



First Church in Jaffrey Weathervane

May – June 2018

Pastor's Pen By Rev. Robin Lunn

Colossians 3:15-17 (NRSV)

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

In my first pastorate I preached a sermon series about gratitude. I can still remember the response from a young man who was struggling with a number of issues. He heard in my sermons the idea that he had the freedom to change his mind about his circumstances and find gratitude for the good things that were coming to him instead of focusing on his struggles. He thanked me for giving him a new place to stand in relationship to his life and I watched him grow over the next few years to be a much more positive and successful person.

Spirit has reminded me of this young man's response and the content of these sermons recently. I, like my

young friend, have spent far too much time these months focused on my challenges, struggling to find the good that this time of transition has within it. I've asked myself why and find a list that you may recognize as your own:

- I am afraid of the unknown
- I feel inadequate to meet the challenge
- I listen to the voices that say I'm too old to remake my life
- I fear repeating the choices my mother made

I could go on but I won't.

When I made this list what came clear to me was how shallow my



From the Moderator - A Snapshot View of the Quarterly Super Circle Meeting
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faith had become. And, in allowing my faith to grow thin, I had lost the capacity to find God's Peace and Grace amidst unexpected change. I had forgotten that I have so much to be grateful for even as things are not turning out as I had expected.

One of my deep gratitudes is you and the community of FCiJ! Your love and care for Shayna and me at this time has been a strong reminder that there can be peace in the uncertainty. This community has lived through many storms and remained steadfast, knowing that the Peace of Christ can "rule in your hearts" no matter what. And as we travel through the spring and summer, listening to one another and the Spirit to discover what our next steps will be, we will abide in that Peace with gratitude in our hearts singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. We will travel the way together seeking out wisdom and reminding one another to look for gratitude amidst the challenges we will inevitably face.

Thank you for helping me to change my mind and remember that, as Julian of Norwich said, "All shall be well and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well." May we rest in this peace even as we travel this unknown road.

Peace,
Robin

Dark Moments

*"All shall be well.."
She must have said that
sometimes through gritted teeth.
Surely she knew the moments
when fear gnaws at trust,
the future loses shape,*

*The courage that says
all shall be well
doesn't mean feeling no fear,
but facing it, trusting
God will not let go.*

*All shall be well
doesn't deny present experience
but roots it deep
in the faithfulness of God,
whose will and gift is life".*

by Ann Lewin
*From Love is the Meaning: Growing
in Faith with Julian of Norwich*

**From the Moderator**

My position as Moderator offers a unique perspective for seeing all the myriad pieces of First Church as an organization – and a spiritual center. A sense of "spring awakening" has become evident to me in the last three or four months as our Circles begin to find their way forward, and the church family navigates its course through big and little "crises" in a caring and thoughtful manner.

We've been having congregational gatherings quarterly to allow all members and friends to know what is happening in the church, as well as to express concerns and ideas. The April 15 "Super Circle" gathering drew 25 members and 7 friends who stayed after worship for a sandwich lunch and the meeting that focused on our Circles, which have replaced the traditional committees over the past two years.

The church remains in good financial shape despite larger than anticipated expenses for heating oil and plowing. We have not withdrawn any extra monies from the Endowment so far.

To prepare for the "Super Circle" gathering the chairs of each circle created mission statements, defined tasks, and listed current members and Carol Hess was able to put together a comprehensive "Purposes/Missions" handout. This is a valuable reference and will be the basis for the Circles section of the website. The Circles, which indeed do "drive the church," are: Benevolence, Communications, Executive, Fair, Friendship/Welcome, Pastoral Relations, Prayer, Trustees, Worship. Each is unique – some have several members, others have 3-4. Some meet monthly, but most meet 5-6 times a year or less. A few are elected, but most Circles welcome new individuals, both members and friends. A few highlights from their reports follow:

- The **Communications Circle** supports all the circles. It needs information for the Weathervane and the website from everyone. Now, it is beginning work on publicity for the 102nd Fair on August 1, 2018.

360 Degrees – continued

- The **Pastoral Relations Circle** meets monthly– please relay concerns and questions to Bobbie Gilbert or Linda Giragosian.
- The new **Friendship/Welcome Circle**, in charge of coffee hour and memorial receptions, would like to know if there is interest in a June picnic, a fall potluck supper/lunch, or December Lunch. Talk to Millie Vigneault.
- **Benevolence Circle** will meet in May to decide beneficiaries of monies raised by the 2017 Fair. If you know of a worthy cause, talk to Marcia Breckenridge.
- At the recommendation of the **Social Justice Circle**, First Church has joined the Monadnock Interfaith Program.
- We'd like to start an **Outreach Circle** to draw more people from around the Monadnock region to First Church. Any thoughts on the mission and strategy of this potential circle, talk to Mary Jo Marvin.

What's next: Rev. Robin will work with the Executive Circle to organize four gatherings at members' homes during May and early June. Using the same set of questions, each group will delve more deeply into the range of options available to First Church and choices to be made in shaping our future.

The complete minutes of the April 15 meeting are posted on the bulletin board, and extra copies are on the table in the Parish House.

Mary Jo Marvin, Moderator (with thanks to our Clerk, Sylvia Hamilton, and her excellent minutes)



May to September – our Listening and Discernment process

At our April 15th Super Circle Gathering we made some plans for the next phase of our listening and discernment work. The hope is that this work will bring us to our goal of a consensus decision about the future we feel FCIJ is being called to and in which we can invest. The first part of this work is a set of 4 **Home Gatherings** where we will use the Circle process (Thank you Leaf Seligman!) to listen and think together about a few questions. Pastor Robin will facilitate each of these gatherings (this is a part of her portfolio) and a scribe will take notes so we can have a record of our listening and thinking.

Some of you have asked, "What is the purpose of these gatherings?" While we have done a significant amount of vision casting and

discernment, it is critical that we are all on the same page about the choices, commitments and hoped-for outcomes that any vision holds within it. The vision offered last October was one gathered up by Pastor Robin and was based in all of the work done previously. It was offered as an option but not a defacto decision. This new work is about taking all of our options, thinking about them together and making a choice that we can feel good about based on where we are now.

To that end, here are the questions we will be thinking through during these Home Gatherings:

- What do you desire and/or need to be central to your faith community in the next 10-15 years?
- What is sustainable in helping you meet these core needs/ desires with consistency and integrity amidst change?

After we hold these Home Gatherings we will debrief at our Second Quarter Super Circle gathering in June and find the commonality in our desires/needs. In July we will hold the second round of Home Gatherings to think about specifics. And at our September Super Circle Gathering we should be ready to take all of this information and chart a course for the next phase of our work.

Listening & Discernment - Continued

Our faithfulness to this process of listening to one another and the Spirit will surely bear good fruit!

We have three Home Gatherings scheduled so far. They are:

May 16th from 10:00 to 11:30 am –
Linda and Zav

May 30th from 3:00 to 4:30 pm –
Mary Jo

June 2nd from 2:00 to 3:30 pm –
Ilona

Note: What does discernment mean?

The ability to judge well.

In Christian contexts, perception in the absence of judgement and with a view to obtaining spiritual direction and understanding.

And there's more on the Internet, if you are interested in a complex word with nuanced meanings.

Trustees Report

The transfer of accounts from Cahaba Works to QuickBooks is steadily progressing. Our sincere thanks to Geoff Frank, Judy Lessard, Karen Johnson, and Treasurer Janet Grant for all of their work and expertise during this transition.

During one of the late April snow /wind storms, another large elm became uprooted in the Memorial Garden near the wall on the Blackberry Lane side. Thanks to Cody Gordon and his team for removing the tree so promptly.

The Trustees have purchased a new microwave for the Parsonage from Korvin Appliance in Keene. The faucet in the upstairs bath in the Parsonage and the faucet in the Parish House bathroom have also received new washers from Pinney Plumbing and Heating to keep them from leaking.

The fire extinguishers have had their annual inspection and the alarm system will have its inspection this month (May).

First Church is pleased to be the host of Project Shakespeare's play *Quilters* on Saturday, April 28 and will welcome a wedding on May 5.

Soon the gardens will be mulched and the flowers will be blooming!

Gwendolyn Gundlach, Trustees' Chairman

One Great Hour of Sharing May 6

On Sunday, May 6, First Church members and friends celebrate the annual One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering. We partner with nearly 6,000 United Church of Christ congregations across the United States and Puerto Rico, as well as with eight other Protestant denominations and Church World Service. The UCC annually channels more than \$3 million dollars through One Great Hour of Sharing to address the world's humanitarian crises – responding to natural and human-caused disasters, ministering to refugees, and building sustainable communities in more than 80 nations.

In cooperation with Global Ministries, Church World Service, Action by Churches Together, Interchurch Medical Assistance, Foods Resource Bank, Oikocredit, Freedom from Hunger and hundreds of local partners around the world, One Great Hour of Sharing is part of a remarkable network of service and caring that is efficient, effective and faithful. Administrative costs are typically less than eight percent annually.

The theme for 2018 is "More Than We Can Imagine," comparing our small gifts to a seeding that can provide food and subsequent opportunities that become a catalyst for of change. "Now to God be the glory, who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more

One Great Hour – continued

than all we can ask or imagine.”
(Ephesians 3:20)

Special donation envelopes were included in the bulletins following Easter and are available in the Narthex. Checks can be made out to First Church in Jaffrey, with OGHS offering in the memo line. They can also be mailed directly to the Treasurer at PO Box 673, Jaffrey, NH 03452.

For more detailed information on the OGHS project, go to www.ucc.org or type One Great Hour of Sharing in your web browser.

The Benevolence Circle**Monadnock Interfaith Project**

The Executive Circle meeting on April 8th approved First Church joining the Monadnock Interfaith Project (MIP). It was created with the goal of “Building An Interfaith Coalition for Community, Understanding, and Social Justice.” They have received grants for their work with the homeless in Keene, they advocate for change on issues important to the local community, and have held training sessions to sponsor Deep Listening. Currently, though most participants represent Christian denominations, members also include UU, Buddhists and a number of “Unaffiliated.” MIP has done considerable networking with state and nation-wide social justice

organizations and would be a good source of information for First Church. They hold monthly meetings, which Justice Circle members will attend; as a member we would have a vote. They do ask for a donation from members, but there is no set “fee.” The Justice Circle is planning to use part of its General Fund budget as a donation to MIP.

**Justice Ministry Letter**

The following letter was published in the Monadnock Ledger-Transcript and also in the Keene Sentinel on March 22:

On March 24th, people from around the country will gather in Washington, D.C. and elsewhere to participate in the MARCH FOR OUR LIVES, organized by students of the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in the wake of the school shooting there on February 14th. We, the members of the Justice Ministry Circle at First Church in Jaffrey, wish to make public our witness and support of these young people and all those who will stand with them. As a member congregation of the United Church of Christ we affirm the resolution passed at the denominations 1995 General Synod which specifically advocated for laws to strengthen licensing and registration of gun sales, (including sales at gun shows), and ban semi-automatic assault weapons and high capacity ammunition clips.

As a church located in New Hampshire we take this stand in opposition to gun violence in memory of historic figures like Keene’s Jonathan Myrick Daniels, an Episcopalian seminarian who lost his life in 1965 attempting to shield young black civil rights activist Ruby Sales from a shotgun wielding racist. Last, but not least, we follow Jesus the Christ, the Prince of Peace, who taught non-violence and the law of love.

The state of New Hampshire has a proud and cherished history of standing courageously for justice on many fronts. We encourage justice minded people everywhere to stand with our youth on March 24th, either in Washington or locally (Keene or Concord). We hope and pray the time is now for significant political action to help ensure the safety of ALL! Through prayer AND action people of faith can bring a renewed sense of hope to a nation weary of gun violence.

*Suzanne Lampert and Shayna Appel
for the Justice Ministry Circle, First
Church in Jaffrey, U.C.C.*



Heather Ames, Jake Ferrell, and Rachel Ricard

Woods Scholarship Recipients Talk about Nicaragua Experiences

On Sunday, April 29, the First Church in Jaffrey welcomed two recipients of the Woods International Outreach Fund Scholarship who talked about their out-of-country experiences in Nicaragua and the impact it had on their lives.

The latest Woods scholarships were given to two people from Conant High School, Jake Ferrell, an English teacher, and Rachel Ricard, a senior. Both participated in the annual Conant High School Interact Club international service project, a February trip to Nicaragua to help build a house for a family in the rural town of Chacraseca, population 8,000. The project was under the auspices and direction of FNE International, an international service agency that works closely with small communities to develop projects that the community leaders want; houses are a priority and built with local materials and given to a family who agrees to pay back the cost of the house in 5 years.

During their 9-day stay, the 16 students and 2 advisors spent mornings on the worksite experiencing the culture and living conditions presented by a third world country, working under a local foreman's directions to dig trenches and help lay the foundation for a family of four. In the afternoons, they learned about other projects that FNEI supports including an afterschool English program and a bee-raising project. Field excursions to the Pacific Ocean coast, a volcano, and historic sites in the cities of Granada and Leon were part of the overall experience

Jake Ferrell, a graduate of the Jaffrey school system and Clark University, has taught at Conant for seven years and serves as an assistant advisor to the Interact Club, an affiliated partner of the Jaffrey-Rindge Rotary Club. In describing the Interact Club, Jake says that "I have never been part of a group of such dedicated, determined, and compassionate young people. These students display clear characteristics of leadership - the student-run Board of Directors runs general assembly meetings, generates meeting minutes, maintains accurate financial accounts, and maintains email correspondence with members and other organizations. In a time when many bemoan the Millennial Generation as self-serving, technology-obsessed people, these students prove those stereotypes wrong."

Rachel Ricard is one of these outstanding students; she takes Honors and AP courses while being involved in athletics and extracurricular activities. Field hockey, track, Interact Board, and yearbook editor are all part of her resume. This was Rachel's second trip to Nicaragua which she calls the "most amazing experience I have ever had. It helped me learn a lot about myself and taught me so much about others. I can never forget conversations with people who don't even have a house to live in, but who show joy in their everyday lives, and share that with others."

Now in its tenth year, the Woods International Outreach Fund was established by the family of Fran and Davida Woods – longtime members of First Church. It awards roughly \$2,000 in scholarships each year for local students, primarily at the high school level, who wish to study and travel abroad. Heather Woods Ames, chair of the Woods Scholarship Committee, introduced Jake and Rachel and gave a brief history of the scholarship program. "My father, Dr. Fran Woods, would be especially pleased about the students we have helped send to Nicaragua with the Interact Club," she said. "Decades ago, he served on the medical Ship Hope and fondly remembered the time he spent in Nicaragua."

When asked about the impact of this trip, common words were "amazing, rich, humbling, gratifying." The teacher, Jake Ferrell, talked about his experience of "being the other, a stranger in a strange place where I did not know

Woods Scholarship - continued

the language well or the culture.” The locals were so kind to him, helping him with his halting Spanish (or even speaking good English), that he gained insights and empathy for immigrants who come to this country. Both speakers stressed that each individual on the trip came, and left, with different perspectives. Debriefing sessions on the highs and lows of the day were held each evening to share experiences and nurture reflections on traveling in a foreign country.

Rachel again emphasized the joy she witnessed. “Not having Wi-Fi sometimes is a serious complaint for us; for rural Nicaraguans, it is not having enough food.” On the highway from Leon to Chacraseca, one could clearly see the haves and the have-nots – BMW cars share the road, sides obscured by trash, with carts drawn by animals. Both speakers were extraordinarily grateful to the Rotary-sponsored Interact Club for giving them “an experience that jolts you out of the usual.”



Getting Ready for the Fair! August 1st, 2018

Happy Rabbit is on the hunt -- looking for books, art, garden plants, antiques or other collectibles, furniture, and more to be sold during the 102nd Summer Fair on August 1. Funds raised support many community service organizations in the Monadnock region. Do you have a 'treasure' to donate to the FAIR this year?

We won't be ready to collect your donations until mid-June or July, but take a look around and see if you have anything you would like to recycle out of your home and into someone else's house!

Get Involved! The Fair needs:

- Workers for every venue several days before and during the Fair
 - Garage space or a barn to store donated items prior to the Fair
 - Plants and garden items – pots, window boxes, stands, sculpture
 - Quality items for our Silent Auction
 - Art work and frames
 - Cash donations are very much appreciated to help offset expenses
- For more information please contact Bruce or Pam Hill, Fair Co-chairs, at philloncapecod@gmail.com or 508-280-0771

Thank you!





May 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 11:00am Senior Exercise	2 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group	3 11:00am Senior Exercise	4 5:00-7:00pm Wedding Rehearsal	5 2:00pm Wedding
6 10:30 Worship One Great Hour of Sharing	7	8 11:00am Senior Exercise	9 4:00pm Trustees Meeting 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group	10 10:00am Bible Study 11:00am Senior Exercise	11	12
13 10:30 Worship 4:00pm Sundaze	14	15 11:00am Senior Exercise	16 10:00-11:30 am Home Gathering - Linda & Zav 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group	17 11:00am Senior Exercise 5:30pm -Community Supper United Church of Jaffrey	18	19
20 10:30 Worship	21	22 11:00am Senior Exercise	23 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group	24 10:00am Bible Study 11:00am Senior Exercise	25	26
27 10:30 Worship 4:00pm Sundaze	28	29 11:00am Senior Exercise	30 3:00-4:30 pm Home Gathering - Mary Jo 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group	31 11:00am Senior Exercise		



June 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 2:00-3:30pm Home Gathering - Ilona
3 10:30 Worship & Communion	4	5 11:00am Senior Exercise	6 4:00pm Trustees Meeting 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group	7 11:00am Senior Exercise	8	9
10 10:30 Worship 4:00pm Sundaze 4:00p, -Electric Earth Concert	11	12 11:00am Senior Exercise	13 4:00pm Trustees' Meeting 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group	14 10:00am Bible Study 11:00am Senior Exercise	15	16
17 10:30 Worship	18	19 11:00am Senior Exercise	20 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group 9am – 4pm Monadnock Garden Club	21 11:00am Senior Exercise 5:30pm –Community Supper United Church of Jaffrey	22	23
24 10:30 Worship 4:00pm Sundaze	25	26 11:00am Senior Exercise	27 4:00pm Tai Chi 8:00pm Men's AA Group	28 10:00am Bible Study 11:00am Senior Exercise	29	30