

Steeple Minute

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

March 1, 2026

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Issue 3

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Message from the Moderator

I would like to thank everyone who participated in our church's annual meeting on February 10th. There was much thoughtful and respectful discussion around all the decisions we had to make. One of the things I appreciate about our UCC church is that our congregational polity system allows every local church to be completely independent and self-governing, which we take quite seriously. The role of the Conference is to act as a regional body connecting local churches to each other and the national setting, focusing on covenantal support, resources, and mission rather than authority. Conferences nurture congregations, assist in search and call processes for pastors, and facilitate justice ministries.

While the full minutes are available for all to see if they want, I would like to just provide a brief summary of the meeting.

The financial report included a report about our trust funds and our budget report. Our trust funds, held in our account with Stifel, are healthy and continue to grow, even with our withdrawals of \$52,800 in 2025 in order to meet expenses. Expenses continue to outpace income for 2026 despite an increase in pledge amounts. We are grateful to our church ancestors who had the foresight to leave us these funds that help sustain the work of our church. We are also grateful to all who pledge their financial support to our church. The 2026 budget was approved with an additional \$800 added for summer music soloists.

These realities created for us an opportunity to envision our church with a half-time minister starting in September. The Personnel Committee has been working diligently with Pastor Peter to come up with scenarios that would serve the church and its mission, as well as be agreeable for Peter to continue with his ministry with us. This spring, there will be opportunities to hear more about this and give your input. After that, the Personnel Committee will create a Call Agreement that all will have the opportunity to examine and vote on.

After a recap and discussion led by Jo Beth Dudley, the new version of the bylaws and structure was unanimously approved by the members present. She noted that the church has been instinctively moving towards this model over the last few years. The work of the church will be divided up slightly differently and new names will be used to describe who is doing what, but we are still the same church. The new bylaws give us a way to support the mission of the church while being more streamlined and nimble. Still, it is a work in progress. Policies and procedures need to be reviewed, rewritten, or created and evaluation will be ongoing.

A new slate of officers and council members was approved as follows: Moderator -Alice Muh, Secretary- Jo Beth Dudley, Treasurer- Joyce Krill, and council members - Mary Menzies, Elaine Pollak, Kim Smith, Tim Gould.

It is always important to thank those who dedicate their time and talents to supporting the mission of the church. To those of you who went to retreats on Saturdays, monthly meetings, and committee meetings that brought us to this place, I thank you!! To all of you who did all the things that make our church 'Church', I thank you! Each of us is an important member of the body of Christ. We are Christ's hands and feet in sharing God's love. The assembled body was challenged to see themselves in this work as our church expresses it and were given an opportunity to show how they would like to contribute to this effort. Names went on sticky notes that were attached to a poster that described our new structure. The result was a colorful mosaic of how we work together. It was a beautiful sight to behold!

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Message from the Moderator

(Continued from cover page)

As we step forward into this new church year, there will still be much business ahead of us: a new sign, opportunities for fundraising, and supporting Shining Lights Learning Center. We will be living into our new structure, and I predict the road may not be smooth. But as long as we are faithful to our covenant, our mission, and to our God, wonderful things will happen.

Ready? Set? Let's go!

Alice Muh, Moderator



Wednesday Morning Bible Study: Join us each week for a chance to learn and talk together about the upcoming scripture in our Sunday morning worship service.

Join Zoom Meeting: Bible Study Wednesday Mornings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85447221746?pwd=DgeZr6nocjmpln0bb4arss3m8UHYwaM.1>

Conversations on the Joys and Challenges of Aging!

Mondays at 11am March 2, 16, 30 in the Ladies Parlor:

Join us in March for a series of conversations on aging! Great conversation, laughs, and sharing the humbling journey of growing older!





UCC Daily Devotional available on line:

<https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/>

First Congregational Church

March 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
1 Second Sunday in Lent 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class - Lenten Series 10:00 AM-Worship Service 2:00 PM – Private Party - FH <i>Mary Menzies</i>	2 11:00 AM – Aging discussion grp. - LP Teacher Appreciation Week 7:00 PM – AA - FH	3	4 8:30 AM – Bible Study & Prayer - Zoom 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	5 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	6 World Day of Prayer Happy Birthday! Elizabeth Edney Pastor's Sabbath	7 7:00 PM-AA-FH	
8 Third Sunday in Lent 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class - Lenten Series 10:00 AM-Worship Service 11:00 AM – Lenten Book Study - CR <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i>	9 Happy Birthday! Glenda Iles 8:30 AM – Personnel -Zoom 7:00 PM – AA – FH	10 6:00 PM – SLLC BOD - Zoom	11 8:30 AM – Bible Study & Prayer - Zoom 1:30 PM – Finance Meeting 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	12 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	13 Pastor's Sabbath	14 7:00 PM-AA-FH	
15 Fourth Sunday in Lent 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class - Lenten Series 10:00 AM-Worship Service 11:00 AM – Lenten Book Study - CR One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i>	16 11:00 AM – Aging discussion grp. - LP 7:00 PM – AA – FH	17 	18 8:30 AM – Bible Study & Prayer - Zoom 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM – AA – FH	19 9:30 AM – Council – CR/Zoom 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP Pam out 7:00 PM-AA-FH	20 Pastor's Sabbath	21 7:00 PM-AA-FH	
22 Fifth Sunday in Lent 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class – Lenten Series 10:00 AM-Worship Service 11:00 AM – Lenten Book Study - CR <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i> 3:00 PM – Community Band Practice - FH	23 Pastor Away Happy Birthday! Pam Nute 7:00 PM – AA – FH	24 Pastor Away 4:00 PM – SLLC Anniversary Celebration planning mtg. - FH	25 Pastor Away 8:30 AM – Bible Study & Prayer - Zoom 6:00 PM – Choir rehearsal- LP 7:00 PM – AA – FH	26 Pastor Away 6:00 PM-AIAnon-LP 7:00 PM-AA-FH	27 Pastor Away	28 Pastor Away 7:00 PM-AA-FH	
29 Sixth Sunday in Lent FODD COLLECTION SUNDAY 9:00 AM – Adult Bible Class – Lenten Series 10:00 AM-Worship Service 11:15 AM – Cake Walk-FH <i>Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz</i>	30 11:00 AM – Aging discussion grp. - LP 7:00 PM – AA – FH	31	 (25) Happy Birthday! Roberta Lavoie				KEY: FH - Fellowship Hall LP - Ladies Parlor CR - Classroom If you are not already, and would like to be included on the birthday/anniversary calendar, please contact Pam (fstcong189@gmail.com)

Financial Report

The Financial Reporting is currently going through a major formatting overhaul to reflect the work of the church as Teams versus Committees as a result of the changes made at the last annual meeting. Pam is working on a new chart of accounts!

To summarize, there was \$35,420 in total income for January. It included some large pre-paid pledges for 2026.

Expenses in January were customary (no surprises!) but heating oil expense (due to the cold temps we've been feeling) was up.
Total Expenses = \$18,588

No money was transferred from the Trust Account in January.

**DON'T FORGET TO SET YOUR CLOCK ONE HOUR AHEAD
March 8th!**

Lenten Book Study, *Knowing Jesus*, by James Allison.

Join in conversations after worship in March (March 8, 15, 22). Copies of the Lenten Book are available in the back of the sanctuary on Sundays. Come even if you haven't read the book!

Wireless Guest Account

SSID: FCC Guests

Password: fcc189main



Special Offering March 15, 2026

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response.

Thank you for your support of this offering!

Sneak Peak at Holy Week!

Sunday, March 29 – Palm/Passion Sunday/ Cake Walk

Thursday, April 2 – Maundy Thursday at the Shared Ministry in Lisbon. Potluck dinner and worship.
(More details to come!)

Friday, April 3 – Good Friday – noon at our church

Saturday, April 4 – Easter Vigil – 7:00 pm at the Episcopal Church

Sunday, April 5 – Easter Sunrise Service – Sunset Hill House

10:00 am service here - Resurrection, John 21:1-19, Communion

CAKE WALK

March 29th (after the service)

Please join us downstairs in the fellowship hall for the annual cake walk!

A cake walk is a fun event for all ages. Donate \$1 each round to walk around a circle on numbers while music is playing (or watch!). Once the music stops, everyone stops on a number and someone picks a number from a basket. Whoever's number is picked gets to choose a cake to bring home! Several rounds are played.

This fundraiser benefits the children of Shining Lights Learning Center!





Shining Lights Learning Center



Marble painting for Valentine's Day!



Hibernating with the Bears



It is teacher appreciation week: March 2-6

Pit stop at the office on the way to the hall for Ground Hog's Day!

Plans are currently underway to celebrate the 20th year anniversary of Shining Lights Learning Center!

The first meeting was held on February 24th as a brainstorming session and the next meeting will take place on March 24th at 4pm. If you would like to join in on the planning, please join us!

Tentative plans are to celebrate on September 26th which coincides with the Littleton Art Show. Here is a little history of how it all started. Each month we hope to provide you with more information on the celebration and history of the center as we get closer to the celebration date in the fall.

At a Special Congregational Meeting on May 21, 2006, the congregation approved unanimously to provide a Christian environment and curriculum for its child care and preschool program. The Congregation agreed to contribute to the total start-up cost and loan the center \$10,000 to purchase furniture, supplies and repairs needed to prepare the space that is now SLLC.

A fence was purchased by the church and erected around the playground. Repairs of the existing play structure were made and new steps and swings were added. Woodchips were brought in to meet state regulations, and a sandbox was constructed. Many members and parents donated time and toys.

The inside space was cleared and cleaned in preparation for painting and shelving done by church volunteers. Sinks and cabinets were purchased and plumbing installed. A computer and software were purchased and an office set up. The inspection was successful and the Center's state license was awarded. Opening day was August 21st, 2006 and the Center averaged 12 to 16 preschoolers and 8 to 10 infants and toddlers per day.

The Pastor's 2006 Annual Report stated: "Along with the Capital Campaign, the dream of two young women in the church, and after hours, days, weeks, and months of hard work and assistance from our church family, the learning center opened in the fall." Other 2006 Annual Reports included that the center opened with a full contingent of teachers and pupils. Plus, there was a waiting list of those desiring a Christian daycare learning center. And how the opening of Shining Lights preschool in the fall provided enormous new energy to the entire congregation in addition to providing a wonderful new resource for the community.

Growth and transition followed in 2007 to 2009, but you will have to come back next month to learn more about that!

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A 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
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

