



First Christian Church of Freedom
THE CHURCH IN THE VILLAGE / ESTABLISHED IN 1858

Freedom Rings

**November-
December
2020**



**To the Council and Congregation of
First Christian Church of Freedom,
NH:**

Dear Members and Friends:

It was a chance meeting toward the end of 2011 that started this stint as part-time pastor of First Christian Church of Freedom. It was only going to last a few months and involve a couple hours a week. Well, it's been almost 9 years, and on October 31, 2020, I will leave this 'call'.

God has been good and there are no regrets on my part. Nancy and I have enjoyed our association with the church and community, and we've especially been grateful for the many friendships gained. Aside from vacations and a few snowstorms, I've presided over worship almost every Sunday. It's been a labor of love, and along with our music director, choir, readers, and ushers, our services have brought 'glory to God' and meaningful worship to the congregation. Besides that, there have been the meetings, fellowship events, and other gatherings that have marked special times in our lives. We are appreciative for being a part of all the things that make the church a special part of the Freedom community.

Of course, we know that so many things changed after March 15th. We were thrown 'for a loop' in having to figure out how to practice our faith in a pandemic. We're still struggling, but at least we have figured out a routine which allows some to experience a video service and others to read them. We still maintain a relationship with our God and each other while looking forward to again gathering for worship. We also have a 'new pastor' willing and able to carry on in the immediate future. We're thankful that God continues to carry us forward into the 'great unknown' with different insights to deepen our faith.

In closing, I'm indebted to God and this congregation for the opportunity to share the Word over these years. Our prayers will be with you as we follow your progress. May God bless you and keep you safe!

Rev. Lawrence Wogman



FROM THE SEARCH AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEES

We're so fortunate to welcome Rev. Edes as Pastor of the First Christian Church congregation. This would be a happy moment at any time, but in this difficult time it's particularly special to have a leader with her experience and energy. She'll conduct her first service on Sunday, November 1, on Facebook Live at 10 a.m. . Go to the First Christian Church of Freedom page and tune in. For those not using Facebook, sermons can be emailed. Sign up by calling 539-6484 to add your email address.

The following is a background story Rev. Edes composed telling some of her varied and interesting accomplishments in New England. We welcome her in her next adventure in Freedom!

"I was born and raised in central Maine where my family was very involved in the Universalist Church, first in Guilford and then in Dexter, after we moved there in 1964.

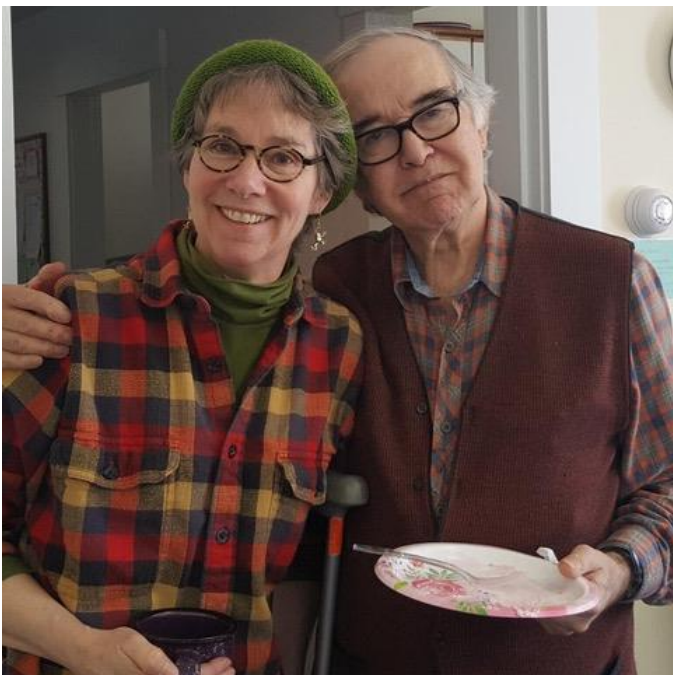
I graduated from UNH with a BA in Vocal Performance in 1978, was married and raised

my family in Newmarket, NH. During those early child rearing years I worked at many part time jobs: house cleaning, retail sales (Birkenstock shop, Hallmark cards and gifts), delivering singing telegrams (it's true!). I remained active in the theater and music community in the NH Seacoast until our move to Silver Lake in 2004.

Prior to entering the ministry, my church work consisted of lay leadership (every committee imaginable) and Director of Music at South Church UU, in Portsmouth (a position I at first resisted, then accepted with trepidation and which ultimately launched me into seminary). I received my M.Div. from Bangor Theological Seminary in 1998 and was ordained in my childhood church on October 8, 2000.

For the first two years of my ministry I worked as a chaplain at the Elliot Hospital in Manchester, NH, while serving as part time as pastor of the Nottingham Community Church (UCC/UU) and preaching from various pulpits in and around Northern New England as guest minister.

My husband, Stephen Kull, and I moved to Silver Lake following my call to serve the UU Fellowship of the Eastern Slopes (2003-2014). I relinquished the full-time pulpit six years ago, partly because Steve was about to retire and we were collecting grandchildren(!), partly because I needed to re-connect with my singing ministry, and partly because I felt, after eleven years, the congregation would be well served to hear a new voice, even if the message was similar. In other words, it was just time. It was a good parting with no hard feelings. Since that time I have functioned as an itinerant preacher, community pastor, hospice and hospital chaplain, and founder / leader of the Silver Lake Singers for hospice and healing. It has been a fulfilling and happy time. I am excited and ready to "settle down" with a home congregation once again."



Well, first of all, I am honored, excited and so very grateful to accept the call to be your new Pastor. Congratulations to *all* of you for persisting in this process during the most difficult of circumstances. Your Search Committee deserves high praise indeed, and I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

All week, as I have pondered what to write by way of a little hello and introduction, I have been thinking of how the apostle Paul spent so many hours composing letters to the various congregations under his watchful eye, as he was separated from them. I might do well to follow his example!

[B]y God's will I may somehow at last succeed in coming to you. ¹¹For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you – ¹²or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. ¹³I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented)...

~from Romans chapter 8

Truer words were never written. Paul captures perfectly what it is I hope for us as we begin our ministry together - that we may mutually

encourage and be encouraged by each other's faith. Learning together, listening to one another, laughing and weeping, praying with and for each other, and in time gathering together for "in person" worship, fellowship and - please, God - Singing! But for now we are prevented.

As of today, the guidelines for gathering in person for worship are burdensome to say the least, requiring masks and distancing, temperature checks, advance reservations and multiple services to insure adequate space for everyone to be seated safely. And that's just a partial list!

But fear not! We will find ways to be in touch and to celebrate. Advent and Christmas will arrive right on schedule, and we will mark the time in new, creative ways, without, I trust, losing the ancient magic of this special season.

In the meantime we will be patient (well, you know ... as patient as we *can* be.) So, another quote. This one from Pierre Teilhard de Chardin:

Trust in the Slow Work of God

Above all, trust in the slow work of God. We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay. We should like to skip the intermediate stages. We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new. And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability - and that it may take a very long time. And so I think it is with you. Your ideas mature gradually - let them grow, let them shape themselves, without undue haste. Don't try to force them on, as though you could be today what time (that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will) will make of you tomorrow. Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be. Give Our Lord the benefit of believing that his hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete. - Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J. (1881-1955)

As I read these words, I felt he was speaking directly to my heart - maybe to all of us as we wait for whatever comes next. We have to trust the slow work of God and our own good hearts as we wait out the pandemic. I hope you are taking care of yourselves and each other as ever you are able.

I also hope you all had a chance, or will find one in the next few weeks, to connect with Pastor Larry and Nancy - to thank them for their years of love and service to this congregation and to wish them well in the next chapter of their lives. It is a hard thing to say farewell without a proper send-off. So once again, we will trust in the slow work of God, believing that the Wogman household will be held in love as they make their way. Godspeed good and faithful servants!

Until we meet, I am yours, truly. Feel free to be in touch and I will do the same.

Pastor Mary

The Reverend Mary Giles Edes

revmge@mac.com

Church: (603) 539-6484

C. (603) 515-6220

H. (603) 367-9420

P.S. Oh, and you will also get to know my husband Stephen! He and I live in Silver Lake with our elderly Standard Poodle, Percy, and our very bossy Norwegian Forest Cat, Mr. Big. Between us we have four grown children and six grandchildren, ranging in age from four to twenty-two! How we miss them...

Last week at the Church Council meeting, Pastor Larry submitted his resignation as Pastor of our Church. Pastor and Nancy have been such a great part of our church family for the past nine years. They both always stepped up to make our church even better whether it was a meeting or a church dinner. Nancy was very involved with the ladies Guild Quilting Group, Music and Worship, the church website and was always available when we needed to have her take notes at a meeting. We sure will miss them as they move on to retirement. Thank you to Pastor Larry and Carolyn for doing the Facebook services all summer and to the production manager, Nancy Wogman. The Council accepted the recommendation of the Search Committee to approve Reverend Mary Edes as our new Pastor. You can read more about Mary elsewhere in this issue. We give Mary a very warm welcome to be our new Pastor. The Search Committee under the leadership of June Burt did a wonderful job to select Mary out of the many applications. We salute that committee. The Council talked about trying to open the Church for Sunday services, but we decided to wait another month and discuss it with Pastor Mary. Many felt it was just not safe to open yet. I want to thank the Food Pantry for the generous donation of a new generator for the church. It will be installed towards the end of the year. The generator will cover the entire church, should the power go out. Many thanks. Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

Dean Robertson, Church President



PASTORAL VISITS

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

If you need to reach Pastor Mary, her phone number is 367-9420 (H) or 515-6220 ©.



Kathy Avery	Dick & Wanda Fields	Carol Melvidas
Tarryn Balch	Jane Garnsey	Judy Michaels
Gerry Barnicle	Michael Gilroy	Gay Mocer
Suzie Bogart	Cynthia Granahan	Diana Mozzoni
Charlie Bojus	Tony Hampton	Cindy Nason
Chris, Harold, Kevin & Robert Boynton	Lynn Hinchee	Billy Norton
Steve Bracci	John Hogan	Pat & Roger Olson
Harold Brown, Jr.	Karen Hopkins	Paul Olzerowicz
Christie Catino	The Family of Glenn Hormell	DeMott Post
Eric Chamberlain	Rob Hyam	Jeannie Rogers
Carolyn Clancy	Dale Johnson	Kim Rose
Celia Costa	Stephen Johnson	Peter Scully
Greg Dayton	Elmer Killam	Marci Sharp
Lorelei DeNisco	Fred Kistler	Kevin Stark
Connie Dockiham	Nancy Koza	Ellie Stokes
David Eldridge	Dana Lee	Laureen Strauch
Delores Ellis	Bernice MacLeod	Jim Tracey
Kate Elliott	Jeff & Kathy MacLeod	Debbie Trail
Bonnie Engroff	Christopher Malloy	Deanna Vallely
John Ferralasco, Jr.	Debbie McGivney	John White
	Bill McIntire, Jr.	

Let us also pray for all the Covid-19 victims, the essential workers and all our country's military personnel and their families



Treasurer Report

Church Financial Activity

All Church expenses received are paid. As of October 13, 2020, Church expenses exceed income by \$29,400 which is about \$3,300 worse than last month again due to pledge and loose giving behind 2019 levels and 2020 budget. Giving for the first 10.5 months of 2020 is \$23,800 behind 2019 giving levels and \$7,900 worse than last month. The Financial Secretary is sending a "status" letter to all church members letting them know where they are with their 2020 giving. Giving is expected to "catch-up" by the end of the year

SBA PPP loan forgiveness and Parsonage/Perpetual Fund distributions are expected to offset the majority of the overall shortfall but we do need 2020 giving to pick up to avoid a deficit for the year.

A draft 2021 Budget has NOT yet been prepared as clarity in the Pledge/Loose category is needed.

Investments

The first couple of weeks of October 2020 have been good for the markets, reversing

much of the September 2020 losses. Uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic vaccine and the economic recovery are the primary risks to the market. The Church investment portfolio is diversified with a strong cash position. The Church pooled investment account is held by discount brokerage custodians Vanguard and TD Ameritrade. The Food Pantry investment account is held by Fidelity with Thrivent as their investment advisor.

If you have any questions about any financial matters of the Church, please do not hesitate to speak with me.

Respectfully submitted,
 Paul J. Olzerowicz
 Treasurer, First Christian Church of Freedom

Respectfully submitted,
 Paul J. Olzerowicz, Treasurer



LADIES GUILD

The Ladies' Guild still isn't meeting as a group. However, several members are taking kits home and sewing quilt tops, returning them to be layered with batting and backing, taking them to be closed, flipped, top stitched, and finally back to others to be tied. They are then taken up to Memorial Hospital for the newborns. Right now we have 16 or so ready to be tied. We are all looking forward to meeting as a group again.

Ring in the Holidays will be different for us this year. We will be participating with Janet Johnson and her artisans at her home on 153 on Saturday, Nov 7.

We are sad to announce that 3 members will be leaving us soon. Roberta Davidson has sold her house and is moving to be neared her stepdaughter, Jane Luke has sold her house and will be moving back to Memphis near her daughter, and Nancy Wogman's house is for sale with their planning to return to Connecticut soon. When we start up again, we will eagerly welcome any newcomers to join us!

Respectfully submitted,
 Peg Nichols



The need continues. We are grateful to Hannaford and Walmart for their weekly donations of 60 - 100 pounds of meat! The USDA has also increased the amount of food they are providing. Our shelves, 2 refrigerators and 3 freezers are full. The Food Pantry Board has been concerned that should there be a lengthy power outage we could lose a lot of food. To address that concern, we have been looking into an emergency back-up standby generator.

During the month of Sept., we provided our clients with food so that they were able to prepare 1,512 meals. Distribution by age is:

0-18	19.4%
20-59	51.4%
60 +	29.2%

We are now having clients sign up for the Thanksgiving and Christmas meals. 19 Clients have signed up thru 10/17. It's early and we

expect many more to sign up over the next few weeks.

Respectfully Submitted,
Peg Nichols, Co-Director
Doris Sirois, Co-Director



THIS NEWSLETTER FEATURES A LONG STANDING MEMBER OF THE CHURCH, DAVID MESERVE

Dave is a native to Freedom – born and raised right here on the family farm on Scarboro Road. He went to school at the town hall; upstairs until the 4th grade, then moved downstairs until the 8th grade. He then went on to Kennett High School in Conway, graduating in 1956. After high school he joined the Air Force, for 4 years. When he returned home, he went to The 5 Chimneys at Province Lake where he met Linda. They courted and fell in love and in 1960 they had a garden wedding at Moose Pond in Denmark, Maine. He went on to have a wonderful family life raising their children.

Dave was the Post Master in Center Ossipee, retired from there in 1977, then purchased the Freedom Post Office. He contracted his brother to build an apartment under the post office, where he lives to this day. He attended services faithfully at the First Christian Church of Freedom and became a member in 1996. George Davidson was the pastor at the time.

We are still collecting gently used or new sneakers for Green Mountain Conservation Group. If you have any-kids or adults, you can drop them off at First Christian Church of Freedom in the front vestibule or at Blue Heron House on Huntress Bridge Road in Effingham. Both are available 24/7. To date, from a variety of sources we have collected 410 pairs! They are sent to GOT SNEAKERS and either recycled or sent to 3rd world countries. It's something positive we can do during this pandemic!

Thanks in advance!

Nancy Wogman



Next Newsletter Deadline is **December 21st**

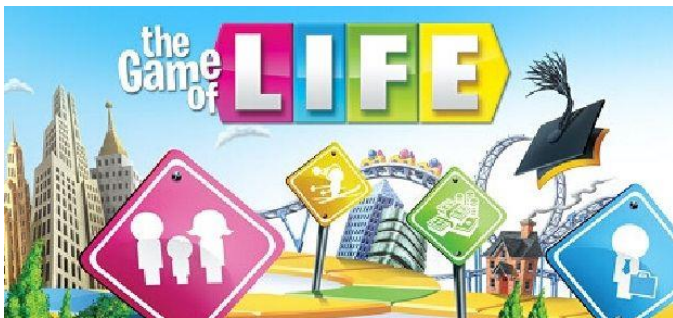
Dave was a Mason then went on to be a Shriner for 20 years where he claimed his true profession – a Shriner Clown!!

He is now retired, still living in the same apartment under the post office, still sitting in the same pew and, upon occasion, will be a lay reader putting his spirit into the reading.

He is enjoying his life with his children, grandchildren and many new great grand-children. He has been seen taking up 2 whole pews when they all come to visit – so full of pride. He loves taking them all out for ice cream (nearly has to take out a loan!) He enjoys relaxing, going out to eat, playing golf and loving his retirement life!

This was a wonderful experience, learning about such a fine man with such zest for life. Thank you Dave!

Gail Bizer



SOME OF LIFE'S LITTLE INSTRUCTIONS

Sing in the shower

Treat everyone you meet like you want to be treated

Watch a sunrise at least once a year

Leave the toilet seat in the down position

Never refuse homemade brownies



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My prayers are with all of you. It will be so wonderful to get back to normal in the future.

In case you need to call the church for any reason, I am here at the office on Mondays and Thursdays from 9 am to 1 pm.

Sincerely,
Patty Dumas

Just for Laughs



Three boys are in the schoolyard bragging about their fathers.

The first boy says, "My dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50."

The second boy says, "That's nothing. My dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100."

The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people with baskets to collect all the money!"

THERE IS NO CALENDAR IN THIS NEWSLETTER BECAUSE, FOR THE TIME BEING, THERE ARE NO CHURCH SERVICES OR ACTIVITIES (except for the food pantry on Saturday mornings). LET US HOPE AND PRAY THAT THE DOORS WILL OPEN AND WE WILL BE TOGETHER VERY SOON.

The First Christian Church of Freedom

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Like us on Facebook!

Pastor Mary G. Edes, 603-367-9420