

June, July & August 2015 Circuit Rider

First Congregational Church of Lebanon, UCC
588 Exeter Road ~ P. O. Box 125, Lebanon, CT 06249

"We seek to demonstrate God's Spirit through worship, witness, and ministry to the needs of the people in the church and the community."

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Our Prayer List

Norma & Harold Geer	Stan Fuller	Ellen Lathrop	Joan Dutko
Joyce Cady	Fay Morehouse	Jean Souter	Michele Barrett
Barbara Rodman	Fred Wright	Neil Whitehead	Mary Horan
Deanna Kokoszka	Judi Bergeron	Carl Fernald	Dan McGuire

Children are indeed a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate. ~ Psalm 127:3-5

Pastor's Letter

I noticed that my lilacs are in full bloom and it makes me remember that snowy cold month of February when I thought the snow would still be here in June! But NO...the snow is gone and spring is here. Spring brings with it such a feeling of joy and new growth.

June 7th is Confirmation Sunday and this year we celebrate the confirming of eight of our youth. They are Silas Olsen, Hailey Tompkins, Sarah Olearnick, Evan Dias, Alyssa Holmes, Lily Barton, Doug Lambert and Clark Vigue. These young people have worked hard all year and are anxious to share with you on Confirmation Sunday. I have loved working with these young people. And also with everyone who makes confirmation a good experience for our young people. The deacons oversee the entire program; Carla Dias works as my assistant during class times, as well as, Keith Kersey who is the field trip coordinator and totally devoted to the youth. Each student has a mentor who has been a special friend during this journey. Mentors include Audra Holmes, Jeanna Prink, Derek Waldron. Jon Magnuson, Keith Kersey, Mary Horan, Duke York, Bill Bundy and Michelle Kersey. And of course parents who have supported the program, contributed food and time to the various activities. This year the students visited a Jewish synagogue, a Mosque and took an overnight trip to St. John the Divine in New York City.

During my years here as your pastor, I have particularly enjoyed working with the confirmation classes. They are our sign of new growth and joy! I find myself missing such an experience and I haven't even left yet! I am learning that to say goodbye to a church family brings joy and sadness to me daily. The sadness is that this is my last confirmation class...my last Bible study class...my last board meeting...my last worship service here as your pastor. The joy is trusting that God promises new growth and new possibilities. As I move closer to the end of my ministry here, I do trust God and all of you in your new beginning with a new pastor. For everything there is a season and this will be a season of new growth!

Thank you again for the privilege of serving you.

*Love and joy,
Pastor Sharon*

Lofty Thoughts June, July & August 2015

I have a habit of marking my days by events that take place in my life: family and friend's college graduations are in May usually, and though I have no one doing that this year, Hannah is being confirmed. It is a highlight of her several months journey of studying her faith, trying to understand what church stands for, the writing of a paper about the meaning of all in her life, and then standing before her church family, aunts, uncles, perhaps cousins, and accepting the call to be a Christian.

She is just 15 years old and it seems a big responsibility to be a Christian, to live a Christ-like life. I so admire the very young adults who accept the challenge, as I look backward to the time when I became confirmed.

So, it is a wonderful, happy moment in our family's lives. My two grandsons are being married in August and September. Another milestone! These can't be the cute little babies I took to nursery school, can they? We are already loving their choices of wives-to-be. Our family continues to grow. It's called LIFE!

I am aware that as I age the 'don't sweat the small stuff' has (almost) disappeared from my mind because of crowding to make room for all the good happy stuff. It doesn't matter what generation is ours – the decades we have lived in, each generation lives through similar times, all very challenging.

I always felt that our creator wants us, His children, to enjoy the world He has established. It sounds so "Pollyanna," but all I have come to realize is, to live your life in the corner you are in, show your Christ-like self to all you meet on your journey. Smile a lot, so the next two generations will find life good.

Our bible class has adopted a mantra, "This is the day the Lord has made, rejoice and be glad in it!"

Just a note,
Jean Souter

News from the Board of Deacons

With Pastor Sharon's retirement, the first step in moving into the next chapter for our church is the selection of an Interim Pastor. The Interim Pastor serves our congregation and leads us in worship while we search for our next Pastor.

In our Church the task of recruiting and selecting an Interim Pastor is the responsibility of the Board of Deacons. On May 12th the Board of Deacons enthusiastically and unanimously selected The Rev. Dr. Robert Wright to serve as our Interim Pastor.

Bob is a seasoned Pastor having served three churches in MA and CT for a total of 36 years. The Board of Deacons felt his style, experience, and approach to ministry will serve us well. We are currently finalizing his contract so that he may begin his term on July 1st.

Bob and his wife Mary live in Ashford, CT.

Giv News

Youth group is open to all youth in 5th grade through 12th.

*June 5th ~ 6:00-9:30 p.m.
Movie Night*

2015 Silver Lake Summer Calendar

The Silver Lake 2015 summer conference calendars are here! They are located on the desk in the church foyer. Scholarships to Silver Lake are available; please see their website or Rev. Mary.

**CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE
June 2015**

June 4th ~ THURSDAY 4:00-7:30 p.m. REHEARSAL FOR CONFIRMATION SUNDAY AND DINNER WITH DEACONS

June 7th ~ CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

Flower Committee

The Flower Committee would like to remind the congregation that if you would like to place an arrangement in the sanctuary for Sunday service there is a sign-up calendar in the foyer or call the church office. If it is a last minute thought just call a flower committee member by Saturday morning. We also invite everyone to please consider sharing flowers, grasses, branches of beauty, from your gardens or yards for any Sunday morning.

Thank you,
Sylvia Ryan
Nancy Magnuson
Tracy Kelley



*"Bread feeds the body indeed.
But flowers feed also the soul."*

~ The Koran



**37th Annual Strawberry Festival
Featuring Room to Move
June 20th ~ 7:00 p.m.**

Donation:

\$10.00 Adults \$3.00 Child

In you can help, please contact Dawn Drum, 228-9558.

Our success depends on everyone!



**The Lebanon Fair is coming!
August 7th, 8th and 9th**

Please, come join in the fun!

We need the following volunteers:

Set-up Crew
Runners

Hamburger Flippers
Clean-up Crew



Please call the church office at 860-642-6179 to sign up or if you have any questions.



**SUMMER
OFFICE
HOURS**

**Summer
Office Hours**

Beginning the week of June 22nd and continuing through the week of August 17th, the church office will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings from 8:30 to 11:30.

Assistant to Director & Director of Christian Ed News

For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy. ~ Psalm 92:4

We have been exploring doing God's work and seeing God in ALL our work. Now is the time to WALK the path of Jesus and put our hard work to life. Come celebrate God's love and walk with the children.

Events:

June 7th - Children Sunday Prep

June 14th - Children Sunday

Baccalaureate Service ~ June 7th - 7:00 p.m.

Lebanon Baptist Church

Please join us at the Lebanon Baptist Church for this special service for our high school graduates. The following members/friends of our church will be graduating this year:

Madison Adams

Jordyn Guerra

Asa Preli

James Gillespie

Evan Hopkins

Church Phone Directory

The phone directory will be updated at the end of August for distribution on Rally Sunday. To be added to the directory, or if you have any changes or corrections, please contact the church office by August 1st at 860-642-6179 or lebfirstcong@att.net.



Board of Outreach News

Summer Salad Community Dinner Sunday, May 31st ~ 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Join us for a community dinner and help fill the cupboards of Neighbors Helping Neighbors Food Pantry! Meal will consist of a variety of summer salads, rolls and drinks. Cost of meal is a donation of peanut butter, jelly, fluff, pasta and/or sauce.

Father's Day Cards

Beginning May 31st we will be selling Father's Day Cards from Church World Services. The cards are \$5 each; if you don't need a card you can still donate to help purchase blankets and tools to be sent to Nepal. Please see us after church in the Fellowship Hall.

It's a Joy to Give

Neighbors Helping Neighbors Lebanon Food Bank Wish List 2015

JUNE – Peanut Butter, Jelly & Fluff

JULY – Ketchup & Mayo

AUGUST – Tuna

SEPTEMBER – Canned Ravioli

OCTOBER – Canned Fruit

NOVEMBER – Stuffing & Canned Ham

DECEMBER – Stuffing, Baked Beans (no pork) and Kids' Snacks

God has the power to provide.

God has the power to love us forever.

Everest ~ Conquering Challenges with God's Mighty Power
Vacation Bible School

Week of July 20th ~ 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

God has the power to heal.

God has the power to forgive.

Embark on an icy expedition where kids overcome obstacles with God's awesome power. Kids will be anchored in rock-solid Bible truths that will guide them through life's challenges.

Join us for this exciting adventure. All are welcome!

On-line registration will begin June 1st.

Please go to <http://lebanonfirstcong.org/ministries/christian-education/vbs>

God has the power to comfort.

PLANNING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER!

We are inviting you to complete the Church Assessment Tool (CAT), an on-line instrument that will help leaders gauge the strength, vitality, and trends in our church. The information gained from this assessment will be valuable in helping the leaders of the First Congregational Church of Lebanon as they make decisions about the future of our church.

We are asking you to complete the survey by going online to the following link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FirstCongregationalLebanon> and tell us about your experiences in and priorities for our church. Please do not discuss the survey or your answers with others as this may influence their answers. It will take at least 20 minutes to complete. The instructions will be simple to follow and submit. We will also have a couple of computers available after church for those who need assistance or do not have access to one on June 7th and 14th. Closing date for completing survey is June 17th.

All answers are strictly anonymous. We have no way of matching any assessment to a particular person, so please feel free to candidly share your perceptions, opinions and experiences. Our future together is dependent on your participation and honest answers.

If you have questions, please contact Tracy Kelley 642-7545 or Bev York, Church Moderator.

Thank you,

Church Council