



First Parish United Church of Christ (Congregational)  
P.O. Box 228, 176 West High Street, Somersworth, NH 03878-022  
Church Office: (603) 692-2057  
Thomas Gardner, Pastor  
An Open & Affirming Church  
[www.somersworthfirstparish.org](http://www.somersworthfirstparish.org)  
[pastor@somersworthfirstparish.org](mailto:pastor@somersworthfirstparish.org)



APRIL, 2026

## EASTER 2026

### Thank you

~~to our readers for the Maundy Thursday Service : Jenny Fortier, Debbie Hall, Kathy Latchaw, Sharon Sirois, Nancie Cameron, Robin Hamel, Priscilla Chellis, Denise Watson, Pete Erickson, & Betsy Behrmann.

~~to Haylea Erickson for a beautiful solo of “Were You There” during the Good Friday service and “In Christ Alone” on Easter Day.

~~to Kathy Latchaw and Sharon Sirois for our Easter Floral Display and to everyone who provided flowers for the display.

~~Tom Gardner for leading us in the service, William Asher for providing beautiful music and Richard Shepherd for making the church look beautiful.





By May, the brightness of Easter settles into something quieter and more rooted. The first astonishment gives way to steady growth, like spring itself. Resurrection is no longer just something we celebrate, but something we begin to live. New life often unfolds slowly, in small changes, in softened hearts, in the courage to begin again.

This is where Pentecost comes into focus. The Spirit arrives as wind and fire, not to leave the disciples where they are, but to send them outward. Fear gives way to boldness, and difference becomes a place of connection rather than division. The same power that raised Christ now moves through ordinary people, calling them into lives of purpose and witness.

There is a quiet justice in this movement. Voices once overlooked are heard. Barriers are crossed. Community is formed not by sameness, but by shared dignity. Pentecost reminds us that resurrection life is not only about personal renewal, but about a world being reshaped.

So the prayer of this season is simple. Spirit of God, move in us. Take what has begun and bring it to life. Send us into the world ready to live with courage, to seek justice, and to trust that even now, something new is growing.



**Pastor Tom Gardner's Contact Information:**

Email: [thomasedwardgardner@gmail.com](mailto:thomasedwardgardner@gmail.com)

Pastor Tom's cell: 603-393-4934



On Sunday May 3rd, the Women's Fellowship will be holding a pancake breakfast following worship. During breakfast, Sue Vollkommer's granddaughter's, Cassidy and Kaleigh, will be there to lead us in their favorite grace from Horton Center, and hopefully a game or two. They will be bringing two or three of their friends from other churches who have attended Horton Center with them. The girls will talk with you about their experiences at Horton Center.

In the past, First Parish had a fund that helped to offset the cost of camp for students from our church who had an interest in attending any of the UCC summer camps. This breakfast will be an opportunity to start this fund up again. There will be a basket for donations.

We hope you will attend the breakfast, these girls absolutely love Horton Center, and I'm sure their stories will prove it! Thank you.



Hello everyone, I just wanted to let everyone know that our **all church clean up is scheduled for May 16th starting at 9am** until all tasks are completed (usually approximately one hour). If it rains that day the rain date is May 30th same time.

## MINISTRY OF PRAYER & CONCERN

**Bill Behrmann**, *Kindred Transitional Care and Rehab, 307 Plaza Dr., Dover, NH (formerly Dover Rehab)*

**Carroll Dudley**, *Harmony Homes By The Bay, 40 Briggs Way, Durham, NH 03824*

**Richard Jackson** *Wentworth Home, 795 Central Ave., Dover, NH 03820*

**Beverly Lyndes** *The Lodges Care Center, 51 Main St., Springvale, ME 04083*

**Ida Patterson**, *Benchmark at Rye, 295 Lafayette Rd., Room 106, Rye, NH 03870*

*--and all who are residents in long-term care and assisted living facilities in our area.*

*Please do send your cards and greetings.*



*With Sincere Sympathy*

Sympathy is extended to the family of:

Eleanor Gowans [4/17/26]  
Sue Vollkommers' mother.

*May the blessing of hope and health surround her family.*



**Food Collection for the pantry:** As an ongoing mission, we are collecting canned pasta (such as Spaghetti O's) and canned baked beans (such as B&M baked beans). Donations can be placed in the basket in the narthex.



## In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Doris & Norm Ballard  
Allison Brock  
Norm Brown  
Kevin Cazeault  
John Chesley  
John & Carol Cummings  
Victoria Eversman

Sarah Gowans  
Cynthia Jutra  
Linda Palmer  
Steven Parsley  
Kirsten Russell  
Kim Shurtleff  
Don Whitten

AND ongoing prayer focus during these days:

- *For our Granite State Association Churches.*
- *That God will bless and guide our Conference Minister, Rev. Gordan Rankin,*
- *That God will bless and guide Pastor Tom Gardner.*
- *Faith formation ministries for all ages - for building strong faith foundations, at all ages and stages of life.*
- *Working together in community - to build community - and to implement strategies for prevention, while providing resources for treatment and recovery from substance misuse and its stigma.*
- **Jesus said: Love God. Love Neighbor. Love Self.**
- *Those serving in the Armed Services and in support capacities around the world.*
- *The UKAMA Partnership between the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe and the NH Conference UCC.*
- *Continued invitational ministry and mission here at First Parish United Church of Christ: invite, include, involve in the good news way of Christ!*
- *We pray for those who are living with life-threatening illnesses; those who are aging or living with cancer, have mental health concerns and those who are caregivers.*
- **We long for peace in our world**, praying that our nation and world leaders will work together in this time of need, finding peace and harmony with all - the sick, poor, homeless, hungry, victims of violence and abuse, our LGBTQ+ community, refugees, immigration concerns, violence in the schools and violence in our streets.
- **We give thanks for all those who have been working non-stop** behind the scenes at First Parish so that the day-to-day needs move along seamlessly. For our committees that oversee our finances, our children, our prayer needs, worship and building concerns, plus our local outreach with The Community Food Pantry and the Table of Plenty.
- **We are hopeful** that God will bless our own church growth in reaching out to new people as we keep the face of First Parish UCC in our community. We share the good news of God's light and love in Jesus Christ, being faithful disciples while inviting and including all who are seeking hope and a spiritual home.



## MAY LECTIONARY READINGS

### Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 3, 2026

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

1 Peter 2:2-10

John 14:1-14

### Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 10, 2026

Acts 17:22-31

Psalm 66:8-20

1 Peter 3:13-22

John 14:15-21

### Ascension of the Lord - White

May 17, 2026

Acts 1:6-14

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

John 17:1-11

### Pentecost Sunday - Red

May 24, 2026

Acts 2:1-21 *or* Numbers 11:24-30

Psalm 104:24-34, 45b

1 Corinthians 12:3b-1 *or* Acts 2:1-21

John 20:19-23 *or* John 7:37-39

### Trinity Sunday - White

May 31, 2026

Genesis 1:1-2:4a, Psalm 8

3 Corinthians 13:11-13

Matthew 28:16-20



May 1 Dave Stolpe, Mark & Kathy Rideout

May 2 Richard Jutras

May 6 Alexis Dascoulias

May 9 Richard Whitten

May 11 Jonathan Chellis

May 12 Beverly Lyndes

May 15 Ken Latchaw

May 16 Connie Ricker, Marc & Patty Cote

May 20 Scott Vollkommer

May 31 Sue Vollkommer, Geoff & Nancy Day

*If you have another birthday or anniversary that you would like to have listed in the bulletin, please contact Debbie Hall at 603-781-8230 or [d\\_hall47@comcast.net](mailto:d_hall47@comcast.net).*



### TIME CHANGE SURVEY

Thank you to members of our congregation who filled out our survey on April 19th. An overwhelming number of people voted to continue to have the worship services start at 9:00AM.

Anyone who would like to discuss this further can contact Pastor Tom.



*Do you know someone who needs some prayers? Please contact one of the Prayer Group members listed below:*

Priscilla Chellis, (207) 698-5977,  
Email: [prchellis@comcast.net](mailto:prchellis@comcast.net)

Carol Cummings, (603) 842-5059,  
Email: :  
[johnandcarol55@comcast.net](mailto:johnandcarol55@comcast.net)

Fran Karlik, (603) 397-5674, Email:  
[kinross2@comcast.net](mailto:kinross2@comcast.net)

## SPRING FLING FAIR

This year's Spring Fling Fair was as amazing as we hoped! There was such a large assortment of fantastic crafts for sale from many talented vendors and from our .

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the fair so special. So fair, the proceeds from the fair is over \$1,400!



	March, 2026	Year-to-Date, 2026
Total Income	\$ 4,373.23	\$26,855.69
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 8,407.44</u>	<u>\$29,949.30</u>
Net Income	\$ (\$4,034.21)	<b>(\$3,093.61)</b>
Checking Account Balance as of March 31, 2026		\$ 18,807.63
Savings Account Balance		<u>\$ 5,004.43</u>
Total Checking and Savings		\$ 23,812.06
Unavailable Checkbook Funds		<u>(\$3,880.12)</u>
<b>Total Checkbook Funds Available</b>		<b>\$ 19,931.94</b>
Memorial Fund Checkbook Balance		\$13,414.84
Mortgage Balance at Service Credit Union at 3/31/26		\$ 5,315.67