

# South Church



CONCORD, NH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



## *For a New Beginning*

By John O'Donohue

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,  
Where your thoughts never think to wander,  
This beginning has been quietly forming,  
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.  
For a long time it has watched your desire,  
Feeling the emptiness growing inside you,  
Noticing how you willed yourself on,  
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.

It watched you play with the seduction of safety  
And the gray promises that sameness whispered,  
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent,  
Wondered would you always live like this.

Then the delight, when your courage kindled,  
And out you stepped onto new ground,  
Your eyes young again with energy and dream,  
A path of plenitude opening before you.

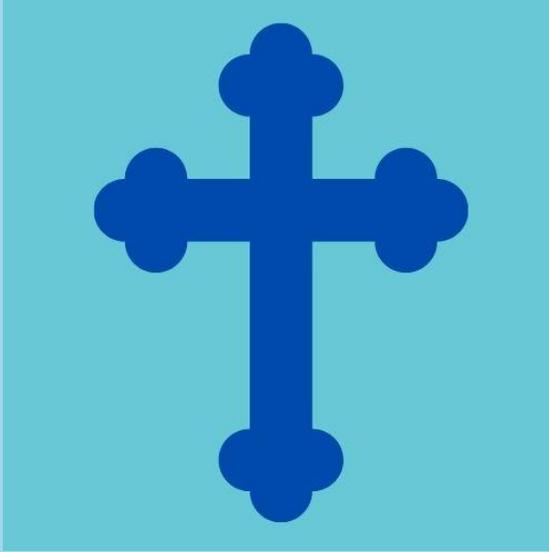
Though your destination is not yet clear  
You can trust the promise of this opening;  
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning  
That is at one with your life's desire.

Awaken your spirit to adventure;  
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;  
Soon you will home in a new rhythm,  
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.



## *Interim Ministry Update*

This summer we are focusing on the context in which South Church exists. We are asking questions: Who are our neighbors? What businesses and agencies are near to our church? What



agencies do we support? What are the trending demographics of Concord and the state? How do people in the Concord community view South Church? Who are the people we overlook? How is our relationship with the New Hampshire Conference? What are the demographics of our congregation, and how is that trending? How has our church membership and giving trended over time?

While asking these questions, *The Vision and Transition team* will be hosting listening meetings to hear from the congregation. Questions we are asking are: What in God's name are we doing here? Where are we stuck? Who lives in our (or your) neighborhood? What is God calling South Church to do? What things are going well? What things might need work? A few groups have already met, and there are some more to come. Look for future meeting announcements in the bulletin and on our Facebook page.

As you can see, we are asking a lot of questions and gathering relevant information. We do this to help shape our conversation around the future of South Church and help guide our actions for the future. During September and October, there will be a couple of events where we will gather as a whole church to dream and develop a vision for our church's future. As with everything these days, the planning of these gatherings will be subject to the safety and health of our congregation.

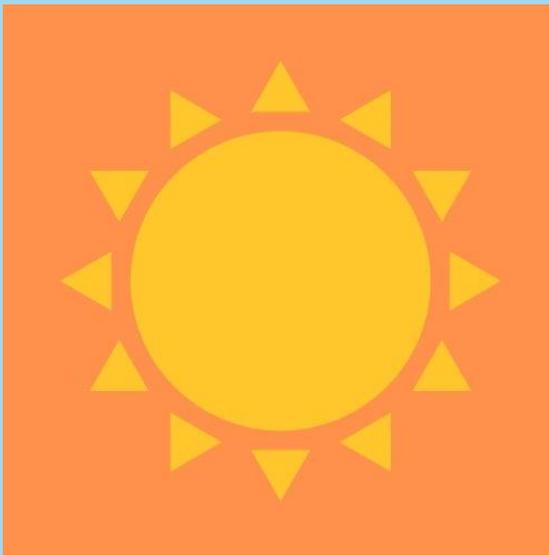
These are exciting times as South Church emerges from Covid and rises to new life together. There is so much to be grateful for!

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## ***Family Promise***

We will be hosting families in the program the week of August 8 to 15. Thank you for all who have volunteered to make this possible. We are still in need of overnight volunteers . . . please consider volunteering. For the safety of everyone, Covid procedures will be observed

regardless of vaccination status. You can determine your level of comfort interacting with the families and we will have a volunteer position just right for you. For more information contact **Peggy Scott**. To sign-up to volunteer click [here](#).



### *Summer Reading*

Michael J. Fox known as Marty McFly, the teenage sidekick of Doc Brown in *Back to the Future*; as Alex P. Keaton in *Family Ties*; as Mike Flaherty in *Spin City* was diagnosed at age 29 with Parkinson disease. In his new memoir, he reassesses his outlook, as events in the past decade presented additional challenges.

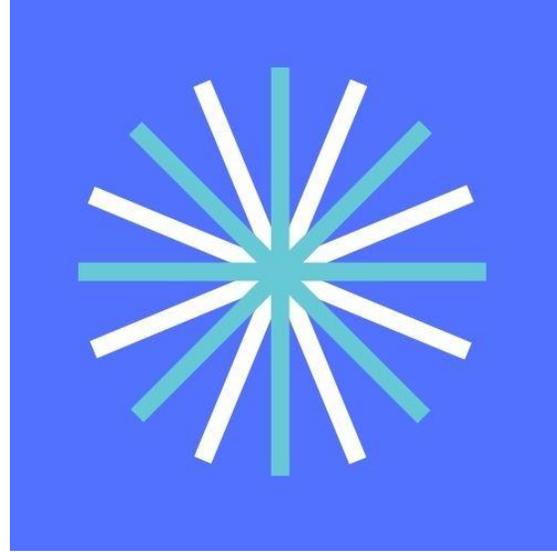
Michael shares personal stories and observations about illness and health; aging; the strength of family and friends; and how our perceptions about time affect the way we approach mortality. Thoughtful and moving, but with Fox's trademark sense of humor, his book provides a vehicle for reflection about our lives, our loves, and our losses. While each person with Parkinson's has a unique set of symptoms and strengths, given Jed Rardin's PD diagnosis a few years ago, this very accessible book is a good way for us as a congregation to experience one person's story. Jed will host a Zoom conversation about the book and about his own journey with Parkinson's on Wednesday, September 1 at 4:30p.m. To register email [Jed](#).

### *Rally Sunday*

It has been truly a blessing to start worshipping together again after a year of

pandemic isolation! On Rally **Sunday, September 12**, we will come together in grand anticipation of a brand new year in which to grow, to stretch and to embrace the “new thing” God wants to do in our midst.

Please note that there will be one service at 9a.m. in the sanctuary, and of course the on-line Zoom option if you prefer to worship from home. Talk it up! Make plans to be here. Invite someone back home you haven't seen in a while! Take a risk and invite someone who really needs to be blessed. Expect joy, gratitude, jazz, and a special guest!

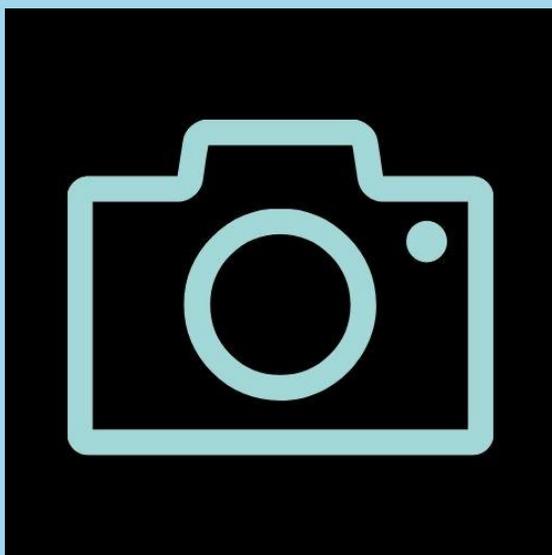


### *Confirmation Sunday*

Come celebrate and bless some very wonderful young people! Brianna Blake, Aiden Ciminesi, Madison Mayo, Alex McPherson, Will McPherson, Colby Nyhan, Nick Robie, Avery Sahr and Thomas Sargent, navigated a very challenging kind of confirmation class this year. Due to Covid-19, they were not able to begin classes until halfway through the school year, and only in the final weeks were they able to actually meet in-person. Join us and their families at one service on **Sunday, September 19** at 9a.m. as we celebrate their transition into taking their own individual and unique places in the body of Christ as adult members of South Congregational Church. Even though it will be fall weather, remember to wear something Pentecost red!

### *Fourth Grade Bibles*

We believe that fourth graders are at a point in their spiritual development where they can understand and truly appreciate the Bible. On **Sunday, September 26**, we give them their own Bible to use during class and to keep for their own. If your son/daughter is entering fourth grade this fall and is interested in receiving a Bible, please contact **Alison**.



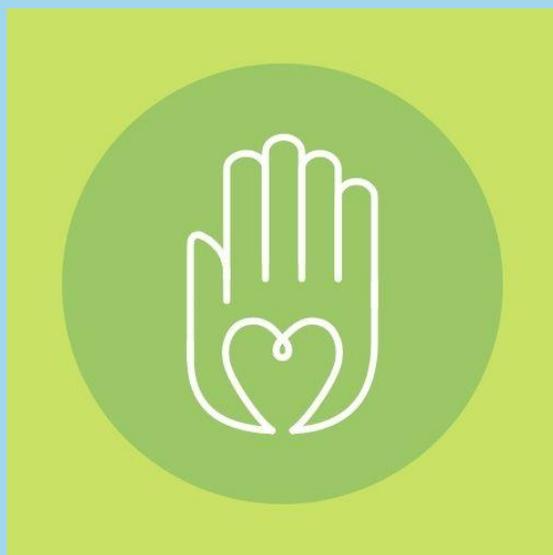
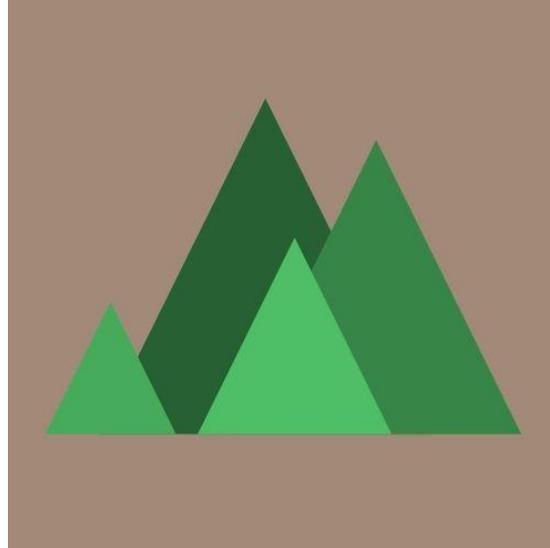
### *Sanctuary Surprise*

Have you heard the story of how some church family faces arrived in our pews during the pandemic? Let us share the story of how God works in mysterious ways. A member of the congregation heard about a similar project and shared the idea with three South Church friends. The trio all agreed that Jed and Sean have been tirelessly ministering and preaching to us all, remotely, with no one sitting in the pews. They decided to surprise them with a full sanctuary. One member of the group knew a printer who created posters from photos. Another contacted Peg and asked for assistance in planning this surprise. Peg volunteered her time in selecting a random variety of members' photos from the directory that could be shared for this purpose. Once the images were printed, the trio placed the photos in the pews just before Sunday. It was a wonderful surprise to see Jed and Sean's reaction to the photos. These images are currently in the sanctuary balcony for you to see the next time you come to worship.

### *Get Movin' 184 Challenge*

We did it, South Church! Together we raised a grand total of \$11,065.20! That's nearly triple our original goal of \$4,118! Thank you to so many of you who found extraordinarily unique ways of raising money while having fun. You have made

manifest God's abundance!



### ***Moment for Mission***

The Faith in Action Ministry has chosen the UCC Strengthen the Church as our Moment for Mission. Strengthen the Church (STC) reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. The funds collected in this offering will go towards leadership development, building new churches, funding activities for youth ministry and creating innovative programs in existing congregations. Because Strengthen the Church is part of the UCC's wider mission, conferences and the national setting equally share the donations from this offering. Your generosity will provide the support needed to continue building the UCC through education, programs and having places to worship. Thank you for your continued support to the Faith in Action Ministry! To donate to this mission, click [here](#).

### ***Flock Note***

Join our flock! Sign up for our text announcements and reminders from South Church through Flocknote. This will allow us to communicate with you better. To sign-up text 84576 and type SCUCC.



## *Daily Devotional*

The UCC Daily Devotional is a spiritually deep and refreshing well, to which thousands of readers are drawn each day. The overall vision and voice of the devotions is tended by the *Stillspeaking Writers' Group*. It provides a relevant ministry of inspiring word, giving creative direction for the Daily Devotional, annual Advent/Lenten devotionals, and other resources. To sign-up for the electronic version click [here](#).

