



Freedom Rings

First Christian Church of Freedom

Combining Traditional and Contemporary Faith Communities

Newsletter

February/March 2015



Pastor's Corner

LENT'S COMIN'

It's usually this time of year (mid-Feb.) when we yearn for Spring. The snow is piled high, the cold is penetrating our warmest clothing, and the landscape is lifeless and brown (except for fresh snows). Unless we're skiers, snowmobilers, or ice fishermen, we're looking forward to the milder winds of the next season.

The Church did not suffer the same hardships of living through a New Hampshire winter, but they, too, looked forward to longer and warmer days. As a matter of fact, "Lent" is a shortened form of "lengthening", and they tended to use this time as an educational opportunity to prepare for Easter, the Day of Resurrection. It was a nice fit for those preparing to join the Christian Church. New converts would learn the basics of the faith, then be baptized at the Easter Vigil, and be welcomed into the congregation on Easter morning. The symbol of the old life of sin and the new life with Christ was played out in each new Christian.

Eventually, the Sacrament of Baptism became a more common occurrence, primarily administered to babies shortly after birth – although some churches still try to baptize at the Easter Vigil. However, Lent remains a season of education, emphasizing

everyone's need to grow spiritually. The mood for the season is more contemplative, and the lessons are meant to remind us of Jesus' struggle in sharing God's plan to rescue humanity. We recount the controversy between Jesus and the authorities as the human desire clashes with God's intentions. From the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness to his trial and crucifixion on the cross, evil conflicts with good. However, the ultimate result is the triumph of God in Jesus' resurrection from death. From that point, we – all of humanity – have the promise of forgiveness of sin, new life, and eternal salvation. We are asked only one response – to believe.

Lent is a great season to consider this response. Forty days (not counting Sundays), beginning with Ash Wednesday (Feb. 18) and climaxing on Good Friday (Apr. 3), we are challenged to meditate on what it means to believe, to repent, to follow, to witness, to serve, and to be a Christian. We'll be exploring such things starting with our service on Ash Wednesday, the Sundays following, and concluding with Holy Week and Easter. We hope you'll join us! God Bless You! Pastor Larry

COMING SOON - MAILBOXES

Mail, as you well know, has become more expensive. Up until recently, we have sent out monthly newsletters as well as seasonal letters. We did get a special rate, but even with that, there was an annual fee, plus each piece cost money. We had to have 200 newsletters to get this special rate as well. The Council decided to cut down on the issues published as well as eliminate people who no longer attended. With fewer issues and less people, each piece had to be sent 'first class' which cost as much or more than before. The other consideration is that we can send the newsletter out on email for free, and there are many who would prefer it that way (it saves paper and can be done in color).

Here's where the mailboxes come in. When the newsletter is published, those who would like to get it on-line will receive notification that it is ready. For those who would like a 'hard-copy', it will be put in their mailbox at church, and if it's not picked up by Sunday, we'll mail it out. In the meantime, let us know if you prefer it emailed. A list will be at the coffee hour on Sunday. This issue will not be affected, but hopefully things will be in place for the next (probably the end of March). Thanks for your continued support!

HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE

How often have you needed a walker or crutches or even a wheelchair for a short time, but

didn't want to buy one? The church has accumulated several pieces of equipment, and would like to make them available to anyone who has a need. There are other places that offer the same service, but they're a distance away. We are presently storing items in the parsonage barn, and would love to get them in circulation. Speak to the Pastor, church secretary, or a deacon if you would like to borrow anything we have.

the **P**resident's *m*essage

It is hard to believe that we are embarking on another New Year. So much has happened since our last newsletter, from the "Ring in the Holidays", the annual Thanksgiving Dinner, our "homemade" Manger awaiting its occupants, to our beautiful Christmas Eve Pageant celebrating the birth of Christ. Heartfelt thanks go out to all our caring and giving volunteers, without whose help none of this would have been possible. We are truly blessed. It was a wonderful Advent season.

I'm very happy to inform you that our "small" church is continuing to grow, for we officially welcomed 13 new members on Dec. 21. They were welcomed with fellowship and love as they continue on their faith journey alongside all of us.

I would be remiss if I did not remind you of the Capital Campaign Fund, as we still have to replace \$48K that we borrowed for church improvements. We have a beautiful, but "old" church and if we wish to keep it a viable place of worship for years to come we need to keep the maintenance issues up to date. Whatever you can afford to help decrease this debt will be greatly appreciated.

We are still looking for a Financial Secretary and if any of you have an interest in this important position please call our church secretary, Pat Bojus. Nadine Chapman, former Financial Sec. will be available to lend you her full support.

As a final piece of information, I'd like to make you aware of a new Community Outreach Program that we are sponsoring along with the Freedom Community Club. Volunteers are available to transport Freedom residents in need of rides,

"locally", to medical appointments, pharmacies, shopping, etc. This program is being well accepted to date and it will continue as long as there is a need. If you wish to volunteer as a driver, please contact the church.

This is my first message to our Newsletter as President and I hope it has been informative. Dean Robertson has been an excellent President over the past three years, and to follow in his shoes, is a bit daunting, but I will do my best to help the church continue to move toward the future. We will be looking for a Vice President in about a year, but for now, Dean has graciously accepted to stay on as VP, to help me "learn the ropes", so to speak,...he has my eternal gratitude! I feel blessed to have everyone's support, and to be a part of this wonderful church "family" we call..The First Christian Church of Freedom.

Be seeing you around,
Sandy Boyle, President

Deacon's Corner

The last few months have seen many changes to the Diaconate. Longtime members Carol McIntire and Louise Anderson have retired as Deacons and longtime co-chairs Mary Hockmeyer and Nancy Beckwith have stepped down as co-chairs and been replaced by George Thompson and Neal Boyle. We are now maintaining a supply of medical equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, etc.). If you know anyone in need of these items, please contact one of the Deacons. There is no charge for the use of these items.

Thanks to Pastor Larry, Carolyn Olzerowicz, the choir, the children, and the ushers, the Christmas Eve Service was very uplifting. The Deacons are now planning for the Lenten season and the Easter celebration.

Neal Boyle



Treasurer's Report

2014 was a very good year for First Christian Church of Freedom (FCCF). December donations were strong and after all 2014 bills are paid the Church ended the year with a surplus of \$19,000. \$13,000 of the surplus came from 2014 pledges and more 2015 prepaid pledges than anticipated. The other \$6,000 of the surplus came from spending less than the budget in many categories.

Due to the strong year end collections, Nadine Chapman (Financial Secretary) and I will discuss "revising" the 2015 pledge and loose "forecast" so that monthly Council reporting will be more meaningful.

New choir robes will cost about \$3,800. There is \$2,445 in the fund so the Church will advance the fund \$1,350. Unpaid advances to the Church Trim and Door Fund are \$6,300 and to the Parsonage for \$6,100. Please consider making a special gift to the church so these funds can pay back the Church for the advanced cash.

Fourth quarter 2014 investment returns were 2.6%. Dividend income made up the lions share of the return or 2.3% with capital appreciation contributing 0.3%.

Please feel free to contact our Treasurer, Paul Olzerowicz for more information.

Respectively submitted,
Paul Olzerowicz, Treasurer

Financial Secretary's Report

In the last newsletter, I informed you of my intention to resign as of December 1. However, since the Nominating Committee and Church Council were unable to identify my replacement, I am continuing in this role for the time being. This is only a temporary solution, however, as I must resign May 1 to pursue an extended travel vacation. Roland Millette will continue to handle counting the offering on Sundays, along with Howard Bouvé', and we are now training a couple of other parishioners in the process. The Financial Secretary enters the information into a formal record to track contributions, deposits the funds in the bank, and reports information weekly to the Treasurer and monthly to Council.

It is urgent that the Church community responds to this issue before May 1. Please offer your time for this vital church activity. Give me a call. I am happy to discuss the opportunities.

*Respectively Submitted,
Nadine Chapman*

Directory of Members & Friends

The Church has created an updated directory of members and friends, and an effort is underway to collect any changes, additions, and deletions that are necessary. We maintain name, address, alternate address with estimated departure and return dates, telephone, and email. Please notify the office (603-539-6484 or fccf@yahoo.com) if you have any changes or wish to be removed from the list. You can also indicate if you don't want your information published.

Pastoral Visits

Should anyone wish to have a pastoral visit or communion, please speak to Pastor Larry, a deacon, or Pat in the church office.

If you have any news you would like to share, please submit it to the church office by the 20th of the month. We would love to hear about your travels and adventures.

Board of Trustees' MEETING

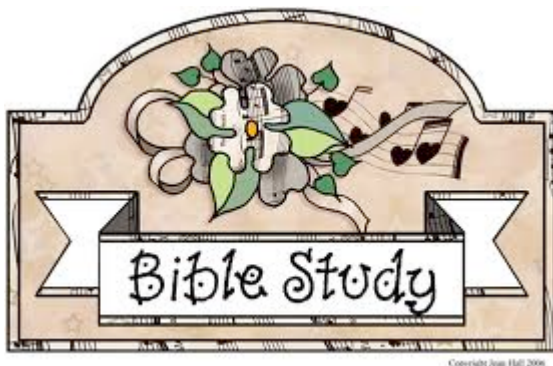
This is turning out to be a very cold and snowy winter. We are doing the best we can to keep the driveway and the steps cleared, but please be very careful when you are parking your car and walking in and out of the building.

The discharge pipe from the sump pump to the outside froze. The pipe has been rerouted inside the building so this will not happen again. The furnace underneath the sanctuary stopped working on a very cold day. The cause was a defective blower motor and this has been replaced.

The parsonage has been rented and the new tenants are in the process of moving in. They are the new owners of Bobby Sue's here in Freedom. If it ever gets warm enough to go for ice cream, stop in and say hello and welcome them to the village.

Thank you to John Hogan and Dan Spear who have gone off the board of trustees. Dan has been a very longtime member and has done more than his share of hard work for the church. New members coming on this year are Mark McKinley and Paul Elie.

Charlie Bojus



All are invited to Camp Calumet each week on Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. for a group discussion of the scripture lessons for the coming week and how the lessons relate to daily living. Bible Study is held in the Camp Calumet Conference Center on the right as you

go west on Lake Ossipee Road. Please see Pastor Larry if interested.

The next book for the Friday Book Group is *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande. It was the editor's choice by Amazon for October 2014. Atul Gawande is a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. This book tackles the challenge of "how medicine can not only improve life but also the process of its ending."

"...in the inevitable condition of aging and death, the goals of medicine seem too frequently to run counter to the interest of the human spirit. Nursing homes, preoccupied with safety, pin patients into railed beds and wheelchairs. Hospitals isolate the dying, checking for vital signs long after the goals of cure have become moot. Doctors, committed to extending life, continue to carry out devastating procedures that in the end extend suffering."

"Gawande offers examples of freer, more socially fulfilling models for assisting the infirm and dependent elderly, and he explores the varieties of hospice care to demonstrate that a person's last weeks or months may be rich and dignified.

"Full of eye-opening research and riveting storytelling, *Being Mortal* asserts that medicine can comfort and enhance our experience even to the end, providing not only a good life but also a good end."

Gawande looks at the end of life from a medical and personal point of view. However, meaning and quality at the end of life are questions of faith as well. How does our faith help us in facing these very important issues?

There are seven copies available at the church. Each for \$15.60. Barring snowstorms that may set us back on *No God But God*, we should be starting with the introduction and the first chapter of *Being Mortal* on February 27 at 10 am. Come and join in the conversation.

David Avery



Intergenerational Christian Education News

At First Christian, there are activities for all ages when it comes to Christian Education. Our Faith Journey never ends and we are committed to providing a firm foundation for our youth and opportunities for all ages to continue that journey.

Our March Intergenerational activity will be a **Luncheon** held on March 15 after church. The proceeds will be used for our annual Music Camp during Freedom Old Home Week this summer.

We continue to offer **Sunday School** each week for any children that might be in attendance. We thank Pet Plunges, Carol McIntire, Heide Paulding and Nancy Wogman for preparing lessons. If you know of children in the community or if you have grandchildren that are visiting, please encourage them to come to Sunday School.

Adult opportunities for education abound at First Christian. The Friday book group meets at 10 a.m. at FCC. That group is led by David Avery and Bob Bossdorf. If you are interested in Bible Study, then join Pastor Larry at Camp Calumet on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. That group explores the lessons for the upcoming Sunday. .

Palm Sunday is early this year-March 29. If you have children visiting, contact Nancy Wogman as we would like children to process that morning with palm branches.

Registration is open for this summer's **Music/Theater Camp-July 27-July 31**. Registration forms can be picked up at church or by calling the office at 539-6484. This year's play is entitled, "Oh, Jonah!" a comic retelling of the Biblical story of Jonah, the prophet who needed a little coaxing to get him to obey God's command.

Nancy Wogman



The Music and Worship Committee

Choir practice has been interrupted because of snow, cold, and illness. We hope for a speedy and complete recovery for Sarah Olzerowicz and hope she can return soon to church and choir.

The choir robes are here and look beautiful! After we have had a chance to organize the transition, we look forward to showing them to the congregation in a proper musical setting and to expressing our gratitude for making this purchase possible.

Peg Scully



Prayer List

Marion Barnes, Rev. Bob Bossdorf, Priscilla Collette, Pauline Crawford, Jeannette DeAngelis, Sarah Delzell, Craig Devine, Ramona Fateux, Donald Flanders, Gordon C. Gladden, Scott Hayman, Dale Johnson and family, George Kendall, Phyllis Kenison, Elmer Killam, Nancy Koza, Elizabeth Landry, Brenda Libby, Louise Lipson, Parker MacInnis, Elise Mancini, Carol Melvitas, Frank Meserve, Bill Nelson, Kelly Nelson, Mindy Olson, Roger Olson, Sean Palumbo, Mary Piper, Ed Roberts, Kathleen Sherin, David Sell,

Virginia Sprague, Sue Stamm, Michele Stoddard, Dick Stosez, Ethel Thomas, Janet Thompson, Jim Tracey, Clay Wagner, Patricia Watts, and all our country's military personnel and their families.

Please let the office know if names should be added or removed from this list or the bulletin. Thank you.



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CHURCH MEMBER?

When you're a member of a church, it means you've made a commitment to your faith. You have said "I'm a follower of Jesus Christ and a member of a Christian community." It also helps from the church's point of view to know who can be counted on to continue the church.

First Christian Church has 2 categories of members. One is as a full member - those who consider First Christian Church of Freedom their primary church. We also have a second category of people who may belong to another congregation. It's called 'associate membership'. It may be that a person is a lifetime member of a church in another state, and really wants to retain their membership there. Or, it may be, as is the case with me and many others, that for other benefits one wants to maintain membership in a church of a particular denomination, or where one's family has always been a member, and it is necessary or desirable that one retain membership in a denominational church. In this case, one can become an associate member here and have all the privileges of a full member - vote, pastoral care, involvement in various ministries, serving in leadership, etc.

We want to invite those who are not, to become full or associate members. Being on this 'list' does not make anyone better or more Christian than anyone else, but it does help us get 'a handle' on 'who we are' as a

congregation, and maybe how we need to shape our mission and ministries.

Please let us know about joining (it's free!), or if you're not sure, speak to Pastor Larry or call the church office 539-6484



Freedom Food Pantry

Hello from the Food Pantry: we continue to fill an important need for those individuals and families that continue to come to us. Peter Park keeps things on target downstairs after each Saturday and all the great volunteers who work each time are of so much help. I have been pleased to step in for our illustrious Doris Sirois while she enjoys a warm 2 months in Florida. I made sure I presented our annual budget request to the Town of Effingham's Budget Committee last week and was met with positive response for our request. We are only 6 weeks from the Vernal Equinox and the daylight is lengthening every day!!!

Blessings to you all , Pat Riker

I have been pretty much disconnected this past month due to my wife's illness and her being moved to several hospitals and now Rehab; she is, thankfully, now making some good progress. With all the snow, things have generally been slow and I have not seen any recent figures; however, under Pat Riker's great direction, things continue to progress and the need still is there. Thanks, as usual to the volunteers for their efforts. Keep those volunteer hours and food coming! Tell me this snow is going to stop before JUNE!

Bob Bossdorf, Co-Director



Ladies Guild

The Ladies' Guild continues to meet on Mondays from 9 til 2 weather permitting. We took 61 quilts to RSVP in December and another 15 in January. Unfortunately, between the holidays and snowstorms (which seem to target Mondays) we haven't met for several weeks. We're hoping that the weather will cooperate soon so we can again gather.

Remember that tickets for our new raffle quilt for 2015 are available. As always, we welcome anyone who is interested in learning to quilt or already has some quilting experience.

Peg Nichols



Scholarship Committee

Anyone who intends to further his or her education in an accredited post-secondary institution may submit an application for consideration to the Scholarship Committee of the First Christian Church.

Applications may be obtained at the church office in Freedom village or at the Kennett High School Guidance Office. Completed forms must be submitted to the Scholarship Committee by May 1, 2015.

Jane Hartnett



Fund Raising

The Fund Raising Committee is selling "Rada Cutlery" made in the USA as one of our fundraisers. This will not be a door-to-door event but samples will be on display at our events and ongoing. You may contact Judy Robertson, Velma Hormell or Pat Bojus in the church office if you are interested in checking out the catalog for paring knives, bagel knives, chef's knives, granny forks, pie or cake servers, steak knives, etc which are available.

Keep this extremely well-made cutlery in mind for gifts throughout the year and you would be supporting the church at the same time.

Velma Hormell



Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is busy planning events for 2015! On Sunday, February 15th a soup lunch was scheduled to be held following the worship service, however a snowstorm changed those plans. We will reschedule hopefully. Once again this year, the committee will plan a few plays and a trip to the Sea Dogs game in Portland.

The committee will continue giving bread to newcomers this year and will send letters to visitors thanking them for attending our Sunday worship service. If you know of anyone who needs a name badge, please see a member of the Membership Committee.

Watch for a sign up sheet next month. We will be planning a group to go out to dinner. We have other activities we are working on. STAY TUNED!.

LuAnn Rollins



We have not had many social events lately. Everyone is sticking close to home with the very cold and snowy weather we have been having this winter.

We were sad to hear that Ellie Bossdorf fell after being home only one day and broke her hip. She is now back at CMC in Manchester and we are praying for her recovery.

Marianne Hogan was also hospitalized and is now home and doing well.

Sarah Olzerowicz fell and injured her back. She is in the hospital in Laconia and we wish her well and hope she will be home soon.

Mark McKinley would like to thank everyone who sent cards and prayers to him on the death of his mother. He brought this lovely quote into the office and I do not know who wrote it, but it is so beautiful. It just has to be printed here.

"Your mother is always with you. She's the whisper of the leaves as you walk down the street. She's the smell of certain foods you remember, flowers you pick, the fragrance of life itself. She's the cool hand on your brow when you're not feeling well. She's your breath in the air on a cold winter's day. She is the sound of rain that lulls you to sleep, the colors of the rainbow; she is Christmas morning. Your mother lives inside your laughter. She's the place you came from, your first home, and she's the map you follow with every step you take. She's your first love, your first friend, even your first enemy, nothing on earth can separate you – not time, not space, not even death."

Anonymous

Ushers Needed

If you would like to be an usher on Sunday morning, see Mark McKinley or Jim Blake and let them know. Ushering involves getting to church a little early, greeting people as they come in and giving them a bulletin. During the service the ushers collect the offering and then bring it forward to the Pastor. The ushers usually sign up for a month, however if something comes up and you can't make it to church there is never a problem finding someone to fill in for you. This is a great way to meet new people as they arrive and serve the church as well.

St. Patrick's Day



RSVP NEWS

The following is an excerpt from RSVP News: *There is a group of talented ladies at the First Christian Church in Freedom. They produce absolutely adorable quilts that are given to every newborn at Memorial Hospital – the most recent group of quilts brought to the hospital in early December will outfit 61 new babies to wrap them up to go home from the hospital. The ladies also donated 8 quilts for the residents at the Merriman House nursing home. How lucky we are in this country to have such artistic, generous people working to make life a little brighter for others in their community!!*

Celebration of Velma Hormell

On Sunday, March 22 from 1 to 3 pm at the Town Hall, there will be a celebration of Velma in her 90th year. If you would like to attend please call Rachel Fall at 539-7596 by March 10 so they can have an idea of how many will be attending.

Velma is well known and loved by her church family as well as the community. This will be a wonderful event for a very wonderful woman.

