



## First Church in Jaffrey Weathervane May-June 2023

### Reflections on a Different Easter by Ilona Kwiecien

I did not go to church Easter Sunday this year. I can't remember when that last happened! And yet ... I'd like to share two experiences which more than created "church" for me. The first was in Poland, where Easter is a very sacred holiday; actually, it extends through Monday, called "Smigus Dyngus" (Wet Monday). Traditionally, on that day you have to watch out for people throwing water at you; indeed, the practice got so out of hand that there is now a law limiting how much and where you can douse one another! Yes, I got wet and sprinkled others.... But I digress!

My "church" this past holiday was spent in the homes of the families of Marcin and Magda...my Polish driver/team member and his wife. None of their family attend church, though they do adhere to the tradition of having a basket of food (eggs, kielbasa, salt, pepper, bread, horseradish being typical) blessed the Saturday before ... and of preparing more special dishes than most tables can hold! I was a welcome guest at three homes, eating (to include - ritually - the blessed food) and drinking (yes, vodka shots!) for about 12 hours over the two days. "Church" became a communion ... a sharing of food, drink, song, stories, laughs, questions and answers, open hearts. I believe that blessings work both ways; if I have blessed some by going to Poland when the war in Ukraine started, then I have been more than blessed by the people I have gotten to know.

My second memorable "church" moment came about when I was "led" to check out First Church's Easter Service after I returned from Poland; I had missed being there and wondered how it all went. I was very happy when I discovered it had been videoed for a limited audience and even more so as I watched and listened – to the music, to Steve's "Show me the Way" story, to the reading of the names of those in whose memory flowers had been given. Hearing my recently departed friend's name, Fr. Norman, was very healing. It all filled my heart with such gratitude that tears flowed. Thanks to all who created this beautiful service. We are so very fortunate to be part of a caring community. Truly, we are all in this together, and we are not "in charge." May we let ourselves be guided...and may we all be surprised and inspired by the likes of 12 pick-ups and 37 motorcycles!



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## **Inside First Church**

### ***Summer Study Series on Music and Spirit***

This summer Steve and Gene will lead a study series on the powerful connection between music and spirit. Exploring a wide range of musical offerings from the early Hebrew Psalms up through breadth of rock and roll, we will seek to discover the songs that feed our souls. These educational gatherings will be held in-person on Wednesday afternoons at 4:00 pm in the Parish Hall beginning on **Wednesday, May 31, 2023**, and running for five weeks. If there is interest, they will also be shared via Zoom. We hope you will join us.

### ***New Members***

Early this summer we will create a time of welcome for anyone interested in becoming members or associate members of First Church. On Sunday morning, June 4, 2023, immediately following worship, we will host a membership orientation to answer questions, offer possibilities, explore rights and responsibilities, and explain the different categories of connection (member, associate member, friend). Then on Sunday morning, June 25, 2023, we will have a ceremony during our morning worship to welcome folks into the life of our church. If you are interested in membership in any category or have questions about the process, please talk with Steve or our moderator, Sam Greene or simply join us at the membership orientation.

### ***Parliament of the World's Religions***

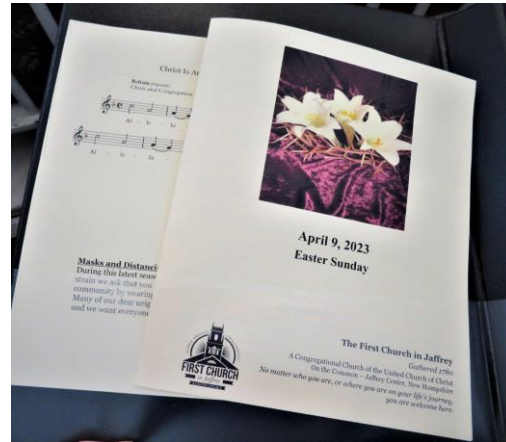
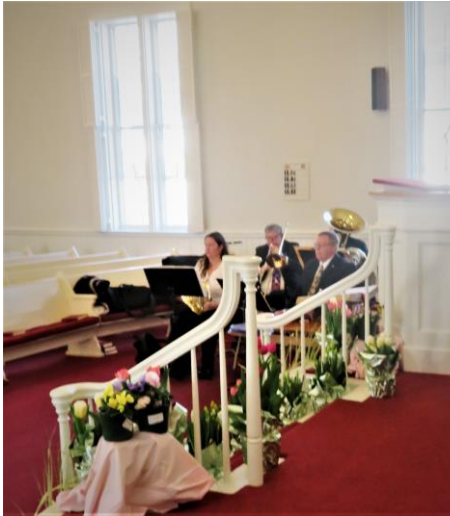
The first gathering of the **Parliament of the World's Religions** was held in Chicago in 1893. This international meeting was an attempt to create a global dialog with all faith traditions. This effort has continued over the last century, and in 2018 the Parliament was held in Toronto, Canada with over 8000 attendees representing over 200 religious, faith and spiritual traditions. Our pastor, Steve Miller attended the 2018 gathering. This summer, the Parliament will celebrate its 130 year anniversary by bringing people from all over the world back to Chicago, Illinois. On August 14-18, Steve will be at the Parliament and this time, he will be presenting two workshops.

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*(Inside First Church – cont'd)*

## ***What an Amazing Lent and Easter!***

Many thanks to all who helped make this Lent and Easter season so rich in community, story, and spirit. We are especially grateful to our music folks: our worship quartet, our Easter Choir, the Easter morning brass quartet and, of course, our amazing minister of music, Gene Faxon, who pulls it all together. We are truly blessed to have so many talented people in our midst!



## **Welcome Spring with a Labyrinth Walk**

The labyrinth behind First Church has been cleaned up and welcomes visitors. What is a labyrinth? Here is one definition from the Healing Consciousness Foundation: “A labyrinth is an ancient symbol of wholeness. The imagery of the circle and spiral combine into a meandering but purposeful journey. The labyrinth represents a journey or path to our own center and back again out into the world.”



Reece and Pop walk the labyrinth

## 2023 May/June Worship at First Church

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

May 7, 2023  
“The Priesthood of All Believers”  
**I Peter 2:2-10**  
John 14:6

June 4, 2023  
Trinity Sunday  
“In the Beginning”  
**Genesis 1-2:4**  
Psalm 8

May 14, 2023  
Mother’s Day/Christian Home  
“A Faith that Lived First in your  
Grandmother”  
**I Timothy 1:1-7**  
Psalm 127

June 11, 2023  
“Colluding with the Enemy”  
**Matthew 9:9-13**  
Psalm 33

May 21, 2023  
Ascension  
“Gate, Gate Paragate”  
**Acts 1:6-14**  
Psalm 68

June 18, 2023  
“The Oaks of Mamre”  
**Genesis 18:1-15**  
Psalm 116

May 28, 2023  
Pentecost/Memorial Day  
“We are One in the Spirit”  
**Acts 2:1-21**  
I Corinthians 12:3-13

June 25, 2023  
“The Green-eyed Monster”  
**Genesis 21:8-21**  
Psalm 83 (6)



First Church was delighted to provide a home for our new friends from the Franklin Pierce University football team for a pizza lunch during their Earth Day clean-up project.



## Looking Forward to Summer!

Mark your calendars — The **106th Summer Fair** will be held on Wednesday August 2, 2023, Jaffrey's 250th Anniversary Year!

Planning meetings will be held in May, June, and July for this important annual event. Look for updates in the Sunday bulletin and eblasts. Many hands are needed to continue our successful venues which raise money for the church and the community. Drop off dates for high-quality merchandise are:

Tuesday July 11, 10 - 12  
Thursday July 20, 1 - 3  
Friday July 28, 3 - 5



Bruce, Pam, Janet  
Fair Chairs

## Summer Pies are Coming Soon!

Thank you to all who signed up on this winter's church survey to help with pies. During the first week of June, we'll have the first organizational meeting for all interested pie people. I'll offer several classes in June for anyone interested in refining their pie crust skills. If you'd be willing to make the same pie (or 2) every week and need help with a recipe, I can also help. The wonderful thing about summer pies is that you can never have enough. People just buy, buy, buy and gobble them up!

### ***Volunteers Needed for Many Tasks***

We could use a one to two helpers every Thursday morning to help Bruce and me mix pie ingredients and bake. All crusts are made beforehand, and I try to have pre-measured ingredients for some of the pies.

Also needed is a good soul (male or female) to fold boxes which can be done any day Monday-Thursday. We will need a volunteer or two on Friday mornings to help garnish the pies and put them in boxes. And of course, we need lots of home bakers to donate pies for Friday sales.

I am sure you are all aware that this year marks Jaffrey's 250th anniversary. There will be a celebration on the Meetinghouse Common on Thursday, August 17, and I think with a special "Jaffrey Jubilee Pie" sold on that one day, we could reap great rewards.

Mark your calendars for that week with "Jaffrey Jubilee Pies"!

I'm not sure I have all your email addresses. If you can help this summer, please send me a quick note and I'll get you on the mailing list.

Thanks very much,  
Pam Hill  
[philloncapecod@gmail.com](mailto:philloncapecod@gmail.com)

## Stories from Ukraine - An Update



This banner hanging on the wall outside the Ukrainian Consulate in Lublin says:

“We thank our brother Poles for their Solidarity with the Ukrainian nation. Good evening, we’re from Ukraine.”

***Ilona Kwiecien recently returned from another visit to Ukraine which reinforced her idea that “Many small people, in many small places, doing many small things can change the face of the earth.”***

Changes to the Ukrainian refugee situation in Poland were again visible. The common theme I picked up on was, “We don’t want to have Ukrainians think they have been forgotten.”

I visited the people and sites we are supporting, with the exception of Zamosc/Lapigua. Stefanie, the founder of Lapigua, came down with a bad bug (possibly COVID) and only just recovered after I returned. We instead had a long phone conversation. Lapigua will soon be moving its distribution center to a new, cheaper location where they hope to create a “community center” for refugees. Apparently, the place needs work, but they have a great team of volunteers. Stefanie has a trusted network of people throughout Europe, to include in Ukraine; she said that “the tiniest amount” of help makes a difference. Recently Lapigua started supporting a group called “Health Patrons” which provides assistance to people in Ukraine who need medical treatment. I left funds with Marcin to deliver to Stefanie.

### ***Warsaw***

At Dom Matki in Warsaw, they not only continue to house about 40 mothers and small children, but have extended support to Ukrainians who have struck out on their own locally but need some additional assistance to make ends meet. They also have connections in Ukraine and send supplies there. On March 8 (International Women’s Day) they created special packages with cosmetics, hygiene products, and sweets. Anna, the director, said that with the help of residents and volunteers they were able to put together 3,000 packages in 24 hours. Coming up June 1 is “Children’s Day.” Dom Matki is organizing a special event for kids with clowns, games, and treats. It seems each time I visit that Anna is broadening their outreach. She again thanked us for our help, including the funds I left with her, adding that most repairs to fix the burst pipes burst have been completed, though many items in storage were lost.

### ***Lublin***

The group home in Lublin (called Liliowa) is slowly being disbanded. The owner has put the house up for sale, and there were only about 12 people left. Some had gone

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*(Stories from Ukraine – Cont'd)*

back to Ukraine, including Victoria and her blind son, Daniil. Though he had begun attending the special school in Lublin, the mother decided to go to Odessa where she has family. From what I heard, she regrets her decision and may return. (When I visited the director of the school to thank her for helping Daniil, she was open to the possibility of future support.) We helped (deposit, some legal fees, and transport) six people move into an apartment. They invited Marcin, Magda and me to a Ukrainian dinner one night; the place is very nice and the landlord left most of the furniture for them with a two-year lease. Three of the women work at McDonalds. They are very grateful for their “luck.” One of the biggest “strokes of luck” was provided by Marcin and Magda who signed – when no one else would – the legal guarantee required by law that should they have to move they have a place to go. Marcin will keep up the “Liliowa connections;” we intend to continue helping as needed.

Lukasz continues to go back and forth to Ukraine. Currently his focus is on helping people move away from areas where fighting is intense. He shared the story of a woman who would not leave without her cow; they found a way to bring both to a safer village within Ukraine.

*If you would like to donate to the Ukrainian Relief project, 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.*



## **Our New Church Librarian**

We are happy to announce that Charlotte DeBell is our new church librarian. She has the experience of having been a librarian for many years and brings the gift of knowing how a library can be organized and promoted. Charlotte, with the help of her husband Lee, has already reorganized the library and added new books, but the task is not finished. Here's a status report from Charlotte.

The library is ready for check-out. An updated list is in the library with a sign-out sheet. The collection includes books on Spiritual Growth, Health and Healing, Contemporary Issues as well as many other topics. The children's books are in a wicker basket by the front window in the Parish Hall. If children are visiting, feel free to have them take a book home. I look forward to making this your library. Please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions. My email is [charlottedebell@comcast.net](mailto:charlottedebell@comcast.net).

## **Trustee Circle Update – Maintaining Our Buildings & Grounds is a 2023 Priority!**

***As First Church emerges from the pandemic years and opens its doors to new members, catch-up, regular, and preventive maintenance takes top priority for trustees.***

Completed this month:

- Fire Extinguisher (11 in total) annual inspection
- Repair/repainting of 1831 sign by church entrance
- Recruiting and scheduling church trash removal

Contractor Quotes for Capital Projects 2023

- Exterior painting \$6,200  
(Parish House front, parsonage north side, upper Parish House rear)
- North parsonage gutter repair and leaf guard installation \$690
- Sanctuary carpet \$2,200 partial (front), \$11,600 full w/underlayment)
- Tower carpentry \$2500
- Tower painting (quote will be sought for 2024 or 2025)

*Planned DIY Projects for 2023* with the volunteer support of church members and friends and Scouts

1. Replace rotted trim around Parish House garage door.
2. Reglaze and paint exterior of church basement windows.
3. Power wash lower Parish House walls in back.
4. Scrape and paint shutters on north (Blackberry Lane) side of parsonage.
5. Memorial Garden - new sustainable plantings, dedicated funds available.
6. Maintain labyrinth.
7. Clear brush and fallen branches from winter storms.
8. General gardening around parsonage, Parish House and along Blackberry Lane.
9. Window washing / storm-screen conversion in spring/fall.
10. Hauling large items to transfer station (trailer needed).

*Other:* Parsonage refrigerator – pending, Parish House refrigerator – also pending  
(dedicated funds available)



## Strengthen the Church Special Offering on May 28

First Church is proud of its status in the UCC as a 5 for 5 Church. This designation is a tribute to the generosity of our members and friends and refers to our yearly support for the NH Conference (a budget item in our operating expenses) and four special offerings.

### ***Special Mission Offerings***

United Church of Christ Special Mission Offerings sponsor vital ministries that bring hope to people in the U.S. and around the world. Our church has identified four areas where critical human needs exist:

- in places lacking health and educational resources and/or where disaster has struck;
- within systems of injustice which oppress daily life and opportunity;
- in the lives of church leaders without sufficient resources to live with dignity;
- in the nurture of youth and congregations just beginning their lives of faith.

### ***Strengthen the Church***

The Strengthen the Church campaign has helped churches to become a place of refuge, comfort, and sanctuary for so many who experience difficulty finding a place of welcome in what can be a cruel world; the stranger and the outcast, the vulnerable and forgotten, the marginalized and the oppressed.

Strengthen the Church is an opportunity for your gifts to sustain not just growing, renewing and birthing churches, but also to ensure that the holy ground they create remains the sacred space in which the extravagant welcome of our beloved Jesus is embodied for all; that they may find a place where they are loved, spiritually fed, and celebrated as the children of God they are.

First Church will collect this offering on Sunday, May 28, 2023. Our first special offering of 2023 was One Great Hour of Sharing. Thanks to our congregation's generosity, we were able to donate \$646 to OGHS.



A plaque, carved by Andy Webber of Jaffrey, has been presented to First Church by Scout Troop #33. The Scouts have been meeting in our Parish House for a year on Monday night. It's been a beneficial collaboration for both – the Scouts have a place to gather and hold special celebrations, as well as store their equipment. First Church not only gets to support this important youth program, but also benefits from free labor at the Fair and other events.

*Thank you for your  
contributions to the  
May - June Weathervane!*

MaryJo Marvin, Steve Miller,  
Ilona Kwiecien, Carol Hess,  
Janet Grant, Charlotte DeBell,  
Bruce & Pam Hill