

April

2017

**Worship ~ Sundays
at 10:00 a.m.**

The Chimes

Necessary Mystery

Make no mistake: if He rose at all
it was as His body;

...

Let us not mock God with metaphor,
analogy, sidestepping transcendence;
making of the event a parable, a sign painted in
the
faded credulity of earlier ages:
let us walk through the door.

-from "Seven Stanzas at Easter"
by John Updike



In 1961 (the year of my birth!), American contemporary writer John Updike published a poem that unabashedly affirmed the bodily resurrection of Jesus. Though most of the controversies surrounding the late Mr. Updike concerned his treatment of sex, many also revolved around his rather orthodox belief in God. (God and sex were definitely his two favorite subjects.)

It was unusual for an intellectual like Updike to affirm the Easter faith so forthrightly. Even theologians of that time (perhaps they triggered Updike's ire) were downplaying the resurrection—treating it symbolically or metaphorically. Updike would have none of it. With the Apostle Paul, he called it plainly: "if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain." (1 Corinthians 15.14, NRSV) Without the resurrection, Eugene Peterson translated freely, everything else is "smoke and mirrors."

This is difficult ground to tread. It tends to make people (i.e., us) uncomfortable. But I believe it is essential, foundational, and necessary. Paul knew it was difficult, and so did Updike and Peterson. So do I. But we affirm it nonetheless.

Does that mean that people who affirm the resurrection must use it like a large sledgehammer to pound people who do not (yet) affirm it? Certainly not. Every serious Christian, however firm his or her faith, understands that the resurrection is—at its core—a holy mystery. We affirm it, yes, but we also stand in awe of it. It is not material for proofs or for ham-handed efforts at evangelism. It is material for praise and invitation. It elicits songs like "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" and phrases like the biblical favorite, "Come and see."

It is necessary indeed. But it is also a mystery. And these two truths shape it into a strong but humble center for our faith.

See you in church on Easter!

--MSB

****Holiday Fair News****



Our enthusiastic Holiday Fair committee is already planning for our fair on November 18, 2017! This is a wonderful church-wide, community outreach and fundraising event. There are many ways to be involved! As you do your spring cleaning or if you are downsizing, please consider a donation of specialty furniture or other items to FPC for our Tiffany Collectibles and Antiques room. *Jim Prue*, who specializes in this field, is happy to assist anyone with items that might be appropriate. Contact *Jim* at 603-749-6897 or jeprue@comcast.net. A letter of donation can be provided for you to use for income tax purposes.

I am looking for a co-chair to work with me and Bethany Gould this year to take over the Holiday Fair in 2018. Bethany is an enthusiastic, hard-working, dedicated and competent young woman who has expressed a desire to help out with future fairs. She (and her entire family) have grown up in our church community and know most all of the tricks and traps in our church!

However, we need an “older adult” to learn with us because Bethany is a working-student and her schedule for next fall is not firm. Please give prayerful consideration to this request and attend our first meeting to share the good news!

Our first committee meeting will be held on **April 30th** at 11:30 in the parlor. I invite interested persons to join us then. Raise your hand and let us know how you would like to help make this year’s fair even better than the last.

If you would like to learn more about our fair or get involved with the planning, contact *Kathy Baker* – 742-5976, skmbaker@comcast.net.

Deacon's Bench



For some reason, Hebrews 11:1 has been on my mind. The Revised Standard Version reads “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things unseen”. This is one of my favorite Bible verses. I consider myself blessed that for most of my life I have always known that things would work out all right. Now, when I start to get anxious about something, I just turn to this verse and remind myself that God is in charge and things will work out in his time and to his will. Remember, “Things will be okay in the end; if it isn’t okay it isn’t the end”.

The Deacons have completed a list of questions to be used when interviewing our interim candidates. I recently heard from Conference Minister Gary Schulte. He has two candidates who are very interested in serving as our interim and who he respects. They are working on updating their profiles and we should have their information by April 1.

We will keep you updated on our progress. In the meantime, if you have any questions please feel free to ask any Deacon.

Peace and Grace,
John Russell, Co-Chair

Mission & Action Scholarships

Application forms for the *Martha Rowe Scholarship*, the *Richard Abbott Scholarship* and scholarships to individuals who wish to continue their education on the post-secondary level in any field or who wish to participate in a community service project are available on the church bulletin board. The deadline for applications is May 1st. For more information please contact the scholarship coordinator, Kristen Peyton at 724-816-8242 or KristenLPeyton@gmail.com

Good Friday Service "The Descent from the Cross"

This year's ecumenical "Holy (or Good) Friday Service," presented by the Dover Area Religious Leaders Association (DARLA), will take place at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, 93 Locust Street in Dover, at 3:00 p.m. (Note the different time from previous years). Father Timothy Curran, the priest at Annunciation Church, welcomes the ecumenical community to this special service.

At this dramatic service, parishioners solemnly watch the priest take down the body of Christ from the cross, wrap him in a white sheet and place him on the black draped altar. The priest reenacts the same steps taken by Joseph of Arithmea who took Christ's body to the tomb. The *epitaphios* (Icon of Christ's burial) is put in the flower decorated tomb. Parishioners venerate the icon at the end of the service, and some children go under the tomb to show humility and to receive God's blessing.

The *epitaphios* (Icon of Christ's burial) remains at the front of the church for the entire afternoon and into the host congregation's evening service. Parishioners come to church and pay their respects to the buried Christ, with the same regard accorded to the viewing of a deceased family member or friend.

The host church is fully accessible, and if on-street parking is unavailable, there is extra parking behind the church in the community parking lot.

Thank You

Thanks to everyone for your thoughts, prayers, cards and visits during my illness. It was much appreciated.

Doris Goodwin

In Sympathy



We mourn the loss of our dear friends, called home by God to share in the everlasting kingdom of Heaven...

Jeremy Bryce ~

Roddy Bryce's brother

Napoleon Rheume ~

Gary Rheume's father

Lucille Soovajian ~

Cindy Thompson's mother

George Wright ~

Marion Wright's husband



**American
Red Cross**

Come give the gift of life! First Parish Church will be hosting a blood drive on Wednesday, April 26th, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. All blood types are urgently needed! Did you know that every 3 seconds someone needs the precious gift of blood? You may call 1-800-Red Cross to make an appointment or you may simply walk in. Thank you all!

50 Year Member ~

New Member Dinner



Our Annual Dinner celebrating those who have been members of FPC for 50 or more years and those who have recently joined the parish will be held on **Monday, May 15**, at **5:30 P.M.** in our Fellowship Hall. We will conclude before dark so folks can still be home early. Please call the Church Office to let us know you are coming so we can plan the food.

This is an **ALL CHURCH** event.
PLEASE JOIN US!



April 9th, 2017
FPC Annual Palm Sunday Luncheon & Easter Egg Hunt
 Come join us for **food and fellowship** immediately following the service. This meal is hosted by our **Christian Education Board** and beverages, salads and desserts will be provided. Please bring a main dish to share. Egg hunt immediately following in the sanctuary.



Sunday School Mission Project
Heifer International



An Ark for Today's World
Heifer International
 is a global nonprofit working with communities to end hunger and poverty and care for the Earth. Since 1944, Heifer has helped 10.5 million families in more than 125 countries move toward greater self-reliance through the gift of livestock and training in environmentally sound agriculture. We will have **FOOD AND OTHER ITEMS FOR SALE** on **Sunday, May 7th**. Each classroom has their own 'specialty' for sale.



Hilton Park
Easter Sunday
April 16th
@ 6:00 AM.

Join us as we worship along with the rising sun. It is always beautiful and usually **COLD**. Dress warm! Pancake breakfast will be served at FPC immediately following the service.



April 23RD
SPECIAL PROGRAM
beginning @ 10:00 AM
 Activities to include:
 ■ Heifer International video, games and crafts to make and sell at our annual Heifer Fair

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL
April 16th or April 23rd



Sunday, May 7th
HEIFER FAIR
(during coffee hour in Fellowship Hall)

Sunday, June 4th
CHILDREN'S SUNDAY





Palm Sunday & Stewardship Covenant Sunday
Sunday, April 9th 10:00 a.m. Worship with Pastor Mike Bennett
*Followed by Our **Annual Potluck Luncheon & Easter Egg Hunt***
Every one is invited. This meal is hosted by our Christian Education Board and beverages and desserts will be provided. Please bring a salad or a main dish to share. Easter egg hunt for children will be immediately after lunch.

Maundy Thursday, April 13th
6:15 p.m. ~ Silent Meal
7:00 p.m. ~ Service of Tenebrae and Holy Communion

Good Friday, April 14th
3:00 p.m. ~ Ecumenical Good Friday Service
Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, 93 Locust St., Dover
Please join with our friends from other Dover area faith communities.

Easter Sunday, April 16th
6:00 a.m. ~ Sunrise Service at Hilton Park
led by FPC Youth
7:00 a.m. ~ Breakfast in Fellowship Hall
10:00 a.m. ~ Festival Easter Worship in sanctuary
with Pastor Mike Bennett
Music by First Parish Choir, Youth Choir, First Parish Ringers and
Brass Quintet





Church Supper

Saturday, April 1st

Come and enjoy a feast!

All for just \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 12 or under.

Served from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Ham 'n beans, homemade breads, coleslaw, string bean casserole, desserts and a few culinary surprises!

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT WHILE YOU EAT! The supper will feature popular music and show tunes by *Rick Gremlitz* at the Hammond Organ with the vocal stylings of *Jean Ellison and Irene Boyle..*



Return Service Requested

The Chimes
The First Parish Church Congregational
The United Church of Christ
218 Central Avenue
Dover, New Hampshire
03820

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Organization
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