

Steeple Minute

First Congregational Church of Littleton
189 Main Street, Littleton, NH 03561

October 1, 2026

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Issue 10

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The Colors of Fall

On Sunday, September 27 we joined the Lancaster and Franconia UCC churches for what has been an annual tradition of joining for worship and brunch at the Horton Center, our NH Conference camp at the top of Pine Mountains. Tivvi Pare, the Horton Center Executive Director, again went above and beyond to set a beautiful and welcoming space for us including a warm fire in the wood stove!

Just what we needed on a gray, overcast day with threats of a nor'easter. There were many good reasons to stay home and warm under a blanket that morning and many did. But a small band of us from each of our churches ventured up the mountain. And along the way, the trees sang out of riotous beauty, brilliant color and surprising gift on a day when some of us weren't sure there were gifts to be found out there on a day like this!

The previous two years we have gathered for worship on the mountain have been bright, warm and abundant with a growing circle of new folks we've welcomed. We carried high hopes this year of expanding our circle with others in the North Country. But this year was, well, different. Perhaps like the year has been for some of us. A bit gray and drizzly around the edges. The memory of storms we've weathered and threats of storms on the horizon.

In times like this especially, I find myself reminding others to do the most important thing we can do and to take care of ourselves. To say yes today to the rest, the renewal, the strengthening we need. Sometimes we find that together and sometimes we find and need that alone, but in all cases we are carried by the hope, faith and love that we all are connected, all of us, wherever we are, alone or apart.

I am excited about our fall worship series as we step this month into reflecting on the stained glass windows in the sanctuary. Color - the vibrant, bright color of the windows has been remarked on so many times. What a gift it is that our ancestors in faith have gifted us with a sanctuary of beauty and color brightening in the morning's changing light. They too lived through seasons of sun and seasons of gray and drizzle. They too were nurtured by the fall's brilliant outpouring of color. Perhaps they too wanted to gift those that followed them with gifts of beauty, color and light to lift their spirits and strengthen their hearts when times get challenging and hard. This fall reminds me that that our ancestors are part of our circle of connection too and their gifts keep giving to us today.

Maybe today is a good day to stay inside. Maybe it's a day to step out and look up at that bright orange tree outside your window. May it be a good day to receive the blessing of God shining forth in the gift of color and delight.

Pastor Peter

First Congregational Church

October 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
KEY: FH - Fellowship Hall LP - Ladies Parlor CR - Classroom				1 Happy Birthday! Dottie Bailey 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	2	3 7:00 PM-AA-LP
4 World Communion Sunday 10:00 AM- Worship Service at First United Methodist Church	5 7:00 PM – AA - FH	6 Pastor In	7 Pastor In 8:30 AM – Bible Study & Prayer - Zoom 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	8 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	9	10 7:00 PM-AA-FH
11 Neighbors in Need Special Offering 10:00 AM-Worship Service <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i>	12 Pastor In OFFICE CLOSED SLLC CLOSED 11:00 AM – Aging discussion grp. - LP 7:00 PM – AA - FH	13 Pastor In 6:00PM – Eastern Star – FH 6:00 PM – SLLC Board – CR & Zoom	14 8:30 AM – Bible Study & Prayer - Zoom 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	15 Noon – Council – CR 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	16	17 7:00 PM-AA-FH
18 FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY Happy Birthday! Kathy Searles 10:00 AM-Worship Service <i>Kathy Searles</i>	19 7:00 PM – AA - FH	20 Happy Anniversary! Kim and Tom Smith	21 8:30 AM – Bible Study & Prayer - Zoom 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM – AA – FH	22 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	23 Pastor's Sabbath	24 NHucc 225th Annual Meeting 7:00 PM-AA-FH
25 10:00 AM-Worship Service <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i> 6-8 PM – Marching Band practice - FH	26 Pastor In 11:00 AM – Aging discussion grp. - LP 7:00 PM – AA - FH	27	28 8:30 AM – Bible Study & Prayer - Zoom 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM – AA – FH	29 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	30	31 Pumpkin Patch Hangout - FH 2-5:30PM 7:00 PM-AA-FH

Wireless Guest Account
 SSID: FCC Guests
 Password: fcc189main
 Enjoy!

Financial Report

August 31, 2026	YTD
Member support:	\$ 105,557
Scheduled w/d from trust funds	\$ 28,000
Other Income:	\$ 6,483
Total Income:	\$ 140,040
Total Expenses:	\$ 138,882
Net:	\$ 1,158

Blessing of the Backpacks on September 13th



Pumpkin Patch Hangout!

The afternoon of October 31st to complement the main street trick-or-treating and before the Gathering of the Jack O' Lanterns event in the evening. Warm food and kid friendly activities are being planned.

Please see the sign-up sheet at the back of the sanctuary to find out what kind of help is needed to execute this **very popular event** in the community! **Donations of candy** are needed and again this year, a plea for **CASH!** Cash will be used to purchase the food items needed.
(Pam is in place this year to shop and make the food!)



Please bring your **CANDY** and/or **CASH** donations to Church on Sundays or bring to the office.

Worship Calendar for October

A Fall Worship Series - Forward Through the Ages

There is yet more light and truth to break forth from God's Holy Word. (John Robinson, pastor of the Pilgrims)

This fall we look back at the rich history of the church through the lens of the Memorial Windows in the sanctuary. We will look to the past as a way to remember and highlight values and commitments that can strengthen us to move forward with faith, hope and love into the future unfolding before us.

Thank you to Dottie Morton and Phil Krill who launched our series on September 20 with wonderful reflections on the history of the organ and music over the years and the renovation of the stained glass windows!

Sunday, October 4 - An Ecumenical Service at First United Methodist to Celebrate World Communion Sunday!

October 4 we'll gather for a special ecumenical worship service at First United Methodist to celebrate World Communion Sunday. Worship is at 10am.

Sunday, October 11: The Rich Young Ruler Window

October 11 we begin our six week part of our fall series with a focus on the stained glass windows. Each week a member of the community will reflect on the stories told in one of the windows and why that particular window speaks to them.

Speaker: Dick Searles

Window: The Rich Young Ruler (Matthew 19:16-30)

Neighbors in Need Special Offering

Sunday, October 18: The Parables of the Sower

Speaker: Kathy Searles

Window: The Parables of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-9)

Special Offering for the Little Free Pantry Today

October 25: The Woman at the Well

Speaker: Rachel Clark

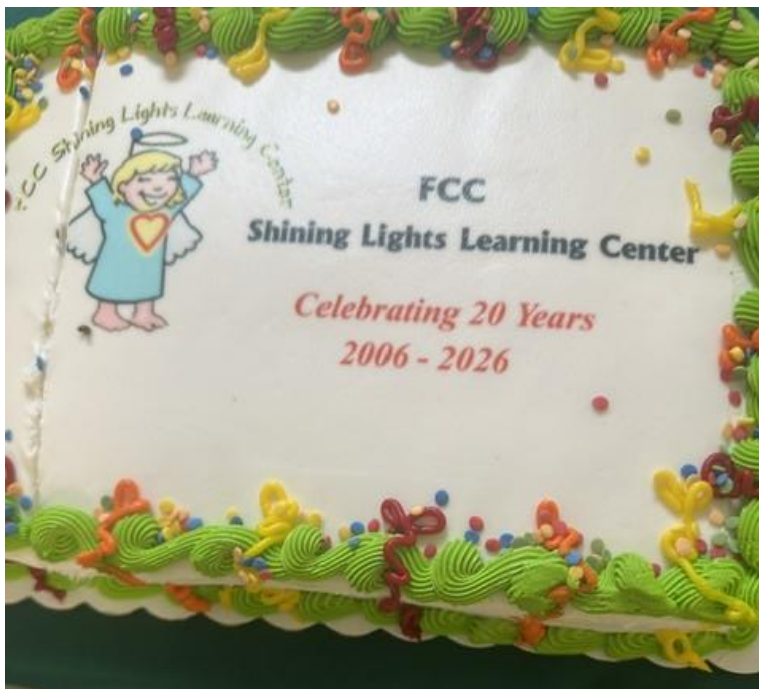
Window: The Woman at the Well (John 4:7-42)

Our Conversations on Aging group will meet every other Monday - October 12 and 26 – and looking forward... November 9 and 23, December 7 and 21. Join us for laughter, meaningful conversations and honest sharing as we check in about the joys and trials of aging bodies, minds and souls – the letting go, and gifts to be discovered along the way.

Shining Lights Learning Center

Thank YOU for CELEBRATING with us on September 13TH!!

The new year is starting strong, we're fully staffed with a confident group of teachers. Enrollment started out a bit low, but we've already gotten our numbers up significantly! We're still looking to enroll some toddlers. We have a healthy waitlist for infants.



Worship at Horton Center September 27th



Dottie Morton and Phil Krill shared stories of the history of the organ, music at church and the capital campaign that restored the stained glass windows. Phil invited folks that gave to the campaign at the time to come forward on Sunday, September 20th to be recognized. The improvements in the campaign are a gift that has kept on giving!





The Neighbors in Need offering, one of five annual special offerings within the United Church of Christ, will be taken on **Sunday, October 11**. Gifts to Neighbors in Need support the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). The other two-thirds of the offering support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, direct service projects, and grants.

Every day, we see myriad cases of hardship and compelling need, no farther away than the doors of our Little Free Pantry. But we can also rejoice in the notion that we also see, from time to time, instances of abundant, extravagant generosity, community commitment, hospitality and caring for others.

We can probably agree that there is also an unprecedented need for justice, compassion and effective advocacy for those less fortunate.

Helen Walton wisely observed, "It is not what you gather, but what you scatter, that tells what kind of life you have lived." Andrea Reimann-Ciardelli, an unpretentious philanthropist and long-time resident of Hanover, NH shared this insight into her philosophy of life: "I strongly believe that those who have wealth also have an obligation to support their community." In the closing paragraph of the last will and testament that Daniel C. Remich, a member of this church, executed in 1914, he stated, "It is my wish that my funeral be very plain and simple. I desire that money that might be lavished upon it be applied to make some heart lighter and somebody warmer or the world better."

Please consider supporting the Neighbors in Need initiative as generously as you are able.

Donations will be gratefully accepted well into November.

A new season of **Dinner Bell**

On **October 6th**, Cynthia Nielson and Pam Nute will head the first FCC hosted Dinner Bell of the season. 120 meals will be prepared! Thank you to all who make Dinner Bell a success every year by bringing food, volunteering or donating money to help with expenses!

Please contact Cynthia Nielson if you would like to be involved in future dinners on January 5th and May 4th of 2027!

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A brief newsletter of the
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of Littleton

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Church Staff

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

Officers

Moderator: Alice Muh
Secretary: Jo Beth Dudley
Treasurer: Joyce Krill
Council: Tim Gould, Elaine Pollak, Kim Smith
Mary Menzies

Team Leads

Administration: Laurie Boswell/TimGould
Caring: Elaine Pollak
Christian Formation: Kim Smith
Worship: Mary Menzies

Shining Lights Learning Center

Board Chair: Suzanne Schott
Director: Vanessa Neuroth

