



## First Church in Jaffrey Weathervane March - April 2023

### ***The Pilgrimage Through Lent***

A spiritual pilgrimage is a physical journey often directed toward a sacred site or holy shrine. The Camino de Santiago (Way of St James) in Spain, which leads to the shrine of St. James the Apostle in Galicia, is perhaps the most famous but there are many others throughout the world – all over Europe, the holy land, and the far east. Many Christian historians mark biblical stories like the journey of Abraham, Moses in the wilderness, or even the disciples' hike up the mountain in the transfiguration story (I mentioned this last week) as clear foundations of this spiritual discipline. It is really a simple practice. The idea is just this – walking towards God.

In my return to New England, I have become reacquainted with an old friend, Rev. Rita Powell, who is the Episcopal Chaplain at Harvard University. She and her student team have been exploring this spiritual practice and have planned to make a pilgrimage this year during Holy Week (April 2-9). Their final destination ... is the top of Mount Monadnock! They will leave Cambridge mid-week and walk a set number of miles each day stopping at churches along the way to worship, eat and rest overnight. They will arrive in Jaffrey late on Easter Eve (Saturday night). They will join me very early the next morning at the Cathedral of the Pines and help lead the sunrise service where the mountain stands in bold view. Then after a quick bit of breakfast and spiritual blessing – up the mountain they will go on Easter morning! Oh, to be young.

There is much to learn on a pilgrimage about journey and destination, about relationship to the land and other pilgrims, about patience and struggle and silence and grace.

All of this is for me, an amazing metaphor for this season of Lent. It, too, is a pilgrimage – a sacred journey towards God and sometimes the journey is within. Through our worship, prayer, education, music, silence, and sharing may we all come to a place of deeper connection to each other and to our God.

Bon voyage,  
Steve  
Lent 2023



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## 2023 Lent/Easter March/April Worship at First Church

Meditation text in bold; Call to Worship text in plain font

March 5, 2023    **Lent 2**

“Nicodemus: Searching for More”

**John 3:1-17**

Psalm 121

April 6, 2023

5:00 pm – Maundy Thursday Service (at United Church of Jaffrey)

March 12, 2023    **Lent 3**

“The Women at the Well:  
Recognizing Spirit”

**John 4:5-42**

Psalm 95

April 9, 2023    **Easter Sunday**

6:00 am – Sunrise Service at  
Cathedral of the Pines

10:30 Easter Sunday at First Church  
“Going Ahead”

**Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20**

Psalm 118

March 19, 2023    **Lent 4**

“The Man Born Blind:  
Willing to Heal”

**John 9:1-41**

Psalm 99

*One Great Hour of Sharing Offering*

April 16, 2023

Guest pastor: Leaf Seligman

March 26, 2023    **Lent 5**

“Martha and Mary: Work and  
Pray”

**John 11:1-45**

Psalm 130

April 23, 2023

“The Long and Winding Road”

**Luke 24:13-35**

Psalm 116

April 2, 2023

**Palm and Passion Sunday**

“The Betrayer: Selling the Soul”

**Matthew 26:14-27:66**

Psalm 31

April 30, 2023

“The Voice of Strangers”

**John 10:1-10**

Psalm 23

## Inside First Church – Journeying Through Lent to Easter



### ***Lenten Study Series: The Character of Faith***

Steve is leading a study series on Wednesday afternoons during Lent. These educational gatherings will be held at 4:00 pm in the Parish House. The theme of the series is the character of faith. Using simple biographies from biblical and historic characters of faith, we will explore and discuss how we might live as people of faith in our day and time. If there is interest, the series will also be available on Zoom with links emailed out via eblast each week.

### ***Lenten Prayer and Soup***

Each Friday at 12:00 noon during Lent, you are welcome to join Steve in the Parish House for a simple prayer service – a pause near week's end to breathe and remember. This gentle prayer will last about 30 minutes and will be followed by a simple soup lunch. These services will run through Good Friday, April 7, 2023.

### ***Easter Sunrise Service***

On Easter Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, Steve will again be leading the Annual Easter Sunrise Service at 6:00 am at Cathedral of the Pines. (<https://www.cathedralofthepines.org/directions/>).



## ***Safety and Security – Some Words of Caution***

### ***Electronic Scams***

Whenever you receive an email or text from Pastor Steve or the First Church Office – always double check to be sure it has come from our correct email or phone number. Several members have received phony messages (the technical term is phishing) asking them to send money or information. Churches are popular targets for phishing emails. *Do not respond to these requests.* If you are unsure – contact Steve or Judy for clarification.

### ***Masks and Distancing***

During this latest season of flu and the new, highly contagious Covid strain we ask that you show compassion and care for our entire community by wearing a mask and keeping distance when possible. Many of our dear neighbors and friends are immunocompromised, and we want everyone to feel welcome in our service.

## News From the Circles

### ***The Worship Circle***

#### **“One a penny, two a penny, Hot Cross Buns!”**



The Worship Circle has enthusiastically endorsed Pat Harmon’s proposal to introduce a Hot Cross Bun Sale to First Church. This event was a tradition in the community church of Pat’s youth in Berlin, MA. The freshly baked delicacies can be picked up on **April 7, Good Friday, at the Parish House from 3 to 5 pm.**

The hot cross buns will be sold in packages of 6 and 12. Preorders are required; email Pat Harmon at [pharmon603@yahoo.com](mailto:pharmon603@yahoo.com) or see her after worship on Sundays. Please give your name, phone number, and the quantity you want to purchase. The Worship Circle is working on the pricing – look for this information in the Sunday bulletins and e-blasts.

#### ***What’s a Hot Cross Bun?***

It’s a sweet pastry, usually made with raisins and dried fruit, with a cross of icing on the top usually eaten on Good Friday. Hot cross buns originated in England, possibly as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but were first documented in 1733 as a London street cry: "Good Friday comes this month, the old woman runs. With one or two a penny hot cross buns." You could find the line "One a penny, two a penny, hot cross-buns" in the English nursery rhyme in the 1760s. English folklore includes many superstitions surrounding hot cross buns. One myth says that buns baked and served on Good Friday will not spoil for a year and protect against illness and fires.

Today, hot cross buns can be found in grocery stores and even purchased via the internet. Regardless of myths, we can enjoy them as a celebration of Easter.

### ***The Pastoral Relations Circle***

Thanks to all of you who so thoughtfully answered and turned in the Mutual Ministry Evaluation forms. So far, we have over 15 pages of answers to the questions asked. Forms are still coming in, so it is a work in progress. You will be hearing from us about the results, and in the future there will be an opportunity to discuss it together. The evaluation is proving to be a very positive and useful process.

*The Pastoral Relations Circle: Carol Hess, Sally O’Brien, Steve Miller, Bobbie Gilbert, Chair*

## Report from Trustee Circle

The first meeting in 2023 focused on defining priorities for the coming year:

- **Capital Improvements** which will be needed in the short and long term: Including exterior building and structural support, outdoor garden and grounds, interior design/usage, kitchen improvements, plumbing, electrical and security updates, communication (telephone, Wi-Fi).
- **Use of the buildings of First Church.** How to increase community usage and manage the facilities. Bookings for 2023 thus far include eight Electric Earth concerts, weekly Scout meetings in the Parish House and occasions in the sanctuary, AA meetings weekly, seven Amos Fortune receptions during the summer months, Girl Scouts, Old Time Music Jams, and community meetings.
- **Support of the Jaffrey 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.**
- **Facilitation of benevolence requests** for the UCC 5 for 5 Special Missions, new and continuing financial support for local and international needs, and maintaining a separate account for contributions and distributions in support of the Ukraine.
- **Compensation packages** for our minister, minister of music, and administrative assistant.
- **Coordination of the Investment Committee** with Bar Harbor Wealth Management.
- **Stewardship** and other financial campaigns.
- **Music programs/organ and piano maintenance**, in collaboration with Gene Faxon.
- **Support for fundraising events**, including pie sales and the Church Fair.
- **Support for worship activities**, including Prayer Meetings during Lent, weekly faith study series, and other church calendar events.

The Trustee Circle welcomes any and all input from members and friends of our Church. Please contact any trustee with concerns, creative ideas, or available time to volunteer. We have a busy year ahead!

*Members of the Circle include Janet Grant – Chair, David Bliss, Pam Hill, Roy Lake, John Raleigh, Dan Wilfrid*

## One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering



In this new year, the 2023 One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) theme is “It’s Time to Share,” based on Galatians 6: 9-10.

*So let’s not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don’t give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all.*

The gifts you give to OGHS are leveraged with those of others across the United Church of Christ and other denominations, bringing a greater impact to the work being done with local and global partners. Your support enables us to respond to a variety of global and local concerns by addressing advocacy, sustainable development, refugee and asylum issues, migration, disasters, and assisting those who are most in need and vulnerable among us.

Wildfires, earthquakes, hurricanes, and flooding have ravaged communities in the United States and worldwide, leaving families in desperate need of assistance. Some of these disasters may have occurred in your hometown, or in nearby communities or to friends and neighbors in countries thousands of miles away, across the globe. Strengthened by the power of God’s Spirit and your collective generosity, the United Church of Christ continues to work with partners to care for others, and not give up... as together we build a just world for all.

**First Church in Jaffrey will collect the OGHS offering on Sunday, March 19, 2023.** Special envelopes will be available, or you can write OGHS on the memo line of a check.



Photo courtesy of Carol Hess

### Thank you to our Weathervane contributors!

**MaryJo Marvin, Steve Miller, Janet Grant, Carol Hess, Ilona Kwiecien, Pat Harmon, Bobbie Gilbert**

**Photo on page 1: Rev. Steve Miller and wife Jill Tyler explore Paris from a riverboat on the Seine while visiting their son in February 2023.**

## Stories from Ukraine



### ***From Ilona Kwiecien***

Since my last visit to Poland in November, the wonders of electronic communication have allowed me to keep in touch with our friends in Ukraine and share their stories with you.

Each month Janet Grant and I go to the TD Bank in Jaffrey, and – with manager Brandon’s help – we send funds to Dom Matki (House for Mothers) in Warsaw and to the Polish account I set up from which my team member/driver Marcin can draw; this allows him to channel our support to Liliowa 5, a group home in Lubin, and to other needs as they arise. Funds to the Lapigua foundation in Zamosc are sent via PayPal.

### ***Just in Time***

Most recently I received a thank you from Anna, the director at Dom Matki, telling me the timing of our donation couldn’t have been better as their basement had flooded, requiring repairs and replacing items stored there, including food. Stefanie, the founder of Lapigua, sent First Church and me a special “Christmas Thank You.” The funds we send go primarily to help Pani Bozenka keep the distribution center (food, clothing, cleaning supplies, etc.) for Ukrainian refugees.

Our latest contribution to Lukasz, another trusted contact, went to buy winter clothing which he took into Ukraine. A special need was the purchase of small propane gas stoves; Marcin became aware of this need and called to ask if we could support it. We did. Marcin continues to buy food for Liliowa 5 every month, coordinating with its director, Victoria.

### ***Lastly, a Special Story from Liliowa 5***

Among the children who live there is Daniil, a two-year-old blind boy. When I met him and his mother in November, she asked for help for her son. I first turned to Stefanie who has a great network within Europe; however, the organization she thought might help had run out of funds (happening more frequently)! When I got home, I spoke with Dr. Dmitry Tarasevich, asking if he could talk to his colleagues and see if anyone had any suggestions. He got right to it and what follows is remarkable!

A synopsis: someone he knew, knew someone who knew another physician in Connecticut who had a connection in Krakow. There might have been one more “someone” in the loop – I lost track! In any event, I soon was communicating with the doctor in Krakow, “Pan Piotr,” and was able to send him copies of test results which the mother had been able to have translated into English. Marcin took snapshots of them and forwarded them to me! “Pan Piotr” then sent them to several

*(cont’d on page 8)*

*(Stories from Ukraine – cont'd)*

specialists within Poland who all, unfortunately, concurred that nothing medical could be done to help Daniil. However, “Pan Piotr” did not stop there. He contacted the director of a school for blind children—you guessed it! – right in Lublin! Full circle! His intercession brought quick results: the director, “Pani Iwona,” contacted me, I sent the information to Marcin and his wife, who together with the mother and son and Liliowa’s director, met with “Pani Iwona” and staff. The little boy will start attending this school in March. A big thank you to Dmitry and everyone involved in this amazing circle!

That is all for this time. With the donations we have received we will be able to continue our current level of support for about three months; thank you one and all. I plan on returning to Poland at the end of March and “go with the flow” from there.

*If you would like to donate to the Ukrainian Relief projects, please make out a check to Refugee Support or First Church in Jaffrey (write Refugee Support in the memo line). Mail to First Church in Jaffrey, PO Box 673, Jaffrey, NH 03452.*

## Armchair Travel to Antarctica on March 19



Left:  
Wilhelmina Bay

Right:  
Penguins vocalizing



Last November Carol Hess and Marvin Caldwell embarked on a wondrous journey to Antarctica – many of us were amazed, jealous, and astounded! On Sunday, March 19 following worship, they will share photos and highlights of a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the bottom of this earth. In the comfort of the Parish House, we will armchair travel to the lands of penguins, albatross, skua, walrus – and the human beings who interact with denizens of the southern waters.

Carol and Marvin will share pictures (on a large screen), stories, answer questions, and explore surprises encountered on this adventure. The presentation should last about a half-hour, and light refreshments will be available.

“We don’t want to be long about this, but friends have been curious and eager to ask questions and see photos,” say Carol and Marvin. “Hope you will be able to join us!”