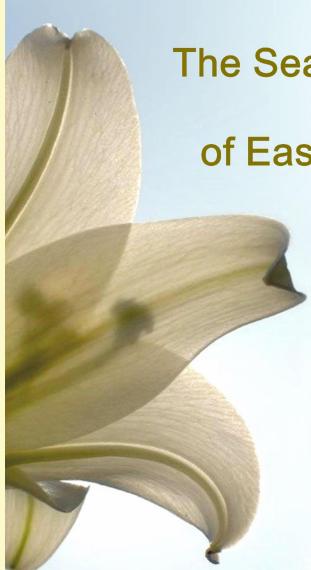


Steeple Chat

The weekly update from your church



In our ONLINE Church this Sunday, April 18, 2021 The Third Sunday of Easter



The Season
of Easter

10:00 a.m.
ONLINE Service
Prelude Music begins at 9:50 a.m.

**Message by Pastor
Paige Besse-Rankin**
The Transformed Community
Acts 4: 32-35

Children's Message by Pastor Paige
A Stewardship Moment

**OUR Ministry of Music:
The First Parish Chorale:**

Come and Be Joyful
Antonio Vivaldi from *Gloria*
Arranged by Hal Hopson; based on Psalm 100

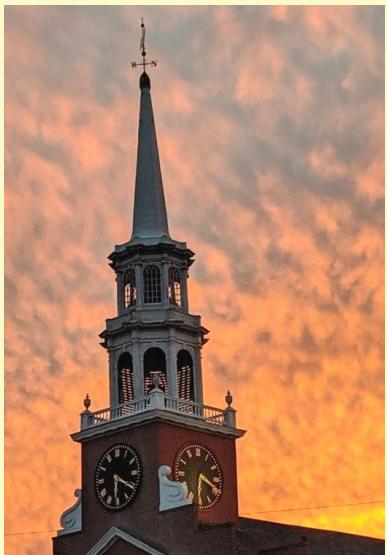
Rick Gremlitz, director
Jeannie Goodwin, piano
Emily Grondin, video editing

Please click this link to join the webinar service
online: <https://zoom.us/j/825890693>

OR: phone in using this number:
1 929 205 6099.
When asked, use our Webinar ID: 825 890 693.

In Steeple Chat this week:

- *Sunday Worship
- *Sunday School
- *Zoom Fellowship
- *Pastor Paige's Corner
- *Our Prayer List
- *Holiday Fair Meeting
- *Deacons' Bench
- *Spring Plant Sale
- *Jump into June Fair
 - *Thrift Shop Re-opening
 - *Welcome the Stranger
- *Wardens' Tool Box
 - *Annual Reports
- *Scholarships 2021
 - *Lunchtime Devotions
 - *Help Wanted
 - *Your Offerings
- *Recordings Sign-up
 - *Thrift Shop
- *Stephen Ministry available
- *ONA Covenant



Our Sunday School is based on the Living Arts program.

Sunday School will open via Zoom at 9:30 am with worship music and begin at 9:35 am with prayer.

We will meet for 15-20 minutes to touch base, talk about what we've learned and to show our art work. We finish Sunday School by 9:55 am so families can join our Zoom worship service together.

Join Zoom Meeting
[https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/86167967557?
pwd=YXZDRolqYUtMbHVidUliWkl2TGxjdz09](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/86167967557?pwd=YXZDRolqYUtMbHVidUliWkl2TGxjdz09)

Meeting ID: 861 6796 7557

Passcode: 222574

Zoom Fellowship Hour

Following our Sunday service.

Fellowship hour will officially begin 5 minutes after the end of the Postlude. In order to get there, you have to sign out from worship and use the link found below or in the Sunday morning email to get into the Fellowship meeting.

Please note: the Fellowship Zoom link is not available until the conclusion of the Postlude and the service Zoom has been closed.

Zoom Fellowship link:

[https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/82849698877?
pwd=N3FyR3BxUmZ3bXVkbUdjRmJ6NzV4UT09](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/82849698877?pwd=N3FyR3BxUmZ3bXVkbUdjRmJ6NzV4UT09)

Meeting ID: 828 4969 8877 - Passcode: 886063

Join Our Zoom Fellowship



Brave Conversations

I am still new enough to New Hampshire politics that I am struggling a bit to understand the process. I have been very thankful for the American Friends Committee State House Watch e-news as one resource that tracks and reports on issues being discussed about which we as people of faith might want to speak up. And there are plenty of concerns in this season from voting rights issues to moral issues in the budget.

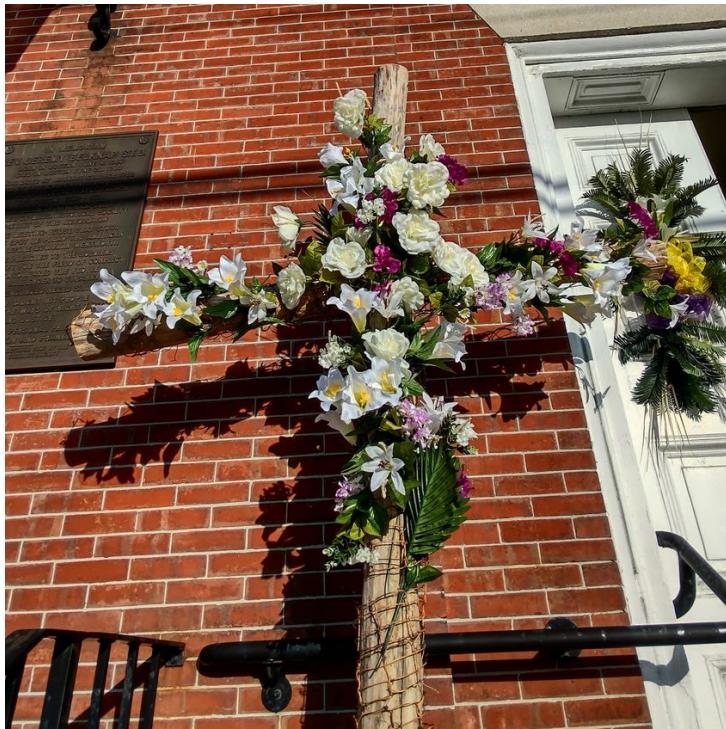
But the one that has had my attention is HB544 which claims to define and prohibit “the dissemination of certain divisive concepts related to sex and race” by any organization that receives state funding. (Think schools, universities, mental health clinics, and more.) This legislation is something of a trojan horse. On the surface, it says it wants to prevent teaching racist concepts such as the fact that one race is better than another. Sounds ok. But what is really at stake is any sort of conversation about systemic racism and sexism, any teaching that our nation or our state is racist or sexist, anything that would make us feel uncomfortable or guilty. This bill was drawn on an executive order from former President Trump to eliminate things like implicit bias training and racial equity training. It is concerned with a collection of scholarly work called “critical race theory”. And, to add to that, it also attacks current discussions around transgender rights and gender non-binary people by declaring that it is a “divisive concept” to look at sexual identity beyond biologically assigned sex at birth. This legislation would not allow the sort of program our church did this fall – discussing white privilege – to happen in schools, colleges, training programs for government workers, training programs by those with

government contracts – such as social service agencies like CAP. There are serious questions about whether this legislation respects Freedom of Speech. It was tabled and didn't make it out of the House, so they attached it to the budget! And it is moving on to the NH Senate in the budget!

I had the privilege of participating in a vigil in Dover last Sunday to remember those who lost their lives in the recent Atlanta shootings and to think more deeply about the racism that is flourishing against Asian Americans in these days. Reports are being received of brutal attacks on the elderly and vulnerable, violence inflicted for no other reason than one's appearance and skin color. The reports find that these are not robberies but hate crimes done in broad daylight. The latest report from just one center monitoring AAPI crimes list over 3,700 incidents from March 2020 to February 2021. I was deeply moved by the young organizers and speakers who spoke of their understandings and experiences. Many were Asian Pacific Islander in race and spoke of the challenge and feeling of isolation living in one of the "whitest states in the nation." I have been curious about the sociological and historical issues that have brought New Hampshire to this lack of diversity. But I don't know how we grow in our understanding of these issues or move towards change without looking at and talking about the history of systemic racism in the state. For instance, NH had "sundown towns" historically – towns with laws that no people of color could be present within the town borders at night. (NH is in no way unique in this history.)

As we watch prayerfully the event in Minnesota unfold this week, I understand the feeling of fatigue and weariness in dealing with issue of racism. But I also give thanks that whatever happens with regards to prohibiting discussion of "divisive concepts", my work and teaching happens in the context of the church. Brave, difficult conversations are part of the ethos of our faith. Challenging ourselves to look honestly at where we fall short of God's vision is part of who we are. From the prophets to Jesus to Paul, there is no shying away from "discomfort" because we understand that is part of how we grow and move towards a just world for all. But we also know that it is not the end of the story! We do not drown in guilt or shame. We can have such brave conversations because there is grace and forgiveness at the heart of it all.

Blessings, Rev Paige



Our Prayer List is published weekly as a link here in Steeple Chat.

If you have prayer concerns that should be included in our weekly listings, please contact the church office at 742-5664 or by email at: firstparish@comcast.net.



For the latest Prayer List, click here:
[Prayer List.](#)



Yes, it's that time of year already!

We will meet to brainstorm for the *The First Parish Church November Holiday Fair Planning Meeting* this Sunday April 18th at 12 pm Noon.

Please join us for a preliminary planning meeting via Zoom. What tried & true crafts, goods, and raffles do we want to continue? What new ideas do we have?

Topic: Holiday Fair Planning Meeting
Time: Apr 18, 2021 12:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
[https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/84815373497?
pwd=T1dJL2lPbTlicXZOMzRvLoFGcjh4Zz09](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/84815373497?pwd=T1dJL2lPbTlicXZOMzRvLoFGcjh4Zz09)

Meeting ID: 848 1537 3497; Passcode: 006957

Alleluia! He is Risen Indeed!!! From our marvelous community Cross to Easter baskets delivered to dear members, from video clips on Sundays to postcards of love between members, First Parish yet again lives our connection as the hands and feet of Jesus! Let us carry the peace of our Easter faith throughout the year.



from the Deacons bench

As though we are expectant parents, we are eagerly awaiting the time we can be together- laughing and singing, hugging and personally passing the peace. We have spent the past year learning and growing, and stretching our minds and our faith. We are tired. We're not sleeping well and we're cranky. We're at the "stick a fork in me, I'm done" point. We want to be together NOW. We need a hug. And like expectant parents, we need to listen to the doctors and be patient. There are risks that come with rushing the process. We don't have a due date for coming back to the building together. There isn't just one specific benchmark we have to meet before the doors open wide. One concrete target is a sustained new test positivity rate below 3%, but without guidance from experts, there are only hypothetical scenarios. Do we want to open if it is only limited capacity? What if we can't hug each other? What if we can't sing? How do we manage collection or Communion? Like expectant parents, there are endless "what ifs" and we hope we're prepared for whatever comes. We have to accept that "what if" can't be resolved without more information. We must wait. And be patient.

The reality is we didn't know how to go into a Pandemic, and we don't know how to come out of one. We continue to learn as we go. Thank you for trusting the Deacons to make the best decisions we can with the information we have at the time.

Next Year In Jerusalem

For the Deacons, *Erica Helm*



First Parish Church is excited to be holding our first Spring Plant Sale.

We are offering 4 types of Hanging Baskets, all grown by our friends at Wentworth Greenhouses in Rollinsford.

Baskets are all \$24 each and are available with Wave Petunias, Geraniums, New Guinea Impatiens or Fuchsia.

We apologize that we can't promise a particular color but if you have strong feelings about a certain color we can see what we can do.

All sales will be Pre-Order only with pick up available in time for Mother's Day Saturday May 8th from 10 am-12 pm Noon outdoors in the FPC Parking Lot at 218 Central Avenue, Dover, NH

We hope you'll enjoy ordering your baskets. They are perfect for your home, your business and also as gifts!

Please check out the order form here: [Order Form](#). Print it out, complete the order and mail it back to First Parish Church with a check by May 1st.

We won't mind at all if you share with friends, neighbors and family!!!

**Jump into June Fair
Saturday June 5th from 10 am - 2 pm
First Parish Church Parking Lot**

Tables: Plant Sale in partnership with *Wentworth Greenhouse*, Bake Sale, Thrift Store, Artisans & Crafters, Collectables, Raffle and Silent Auction.

Lots of Fun, Artists, Festivities & Popcorn

**Creative Donations needed for the Silent Auction
(see Help Wanted section below for details)*



Volunteers needed for the Tables:

Please contact Ingrid Roeder,
Program Director & Volunteer Coordinator
IngridFPCDover@gmail.com



**The Find it at the First Thrift Shop
will be reopening on:
Thursday May 6th from 1-4 pm
Saturday May 8th from 10 am -1 pm**

**Donations will be welcome starting on
May 6th!**

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL!



Welcome the Stranger!
Inna (not her real name)
wants to earn her NH
Driver's License and
needs a few volunteers to
help her practice driving

before the test. She has driven before but it would be helpful if she had some refresher hours behind the wheel.

Inna is from Cameroon and she seeks Asylum. She has made much progress on that path: She has her work permit, a social security number, and a NH DMV identification card. She is working hard to improve her English skills. In June, she expects to be awarded her Paralegal Certificate from Mount

Wachusett Community College. And she is working to get re-certified as a Licensed Nurse Assistant in New Hampshire.

Inna is bright; she has a strong work ethic; and she has a big heart. Everyone who meets her finds her to be friendly, caring, and resilient. She expects to receive the Covid-19 Vaccine soon after April 19.

A team of volunteers from Temple Beth Israel in Portsmouth and from Trinity Lutheran Church in Newington are supporting her and her host family with a variety of services. Can First Parish assemble a team of Driver Ed Instructors? We would like to recruit the team now and have team members ready to drive with Inna as soon as both Inna and each volunteer are fully vaccinated.

If you would like to become part of Inna's life (and learn her real name!), please reach out to Joyce Tugel who will be coordinating Inna's driving lessons. She can be reached at JTugel@GMail.com.

Warden's Tool Box



Coming to a window near you. This week the Wardens have ordered new storm windows for Fellowship Hall and Parlor windows, to be installed in August. This is the first step. They will protect our windows until, or while, they are being rebuilt. We are applying for a grant again this year in hopes to help cover the cost. Keep your fingers crossed. Window rebuilding donations are always welcomed.



To all those submitting an annual report on behalf of a board, committee, or program, please submit your report to the church office by Friday, May 7.

We will be printing and assembling the annual reports in the church office and plan to mail reports along with proposed 2021-2022 budget and nominations to all members on June 1st.

There will be a presentation and discussion on the proposed 2021-2022 budget via Zoom following the worship service on June 6.

The Annual Meeting of the church will be held via Zoom following the worship service on June 20.

Scholarship Application Information:

The Mission and Action Committee of First Parish Church is offering scholarships this year to qualifying students.

The deadline for submission, with all components completed, is April 24, 2021. There will be no extensions.

The applications are available online and may be filled out and submitted online this year. Please click on the link for application and complete instructions: [Scholarship Application](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Carol Seely, Mission and Action Scholarship Coordinator, 603-312-0771, k9vet@rcn.com.



Lunch Time Devotions: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:00 noon

We offer devotions on Tuesdays and Thursday each week. This is open for everyone on a drop-in basis. Come when you feel like it! What will you find when you

join us? We spend a few moments greeting each other and catching up, we hear a scripture reading and a brief reflection on that reading. Then we listen to a song. We share people and situations we want to lift up in prayer and finally we pray together. Please join us Tuesdays and/or Thursdays and ground your day in prayer. You can find us here:
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

[https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/92409379536?
pwd=RUXZaFFBK3JOUWplRTRLaWFBAVRkQTo9](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/92409379536?pwd=RUXZaFFBK3JOUWplRTRLaWFBAVRkQTo9)

Dial: 1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 924 0937 9536

Password: 835028

This *Help Wanted* Column is a continuing feature in Steeple Chat. We will post Immediate, Future, and Outside in our Community Needs at First Parish Church on a weekly basis.

If you are searching for opportunities to serve in the community or you have found yourself wanting to connect or reconnect with First Parish Church we would appreciate your help.



Present Volunteer Needs:

The *Jump into June* spring fundraising event Saturday June 5th:

Bake Sale Table help & donations | Plant Sale Table Help & plant donations | Silent Auction Donations -

Creative ideas for Donations for the Silent Auction: Be a Guide for a day | Lead a Hiking Trip | A Pie a month/12 months | Boating for a day | Kitchen Herb Garden | Succulent Garden | Fishing for a day | Salsa's. Relishes, jams, jellies, chutneys | Canning lessons this summer | Paddle boarding for a couple of hours | Flying lessons | Plane ride | Detailing a car | Baking lessons | Weekend "getaway" | Clown Lessons | Mountain passes to ski or snowboard | 5-20 hours of landscaping | 3 to 5 -course meal delivered to a person's home or beach | Picnic Basket | Clam Bake | Baskets with a theme: Chocolate, or coffee or teas | Art Lessons: Book Making, Drawing, Painting | Stain glass lessons | Cooking lessons | Quilting lessons | Knitting/Crocheting lessons | Family photoshoot | Future Theatre tickets | Hair appt. with a local stylist | Dancing lessons | Foodie's Delight Basket | Wellness Basket | Baby Gift Basket | Spa Basket | Mani/Pedi at a spa | Music/Instrument lessons | Pet sitting or boarding | Vocal lessons | Gourmet cupcakes | Rainy Day Basket: Games and goodies for a day indoors | Cheese Basket | Movie Basket: Popcorn, boxed candy and certificate to local theater | Car emergency kit | Golf: clubs, tees, towels, gloves | Strike it Rich: Different types of lottery tickets | Basket: Grill accessories and spices |

Other Volunteers needed for the *Jump Into June* Fundraiser

event: Set-up | Break down | Helping with Safety protocols | Signs/PR | Runners

Future Needs:

Thrift Shop

Capital Projects Team

Cochecho Challenge Race Team

Please contact Ingrid Roeder, Program Director & Volunteer Coordinator to see where you're feeling called. IngridFPCDover@gmail.com
Thank you very much. We look forward to hearing from you.

YOUR OFFERINGS



Please remember your Offerings

through electronic giving.

An additional option for giving to your church is through the QR Code box reproduced here.

To use: Hold your iPhone or iPad camera up to the QR Code box and a link should appear on your screen. Click on that link which will take you to the FPC donate area.

For those who are able, we strongly invite ongoing sharing of pledges and offerings. Offerings may be made from through the church webpage here: [Donate](#); or by mail, or



VIDEO Recordings of ONLINE Sunday Services

During this time of live-streamed services, we record the video (and audio) of our Sunday online services. These recordings are now available as mp4 video files through our Basecamp software program.

If you do not already have access to Basecamp, you may register by filling in the registration form posted on the Breeze program. Here is the link to sign-up:
<https://fpcdover.breezechms.com/form/55811a>





Find it at the First Thrift Shop:

The Thrift Shop will re-open on Thursday, May 6 for the Spring season. Regular days and hours of operation will be Thursday from 1 to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 am to 1 p.m. Donations are welcome during hours of operation.

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.

ALL are Welcome Here!

See you ONLINE!

First Parish Church Congregational

United Church of Christ
218 Central Ave

Dover, New Hampshire 03820

(603) 742-5664

Visit our website: www.firstparishdover.org



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

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