

October 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.”

Rev. Dr. Robert J. Wright, Jr., Interim Pastor
Pastor’s Office Phone: 860-642-2557
Cell Phone: 860-942-7239
Email: revrwright@gmail.com

Nancy Magnuson, Secretary
Phone: 860-642-6179
Email: LebFirstCong@att.net

Rev. Mary C. Horan
Director of Christian Education
Email: mchoran@att.net
Phone: 860-642-4330

Veronica Thomen
Assistant to the Director of Christian Education
Email: mamav06@gmail.com
Phone: 860-324-5428

Derek Waldron ~ Organist
Email: WaldronsStudio88@gmail.com
Phone: 860-593-6836

Teresa Bielecki, Website/Facebook Coordinator
Email: teresabielecki@yahoo.com

Church Kitchen Phone: 860-642-7000

Web Site: www.lebanonfirstcong.org

Bev York, Moderator
Email: bevishistory@yahoo.com
Phone: 860-423-1878

Jennifer Blevins, Chair of Board of Deacons
Email: jgblevins@hotmail.com
Phone: 860-642-6105

Tracy Kelley, Clerk
Phone: 860-642-7545

Duke York, Chair of Board of Trustees
Phone: 860-423-1878

Michelle Kersey, Co-Chair Board of CE
Phone: 860-642-7411

Bryce Johnson, Co-Chair Board of CE
Phone: 860-885-1431

Ashley Meseroll, Co-Chair of Board of Outreach
Phone: 860-642-7364

Geri McCaw, Co-Chair of Board of Outreach
Phone: 860-642-7449

Skip Kuzel, Co-Chair of Stewardship Comm.
Phone: 860-642-4330

Al Manning, Co-Chair of Stewardship Comm.
Phone: 860-642-6444

Sue Vigue, Chair of Music Comm.
Phone: 860-642-4761

Our Prayer List

Lucy Todd

Ellen Pelkey

Ellen Lathrop

Joan Dutko

Joyce Cady

Fay Morehouse

Jean Souter

Michele Barrett

Carl Farris

Norma Geer

Stan & Karen Fuller

Barbara Rodman

Fred Wright

Neil Whitehead

Mary Horan

Deanna Kokoszka


Judi Bergeron

Carl Fernald

Dan McGuire

*But you, O Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, and the one who lifts up my head.
I cry aloud to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy hill. ~ Psalm 3:3-4*

Pastor's Corner



First impressions are very important; I've always been taught and believed. So, I hope I've made a fairly good first impression on all of you. You've certainly made a very good first impression on me. One of my first impressions humbles me, and inspires me. Each Sunday, between 9:30 and 10:00, a number of faithful church members arrive, park in handicap parking, and make their way with walkers or wheelchairs or with personal home health aides to assist them. I think to myself how much they've gone through to be able to come to church, into "God's house" and presence. Most of them also stay on for coffee hour and some time to have fellowship together. Even on the series of hot and humid Sundays through July and August, they were here and I want them all to know how impressed, even inspired, I was by their presence, and continue to be. And humbled.

Another first impression emerges from this past Sunday, Rally Sunday, just a few days from my writing this. Our opening hymn was "There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit" in this place; and it was surely true and evident. The presence of the children, the blessing of the prayer shawls, the many prayer concerns and joys freely shared: I hope every Sunday is so full of spirit and faith.

May the first impressions become permanent impressions of a loving, caring, sweet spirit.

Blessings,
Bob

Lofty Thoughts October 2015

I was sitting in my favorite chair deciding what to do next. I glanced at my rug and thought I saw something on it. The sun was peeping through the blinds as I looked. I got up, reached down to pick up what I thought was a piece of yarn, and lo and behold, there was nothing there! It was a sliver of sunlight that fell upon the pattern of the rug, which fooled me. I was chagrined and laughed at my foolishness. (It wasn't the first time it happened either!)

The art world has a name for something similar, it's called 'trompe l'oeil' which Webster's College Dictionary describes: 'in which subjects are painted in realistic detail; deceive the eye.' I find it fascinating as, for instance, a rock wall is painted on a flat surface, yet by shading, using shadow-effect, the wall appears three-dimensional. I could reach out and touch it. It is very clever and, I always thought, difficult to do. I don't like being fooled – it makes me feel less than smart. But I admire the cleverness!

I attend art classes, working in watercolor and sometimes pastel. When painting an eye (human or animal), it does not 'come alive' until the eyeball has a white mark in it – to show the eye is 'seeing.' It sounds like a trick, but it works. It is a challenge to work on a flat surface and make it look realistic. I guess I'm trying to say that many things are not what they seem to be. We have to look carefully and have an open mind to know the difference.

Halloween will soon be here. So many costumes and people to emulate – in order to 'fool people.' It's an opportunity to deceive others, all in the name of fun.

We all play many roles in life. For me, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, mentor, and especially, friend – a chosen role. It is fascinating to be all those things, plus careers and hobbies, and being part of a community, like a 'church family.' Think about your life – how it has grown to be good for you; all the 'perks' in your life that create happiness. It chases away dark clouds, brings a rainbow of color to the sky, and promises sunshine.

Perhaps this will turn into a song. I know I feel like singing now!

"October's Bright Blue Weather."

Just a note,
Jean Souter

Fall Cleanup

Saturday, November 7th ~ 9:00 a.m.
(Rain date – Saturday, November 14th)

The Trustees are seeking all able-bodied members and friends to help out in the fall leaf cleanup of church grounds and interior cleaning of the sanctuary pews and woodwork. Please bring rakes for outside work, or buckets, sponges, and appropriate cleaning agents for inside work. Your contribution will be much appreciated.

Bible Study

Bible Study has resumed! We meet Wednesday mornings at 9:30 in the Memorial Room and everyone is invited to attend. I love leading Bible Study; it's one of my favorite responsibilities/opportunities of ministry. Whether you've studied at seminaries or never ever before engaged in Bible Study, perhaps fearful about how little background you have; I promise to never make anyone feel uncomfortable or embarrassed. We will begin this fall with a study entitled "Parables: Stories for Life in God's World." As the guide says, "Jesus was the master of the parable. Deceptively simple, these timeless stories were used by Jesus to bring new life to old ways." The student resource book is \$16, checks may be made out to the church and I will order them; you are welcome to attend without purchasing the guide. Please plan to participate.

***Preliminary Budget Hearing
Sunday, October 25th
Following the worship service.***

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

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

World Communion Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday in October and offers congregations from around the world the opportunity to experience Holy Communion as a global community of faith. On this Sunday Christians in every culture break bread and drink of the cup to affirm how important the Church of Jesus Christ is and how each congregation can be interconnected one with another in service and Christian unity.

The Church is one in the Spirit and one in Christ and Christians celebrate communion on this day in as many ways as there are congregations, whether in a grand cathedral, a mud hut, under a tent, on a hillside, or in a meetinghouse.

World Communion Sunday originated in the Shadyside Presbyterian Church in 1933, was adopted throughout the US Presbyterian Church in 1936 and subsequently spread to other denominations. In 1940, the Federal Council of Churches (now the National Council of Churches), endorsed World Communion Sunday and began to promote it to Christian Churches worldwide.

So let us be mindful on this Sunday that Jesus is present wherever two or three or more are gathered in His name when we all share the Meal where Christ is our Host. We are all connected by his love and when we live and serve by his example we can transcend all boundaries of geography and language. Around His Table together, we broadcast our faith to the world and say,

"Come and dine; there is room for all!"

We are to build up the body of Christ—not break it down. Let us take these words of Christ to heart: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do people light a lamp and place it under a bushel, but on a stand. And it gives light to all in the house. Let your light shine before others that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)

"Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith." —Ephesians 6:23

NEWS FROM ISA & ROUND ROBIN CRAFTERS

Inspired by South Africa is a non-profit group helping to support the Bridgman Development Centre in South Africa. It is one of our Church's mission groups. Necklaces, earrings and bracelets are created all with an African flavor, hand-sewn mudcloth bags, tea bag pouches containing a tea bag from South Africa, and of course, beaded spoons are also offered. There is a patchwork bag made from African Batik fabric, our Mission Statement is sewn inside the bag. We do have a few bracelets made by the Krobo tribe of Western Africa made from crushed, fired and then painted recycled glass. They are both beautiful and colorful. Our baskets are made by groups of women throughout Africa who are working their way out of poverty; you will find the baskets to be works of art and of the highest quality. We have items to sell and stories to tell. The calendar of events is listed below:

October 4th - Willimantic Food Coop Marketplace

October 17th - Super Saturday Keefe Regional Tech High School, Framingham, MA

November 21st - Holiday Harvest Bazaar

December 5th - Lebanon Senior Center Christmas Bazaar

Sandy Rose, For Inspired by South Africa



When someone asks why I do what I do, I answer with following explanation: "UBUNTU" with origins in the Bantu language of South Africa and is an African philosophy and is focused on People-to-people relationships. "I am because you are" most simply and beautifully describes Ubuntu. Desmond Tutu further defined the term when he said: "One of the sayings in our country is Ubuntu - the essence of being human. Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can't be human all by yourself and when you have this quality - Ubuntu - you are known for your generosity. We think of ourselves far too frequently as just individuals, separated from one another; whereas you are connected and what you do affects the whole world". The word and its meaning keeps me interested, curious and with wanting to do something positive. I know we can serve both locally and the rest of the world, whether it be Africa, Haiti or elsewhere.

Sandy Rose, For Inspired by South Africa



Round Robin Crafters

We are a small group of women who meet once a week on Friday afternoons 2:00 to 4:00 pm in the basement of our church. We are busy creating items to be sold at the Bazaar in November. There are table runners, throws, pot holders and our very popular aprons and a few other items. Even if you do not sew, we need your help cutting, ironing and putting on the finishing touch. We can guarantee a pleasant time spent creating and enjoying our fellowship. Round Robin is an old-fashioned term, which means something is passed to you to work on, then you pass it to another, and finally it is completed. And that is just what we do.

Sandy Rose, For Round Robin Crafters

Reminder to Scholarship Candidates

Welcome back Confirmands and Seniors! We want to remind you that scholarship funds are awarded in your senior year based on two criteria; church membership and active participation in our church family life. Please don't wait till your senior year, as it is traditionally, a very busy time.

Enclosed is a listing of annual church activities and the church member to contact for questions and information.

Also, attached is a template for recording/tracking your participation. But, please feel free to use whatever method that works for you.

We look forward to seeing you!

Yours in the light of Jesus Christ,
The Deacons

CHURCH COMMITTEE CONTACTS SCHOLARSHIP 2016

HEAD USHER – Chet Ryan

CLERK – Tracy Kelley

TREASURER – Jim Gillespie

ASSISTANT TREASURER – Steve Blevins or Jim Donnelly

ORGANIST – Derek Walden

CHURCH SECRETARY – Nancy Magnuson

CUSTODIAN – Richard Chabot

DIRECTOR OF CE - Mary Horan

BOARD OF DEACONS – Jennifer Blevins

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH – Geri McCaw or Ashley Meseroll

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – Duke York

Giv2 -Audra Holmes

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Michelle Kersey or Bryce Johnson

FLOWER COMMITTEE – Tracy Kelley

STEWARDSHIP - Skip Kuzel

LEBANON FAIR BOOTH -

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE – Ruth Tilley

MUSIC COMMITTEE - Sue Vigue

CHURCH COMMITTEE CONTACTS SCHOLARSHIP 2016 CONT.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL - Dawn Drum

FOOD FOR THE SOUL - Geri McCaw

HARVEST FAIR – Kim Alleman or Linda Wagner

ARCHIVES – Michelle Kersey

DELEGATE NEW LONDON ASSOCIATION - Edna Pelto

DELEGATE CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE – Ellen Bauwens or Seth Thomen

CRAFTERS – Sandy Rose

ISA – Sandy Rose

WEB SITE – Teresa Bielecki

MEMBERS AT LARGE – David Fields or Edwina Rechlin

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – Nancy Magnuson

PRAYER SHAWL – Carla Dias or Linda Wagner

SANCTUARY SWEEP – Ruth Jones

PROGRAM & POTLUCK LUNCHEON

On October 4th following our church service there will be a presentation by Rev. Tom Clough of the Connecticut UCC who will discuss the results of Holy Cow which is the on-line survey that many people filled out last May/June. Members of the congregation answered questions regarding the health and future vision of our church. This meeting is open to the church family and will be preceded by a pot luck luncheon.

Board of Outreach News

Due to the largest refugee crisis since WWII, the UCC has set up a fund, "Refugee Crisis Response," to aid European countries involved. On October 4th the Board of Christian Outreach will collect for this fund. If you would like to donate to this fund at any other time checks can be made out to the church with "Refugee Crisis Response" written in the memo.

It's a Joy to Give

Neighbors Helping Neighbors Lebanon Food Bank Wish List 2015

OCTOBER – Canned Fruit

NOV. – Stuffing & Canned Ham

DEC. – Stuffing, Baked Beans (no pork) & Kids' Snacks

HOLIDAY HARVEST FAIR ~ General Store, Silent Auction, Gift Baskets & More!

The Holiday Fair is Saturday, November 21st, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. the day will be upon us before we know it, so now is the time to get into planning mode. We have a committee, but this is an 'All-Church' FUNdraising activity, and we need lots of help. Here are some of the ways to participate:

GENERAL STORE – it's harvest season. Do you can veggies, make pickles, jams or jellies; do any other wonderful thing to enjoy the harvest throughout the winter? Well, please donate a jar or two to the General Store at the fair.

SILENT AUCTION - As we mentioned last month, our very popular Silent Auction this year will be featuring items, goods, and services, which we, the church family, will be donating. (This is not the 'clean out your basement/attic stuff, but rather things we would buy for gifts or wish someone would 'gift' to us! Some suggestions: items handmade or purchased; services – share a talent that you have or a service you could provide – a 'spring/fall clean-up-the-yard' day; sew a hem; replace a zipper; mend a garment; repair furniture; a lesson; help someone put up their holiday decorations (or take them down!); transportation; shopping assistance; prepare a dinner; host a tea party; teach someone how to use their smartphone, or some other device; tickets to a performance, show, or athletic event; donate a professional service you can provide. We ask that you think of what you would like or wish someone would offer or provide or help you accomplish. Perhaps team up with someone to provide an item or a service.

GIFT BASKETS – our themed gift baskets were beautiful and a big hit last year. We will again ask boards and committees to donate items for particular themes, but we also want everyone to participate in donating to fill the baskets. These are some of the categories we will be doing, and anything else you can think of – let us know: **Pets, Games & Puzzles, Sports, Coffee & Tea, Chocolate, Arts & Crafts, Baking, Kitchen, Holiday (any and all holidays!), Music, Entertainment, Nature, Light Up Your Life (candles, etc), 'Ready for Winter,' or 'Wintertime Fun'** depending on how you look at it. We will also need nice baskets/containers, clear wrap, and pretty ribbons to do them up, so if you have some to spare....Thank you!

THE "BLUE" TABLE - something new this year and we think it will be fun. We will have a table that features 'Anything Blue.' We are looking for your donations for this table – it can be anything as long as it's blue, or at least predominately blue. Be creative, look around your home or when you're out and about, and let's see what we can come up with. We'll be selling 'blues' to make some 'greens!'

Kim Alleman and Linda Wagner
kalleman@charter.net lindawagner827@gmail.com
Co-Chairs Holiday Harvest Fair

Board of Christian Education News

The Board of CE is very excited about our new Children's Education Program beginning this fall! The upcoming year will focus on Holy Encounters, mission work, and youth involvement in church services. We are looking for TEACHERS OF ANY AGE to help make our children's education a success! Please consider donating some time – *"Many hands make light of work"*!

Annual Pumpkin Carving is October 25th, so please MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

