

# NOVEMBER

## Upcoming Meetings

- Nov 1- 3:00 Ed Warfield Calling Hours (Wilkinson-Beane)
- Nov 5- 6:30 Membership Mtg
- Nov 6- 6:30 Outreach Mtg
- Nov 7- 5:30 Stewardship Mtg
- Nov 12- 6:30 Property/Finance
- Nov 14- noon & 6:00 Book Club
- Nov 18- 6:30 Educational Ministry Mtg
- Nov 19- 7:00 Worship and Music Mtg
- Nov 20- 6:30 Council Mtg
- Nov 21- 5:30 Deacons Mtg
- Nov 23- 9:00-2:00 Christmas Fair  
11:15 Worship Service - [Ledgerview, Taylor Community]
- Nov 24 Adult Faith Formation: Substance Abuse Recovery
- Nov 27- 1:00 Ed Warfield Committal (Veterans Cemetery)
- Nov 28 11:30 Hazel Duke
- Nov 28-29 Thanksgiving Break



Hand Bell practice meets at 10:45 a.m. after Sunday worship

Stitches of Love meets every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

Choir practice meets every Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

# Tower Tidings



Congregational Church of Laconia, UCC

November 2019

## Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

By now many of you will have received and perhaps returned your pledge cards for our church's 2020 Stewardship drive. If so, I thank you. Your generous financial and prayerful support will make possible things like our Faith Formation classes, our Caring Connection group, the capability of our facility to host over 35 Recovery meetings weekly and of course the wonderful worship and music we enjoy. This is to name just a few of the ministries through which our church and congregation reach out to the greater Laconia community with the love of Christ.

In a few months we will be voting in the New Hampshire Presidential primary. Be sure to make your voice heard by voting. Pledging your support of our church's work is another way of declaring your position or placing your vote, if you will. I share with you a portion of my sermon from a couple of weeks ago that I believe speaks to this.

*"... Stewardship is our way of saying we trust (have faith) in the way of Jesus as it is expressed through this congregation's gifts, ministries, outreach programs, life-giving works of compassion and caring by each and every one of you and not just the pastors!*

*Stewardship, the giving of our time, talents and financial resources, is our way of saying, "I'm jumping off the fence on the side of the way of Jesus." That we trust that he has shown us the way through his life of teaching, healing, and compassion to those we have labeled as "them" or the outsider, the outcast, the persons on the margins of society. We can see the way in his life, death and resurrection, and we are saying that we trust he will continue to reveal to us the way as we step out in faith time and time again."*



So as we step out into 2020 in faith we do so together there is work to be done, the future is not as clear as we may like but it doesn't have to be clear or obvious to us. For if we could see the way clearly then taking that step wouldn't require a whole lot of faith. It is when we cannot see clearly or know beyond a doubt the way forward and we

still step out in the direction of Jesus, this is when we are being the people of faith Jesus calls us to be.

*Pastor Neil Wilson*



This Sunday, November 3 at 2:00 a.m.  
Please remember to turn your clocks back 1 hour or you just might be very late for church services Sunday!

## silent AUCTION

Do you have a special item that you would like to donate to the Christmas Fair, Silent Auction? If so, please call Louise Bastille at 293-0182 [elrevs@earthlink.net](mailto:elrevs@earthlink.net) or Maurine Bastille 293-0353 and we will come pick it up! You may also bring items to the church



office. Please indicate the value of your donation and if you have a reserve amount. Be sure to have your name on the item in case we need to reach you. Gift certificates are welcome, too! Often times local businesses will donate a gift certificate. We can provide them a tax-deductible receipt. Thanks everyone!

## Scarves in the Square

Stitches of Love wants to thank all who participated in this community outreach event by knitting and crocheting 78 scarves, and a generous donation of 50 pair of gloves for people in our community.

*That's Pastor Neil, Tammy, Janet and Hollis chillin' with the scarves!*



## 21st Century Church Update:

So, what exactly has our Creating and Leading the 21st Century Church (CL21) team been doing the past year? Well, we've been meeting every other month at churches all over the state with other church teams interested in shaping the future of their churches. The Conference organized workshops on topics of particular importance to churches facing the uncertainty of our times. Here are some highlights of what we learned:

- ◆ Understanding relationships within our congregation can bring new energy and vision to our future. Change is inevitable.
- ◆ Leading our congregation to solutions to the challenges we face by knowing when to make technical or adaptive changes is important.
- ◆ Listening for understanding and responsive dialogue while suspending judgement will improve communication.

- ◆ Building a foundation of trust and appreciation of individual perspectives and gifts can help us avoid serious conflict.
- ◆ Having a clear sense of mission and purpose is incredibly important as our congregation recognizes the need for adaptive change and experiments with new models and paradigms for worship, education, fellowship, and service.
- ◆ Working on ways to draw upon the creativity of our members can lead to innovative experiences and vibrant expressions that return joy and meaning to our church.

We are in the midst of better understanding the results of the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) that many of you responded to this past year. Even though we still have more to learn, we already know that clarity of purpose is crucial. With that in mind, take a look at this short video that we hope will open your eyes as it did ours.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ytFB8TrkTo>

# Christmas Fair News

Saturday, November 23

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Your help is needed to make the Christmas Fair a success. The help has begun with the Table Chairs listed below who have agreed to organize and oversee the specific tables at the Fair. If you would like to donate, help or support one of the Tables, please speak to the Table Chair or one of the Fair Co-Chairs. They will tell you that you can help with craft items and knitted or crochet items for the "Arts & Crafts & Needlework" table, maybe with those no longer used tree ornaments that would be perfect for the "Nice as New Christmas Tree", or you could bake brownies or breads, make jellies or goodies for the "Country Pantry" table, any and all kinds of cookies are needed for the "Cookie Walk", also those nice as new treasures for the "Nice As New" table, plus extra nice treasures, gift certificates, or small furniture items for the "Silent Auction" (bidding closes at 1:00 p.m.), maybe some



plants and greens for the "Greens Table", even those unwanted books for the "Book Nook" and unwanted jewelry for the "Jewelry" table are needed and, of course, helping by telling neighbors, family, friends and everyone about the Fair so that they can enjoy all the treasures on Saturday, November 23. Fair time is 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with coffee and pastries being served at 9:00 a.m. and lunch being available from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Once again a limited number of our special 24" x 40" wall-hanging, quilted Advent Calendars with hand-sewn ornaments in beautiful Christmas colors will be available. These are a one-of-a-kind item and are only available at the Fair. Also, for our young shoppers there will be a table for them to write "Letters To Santa" and mail it in Santa's special mailbox.

We hope you can help in some way. Please feel free to speak to one of the Chairs listed below and when you drop off your items, don't forget to fill out an item slip (we appreciate knowledge of ingredients, plant names, suggestions for pricing, etc.). Your help and everyone's participation is what makes the exciting event work! Thank you.



Welcome Table:	Phyllis Veazey/Helga Brunkhardt	524-2459
Lunch:	Diane Wells	455-5401
	Kathy Giovanni	366-5881
Silent Auction:	Louise Bastille/Maureen Bastille	293-0182
Nice-As-New:	Ruth Gill	528-6608
Plants:	Carole Veer/NEED A CO-CHAIR	528-1963
Country Pantry:	Marilyn Lynch	524-1906
	Nancy Barth	527-8022
Arts & Crafts & Needlework:	Janet Janke	527-3436
Tree Ornaments:	Jane Brown	455-1695
Cookie Walk:	Catherine Tokarz	998-3811
Co-Chairs:	Hollis Thompson	(512) 970-6592
	Cindy Nutter	455-4332



**The Belknap House** is now open. Our Outreach Ministry has coordinated with the Belknap House to bring bedtime story reading to the children living at Belknap House every Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m. Beginning November 12 and continuing each Tuesday evening, teams of three "Bedtime Story Readers" will be reading to the children at the Belknap House. If you wish to participate please see Pastor Paula and please keep the families at Belknap House in your prayers.

*Derek Waldron, a student at Chicago Theological Seminary and a Member in Discernment in the Merrimack Association of the New Hampshire Conference is doing his Field Placement year with us at the Congregational Church of Laconia UCC. Throughout he's year with us he will be sharing his reflections of his call, seminary and ministry with our church. Derek's home congregation is South Congregational UCC in Concord, NH.*

## Reflections from a Seminarian

"Try on." This was one of the first phrases I was introduced to when I began my seminary journey, followed quickly by, "it is not okay to blame, shame, or attack, self or others." I was down in Cambridge, MA for a two-week intensive introduction to seminary, along with 8 other members who were part of my new cohort, sitting in a circle unsure of what would happen next. What would cause us to blame, shame, or attack, self or others? Were we going to dive right into theology? Do the typical icebreaker routine? Or simply begin the basic orientation to a new school?

New things, new ideas, or new people can be exciting, fruitful experiences however, these "things" can also be anxious, conflict riddled events. This was the atmosphere in that room on a beautiful, warm July day. "Try on" we were told. The leaders of the group knew the feelings flowing throughout each of us on that day. They knew what "newness" can bring out in people if they aren't expecting it. It was in these times that we were, and are, encouraged to "try on." Try on traditions not of your own, try on ideas you haven't considered before, try on experiences that may seem unnatural. They did not

state it at the time, yet I now know, we do not grow if we stick to what we have always done. We do not grow without letting go of our anxiety and dive in. We do not grow unless we engage with "newness" without knowing where it will take us.

I've taken both of these phrases with me throughout my seminary journey and into my life. It has changed the way in which I engage with and view my community both near and far. These were the phrases that I brought with me when I started here at the Congregational Church of Laconia. A new community, entering into a new role, and living into the call I answered years ago. Excited anxiety is a good way to describe my feelings. However, I tried all of this on and have found new meanings to my call. It has only been a couple months so far, yet I don't know if I've felt more called than I do at this time.

I feel that this church, this community, is about to engage in similar experiences of "new". A new call, a new mission, a new understanding of "why?" Some of us may be feeling the same sort of excited anxiety. I urge you all to welcome this feeling! I believe some of the most powerful experiences with God occur in this space. It's a space of creation, of exploration into the possible. As we continue along this journey, I hope you join me in trying on all that comes our way, both expected and unexpected, seen and unseen. Exciting times are ahead for this community, friends!

Peace,  
Derek Waldron

## It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like...

Believe it or not, it's time to start thinking about Christmas! Please join Altar Guild on Sunday, November 3rd in Church Hall to refurbish our wreaths for the holidays. We'll begin at 1:30 so that you can all participate in the Lenten devotional writing workshop after church. You can deconstruct old wreaths, spray them clean, or--if you have the know-how--make new bows with Beth Shehadi for a new look in our sanctuary this holiday season! Come!! Help us prepare to deck the halls!!!





## Adult Faith Formation:

November 24 11:00 a.m. in the Church Library

*“Understanding Substance Abuse Recovery”*

Trish Weatherbee will join us and help us to understand what “recovery” is and the in’s and out’s of recovery.

## A Note from Paula

The Embracing an Adult Faith by Marcus Borg study that several people are participating in the month has been a deeply moving experience for me spiritually. Marcus shared a poem by Denise Levertov, titled “An Avowel” (An **avowel** is an affirmation of the truth of what you believe.) continues to move me.

*As swimmers dare  
to lie face up to the sky  
and water bears them,  
as hawks rest upon air  
and air sustains them,  
so would I learn to attain  
freefall, and float  
into Creator Spirit’s deep embrace,  
knowing no effort earns  
that all-surrounding grace.*

I love the image of floating on the water, face up to the sky and being held; I can visualize the hawk soaring through the air effortlessly; I am grateful that these images bring to light for me the gift our creator has given when we know that we do not need to earn the all-surrounding grace that sustains me. Thanks be to God.



## Walking in Faith—Together

Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11:00 – 12:30 YOU are invited to help the Deacons make the 2020 Lent season a time we will all remember. We would like everyone to help in creating a scripture based devotional.

The Deacons invite all on this spiritual journey – we will walk in faith together to create a Lenten Devotional with readings for each and every day of the 40 days of Lent.

You will not be alone. Join the Deacons on  
Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> from 11:15 – 12:30 (lunch provided)  
Carolyn Keilig will guide us in ways to write devotion.

Even if you don’t want to have your devotion printed – join us!  
We are “Walking in Faith – Together”

## Annual Meeting: New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ

*submitted by Janet Simmon*

The theme of the NHCUCC Annual Meeting on October 19 was "From Complicity to Courage: Step Up and Speak Out." Eight Laconia members: Rev. Paula Gile, Rev. Neil Wilson, Ray Vercoe, Kay Vercoe, Sue Smith, Diane Tinkham, Ted Tunnicliffe and Janet Simmon had the privilege of participating in the day and hearing Rev. Traci Blackmon's Prophetic Witness challenge us to bring justice to reality by stepping up and speaking out. We enjoyed participating in the music, storytelling, remembrances, decisions, speak-outs, votes, skits and displays.

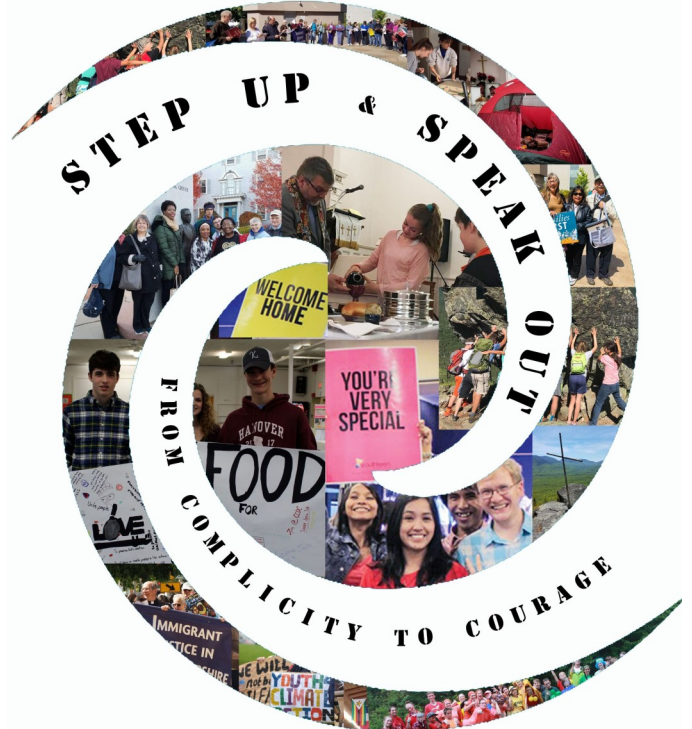
The Resolution of Witness Calling for the United States to pull "Back From The Brink" and Prevent Nuclear War passed unanimously. This resolution urges the United States to change its nuclear arms policies. There are five principles in this resolution of witness:

- (1) Renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first;
- (2) Ending any U.S. President's ability to authorize a first strike nuclear attack;
- (3) Taking U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert;
- (4) Canceling the plan to replace the nation's arsenal with new, enhanced weapons;
- (5) Actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear states to eliminate their arsenals.

We are called to become better informed and to endorse the initiative on the national website: [www.preventnuclearwar.org](http://www.preventnuclearwar.org)

The review of 2019 Synod included the nineteen resolutions that were passed. The details are available online.

I attended the session with Rev. Blackmon. She explained the change in structure in which it becomes more collegial and less hierar-



chical. Rev. Blackmon is now Associate General Minister of Justice and Local and Church Ministries.

Pilgrim Press is being relaunched as our country is in need of literature on justice. Did you know it is the oldest printing house in US? The "Pilgrim" name has been changed to "pilgrim" and the new logo is book and compass.

The Mission Income and Spending Plan for 2020 was presented and passed. You can view a copy on line or at the church office.

For me, the meaningful message in this powerful call to speak out and act in justice was that our own personal acts of stepping out and speaking up might not make a huge difference in the world but always will do that in our own hearts. "Ignoring injustice endangers your own soul," Traci Blackmon.

The closing prayer ended with "..... we have encountered community..... shared stories interwoven in the tapestry of faithfulness.....you now send us forth to be a people who put our feet in the places where Divine love is needed the most and who offer with bold voices proclamations of

*continued page 7*

*continued from page 6*

justice and righteousness. .... thank you for reminding us how deeply you believe in us and our ability to be the people you call us to be."

The Annual Meeting morning session can be viewed at:

<https://youtu.be/vBQvIFBBGQs>

The Annual Meeting afternoon session can be viewed at:

<https://youtu.be/VqU3v5Ke3o4>



*From the girls in the office,*

*Camille and Carolyn xx oo*



Presented June 26, 2019

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*Sometimes you  
don't realize your  
own strength  
until you come  
face to face with  
your greatest  
weakness. -  
Susan Gale*

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Nov 1  
*Cynthia Shippee*

Nov 2  
*Lauren Emond Hobbs*

Nov 5  
*Sandy Braillier*

Nov 6  
*Stephen Bobotas*  
*Connie Clark*  
*Paul Rich*

## Happy Birthdays in November!

Nov 7  
*Elaine Smith*

Nov 8  
*Helga Brunkhardt*

Nov 9  
*David Joyal*

Nov 11  
*John Gill*

Nov 12  
*Kathy Giovanni*

Nov 13  
*Kathryn Vercoe*  
*Judith Genre*

Nov 15  
*Dan Outhoummontry*  
*Ila Mattila*

Nov 16  
*Penny Lamarre*

Nov 17  
*Wilma Davis*  
*Dylan Lines*  
*Harmony Solomon*

Nov 19  
*Luann Mussari*

Nov 23  
*Rebecca Bean*  
*Chuck Laurent*  
*Caleb Marcel*

Nov 24  
*Jacob Mozier*

Nov 25  
*Donald Forsberg*

Nov 27  
*Trevor Hunt*

Nov 30  
*Wayne Domin*



## Wednesday Matinee



What: Contact Catherine for details  
When: Wednesday, November 20 at 1:00 p.m.  
Where: Gilford Cinema 8  
RSVP: To Catherine by calling her at 603.998.3811  
or email [ctokarz@metrocast.net](mailto:ctokarz@metrocast.net)



## A Message from Mother Earth

We are a Just Peace church. As such, we have an obligation to be better stewards of our resources and environment. So your Worship and Music Committee asks you to recycle hymn inserts that you sometimes find in your Sunday bulletins. No, not in the green recycling bins! Instead, simply leave your hymn sheets on the stands by each entrance where you will see an invitation to do so. We'll save paper and printer toner if we file these inserts for reuse at a future date and infinitesimally, perhaps, decrease our carbon footprint. Every little bit counts! Thank you from your Worship and Music Committee ... and Mother Earth

*Save These*  
**DATES**

Advent Spaghetti Dinner - December 6 at 5:30 p.m.  
Advent Soup and Study - December 12 at 5:30 p.m.  
Christmas Pageant - December 15 at 4 p.m.  
Advent Soup and Study - December 19 at 5:30 p.m.