



SEPTEMBER 2026



We have a busy and exciting Fall schedule planned after having a relaxing summer. We hope you join us!

*** Welcome Back Sunday will be held on September 20th.**

The Women's Fellowship are planning a delicious breakfast following worship. Many of the dishes we love will be served, such as quiches, french toast casserole, fruit, bacon, and sweet breads.

*** We will be serving a Community Spaghetti & Meatball dinner on September 26th from 4-6pm.** The meal includes: spaghetti & meatballs, tossed salad, garlic bread, white bread and homemade desserts. We will need many hands to help during the supper, so a sign-up sheet will be available in the Narthex soon. Thank you to everyone who has signed up to make a dessert! (This will be the first public supper we have had since we discontinued the Spaghetti Suppers in 2020.) Please share the poster, which is on the last page of this newsletter, with your friends and family.

*** We are planning a yard sale on October 3rd.** This year will be different: We will rent tables to vendors to sell their wares. More information to follow.

*** World Wide Communion and Blessing of the Animals will be held on October 4th.** The Blessing of the Animals will take place in the lower parking lot at 2pm.

*** The Holly Daze Fair will be held on November 7th from 9am-2pm in the church hall.** Our Women's Fellowship have been working hard to make lots of beautiful items and we will have several vendors again this year.

Pastor Tom will be away a few more days in 2026.

*** September 6th** — Dave & Robin Hamel will lead worship

*** September 27th** - We welcome Rev. Sandra Pontoh

*** November 29th & December 27th** - We welcome Rev. Wesley Palmer back again.

TRUSTEES

Where did the summer go? As trustees we've been busy behind the scenes. We've had the roof replaced and hoping to lower the insurance premiums by doing so.

The driveway will be sealed next Friday and Saturday, September 4th & 5th.

Unfortunately we're still having elevator issues and are working to get it repaired and inspected.

All meetings will be starting the first of September.

Welcome back and look forward to exciting things happening this coming year!

See you soon.

Moderator/Chair of Trustees
Nancie Cameron

THANK YOU

Dear First Parish,

Thank you so much for your donation to our trip to Horton Center. We will be attending the camp July 5-11. We are excited to be going, and so thankful for your wonderful contribution towards the cost. We look forward to sharing our adventures with you soon!

Thank you, Cassidy and Kaleigh Richer



Psalm 121 begins with a question that feels especially fitting as summer begins to give way to autumn: "I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come?" Late August and September can be a season of transition. The long days of summer begin to shorten, routines return, and the familiar rhythms of work, school, and community begin again. There can be excitement in that return, but also a sense of uncertainty about all that lies ahead.

The psalm answers its own question with a simple assurance. Our help comes from God, the maker of heaven and earth. The God who has been with us through the bright days of summer does not leave when the season changes. God watches over us in our coming and going, in our beginnings and our endings, in the ordinary routines that make up our lives.

There is something comforting about remembering that we do not have to face every new season knowing exactly what it will bring. We are not asked to have everything figured out. We are simply invited to walk forward with trust, knowing that God is present along the way. As summer fades and autumn begins, we can carry with us the gratitude of what has been and the hope of what is still to come.

So our prayer for this changing season is simple. Faithful God, walk with us as we begin again. Give us courage for what lies ahead, gratitude for the days behind us, and open hearts for the gifts that each new season brings. Help us remember that wherever we go, you are already there.

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

Email: thomasedwardgardner@gmail.com
Pastor Tom's cell: 603-393-4934



The women have been busy this summer cleaning out old materials in the classrooms as well as continuing to work on crafts for the Holly Daze Fair. They had a craft/yard sale in August and made \$180.

Also, we have been making plans for a community SPAGHETTI SUPPER on Saturday, September 26 from 4-6pm. There is a sign up in the Narthex if you could bring a homemade dessert and another sign up for volunteers to help work at the dinner. This hasn't been done in quite awhile, so we are hoping there will be plenty of people who can help us make this a success.

If you should peek into the kitchen, you will notice there are beautiful new cloth coverings under the counter that replaced the broken slides. Many thanks to Diane Chessman for making these and to Richard Shepherd for setting them up.

Also, thank you to Toni Rhodes and Marilyn Sirois who have made 36 beautiful sacs to put the Christmas items in that will go to the pantry children.

We are very blessed to have so many women willing to help with whatever is needed.

Please know all are welcomed and please bring a friend.





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.



In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Allison Brock
Priscilla, Richard &
Michelle Brock
Norm Brown
John Chesley
John & Carol Cummings
Win Damon

Linda Palmer
Steven Parsley
Roger Proulx
Diane Shepherd
Kim Shurtleff
Scott Vollkommer
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, and our Associate Minister, Rev Linda Hirst.*
- *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.*



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

Priscilla Chellis, (207) 216-3338,
Email: prchellis@comcast.net

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

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



SEPTEMBER LECTIONARY READINGS

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost - Green
September 6, 2026

Exodus 12:1-14, Psalm 149
Ezekiel 33:7-11, Psalm 119:33-40
Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:15-20

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost - Green
September 13, 2026

Exodus 14:19-31, Psalm 114 *or*
Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21
Genesis 50:15-21, Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost - Green
September 20, 2026

Exodus 16:2-15, Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45
Jonah 3:10-4:11, Psalm 145:1-8
Philippians 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost - Green
September 27, 2026

Exodus 17:1-7, Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32, Psalm 25:1-9
Philippians 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32



Sept 1 Doug Whitten
Sept 2 Susan Nye
Sept 5 Joe Fortier
Sept 7 *Richard & Julie Hurley*
Sept 9 Sue Boucher
Sept 12 Wendy Alves (St.Jean)
Sept 14 Nancie Cameron
Sept 18 *Shawn & Angela Richer*
Sept 19 Nancy Brown,
Gregg Fournier, Trevor Richer
Sept 20 Nick Farrell,
Maureen Collins
Sept 24 *Dean & Robin Martin*
Sept 26 Susan Eastman



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.



	July, 2026	Year-to-Date, 2026
Total Income	\$ 6,217.21	\$ 58,988.90
Total Expenses	\$ 8,629.68	\$ 62,108.55
Net Income	\$ (2,412.47)	\$ (3,119.65)
Checking Account Balance as of July 31, 2026		\$ 19,108.74
Savings Account Balance		\$ 5,004.60
Total Checking and Savings		\$ 20,177.60
Unavailable Checkbook Funds		(\$3,935.74)
Total Checkbook Funds Available		\$ 25,260.28
Memorial Fund Checkbook Balance		\$13,414.84
Mortgage Balance at Service Credit Union at 7/31/26		\$ 3,593.90

A CHRISTMAS STOCKING

The Women's Fellowship is starting to prepare for Christmas stocking/bags to be given to 36 children who visit the Community Food Pantry. We are starting now to give us extra time to pick up items to add to the bags. A list of items we have given in the past is listed below. We have also added the number of each item that we already have.

Your donations to these bags would be greatly appreciated. Just a reminder that we need gender-neutral items only.

Thank you in advance for your help!

Diane Chessman
Women's Fellowship
Live Well, Laugh Often, Love Much

ITEM	HAVE	NEED 36	ITEM	HAVE	NEED 36
Crayons	40	0	Tooth Paste	1	
Paint w/water books			Candy/Candy Canes		
Brushes for above			Hand Spinners/ Snail Toy	48	
Colored Pencils	8		Glow-in-the-dark Bracelets	11	
Markers			Colored & White Chalk	10	
Coloring Books	52	0	Pencils	Tons of them	
Water Paints			Small Travel Games	4	
Sticker Books			Hand Spinners	48	0
Blank Notebooks			Play Dough/Clay	60	0
Scratch Art	4		Stuffed animals (small)	22	
Bouncy Balls		11			
Bubbles	32	4			
Squishies	4				
Combs					
Toothbrushes	1				

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

September 26, 2026

4-6pm

**First Parish UCC
(Congregational)**

**176 West High Street
Somersworth, NH**

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**Sauce with Meatballs, Garden Salad,
Breads, Homemade desserts**

\$10 Adults; \$7 Children (3-12)

