

March
2017

The Chimes

Worship ~ Sundays
10:00 a.m.

Lent: A Different Kind of Tithing

I'm a believer in *tithing*—that is a giving away of 10% of income. It is a practice that has enriched my spiritual life. You may have heard me talk about this from time to time. But with this issue of the *Chimes*, I'd like to invite you to think about a different kind of tithing.

The season of Lent consists of the forty days prior to Easter (Sunday's don't count, since every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection). Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on March 1. (For those who like detail: In 325CE the Council of Nicaea established that Easter would be held on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox. From that point forward, the Easter date depended on the ecclesiastical approximation of March 21 for the vernal equinox.)

At 40 days, Lent represents roughly 10% or a "tithe" of the 365 days of the calendar year.

Thinking of Lent as a tithe of our time to God is very helpful, I think. We set aside one small portion of the year to devote some extra focus and attention to worshipping God, following Jesus, and more intentionally practicing our faith.

At First Parish Church, you'll find many ways and opportunities to engage, or re-engage your faith. If you haven't been giving God enough time, here's a chance to try something new. Whether it is daily prayer, scripture reading, attending worship services, or just joining in some activities at church—marking off this time will make a difference in your life.

See you in church!

-- MSB

Lenten Bible Study: *The Letter to the Philippians*

Come join in an informal discussion of one of the Apostle Paul's most important (and shortest!) letters. Pastor Mike will lead a conversation that touches on some of the most important themes of the Christian life. This will also be an opportunity, before Mike's retirement this summer, to spend time together reflecting on the meaning of our life together in Christ. We will focus each week on one chapter. Join us for one session or for all four! Four Thursday evenings in Lent from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the Parlor: March 16 – Chapter 1; March 23 – Chapter 2; March 30 – Chapter 3; April 6 – Chapter 4.

Mission & Action Scholarships

Each year the Mission and Action Board awards scholarships to graduates from the congregation pursuing higher education. The *Martha Rowe Scholarship* is available for students pursuing the nursing field or patient care related fields. The *Richard Abbott Scholarship* is available for business majors. Mission and Action also awards scholarship 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.

Applicants for scholarships will receive consideration based on community projects completed, contributions to our church and to their school, an application essay, and the recommendations of three individuals.

Application forms are available on the church bulletin board. The deadline for submission of applications is May 1, 2017. For more information, please contact the scholarship coordinator, Kristen Peyton. She may be reached at 724-816-8242 or KristenL.Peyton@gmail.com.

UKAMA MISSION

Give thanks for the past, for those who had vision, who planted and watered so dreams could come true...

The Mission and Action Board heart-fully thanks all of you who made this mission possible! We can't be more thrilled with the outcome and to announce that we not only met but exceeded our goal of raising \$6,000.00 for the clean water project. We asked you to help us bring clean water to our friends and family at Highfield Church and they prayed for us that our mission would be blessed. Their prayers and ours were answered. Your hearts spoke loudly! With the drilling of a new bore hole, we will be bringing clean water to our friends and family at Highfield Church UCC, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Deacon's Bench



I am sure many of us are concerned about how we will move forward now that Pastor Mike has announced his retirement. According to the church by-laws, the Board of Deacons has two responsibilities. The first is to call an interim pastor while the church searches for a new settled pastor. The second is to appoint a search committee of seven or nine people to find our new settled pastor.

To start this process, the Deacons met with Conference Minister Gary Schulte on February 14. Gary will be working with us throughout the process until we call our new pastor.

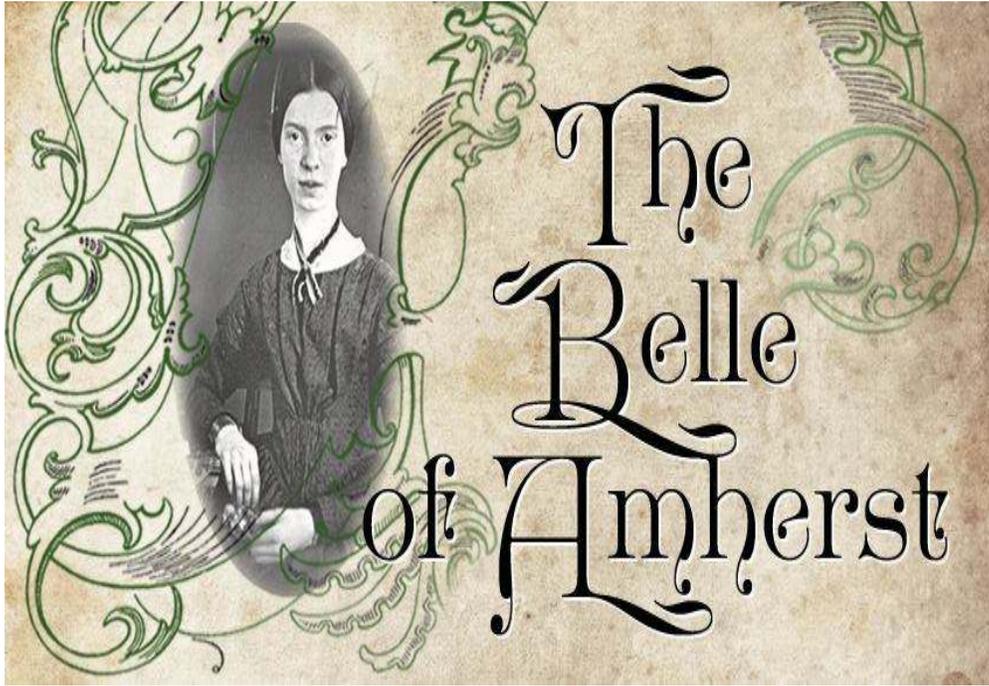
The first step is to call an interim minister. A small group of Deacons is working to complete a draft of the "Request for Interim Leadership". After this is approved by the entire board it will be sent to the Conference. The Conference will then provide a list of at least two candidates for the position of Interim Pastor. The Deacons will then interview the candidates and either select one or ask for more candidates. Once we have called an interim, the Deacons will begin the process of calling a search committee.

If you are like me, you will experience frustration that it all takes too long, normally 12 to 18 months. I keep reminding myself that we are working to God's timeline and as long as we work diligently and in good faith to discern God's will we will be successful.

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

Men's Group meets Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM in the Parlor.



A play based on the life of New England's own Emily Dickinson
At First Parish Church in two performances:
Friday, March 24 at 7:00 p.m. and
Saturday, March 25 at 2:00 p.m.

The Belle of Amherst delicately explores the life of America's greatest woman poet from the age of 15 when she was full of hope, until she died at 56, a virtual recluse. Miss Dickinson's experiences are recreated on the stage with liberal excerpts from her poetry. Our own Carol Davenport will recreate this one-woman production which she performed at two seacoast theater venues several years ago to critical acclaim. This fully staged and costumed production will be performed in the sanctuary, utilizing our newly installed lighting system.

This production is being donated by Carol and her production team to the ongoing FPC FUNdraising initiatives.

Save the dates! You will not want to miss this one-of-a-kind performance which the NY Daily news called: *magnificent...an arresting, riveting experience.*



Memorial Easter Plants



Spring plants to decorate our Sanctuary for Easter may be ordered by pre-paying when you sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board across from the office. **The price is \$10.00 per plant.** Please indicate how you would like the dedication to read.

Please sign up by **April 2nd.**



Our youth will be seeing
"The Shack"

as a group on

Sunday, March 12th.

We will gather after church and carpool to the theater.

Please let me know if you plan to attend so I can plan tickets accordingly.

THANK YOU

to all who supported our youth and bought

Super Bowl Subs

AND

pledged our teams for the
**Dover Children's Home
Annual Bowl-A-thon**

Our FPC team won
BEST THEME WEAR!

In Sympathy



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

Carl Lauersen ~

Karen Henck's father

Norman Stacy ~

Ruth Stacy's husband

Richard York ~

Laurie York's husband

Melody ~

Danielle Fillion's grandmother

Altar Flowers

February 5 In loving memory of her mother *Gladys "Mickey" Harris* given by *Lana Black*

February 19 In loving memory of *Elbridge* and *Donald Goodwin* and *Walter Phelps* given by *Doris Goodwin* and family

February 26 In loving memory of *Pam Bertram-Stieglitz* given by her husband *Joe Stieglitz*

If you would like to purchase altar flowers, please contact *Joanne* in the church office at 742-5664.



One Great Hour of Sharing is the Lenten Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports disaster, refugee and development actions. The offering date for the One Great Hour of Sharing offering is **March 26th**, but gifts may be shared at any time. Please give generously! Offering envelopes will be in the Sunday bulletins on March 26th. Thank you.

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Rev. Michael Bennett, Pastor & Teacher
msb@firstparishdover.org

Rick Gremlitz, Church Administrator
rickgremlitz@yahoo.com

NH UCC: www.nhcucc.org

Bulletin Deadline: Tuesdays by 9:00AM

Chimes Deadline: The 15th of every
month ~ Please email bulletin and
chimes information to Joanne at
firstparish@comcast.net



Return Service Requested

The Chimes
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The United Church of Christ
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