

Steeple Chat

The weekly update from your church



In our Church this Sunday, February 17

The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Message by Pastor Paige Besse-Rankin

Open and Shut Cases

Jeremiah 17: 5-10; Luke 7: 17-26

Children's Message by Pastor Paige

Ministry of Music

The Joyous Ringers

***New Day* Brenda Austin**

The First Parish Choir

***Jubilee!* Ray Makeever; arr John Helgen**

Carolyn Harriman, flute; Marty Thyng, percussion

We are delighted to receive into the membership of our church this Sunday:

Rev Paige Besse-Rankin, Rev Gordon Rankin and Emily Rankin.

Please join us for our fellowship gathering following the service.

Child care is available during the service.

UPDATE! A Gift for Our New Pastor...

Thank you to the many folks who completed the information sheet and had their pictures taken last Sunday. The completed forms are making their way into a special binder for Rev Paige. The book will not be complete without YOU in it. Rev Paige has asked for our help in her quest to begin to get names and faces better connected. Paige considers it a gift for you to take a few moments to share this information with her.

If you have not yet completed an information sheet, please click to download and print a pdf of the [FORM](#). Then, please drop your completed form at the church. And, the next time you are at church, be looking for the friendly photographers to snap an informal picture.



In our Sunday School

Join us Sunday for **FIRST Kids Gathering** time at 9:30 a.m. in Nazareth Hall for children and their families. Rev Paige will be leading FIRST Kids this Sunday. At 9:55 a.m., all will move upstairs to the sanctuary for worship. Following the Children's Message, kids and teachers will return downstairs for their classes and activities.



Adult Discussion Group

There will be NO Adult Sunday School Class on Sundays February 17, 24, and March 3.

Class will resume March 10, the first Sunday of Lent. During Lent we will be discussing topics selected by those attending, using devotional material from *Our Daily Bread* as our primary resource. All are welcome! Starting at 8:50 AM in Room 8.

Upcoming Events and Notes

TOMORROW! Join in the fun at **Fellowship Game Day** on Saturday February 16th from 2-4 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. All ages welcome, and guests too! An assortment of board games will be available or bring your favorite. Bring a snack to share, drinks will be provided.



Next Church Supper

Saturday, March 2, 4:30-6:00 p.m. Our culinary salute to St Patty's Day! Our monthly Church Supper features a traditional New England boiled dinner of Corned Beef, Ham, Potatoes, Turnips,

Carrots, Cabbage, Onions, Beets, Corn Bread, Irish Soda Bread and homemade desserts. If you are able to assist with food donations for the supper, please sign up following the service this Sunday.



REV
PAIGE'S
CORNER

Church Camp Changed My Life

Some of you may have noticed that even before I began work here, I agreed to serve as dean at Horton Center this summer. In part, this is because I am old friends with the interim director and he knew where to find me in South Dakota. But the bigger story is that I have volunteered a week at summer camp for most of the years of my career as a way to give back. I was actually on the Horton Center staff 30 years ago for just a summer between college and seminary serving as the Arts and Crafts staff, so I am thrilled to be returning to the mountain.

I grew up going to a variety of summer camps - YMCA, Girl Scout, 4-H and such. And they were ok. I had some adventures and tried some things that I never would have done otherwise - like water skiing and horseback riding. But they didn't have the impact that church camp had on me.

When I was attending church in high school, one of my friends told me about a music camp held each summer at the Methodist retreat center Rolling Ridge. My family teased me that instead of a rustic cabin in the woods, I was now going to camp in a mansion (which had been donated to the church.) But at that camp, I found other music geeks who were willing to talk about faith. At that camp, I had a chance to meet a number of pastors in a much more relaxed setting. I met my first clergy woman which opened my eyes to the possibility it might be a path for me. And the lessons of faith explored there stayed with me in profound ways. There, I first learned about refugees and was challenged to think about hunger. But probably most profoundly, I made incredible friends there that are still part of my life today.

I don't remember that statistic, but some surprising high percent of clergy say that their sense of call to ministry began at camp. At one camp where I volunteered, the young adult staff that returned year after year claimed the camp as their church saying it was the one place that effectively nurtured their faith life in a way that they could relate.

So I believe Outdoor Ministries and Church Camp are a very important ministry of the church! We have a camp! As part of the New Hampshire Conference UCC, we support Horton Center - an amazing camp at the tip of Pine Mountain in the White Mountains. We are also very close to Star Island which is an independent camp that has a couple UCC focused weeks and some amazing programs for individuals and whole families! If you haven't been to church camp, give it a try! Horton Center information and registration can be found here: www.hortoncenter.org

A Word of Thanks:

I want to thank everyone who took time to fill out and return the pink information forms so that I could begin to get to know everyone! It is an amazing gift and I am so thankful for all the information and for the act of putting names and faces together. And, by the way, some of you have wonderful pet names that made me laugh out loud!

With blessings! -- Rev Paige

In Our Church Life

Prayer Shawl Group We would love to have you join us on Thursday, February 21st and the third Thursday of every month at 3:30 for a time of fellowship to knit and crochet prayer shawls. A Prayer Shawl is symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving God. They wrap, enfold, comfort, cover, give solace, hug, shelter and beautify. A Prayer Shawl is a gift to someone to "wrap" them in prayers to bring them comfort, love and strength. If you have any questions, contact Emma Bent at (603)953-3767.



March Fellowship Hours: Let's try something new!

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. ~ Matthew 18:20

Each Sunday, our First Parish Church family gathers to worship, learn and grow in Christ. And each Sunday, we gather after the service in Fellowship Hall for conversation and coffee. This is an important part of our church life, and many celebrations and cares are shared during this time.



Fellowship Hour

Your First Parish Church Council would like to try an experiment during the month of March. Rather than having our Boards and Committees host Fellowship Hour, we'd like to ask for volunteers to take on this task. All it takes is two people to put out the cookies and fruit that others provide through our ongoing signup, and to clean up a few dishes afterwards.

Why not sign up for just ONE Sunday in March so we can try this experiment and share the joys of serving our church through hospitality? Click here to choose a Sunday: volunteersignup.org/9B7HQ

We are blessed to be part of a loving church family, and as with any family, many hands make for light work!
Joyce Tugel, Council Chair

Come to Camp! The NH Conference UCC runs a wonderful summer camp on the top of a mountain! Horton Center offers opportunities through the summer for people of all ages to come away for fun, adventure, and faith exploration.



This summer, there are more opportunities than ever as Horton Center does a new thing. Each week, there will be three different conferences offered for different ages - each with its own theme and focus. There is something for everyone!

And if it feels a little scary to go to camp for the first time with people you don't know, sign up for one of the Week 3 camps. Rev Paige and Rev Gordon will each be deaning camps that week. Check it out and find links for online registration at: www.hortoncenter.org.

Our **InReach Ministry** is looking for additional volunteers! Can you help out with preparing and delivering a meal to a sick church member? Perhaps drive someone to the doctor? Or maybe spend an hour of your time with a church member's mom while he runs out to the store? There's no commitment needed, just an occasional favor to help out someone in need.

Do you know someone who might need InReach?? - a service provided by our church family volunteers that believes it's the little things that make a big difference during a time of illness, loss, or even joy? Speak to Cindy or Betsy, or email them at fpc.inreach@gmail.com.



Find it at the First Thrift Shop is open on Thursdays, 1-4 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

First Parish is a **Stephen Ministry Church** that provides weekly individual and confidential spiritual care for those in need. Please contact one of the following to get connected: *Judy Edwards*, 603-978-4789 or *Dave Dickson*, 603-781-9791.

First Parish Church is Open and Affirming,

welcoming all to participate fully in the life of our church family, its ministries, fellowship, leadership, rites and sacraments, regardless of ability, race, ethnicity, social or economic situation, sexual orientation or gender identity.

See you in church!

First Parish Church Congregational

The United Church of Christ
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(603) 742-5664

[Visit our website: www.firstparishdover.org](http://www.firstparishdover.org)



First Parish Church, 218 Central Ave, Dover, NH 03820

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