



June 2024 Circuit Rider

First Congregational Church of Lebanon

588 Exeter Road ~ P.O. Box 125

Lebanon, CT 06249

www.lebanonfirstcong.org

“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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Church Office Hours

Tuesday ~ 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Wednesday-Friday ~ 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

A Note from the Pastor

Dear Friends,

As I write this, I am profoundly aware that this is the last time I will communicate with you through this particular medium. Actually, I have been intensely aware over this last six months of every “last” time I have done something with you – the last season of Advent, the last Christmas Eve Service, the last Epiphany Star Sunday, the last... All the way up to the last Easter Sunday with you. All of these “lasts” have held more weight, knowing that my years in professional pastoral ministry have come full circle... with you.

It was Easter Sunday, 1996, when for the first time, I wore a robe in worship. It had taken all of my years in preparation for ministry for me to have “grown into” that robe. And having spent the prior seven months with you, as a student in your midst, and having felt your love, and experienced your encouragement, it was indeed a special moment, when I shared that “milestone” with you.

Two years later, some of you were with me the first time I wore a stole on my shoulders – the one my Mom and I had chosen before she died – the one placed on me by my father, on the day of my ordination. Five years after that, many of you were with me to celebrate my and Russ’ wedding in our beautiful sanctuary. Over my many years living and practicing ministry all over the U.S., you always welcomed me home on visits, with open arms. For so long, you have been my church “home”.

In 37 short days, I will preach in our sanctuary for the last time as your Interim Minister. It will be an emotional day for me – perhaps for some of you also. One last time, I will hug and kiss you “Good-bye”.

Very shortly after that, you will welcome a new Minister into your amazing, thoughtful, loving family. How truly blessed that person will be!!! They have no idea, as yet, and perhaps can’t even begin to imagine the joys, wonders, and treasures that await them in your presence, and in God’s tremendous presence in this place!! I am excited for them!! And for you!!

The future is VERY bright, and filled with God’s good gifts for you to unwrap and experience together! I will be continuing to cheer you on from a distance for all of the years to come! You are a beacon of light and hope in this community, and as you grow with your new Pastor, to accomplish all that you have discerned are God’s plans for you, your light will only grow brighter; and your presence in this community will only grow more vital and important. I pray that you will, each and all embrace the adventure and opportunities that are being placed before you with all of the joy and abandon of a people who have such confidence in their God that you are so bold as to “be anxious about nothing”.

As I depart your church, and your community, I trust whole-heartedly in God, and in the person God has prepared to journey with you in the coming days and years. My wish for you is that you will trust this person with your stories, and your secrets, with the things that cause you pain, and that wake you in the night. I pray that you will also include them in the moments that bring joy to your hearts, with the moments that make you laugh, and sing and play.

A Note from the Pastor Continued

As our time together draws to a conclusion, it is important for me to formally acknowledge that after June 30th, I will not be able to be available to minister to you any longer. The ethics of the Ministerial Code, which I whole-heartedly respect, and agree with, require me to refrain from making myself available to officiate at any funeral, memorial service, wedding, baptism, or any other type of religious occasion for members of this congregation, for at least two years, and even after that, only with the invitation of the Pastor of this church. The reasons for this are many, but perhaps most importantly, this allows and encourages you to connect with, and come to trust the love and leadership of your new Pastor. So, I ask you to please honor this, and not ask me to participate in any of these types of occasions. I promise you I will not be hurt or offended by your coming to love and trust your next minister. I am confident that we will hold a special place in each others' hearts, and for me, that is more than enough.

As I leave this wonderful church and community, I do not yet know God's plans for me. But I know and trust that they are good. My thoughts return daily to one of my favorite passages from scripture. I know it is true for me, and it is true for you. The prophet speaking for God in Jeremiah 29:11 says:

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord,
plans for your welfare and not for harm,
to give you a future with hope.”

I leave you with an abundance of hope, joy and love in my heart for each and every one of you. May God continue to bless you and keep you ...

With Love and Gratitude,

Denise

Message from OUR CHURCH Moderator

As you all should be aware by now, Rev. Terry (Denise) has presented, to the church, her resignation as of June 30, 2024. She has been a very valuable asset to Our Church, and the community, throughout this interim period. Denise is a very hard-working individual. She is very conscientious of everyone's needs. It has been a pleasure to have worked with her over these past 2+ years. We wish her well whatever, and wherever her path leads.

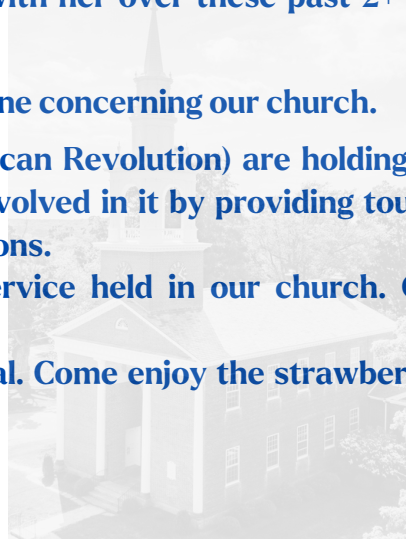
Don't forget the events coming up in June concerning our church.

- June 1 the SAR (Sons of the American Revolution) are holding a special event on the Lebanon Green. Our church is planning on being involved in it by providing tours of the church, ringing of the Bells at 12:00pm, plus possibly other functions.**
- June 2nd is the Baccalaureate Service held in our church. Come and help seniors celebrate their pending graduation.**
- June 15th is the Strawberry Festival. Come enjoy the strawberry shortcake, ice cream, and cake. Also enjoy the music.**

See you in church.

Art Wallace – Moderator

"Be Active, Join In!"



Lebanon Fair
July 26-28

We need hamburger flippers,
set-up crew, runners,
and clean-up crew!

If you would like to join in the fun,
call Tom Boisvert at 860-642-4404.



Created To Care
VBS 2024
July 22-26, 9am - 12:30pm
Volunteer!

What does volunteering at VBS look like for adults? *Monitoring*, Overseeing, but not leading, activities like games, crafts, or being available as campers transfer between activities. *Time-Keeping*, alerting groups when it's time to move to the next station. *Set-up & Clean up*.

Youth Leaders Welcome! High-school aged youth can join us in exchange for community service hours! Teens will engage with campers, help with crafts, games, and promote having an amazing week!

Email Rev. Mary Horan to get involved! mchoran@att.net





SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE MAY 2024

A little over a year ago, the church commissioned a search committee to conduct a search for a Designated Term Pastor. Your search committee consists of Phil Johnson, Phil Ziel, Sandy Belisle, Geri McCaw, Audra Holmes, Rev. Mary Horan and Dave Stifel with Priscilla Clesowich and Amy Kirkpatrick as alternates.

We posted our profile and position with the UCC in October 2023. We have received 12 profiles since our initial posting. Of those profiles, 10 were granted interviews. These applicants had a wide range of skills and backgrounds, and it was a challenge finding an applicant that fit our DTP goals and we felt would be the right fit for our church and its future.

We did identify one that we felt passionate about and we agreed that this applicant had the energy and vision we needed for our church's future. We began negotiations with that applicant in May 2024. After several discussions, we are happy to announce that the applicant has agreed to a call agreement package and that applicant is now our candidate!

At the request of our candidate, we are unable to share any personal information about the candidate until candidate weekend. The search committee and the candidate have selected June 22nd and 23rd to be when the candidate will be introduced to the congregation. There will be a meet and greet on June 22nd, details to follow. The candidate will conduct service on June 23rd with a special church meeting immediately following service.

This is an important step for our church, and we invite you to attend and be a part of this process.

With blessings,

Phil Johnson
Chairman, FCCL Search Committee

**June
Birthdays**



15th ~ Bryce Johnson
19th ~ Adam Kersey
22nd ~ Rob Boyce
28th ~ Madison Adams
30th ~ Donna Diekmann
30th ~ Eileen Colwell



**From the
Outreach Committee**

Thanks to all who contributed to the Blanket Project which we held on Mother's Day.

Your generosity made it possible to provide over forty blankets to those victims of domestic abuse and those who need comfort. It brings to mind Linus in the Peanuts cartoon and his security blanket. Perhaps a blanket is what someone needs to make them feel secure and comforted. Thank you once again.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LEBANON
588 EXETER ROAD, LEBANON
(ON THE LEBANON GREEN.)

45TH ANNUAL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 2024 ~ 6:00-8:00 P.M.



ENJOY LIVE MUSIC WITH
ROOM TO MOVE

DESSERT FESTIVAL MENU INCLUDES:
STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE, CAKE & ICE CREAM
BEVERAGES (COFFEE & WATER)

TABLES AND CHAIRS WILL BE
AVAILABLE BOTH INSIDE AND
OUTSIDE SEATING.



Music Appreciation Sunday
June 16th

Baccalaureate Service

The Lebanon faith communities invite our young people who are graduating from high school in 2024, their family, and friends, regardless of church affiliation, to a Baccalaureate Service on Sunday, June 2nd at 6:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church of Lebanon. A light reception will follow the service. Graduates are requested to come in cap and gown (if they are available) and to arrive by 6:15. All are welcome!

**2024**

Holiday Fair Crafters
June 8th ~ 9:00 a.m.

Join us as we create more items for our Holiday Fair! If you have some ideas you would like to share with the group, please bring them.