

South Church Concord NH



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Message from Jed

Lent: Lighting the Way

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." Psalm 119:105

There is, in the practice of centering prayer, an exercise known as "returning to the breath." When the mind wanders, or pressing thoughts bang on the door demanding our attention, we are invited to turn our attention back to our breathing, to stay focused on the most basic, life-giving dimension of the human body. Good breathing, as with good eating, increases our ability to focus, our energy, our sense of peace and our availability to God and to one another. The simple gift of focus is life-giving.

More than anything these days, we need to hone our ability to focus, not only on our breathing, but on God's presence and leading. With bad news lurking around every racial, economic and political corner, whether our goal be to simply survive the day or to bring light into the darkness, we will need to focus more than ever on the good news that God would have us share in the world.

Our Lenten theme is Lighting the Way, and together in our worship and in our work, we will tend to the light of God's love as it seeks to reside in us so that we may help carry that light into the present darkness; to help light the way into a world that is less afraid, less angry, less polarized and more just.

Events and Activities

Epiphany Video Devotional

Two congregations . . . one shared ministry. This Epiphany season, we are

Epiphany 2021



offering weekly video devotional along with First Congregational Church in Pelham.

We upload two videos on Wednesdays during the Epiphany, one from each congregation on our [website](#). Individuals have been asked to give 3 to 4 minute video reflections based on various scripture lessons and posing questions.

We have been embracing the stories of the Magi's visit; Jesus' baptism; and the wedding to Cana. As we share these videos, reflect on how these stories are woven into your lives. Together we are sharing our journey.



Virtual Bingo

On **Sunday, January 31st** spend an hour playing Virtual Bingo from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. We will be live via [Zoom](#). If you want to play you will need to pick up your bingo sheets prior to the event. Please join Alison and other families for this fun, social hour. This event is open to all members of all ages. You don't have to [register](#) for this event, but if you do it will be helpful to know who to expect.



Continuing Conversations

Join Sean Dunker-Bendigo every Wednesday from 8 a.m to 9 a.m. for conversation and connection. Grab a coffee, tea or beverage and join the conversation. Drop-in, stay awhile or pop in just to say hello and run. A free-flowing format with laughter, seriousness, creativity, dreaming, and everything in between. Join the [Zoom](#) meeting.

By the Poet's Light

Starting February 18th, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and continuing the third Thursday of every month, join Sean Dunker-Bendigo for by The



Poet's Light. Each month we will read and discuss powerful poems related to change, vision, and new beginnings. Zoom info: Join the [Zoom Meeting](#).



South Church "Move-a-Thon"

Save the Dates! Make a note on your calendars now for the first-ever, super-fun South Church "Move-a-thon!" Throughout the seven days of **May 28th to June 4th, 2021**, South Churchers and friends will have the opportunity (at our own time and pace, alone or in teams) to walk, wheel, shuffle, swim, bike, run, hop, bounce to raise financial support for the mission of South Church, as well as, some of our

neighbors. Stay tuned for more details!

Ministries



Mission of the Month

For the month of February, the Faith in Action Ministry will be collecting donations for Neighbors in Need. Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. NIN makes available annual grants to UCC churches

and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service, to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. Thank you for your continued support of the Faith in Action Ministry. Donate [here](#).

Racial Justice

Time to Get to Work!

The racial justice task force at South Church was born in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder and the global outrage that followed.

Political Treatment Fair Civil Rights
Attitudes Practices Inclusion
RACIAL JUSTICE
Employment Society Economy
Access Living Wage Pay Equity
Beliefs Democracy Training
Policies Equity Police Support
Impact Courts Equality Change

After reading Ibram X. Kendi's book, *How to be an Anti-Racist*, we have been gathering regularly to lay the groundwork for South Church to become a racial justice church. The January 6th siege of our Nation's Capitol; the emboldened resurgence of white supremacy; and other hate groups have made all the more clear just how much work our country has to do to confront and heal the racism in our midst. We on the task force

invite you to join with us for any and all of the following events as we educate ourselves and begin that journey together:

The Intersection of Racial and Environmental Injustice in the U.S.

Join Brynne Rardin on **February 10th** at 5:30 p.m. for a 45-minute educational [webinar](#) on the severity of the climate crisis and its direct correlation to racial injustice in our country, which she has developed as a certified *Climate Reality* leader.

Traces of the Trade: Join Sean Dunker-Bendigo, Lynne Morgan and Jen Evans on **Monday, February 22nd** from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., for a screening of the [documentary](#) movie **Traces of the Trade: A Voyage of Realization and Reconciliation**. There will be a follow-up discussion Monday, March 1st at 7:00 p.m.

Waking up White: Join Linda Kenison in a bi-weekly study of Debbie Irving's groundbreaking [book](#), beginning on **Wednesday, March 3rd** at 5:30 p.m.

Stay tuned for detailed information on registering for these, and other upcoming events on our website.



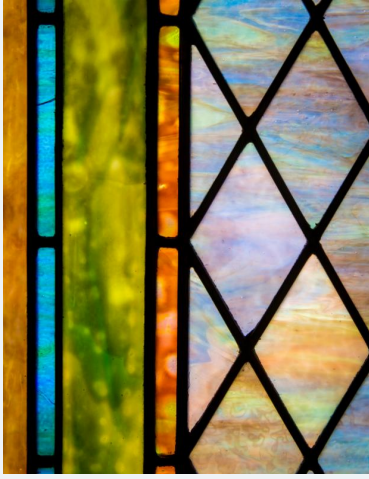
Memorial Prayer Beads

It is almost a year that we have been learning how to navigate this pandemic. As a way to honor those who have died, we are working to create prayer beads to display outside the church by March 13th. Each prayer bead will include a bell or charm representing each individual and an additional twelve beads to represent the year we have all endured. Our goal is to

create a string of beads for each individual that has died. As of January 28th, 1004 Granite State Residents have died from Covid. If you are interested in helping out stop by the church to pick up a kit in the side entrance by the parking lot. Also if you have beads you would like to donate to this ministry, please feel free to drop them off at the church. We will take any beads, plastic, wood, metal or glass.

Let There be More Light

The Property Stewardship Ministry is undertaking two projects to enhance the lighting in our buildings and to protect our assets:



The first project involves the restoration of all of our stained glass windows and the replacement of plexiglas coverings. We hope to protect the windows in the coming years. The cost of restoring each of the large Sanctuary windows is approximately \$4,000. The cost to restore the three large windows facing Pleasant Street will be approximately \$20,000. The cost to restore the other smaller windows on the bell tower and elsewhere are somewhat less.

The second project involves the replacement of all the lights in the Sanctuary and Parish House with new LED fixtures or LED light bulbs. The total cost of the lighting project is approximately \$22,250. (Approximately, \$7,550 will be funded with a grant from Unital; an additional \$7,000 of the cost will be paid for using the Church's annual distribution from the Mosley Trust; which leaves an unpaid balance of approximately \$7,700 to be paid by the Church over the next five years.) We expect that our energy savings will offset this repayment obligation.

If you are interested in funding all or part of the cost of the restoration of one of our windows or would like to contribute to the cost of the lighting upgrade, please email [Lou-Ann Poirier](mailto:Lou-Ann.Poirier) for more information on how to make a gift for either of these wonderful projects.



Family Promise

We are hosting Family Promise February 7th to the 14th. Families will continue to be safely housed at the First Congregational Church parsonage in Henniker. We will be providing meals for them at this location. Timing of meal drop off is flexible, and maybe coordinated either in-person with the families or deposited in a cooler outside the house. Sign-up [here](#)

Church Communities



Gather in Prayer

Morning Prayer

7:30 a.m.

Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Click [here](#) to join

Evening Prayer

7:30 p.m.

Mondays and Tuesdays

Click [here](#) to join:



Prayers

Please keep the following people in your thoughts and prayers....

- President Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and their families.
- All those devoted to and charged with protecting the security of our democracy.
- Those who have lost their lives to Covid and the loved ones they have left behind.
- All those who are on the front lines of health care.

If you would like the congregation to pray for someone and be added to our prayer list, please contact [Lou-Ann Poirier](#). She will also make Jed aware of your prayers.

Office Hours

The Office Hours for entering the building are
Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and Thursdays 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
However, if you need to enter the building, please call the office to let them know you will be arriving and please wear a mask and use hand sanitize
