

Congregational Church of Hooksett

March 2024 Newsletter



A single crocus blossom ought to be enough to convince our heart that springtime, no matter how predictable, is somehow a gift, gratuitous, gratis, a grace.

-David Steindl-Rast

Contact Us

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Jan Bordeleau

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Kerry's Corner:

Greetings brothers and sisters in Christ,

I don't know about you, but I can't believe it's already March. We get to turn the clocks ahead on the 10th. We will celebrate Palm Sunday on the 24th and Maundy Thursday on the 28th. I will be here to open the sanctuary from 9-1 on Good Friday. I will be available if you would like to talk or come and just be in the sanctuary. Easter is on the 31st. There will be two services that day—one at Sunrise and one at 10am. Tune in to the rest of the newsletter to read about other happenings in the church this month.

I would like to know how your Lenten journey is going. Have you been able to keep up with your study? Have you found it possible to turn back towards God in a way that is meaningful for you? I will share that this past month has been a struggle for me—the darkness and covid for 15 days! And admittedly, a little depression. It is said that we need to go into the dark places before we can appreciate the resurrection. I for one need to remind myself that we can't hurry through the Lenten Season. It is good to feel the emotion of the wilderness to perhaps have a better understanding of what Jesus went through for 40 days for our benefit.

On another note, I hope you have had an opportunity to meet Skylar, if not feel free to stop in and say hello!

Blessings to you in this Lenten season.

Pastor Kerry

From the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

As part of the new structural changes in our church, the PPRC will be acting as a human resources committee as well as performing our role of supporting the pastor and parish. The PPRC will be holding monthly meetings to best serve the congregation and support our pastor.

Here are some highlights of our recent work:

- Pastor Kerry's updated contract has been signed.
- Pastor Kerry's updated schedule will now be Sunday through Wednesday.
- The PPRC discussed the need to form a search committee to complete the work set forth by Pastor Kerry as our interim minister and the congregation. We brought this to the Council who is now forming that important committee.
- Finally, we are in the process of searching for and hiring a new Administrative Assistant.

Please see any of us with any questions or concerns that you may have at any time.

Respectfully,
John Vaughn, Kim Fischer, and Heather Rainier

From the Diaconate:

Psalm 57:2 I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me.

GREETINGS FROM THE DIACONATE

Last month, we began work to create a directory of members and friends of the Hooksett Congregational Church. We appreciate the positive response and have already received submissions of contact information from many. If you have not had an opportunity to share your information, please seek out a member of the Diaconate this month.

Our Church calendar for the remainder of the Lenten season:

March 3 Communion Sunday

March 24 Palm Sunday

March 28 Maundy Thursday

March 29 Good Friday

March 31 Easter Services

Sunrise Service

10am Service

Lectionary Readings for March

(click on reading for text)

March 3

Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
John 2:13-22

March 10

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21

March 17

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16
Hebrews 5:5-10
John 12:20-33

March 24

Palm Sunday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16

March 31

Easter Sunday

Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Psalm 136:1-9,
23-26
Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13 and
Psalm 46
Genesis 22:1-18 and Psalm 16
Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21 and Exodus
15:1b-13, 17-18
Isaiah 55:1-11 and Isaiah 12:2-6
Romans 6:3-11 and Psalm 114
Gospel
Mark 16:1-8

Thank you to all those who have served our Church as worship leader or usher, as acolyte or church bell ringer, by serving coffee or contributing snacks for Fellowship Hour.

The Diaconate Board meets the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm in Fellowship Hall. Anyone interested in learning more about our activities is welcome to attend our meetings.

Yours in Faith,

Bonnie Boucher	Mary Ellen Kresel
Norm Boucher	Paula Vaughn
Walker Brown	Nancy Vaughan
Lynn Chevrette	Mary Ann Wells
Kathleen Dube	

From the Prayer Team

John 3:16-17

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

In so many lives, Holy One, bombs are exploding, storms are raging, and the flood waters are rising. It's hard for many to know where their next moment will lead. Yet, we know that your Holy Spirit is there with us and with them—in the storms and in the turmoil of our lives. As we pray for people in harm's way—from war, sickness, loss, tragedy, and hopelessness of many kinds. We thank you for the opportunity to pray, to offer the cares of this world up to you. You see beyond the pain and the fallen nature of this world. You promise that all we have to do is put our hope and trust in you and all this will be overcome. Tomorrow will come. The sun will rise. The world will continue to spin on its axis. And your love will continue to strengthen and comfort your children no matter what. We pray for the day when Jesus will restore peace and justice to us and create a global family, free and safe to praise your holy name and bask in the glory of your love. Amen

The prayer team meets after service on the third Sunday of every month and welcomes all who would like to sit in with us as we lift our voices to God and share readings and meditations. We meet in the vestry around 11:30. If you need prayers, please contact prayer@hooksettucc.org. May the hope of Christ's resurrection comfort and lift you this Easter season.

From the Music Committee

As this is being written, the wind is blowing through the trees, throwing twigs and pinecones at the siding of the house, and moving through the wind chimes creating an interesting symphony. It's hard to ignore, so thoughts turn to wind & spirit...the winds of change and the unchanging

Spirit of God. We often sing about the Spirit. "Spirit of God, descend upon my heart." As the March winds blow outside our windows bringing the winds of change to our congregation, we can be certain that the Spirit of God is truly in our space, guiding, unchanging, and reminding us that God is here-invisible and powerful but seen through His effect on our works and our lives.

Below are the hymns of March. Rejoice because we celebrate the greatest change this earth has ever seen, the resurrection of Jesus!

March 3

#436 God of Grace and God of Glory

#332 As We Gather at Your Table

#197 Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross

#198 Lift High the Cross

March 10

#400 Christ Has Made the Sure Foundation

#223 What Wondrous Love is This

#207 Just as I am

March 17

#190 Beneath the Cross of Jesus

#451 Be Now My Vision

#198 Lift High the Cross

March 24

#213 Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

#216 All Glory, Laud and Honor

#237 I Come to the Garden Alone

March 31

#230 Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain

#301 Crown With Your Richest Crowns

#233 Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Hosanna and Hallelujah!

Judy Duval Vicky Karels

Kim Fischer Kathy Cruson

From Christian Education

Hello and greetings!

As March begins we realize that our church school year is almost two-thirds over. Time really flies! This month our Sunday School theme will be about Fairness. It is a theme that can sometimes be uncomfortable because what is fair is not always equal. For example, one memory that many of us with siblings can share is bedtimes. It's not fair that an older sibling can stay up later than you. In Sunday School we plan to explore the idea of what is fair

through videos, games and projects. If you know someone 14 or younger that you think could benefit from this theme, encourage them to be a part of our group.

In addition to this theme we will incorporate Palm Sunday and Easter into the month.

If you are interested in helping with Sunday School or you have great ideas to share, please reach out to Kristen or Jeff.

Blessings,
Kristen and Jeff Hamilton

From the Community Outreach Committee

Greetings!

Old Man Winter is lessening his grip on NH as we slide into March.

In December, Outreach sent out a form asking the congregation to suggest different causes that are near and dear to your hearts and the responses from folks were terrific! Some of the many causes that our church would like to support this year include WayPoint, Church World Services, RIP Medical Debt, Families in Transition, David's House, Maynard House, Bread of the World, Relay for Life, Open and Affirming Coalition, Samaritan's Purse, NH Food Bank, Tunnels to Towers, The Way Home, NAMI, and the Crop Walk. We are thrilled to have so many options where we can make a difference. Our hope is to find ways to incorporate several of these causes into our year and show our congregation how we all have helped to make a difference in others' lives.

With our meeting last month we have had good conversation about how we can give back to our communities near and far. Many of our outreach projects we are focusing on this month are local. First, our hat and mitten drive is heading into its third month and we would like to make it ongoing. The collection basket is in the hallway between the Vestry and Fellowship Hall. If you are an avid knitter, crocheter or you are a good bargain hunter, please consider sharing your talent by adding to our hat and mitten drive. These donations will be given to local shelters and transition homes toward the end of fall when the need is high. Other outreach that is ongoing at church are collections for David's House, and now the Maynard House. Similar to David's House, which provides overnight housing for children and their families, the Maynard House provides adult patients a comfortable place to stay while undergoing treatments in the Upper NH/VT area. Look for more information about what both Houses need located near the "collection House" in Fellowship Hall.

Next, Outreach will be hosting Candy Bar Bingo on March 8th at 6:30. How does it work? For every candy bar you bring, you will be given a bingo card. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided. Please join us for fun and fellowship and bring a friend or two!

There are a few things that Outreach will be working on in the next few months. First, we are looking into hosting a blood drive at our church. We are still in the infancy stage of planning this as we contact the Red Cross about what we would need to make this happen. More information will be coming your way when or if this takes place. We are also talking about doing a church dance in May. Similar to the "Senior Prom" we've done in the past, we would like to pull the congregation together, both young and old, to enjoy a night with music and dancing. Next, we are looking to put up a church sign somewhere along the road that reminds Hooksett that we are here and welcoming. We understand that the church does not own much property along the road but we are working on finding documents that might inform us about how and where we can put one. If you, or someone you know, can share this information please let us know.

Last, Outreach would like to lift Kerrin Gullison and her Relay for Life team as they prepare for their June 1st event. Relay for Life is committed to recognizing cancer survivors, remembering those who have lost their battle with cancer and they will continue to fight every type of cancer that has left its scars on our lives. Please consider helping Kerrin's team as a donor or team member as the event draws near.

We wish you all well as we begin this month of seasonal and spiritual transition.

With peace and love,
Kathleen Dube, John Vaughn, Mary Ellen Kresel, Bonnie Boucher, Kathleen Murphy and Kristen Hamilton

Hooksett Community Kitchen

We would like to extend our thanks to Troop 603 for preparing and serving a delicious Mac & Cheese bar meal in February. Our next meal on Monday, March 18 from 5-6 pm will be sponsored and prepared by the Hooksett Lion's Club. The menu includes Shepherd's Pie, Salad, Brownies & Ice Cream, and Beverages. We are so grateful for our community partners who support the mission of the Hooksett Community Kitchen!

From Buildings and Grounds

Spring is right around the corner and the new Buildings and Grounds committee is hard at work making sure our church is ready with some new upgrades! The B&G committee is currently working on researching how we can update our parking lot to ensure both safety and

accessibility for our community members. We are also in the process of researching options to replace the toilets in the building (both upstairs and downstairs) so we can better accommodate our growing church.

On March 10th, we will be springing forward into daylight savings time so make sure you get plenty of rest and check your clocks!

Finally, we are in the process of preparing for the annual Church Yard Sale! The yard sale is going to be held inside the church on Saturday, May 18th and we still need more volunteers for this event!! Please reach out to your B&G crew if you would like to volunteer! If you are unsure about volunteering for events at the church, just remember these words from Helen Keller..."Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much".

B&G Committee (Steven Karels, Vicky Karels, Ron Chevrette, Bill Andrade, Judy Duval, Lee Simond, Susan Cokkinos, Kerrin Gullison)

From the Finance Committee

Your Finance Committee has been busy getting into our new role. Highlighting what we have accomplished and are planning to work on.

- As approved at the annual meeting, we are withdrawing \$10,000 from the Greenough Fund to cover operating expenses.
- We are looking into how to consolidate some of the accounts with the hope of accruing some interest.
- We are exploring opportunities with other investment firms to best serve the church's needs.
- We are going to re-establish a capital reserve fund to help with future large expenditures.
- Each month, each committee that has a line item for spending will get an update prior to their meeting.

As always if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to ask one of your committee members.

Respectively submitted your Finance Committee.

Heather Rainier, Chair

Joan Cote, Treasurer

Kathy Willis, Assistant Treasurer

Pam Hennessey

Steve Karels

Other News:

Now that the cold months of winter are in full swing, what better way to stay warm than spending time with friends. Our church is planning to have a dance. Anyone interested in helping plan this event please chat with Kristen Hamilton at kduvs@yahoo.com.

We have started digital announcements again. Before church, announcements will be displayed in a slideshow format on the TV in the Vestry and after church on the TV in Fellowship Hall. If you have an announcement that you would like to add to the slides please let Kristen Hamilton know via email: kduvs@yahoo.com.

Last, our Church TVs are equipped with Google Chromecast. This allows us to “cast”, or send something to the TV without hooking a computer up to it. With this said, the Church is looking for 2 tablets or unused smartphones that we can sync Chromecast to. Think of these as remote controls. If you have a smartphone or tablet that does not get much use anymore, please consider the Church as it’s next home. Please contact Kristen with any information on a device.



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Happy fundraising,

Kristi Sisay

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Winter is the best time to get cozy, relax and read! Read any great books? Ready for another? Bring in your books to share and take one. We have set up an area inside the ramp door for this purpose. There are several puzzles as well. Please help yourself!

Want to know what is going on throughout the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ? Click this link to sign up for their weekly digital newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/y9kct9zj>

