff

Rev. Peter Igenfritz, Pastor
Office Manager: Pam Nute
Organist & Choir Director: Dottie Morton
Sexton: Reg LaFlam

Officers

Moderator: Alice Muh
Vice Moderator: Dan Kiefer
Treasurer: Joyce Krill
Assistant Treasurer: Rachel Clark

Committee Chairs

Christian Education: Kim Smith
Deacons: Mary Menzies
Finance: Phil Krill
Mission: Linda Warden
Music: Tina Peabody
Personnel Relations: Tim Gould
Property Management: Laurie Boswell

Shining Lights Learning Center

Board Chair: Suzanne Schott
Director: Vanessa Neuroth

