

South Church Concord NH



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

e-Lation!
May 27th

The Question Everyone is Asking

Like blossoms on a tree in early spring, there are newly-visible signs that, God willing, come fall, we will be able to come back together in worship in our beloved church building and in each other's real presence! The total number of new cases of COVID -19 in NH is still declining, and the number of fully vaccinated is growing steadily. The fully vaccinated no longer need to mask.

Our current plan is to "open up" this fall to worshipping, learning, singing (may still require being masked), ringing and meeting in person beginning Rally Day, September 12th! We hope as part of that process to welcome back the groups who have relied on our building for their invaluable work in our community. Naturally we will make sure that we are, as a community of faith, maintaining vigilance when it comes to limiting the spread of COVID-19. We are grateful for all of the patience and generosity South Churchers have shown during these last fifteen months of the pandemic.

We have learned a great deal about how to be the church in the virtual age. Going forward I feel confident that much of our congregational life together will have optional, digital ways of staying connected so that distance, health or busy schedules will no longer necessarily be barriers to fully participating in all things South Church. Indeed, the virtual option should make it easier on many folks to participate in many aspects of our congregational life. In the meantime, during summer, there will be two worship services: an "analog" worship in the parking lot at 8 am and the online worship at 9 am.

There will be much celebrating to be done, and rightly so – it has

been a brutal and lonely year for so many, and none of us can fully predict what the long-term challenges and costs of this pandemic will be to any of us. What we can be assured of is that people of color, the poor, the homeless and the powerless will carry a heavier burden of loss than most of us. As we move together more fully into our interim time of discernment, may God lead us as an ONA congregation to open our doors, our stories, our minds, our hearts and our hands more fully than ever before.

With love and gratitude for each of you,

Jed

Events and Activities

Get Movin' 184 Challenge

We have surpassed our fundraising goal of \$4,118 and donations keep coming in every day! Let's see just how much higher we can go! If you haven't signed on to the Challenge yet, now is the time. We have extended the deadline to participate in the Get Movin' 184 Challenge to **June 1**. Sign up now and join the fun!



If you plan to be a participant

First, choose an activity that you are willing to take part in at some point during the week of May 28 to June 4. The activity can take place on one day within that week or can be spread out as a participant wishes throughout any part of the week. The goal of the activity must include the numbers one (1), eight (8) and four (4) in any order or combination. You must [register to participate](#) by June 1st. Click [here](#) to download a full packet. (Participants, please remember to take pictures of your event and post them to the church FaceBook page.)

If you want to sponsor a participant

Sponsorship payments can be made [online](#) or if you prefer, simply mail a check to the church office with "184 Challenge" and the name of the person you are sponsoring in the memo line. There is a list of challenge participants below.

Get Movin' 184 Challenge Participants

Brianna Blake will shot 184 hoops with the Confirmation Class

Abby Charbenau will bike 184 miles

Aiden Ciminesi will shot 184 hoops with the Confirmation Class

Laura Ciminesi will bake/share 1 cake, 8 loaves of bread, 4 dozen cookies
Steve Ciminesi will bike 18.4 miles
Tammy Ciminesi will walk 18.4 miles
Kathy Daniels will paddle 1.84 miles
Sean Dunker-Bendigo will take a 184 mile motorcycle ride
Becky Field will row 18.4 minutes for 3 days
Judith Forest & Yorke Peeler will walk 18.4 miles
Liz Garlo will paddle 1.84 miles
Nancy Haigh will walk 1.84 miles
Susan Hatem will take 1 hike, do 8 hours of yard work, give 4 loaves away
Don Hayes will hike or walk 18.4 miles
Walt Irvine will bench press 184 pounds 10 times
Eileen Jones will walk 18.4 miles
Carolyn Kerr will swim 18.4 laps
Sue-Marcotte Jenkins will swim 184 laps
Ro Metcalf will ride her tricycle 18 times in 4 days
Alison Nyhan will walk 184 miles over 8 weeks
Celeste McQuarrie & Chris Lanzara will walk 80 minutes in 4 sites
Lou-Ann Poirier will bike 18.4 miles
Laurie & Jed Rardin will bike 18.4 miles
Carlene Ruesenberg will bike 18.4 miles
Peggy Scott & Cindy Rogers will take a 184 mile motorcycle ride
Pauline Simonton will ride her Peloton for 1.84 hours
Leanne Tigert will hike 14.8 miles
Peg & David Wenzel will paddle 1.84 miles
Keri Yankus & Collin Vodra will paddle 1.84 miles
Janet Zeller will travel in her wheelchair 1 mile, 8 times in 4 days
South Church Confirmation Class will do a basketball shootout

Our Get Movin' 184 Sponsors

Thank you for supporting the ministries of the South Church!

Lee Allison
 Kay Amsden & Mary Lou Fuller
 Kim & Steve Arndt
 Barb Ashworth
 Leslie & Jay Barry
 Brian Blake
 Rose & Larry Brigden
 Martha Burnham
 John & Faye Buttrick
 Rebecca Capo
 Adria & Chip Cilley
 Becky Collings
 Pat & John Cotton
 Doreen Desmarais
 Carol & Jon Dyer
 Evelyn Eddy
 Jennifer Evans
 Jon Evans
 Jennie & Adam Fennelly
 Paul Fortier

Maria & Paul Lennon
 Andrea & David McGahan
 Mae & Bill Murdoch
 Abe Nelson
 Barbara Nicholson
 Diana Zeller-Norris
 Bonnie Ota
 Elizabeth & David Parisi
 Lou-Ann Poirier
 Dianna Powers
 Sue Proia
 Jerry & Sue Rardin
 Paul Rardin
 Mark Riley
 Nancy Roberts
 Mary & Lou Rosenthal
 Craig Sargent
 Cy Sherman
 Polly & Terry Shumaker
 Sarah & Bob Sloper

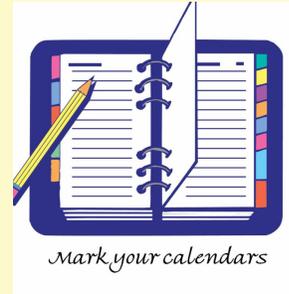
Cal Genzel
Sara & Brandon Gemmiti
Eileen & Mike Gfroerer
Linda Gray
Beth & Bill Hanley
Gyme Hardy
Don Hayes
Emily Jenkins
Rachel & Brian Jones
Patricia Knight

Julie Sweeney
Linda Marcotte Tatar
Marian Towle
Cheryl Van Dyke
Danielle Ward & Caoimhe McAuley
Paula Ward
Jeffrey Yeager
Pam & Oge Young
Holly Zeller
Janet Zeller

Mark your Calendars

June 6 - Informational Meeting in the Sanctuary after the 9 a.m. service

June 13 - Annual Meeting will be virtual after the 9 a.m. service



White Like Me

All South Church members are encouraged to view the 2013 documentary *White Like Me*. This is a 69-minute film that features anti-racist educator Tim Wise who authored a book of the same title. It explores the subject of white privilege in the U.S.—its role in the growth of the American middle class after World War II and how it has contributed to the perpetuation of racism in our American society—our lives, our politics, and social policies.



With a public library card, the film is also available to view at no cost through Kanopy.com. Or to view the film on YouTube, simply paste this [link](#) into your browser.

On **Wednesday, June 2** at 7:30 p.m., Sue Marcotte-Jenkins will host an hour-long gathering on Zoom to discuss the film. Please be sure to watch the movie prior to the discussion and register for the event [on-line](#). Please contact [Sue](#) if you have any questions. Once you sign up Sue will send you the Zoom link to the discussion.

To Mars and Beyond VBS

We invite voyagers on a space travel adventure to explore where God's power can take them. Along the journey, voyagers learn the stories of Daniel; Esther, the Good Samaritan, Jesus Heals and the Journey to Emmaus. Each day, our voyagers will reach for the stars and encounter the limitless power and love of God. In the



mornings there will be a realm of stories, songs, crafts and games. In the afternoons, we will explore the story in unique ways. We will travel on local field trips, possibly a hike in Concord and the Discovery Center as a way to witness God's gifts before our eyes and beyond. We will be hosting a Vacation Bible School the week of **August 16 to August 20** from 9a.m. to 3 p.m. for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Throughout the week, we will be outside as much as possible. If we need to be inside we will wear mask. The cost is \$40 per child. To sign-up check out our [website](#) by Sunday, June 13. For questions or more information please contact [Alison Nyhan](#).

Star Island

Star Island will be open for conferences and day trips in 2021! Registration is now open for the earlier conferences. For details on the conferences, click [here](#).



Ministries

Moment of Mission



Nobody hungry, nobody thirsty, shade from the sun, shelter from the wind, For the Compassionate One guides them, takes them to the best of springs." (Isaiah 49:10 MSG)

The Faith in Action ministry has designated May's Monthly Mission collection will go to One Great Hour of Sharing. This is one of the four special mission offerings established by the United Church of Christ. The purpose of this mission is helping communities around the world become stronger, healthier and better equipped to address hardships and catastrophes. This support can take many forms: helping individuals who are on the brink of homelessness, assisting refugees or asylum seekers who are in limbo, or rebuilding communities after a natural disaster. Your generosity ensures that even in the midst of uncertainty, the church will continue to change the lives of those who are most vulnerable among us. Donate [here](#) to support this mission.

Racial Justice Work

One year ago, the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin brought issues of systemic racism to the forefront of our national consciousness and energized



activists across the country. Many from South Church participated in the march and rally at the statehouse where they heard people from our community speak of their experiences of injustice. Since that time, they have been trying to grapple with our understanding of the issues and discern what our role as a faith community might be, how we might be “Repairers of the Breach.”

You’ve probably noticed the variety of opportunities for movies and book discussions that have been offered since February; perhaps you’ve wondered who’s behind them. They have been generated by an informal group of church members who gathered initially last summer to read and discuss Ibram X Kendi’s book, *How to Be an AntiRacist*. After completing the book discussion, the group has continued to meet regularly to explore how we might expand the conversation to more members of the congregation with the ultimate goal of undertaking the process for Becoming a Racial Justice Church as outlined by the NH Conference of the UCC . We have posted a number of resources, including this NH Conference UCC guidance for becoming a racial justice church, on the church [website](#). We encourage you to take some time to explore these resources and to engage in discussion opportunities.

Justice is one of the clearest calls of our faith; we have work to do! There is an open invitation to join in this effort. Please contact any of the current members if you’d like to join in working toward this goal.

The current members of the South Church Racial Justice working group are:
John & Faye Buttrick, Toni Callahan, Tammy Ciminesi,
Sean Dunker-Bendigo, Jen Evans, Pegi Frosthalm, Nancy Haigh,
Susan Hatem, Eileen Jones, Linda Kenison, Sue Marcotte-Jenkins,
Sue Moore, Chip & Lynne Morgan, Jed Rardin and Janet Zeller

Vision and Transition Team

As you know, South Church has been in a period of transition since Carlos accepted his call to Pelham Congregational Church. We are thrilled to have Rev. Sean Dunker-Bendigo join our pastoral team to help shepherd us through this period. In a church with one pastor, the role of an interim pastor is fairly straightforward. However, since Jed is happily still with us, Sean’s role as interim may be less clear in people’s minds. This period is not simply intended to help us fill a pastoral position. Rather it is a process of looking at what really matters to us and where we go from here. For the last few months, a Vision and Transition team has been meeting with Sean (and sometimes Jed) to think about several big questions and discuss a vision of where South Church is going. So far, our guiding questions are:



- Who are we as a church?
- What are we being called to do?
- What will it take us to do that?

Rest assured, the mission of this group is *not* to just answer these questions on our own or make decisions, but rather to gather the congregation's input so we can all plan for our church's future together.

Right now, we are taking some time to honor our church's past in preparation to look forward. Telling our stories and sharing our history helps us connect to who we are and think about who we want to become. This is why you have been invited to share your South Church stories with Sean by whatever method is most comfortable for you. You can share a video or photos, send an email, or volunteer to be interviewed by Sean.

When I was thinking of what story I might share from my time at South Church, I was reminded of a September Sunday in 2015. At the time I was training for the NYC Marathon and doing some long training runs on the weekends. I had planned a route from my house in Pembroke to downtown Concord and back. As I was running downtown, I got this strong feeling that I was supposed to be in church. I tried to ignore it because I was in running clothes (what would my mother say?) and was sweaty from running at least 6 miles already. But I just couldn't shake the feeling that I needed to be there, so I ran to church, plopped my sweaty self in the pew with Becky Field, and snapped a quick photo of my running sneakers in the sanctuary. It was a wonderful worship service, and during the prayers of the people, I shared my "God is still speaking" moment. This story always makes me think about how much I love this community where I can show up just as I am and be welcomed with open arms. I have always felt at home at South Church, and that Sunday was one more reminder of how God continues to bring me to where I need to be.

Now that you've heard my story, I hope you will share one of your own. After we gather these stories, we will continue the visioning process by looking outward to our local community and thinking about our values as a congregation. Keep watching e-Lation! for more news and opportunities to get involved in the process. In the meantime, if you have any questions, you can reach out to Sean or any of the members of the Vision and Transition Team: Peter Imse, Chip Morgan, Jill Smart, Leanne Tigert, Sara Willingham, Pam Young, and Janet Zeller. We look forward to hearing from you as we move forward together!

Jill Smart, on behalf of the Vision and Transition Team

Sharing Our Stories

Gyme Hardy's Story

I am grateful to the faith community of South Church for the blessings of their support in my journey to answer the call to find my authentic voice, to speak my truth through Sacred Conversation, the encouragement in answering the call to lay ministry through ongoing education, and the

Joanne Varga's Story

*I was very blessed when the door opened to come to South Church by virtue of Paul being called to be Associate Minister with Duke Potter as Senior Minister in 1954-57. As newlyweds and our first parish out of Seminary, where we were **WARMLY WELCOMED**. It was a good nurturing place where I*

strength of prayer within lay ministry.

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful." Colossians 3:15

taught 4th grade church school and sang in the choir under Mary McLaughlin. You helped welcome our first child, Paula, into the church. We carried the experiences here to other parishes. Then back in 2014 we retired and experienced the same warmth and love we had know previously. I am now involved in SAGES, Women's Retreats, Spiritual Practices, and Wisdom Way; that are all enriching experiences.

Church Community

Prayers

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

Nancy Robert's son-in-law; Joe Derek

The many people caught in the cross-fire between the Israel and Palestinian leadership.

All of the people that are still being infected with the Covid virus.

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 Summer Hours

Monday
Varies (please call the office)
Tuesday
6 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Wednesday
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Thursday
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Friday
Closed



The office will also be closed on **Monday, May 31** for Memorial Day.

