



Tower Tidings

Congregational Church of Laconia United Church of Christ

18 Veterans Square Laconia, New Hampshire 03246

603-524-0668 www.laconiaucc.org

March 2023

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- Winter Walk,
March 5th

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On the Road Again!

Two interim roads diverge at the front stoop of each local church in pastoral transition.

One road is the slow road. The positive momentum of the church is put on hold as the interim delays the formation of a Search Committee and encourages a lot of congregational “self-study.” There is the perception of “illness” in the church system, and the interim works to restore congregational health. Thus, each “developmental task” of the interim time is painstakingly pursued. In churches where there has been a very long tenure, a lot of conflict, or professional misconduct, this can be a very worthwhile road to travel. Time is needed to regroup and discern a new congregational identity before the search for a new pastor can even be considered.

For too long, the first road has been a one-size-fits-all model for interim ministry. A second road seeks to capitalize instead on all the healthy and positive momentum present in the life of the church. Programs are expanded, outreach is encouraged, and a Search Committee is elected and commissioned. There is work on developmental tasks, but that work is an undercurrent and not the focus. Along this road, new approaches to ministry are explored, and small changes to worship, administration and committee life are experimented with and evaluated. There are many challenges that are identified, but a spirit of hope about the future persists.

I am grateful that, for the most part, CCLUCC has been following the road less taken. Because a lot of energy is not needed for self-study and healing, we can focus instead on the “Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve” sign in the church’s front entrance. What might that look like?

Participate as fully as you are able in the life of the church. In-person and online worship fortifies our faith. Attendance at committee meetings and church programs builds up our church. Praying for the church, its leaders, and the wider community we serve, unleashes the Spirit in our midst. Emailing, calling or writing people you have not seen for awhile lets them know that you miss them and can be a very worthwhile spiritual practice. When you are out and about in the community, speak highly of your church and what it means to you. Don’t be afraid to invite others to a Sunday morning service of worship or a mid-week program. We are all in this together!

Be open to change. We are living into this new time of re-gathering after three years of lockdown and isolation – it probably is not going to be the way it

Continued on next page

was. Be kind toward others. We are all trying hard to do our best. Be advocates with and for those who suffer from hate, injustice, abuse or neglect. There are so many in our world who need people of faith to be by/on their side.

Where will this road lead us? Buzz Lightyear might respond, "To infinity and beyond!" Perhaps that should be our mantra. Maybe the quote attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson is more appropriate: "Life is a journey, not a destination." However, let's just leave it with Willie Nelson that great pioneer of interim ministry! We are "On the Road Again," and that can be a wonderful place to be!

With you on the Journey,
Campbell Lovett, Interim Pastor



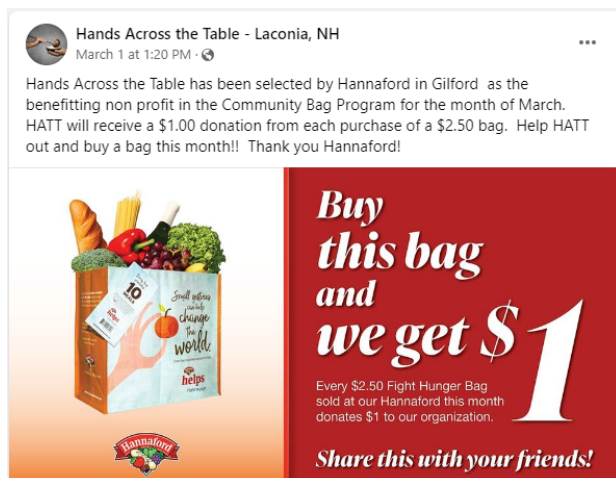
Book Discussion Group for March, April & May

Here are a few links if you want to start researching titles for this spring's Book Discussion Groups. The Group meets on the third Wednesday of each month at noon in the Parish House library.

March 15 - Leaving Church by Barbara Brown Taylor

April 19 - Seeking Peace by Mary Pipher

May 17 - Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus



Congregational Church of Laconia-UCC Coffee Hours



March 5th:
Parish Activities

March 12th:
Worship & Music*

March 19th:
Property & Finance

March 26th:
Diaconate

- **Full coffee hour with beverages & refreshments.**

* The March 12th Coffee Hour is the second of two opportunities to engage in a conversation about creating a safe and secure environment for worship where all are welcome. See more details on page 3

The Little Free Food Pantry Update

Still going strong! After a little over two years, our outdoor food pantry continues to provide food to the food insecure in the Laconia area. Even on these freezing days and nights, a group of six church members take turns putting out food each morning and bringing food that will freeze back inside later in the day.

Thanks to all of the donors during the last two years! We hope others will join in continuing this important outreach to our community. How can you help?

Giving is simple. Food donations can be brought to church each Sunday and placed in a labeled box at each entrance. Food can also be placed directly in the pantry or brought to the church office Monday, Wednesday, or Friday during office hours. Monetary donations can be dropped off at the office or mailed directly to Carolyn. We are happy to do the shopping for you! We even have a glass jar in the office to accept smaller cash donations, which are often used to purchase bread. No gift is too small! Thank you in advance for your support.



-The Little Free Food Pantry Team

Safety & Security Conversation Part 2 — Change of Date

Thanks to the 30 or 40 of you who stayed for a serious conversation about church safety & security last week. Because these listening sessions became a two-part series rather than a twice repeated single session, we are **rescheduling** Part 2 to take advantage of the momentum we've gained. Our focus will shift to the realities faced with some regularity in and around our church and how we can with love and good judgment make decisions to minimize our risks. Please plan to join us again for Coffee & Conversation about this timely topic on **Sunday, March 12th**. We will meet in Church Hall so you can grab a cup of something and sit right down. Bonus! Your Worship & Music Committee will provide refreshments that day!

NEW PODCAST SERIES ALERT!

"**Seeds and Ways**" is a new podcast series based on the United Church of Christ's weekly resources: "Sermon Seeds" and "Weekly Seeds."

- "**Sermon Seeds**" is for worship planners and includes passages from the Revised Common Lectionary and a reflection for the week.
- "**Weekly Seeds**" is for personal Bible study or small groups.
- "**Seeds and Ways**" can be found here: [Link via Facebook](#) or [Listen with Apple](#) or [Listen on Spotify](#).
- The podcast [Into the Mystic](#) with the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer isn't going anywhere! Keep tuning in for the General Minister and President's weekly reflections through the election of the next GMP at General Synod (June 30 - July 4, 2023).

Calling all singers!

We are starting a joint venture with the Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative to establish a community chorus which will rehearse in the Fellowship Hall. Power Chords is the name of the group and we can adapt that to many styles of music and performance venues.

Our first performance opportunity will be May 20, 2023 on the stage of the Colonial Theater, as the votes are tallied following a duet competition of Broadway songs that night. We, too, will be singing all Broadway music that night, in keeping with the theme.



After this six week initial trial period, we will choose our path forward, broadening the scope of our music to include Gospel and “Pops concert” choices. The music will be lively, sung in four parts with accompaniment, and in a lighter, less formal style than traditional classical or church choir choices. No audition is necessary, but you must be able to match pitch while singing in a group. Rehearsals will be once a week for about an hour and a half and will be scheduled according to when most participants have the fewest conflicts.

To sign up, the direct link is <HTTPS://Belknapmill.org/powerchords>

Greetings from the 200th Anniversary Steering Committee!



We would love to hear your ideas as we explore how to have a fabulous 200th!

Please submit your ideas by March 15th to Beth Shehadi at Bethshehadi@gmail.com or Hollis Thompson

at hollisandgreg@yahoo.com or Hollis Thompson - treasurercongochurch@gmail.com

Or speak to anyone on the committee:

Martha Clement, Maurine Bastille, Diane Wells, Bob Harrington, Jerilyn O'Hearn, Margie Kreitler, Carolyn Jorgenson

All ideas are welcome!!!!!! and Thank you for your interest!

Lookin' for Love in All the Wrong Places – A Worship Series for Lent



The Christian scriptures offer many images of where love, grace, forgiveness, righteousness, and healing can really be found. And it is not in the “usual” places. Lent will be a reflective time to reassess where we are searching for meaning and purpose. We’ll explore stories of Jesus to find out who offers the right places. We are grateful for this resource from Worship Design Studios and Marcia McFee.

March 5	Look for the Helper – Psalm 121
March 12	Look for the Thirst Quencher – John 4:13 – 14
March 19	Look for the Shepherd – Psalm 23
March 26	Look for the Liberator – John 11: 1 – 45
April 2	Look for the Unexpected – Matthew 21: 1 – 11
April 9	Love Wins! – John 20:1 - 18



March(ing) In the Light of God Lenten Series

An Exploration of Special Days in March from a Lenten Perspective. Led by Campbell Lovett and members of the Diaconate on Thursday evenings in March. A simple soup supper provided by the Diaconate will begin at 5:30 p.m. The program takes place from 6 to 6:45 p.m. Please join us for this gathering of food and fellowship.

Thursday, March 9th – International Women’s Day

Thursday, March 16th – St. Patrick’s Day

Thursday, March 23rd -- Ramadan

“The New Testament You Never Knew”

A Bible Study Exploring the Context, Purpose, and Meaning of the Story of God.

Are you interested in a Bible Study about the new Testament? This unique 8-part series will be offered after worship/coffee hour beginning March 19. Using a unique blend of brief videos and a workbook, participants will discover more about the New Testament people, places and theologies than they every knew. Please contact Claudia Wright if you are interested, so that we may order you a workbook. Claudia.Wright2840@icloud.com.

Lunch & Learn

Thursday, March 9, 12 p.m., Church Hall

Learn about the NH Alliance of Braver Angels, whose mission is to bring Americans together (especially here in NH) to overcome divisiveness and strengthen our communities.

How? *With thoughtful and respectful listening (and maybe finding common ground!)*

Why? *Because it matters!*



It's no accident that we call our worship space a sanctuary. It is indeed a place of refuge and safety. We come to this space with many different perspectives, ranging from our religious beliefs to our community involvement to our family traditions. In spite of our differences - or maybe because of them - we thrive and grow as individuals and as a congregation.

Yet step outside these doors and things sometimes feel a bit different. Not the literal doors, but the openings into those spaces where an opposite point of view is not tolerated. One can feel the difference when reading the local newspapers, especially the opinion section. The vitriol can be palpable. Letters to the editor must be carefully worded to avoid negative backlash. Not fun. Not good. We can do better.

Among the many organizations trying to build bridges instead of divisions is Braver Angels, a national non-profit organization manned by volunteers whose purpose is to create opportunities for respectful sharing of opinions and perspectives. Listening without judgment is one of the core attributes of a Braver Angels conversation, as is inquiry to increase understanding rather than "got 'ya" questions. Finding common ground when possible is another value of the Braver Angels approach. The purpose of a Braver Angels discussion is honesty in expression and understanding of diverse perspectives rather than the push and pull of persuasion.

Altar flowers are needed for Sunday, March 19th

If you can help, please phone or email Maurine Bastille
at mbastille46@gmail.com.

March Birthdays



3/9	Claire Bragg	3/27	Penelope Burke
3/11	K. Robert Bengtson	3/28	Jerry Krupp
3/13	Peter Millham	3/28	Lorraine Barrows
3/14	Maurine Bastille	3/28	Lorienne Valovanie
3/16	Nancy Barth	3/29	Dolores Folsom
3/17	Neil Wilson	3/29	Gail Dyer
3/17	Aurelia Genre	3/30	David Lynch
3/17	Joy Southworth	4/2	Caden Tucker
3/22	David Emond	4/2	Joey Bryant
3/23	Helen Joyal	4/3	Gail Glines
3/25	Patricia Masters	4/4	Tyler Emond
3/26	Carol Rawson	4/4	Lydia Tucker
3/26	John Kreitler	4/5	Allison Marshall
3/27	Jack Landow	4/5	Tessa McCallum
3/27	Jerry Maher		

HORTON CENTER SUMMER CAMP 2023 CHALLENGE

"Pastor, how can we get these bats out of our belfry?" asked the church trustee.

"Confirm'em," quipped the pastor.

How do we get kids *into* the church family? *Send them to camp!*



The Educational Ministries Committee, inspired by Rev. Janet Heslam, wants to do just that - send kids to Horton Center, the NH United Church of Christ's camp on Pine Mountain.

Many of you may have been to Horton Center and have undoubtedly been moved by the experience. Maybe some others among us have longed to participate, but just couldn't make it happen. The Ed Min Committee wants to inspire you - that's all y'all - to join in a challenge to make a Horton Center experience possible for any young person in our church, regardless of their ability to pay. Yes, you read that right. The committee has determined that part of its mission is to provide this faith experience for any young person and is calling upon the congregation to help make that happen. Thanks to the past generosity of many in our congregation, the Campership Fund has some seed money to launch the project.

The challenge clock starts now!! Please give generously to the Horton Center Campership Fund. A check to "Congregational Church of Laconia" with "Campership Fund" in the memo line is all it takes! And send your donation to the church office **before May 15th**.

It's time to order Easter flowers

The Altar Guild adorns the altar and chancel with flowers on Easter Sunday, Easter comes early this year, April 9th. A sign-up sheet is now in the office to place a lily or Easter flower in honor of or in memory of a loved one, or with another message. A donation of \$20 will allow us to buy a plant. If you write a check, make it out to Congregational Church of Laconia UCC and write Easter Flowers in the memo section. Please indicate whether you wish to take the flower home or have it delivered to a shut-in by our Caring Connections team. **The deadline for ordering and giving a message for the Easter bulletin is Monday, March 31.** Thanks!



Easter Flowers

In loving memory of, in honor of, or another message:

Given by: _____

I will take the flower home _____ Please deliver to a shut-in _____

Suggested Donation \$20 _____ I'll bring in flowers _____

An Important Moment in Our Church's History

A local Alcoholics Anonymous group was launched on February 19, 1948, at the Congregational Church assembly hall. Mayor Parmentier opened the meeting, attended by 100 people who had come from Boston, Manchester and other places. Clergymen of all faiths, social workers, physicians, county commissioners, City Council members, police officials and members of industry attended. "All present lingered for a long time over the coffee and doughnuts to learn more about the movement, which has no dues, accepts no gifts of money, and is carried on mainly through weekly group meetings.

—*The Laconia Daily Sun*

Seventy-five years later the Congregational Church of Laconia remains dedicated to those seeking sobriety by providing space for various AA groups to meet every day of the week.

Improve the energy efficiency of your home.

FREE Home Energy Workshop



NHsaves Button Up Workshop

is a 1½ hour presentation about improving the energy efficiency of your home. It covers energy saving tips and NHsaves energy efficiency programs. Learn about saving electricity, insulation and air sealing, energy audit and weatherization programs, rebates on electric and gas appliances, and other incentives from NH's energy utilities. New Hampshire residents that want to use energy wisely and save money will find the information very useful.

WHEN NEW HAMPSHIRE SAVES,



NHsaves.com

PRESENTATION:

Join us for a **NHsaves** Button Up Workshop

WHEN:

Monday, March 20, 2023, 6:00–7:30 P.M.

Light refreshments will be served.

WHERE:

Laconia Library
695 North Main Street
Laconia, New Hampshire

PRESENTER:

Andy Duncan, Energy Training Manager, LRCC

QUESTIONS:

Unitarian Universalist Society of Laconia
603-524-6488 • uusl@myfairpoint.net

SPONSORED BY:

NHsaves: www.nhsaves.com

LOCAL PARTNERS:

Green Sanctuary Committee of the
Unitarian Universalist Society of Laconia
The City of Laconia
Congregational Church of Laconia
Laconia Gilford Lions Club

Visit https://nhsaves.com/learn/?resource_type=event
for dates and locations of all Button Ups.

Workshops are organized by Plymouth
Area Renewable Energy Initiative, (PAREI)
www.PlymouthEnergy.org • 603-536-5030

The workshops are FREE thanks to funding provided by



EVERSOURCE



CANTERBURY SHAKER VILLAGE

"HANDS TO WORK AND HEARTS TO GOD"

WINTER WALK

TURNING MILL POND PATH

**SUNDAY
AFTERNOON,
MARCH 5TH
MEET AT 1 P.M. IN
FRONT OF THE
PARISH HALL**

**SPONSORED BY: EDUCATIONAL
MINISTRIES COMMITTEE**



Bring some water, winter footwear or snowshoes if we're lucky! This is an approximately 2 mile loop with some elevation gain and loss. It follows dirt paths and roads and we can expect variable conditions depending on the weather!

Contact Jean Clarke for more information
tel. 603.455.9702 or jeanclarke56@gmail.com