


# February 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Fellowship Hour: Missions</b>			1 Food Pantry 6-8pm  Adult Choir 6pm  Pastor Mark leads Prayer Service at NH Rehab Hospital 6:30pm	2 Food Pantry 3-5pm  Adult Book Study 9:30-11:30am	3	4  <b>All Church Committee Workshop 9-11am Church hall</b>
<b>February Pantry Requests:</b>  Peanut Butter, cake mixes and cereal						
5 Choir 8:45am Sun. Sch. 10:00am Worship 10:00am  <b>Communion</b>  <b>Mission Fair follows worship</b>  <b>CE meets after worship</b>  <b>Wm's Fellow- ship meets after worship</b>	6 Food Pantry 10am-Noon	7 Fair Workshop 9-11:30am  <b>Diaconate Training 6:00pm</b>  AA 7:30-9pm	8 Food Pantry 6-8pm  Soms-Rollinsford Prevention Coalition 12noon-2pm  Adult Choir 6pm	9 Food Pantry 3-5pm  Adult Book Study 9:30-11:30am  C-S Assoc. Exec. Comm., 3pm  Girls Scout Leaders meet in hall 6-8pm	10  Deadline to sign up for Prepared to Serve Event	11  <b>Men's Group Breakfast 8:30am</b>
12 Choir 8:45am Sun. Sch. 10:00am Worship 10:00am  Valentine Luncheon follows worship Soup/Grilled Cheese!	13 Food Pantry 10am-Noon  <b>Music Comm. 10am</b>	14 Fair Workshop 9-11:30am  <b>Trustees 6:00pm</b>  AA 7:30-9pm	15 Food Pantry 6-8pm  Adult Choir 6pm (with Tim Allen)	16 Food Pantry 3-5pm  Adult Book Study 9:30-11:30am	17  Pastor Mark Speaks at Chapel, Tri-City Christian Academy, 8:30am  <b>March 2012 Newsletter Deadline 12Noon</b>	18
19 Choir 8:45am Sun. Sch. 10:00am Worship 10:00am  Lenten Devotional Available  Wentworth Home Worship, 3pm	20 Food Pantry 10am-Noon  <b>Mission Committee 6:30pm</b>	21 Fair Workshop  C-S Bible Study Rochester 1:30-3pm  <b>Church Council 6:30pm</b>  AA 7:30-9pm	22 Food Pantry 6-8pm  Adult Choir 6pm  Ash Wednesday Worship, 7pm, Berwick United Methodist Church	23 Food Pantry 3-5pm  Adult Book Study 9:30-11:30am (if needed)	24  Spaghetti Supper Prep 3pm  	25  <b>Public Spaghetti Supper 4-6pm</b>  NHCUC Prepared to Serve 8:30am-4pm Pembroke
26 Choir 8:45am Sun Sch 10:00am Worship 10:00am	27 Food Pantry 10am-Noon  Commission For Cong'l Life NH Conference, Concord	28 Fair Workshop 9-11:30am  AA 7:30-9pm	29 Food Pantry 6-8pm  Adult Choir 6pm			

# FIRST PARISH NEWS



**First Parish United Church of Christ (Congregational)**

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FEBRUARY 2012

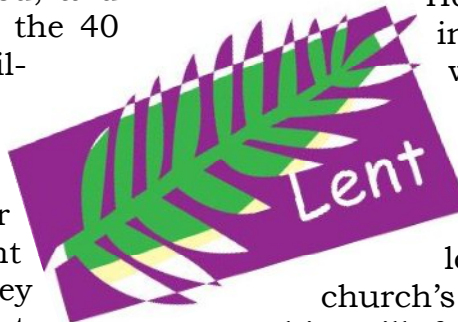
## LENT BEGINS

The 40 day season of the church year, Lent, begins on **Ash Wednesday**, February 22<sup>nd</sup>. We will gather for worship with our friends from the United Methodist Church, Berwick, AT THE BERWICK CHURCH. Worship begins at 7PM.

The 40 days become an opportunity, a possibility, a definite "set aside time", for God, and God alone. We parallel the 40 days of Jesus in the wilderness, to prepare our hearts and reflect on our lives, in preparation for Easter, for Resurrection Day. Might we begin our journey with a deep thanks to God? Lent is a time for YOU to look inside Scripture, spend time in prayer, be a part of weekly worship. God wants you to begin a mission initiative. It is YOUR time to get up, and get going. Give up being selfish. Celebrate the love and

care that God HAS given, and share it. To help with your Lenten preparations, *Lenten Devotionals* will be available in the Library area beginning on Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>.

The annual **Ecumenical Lenten Prayer Services** are in the process of being planned. The final listing will appear in the Sunday bulletin. Hosted in churches in the Somersworth-Berwick area, we will have opportunity to join together in prayer, being lead in the host church's tradition. Fellowship will follow each service. The day of the week has not been determined yet...there has been some interest in moving these from a weeknight to Sunday afternoons. So, watch the Sunday bulletin for more details.



# From Our Pastor...

Dear Ones:

I don't know about you, but I can get to a point when I don't want to talk anymore. I keep the conversation in my head, and I begin to believe what I say to myself. It is never good! Why don't I put my heart out more? Ease, fear, failure, disagreement are all reasons, no, excuses that come to mind. Have you ever felt this way?

Here, today, right now, we easily (there's that ease again!) let the stuff of life get in the way of our relationship with God. Yes, fear of failure and perhaps even laziness, get in the way of our communication/prayer with God (or Jesus, or the Holy Spirit). This then hinders our participation in Sunday worship, verbal or silent table grace (both are acceptable, but only if intentional). Offering admonishment to our children, or, even being admonished by them can fit in here as well—we let go of one, and ignore the other.

I suggest to you that the 40 day season of Lent can be a way to start afresh, if we will be attentive and open to what we will hear from the Holy One. This piece from *Prayers of*



Reconnect with God  
Reconnect with one another

*Life*, written by Michel Quoist, inspires my own inner conversation:

*I have just hung up; why did he  
telephone?*

*I don't know...Oh! I get it...  
I talked a lot and listened very little.*

*Forgive me, Lord, it was a monologue  
and not a dialogue.*

*I explained my idea and did not get his;  
Since I didn't listen, I learned nothing,  
Since I didn't listen, I didn't help,  
Since I didn't listen, we didn't  
communicate.*

*Forgive me Lord, for we were connected,  
and now we're cut off.*

Friends, reconnect with God. Reconnect with one another. Let's use wisely the days of Lent to do just this by kneeling down, bowing low, somehow physically, acknowledging before God our humility of heart. God listens; will we?

God bless and keep you...

Pastor Mark