

# *The Pittsfield Pilgrim*

First Congregational Church  
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Pittsfield, NH 03263

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# *The Pittsfield Pilgrim*

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[www.pittsfieldcc.org](http://www.pittsfieldcc.org)

The Rev. David Stasiak, Minister  
Nella and Mike Hobson, Publishers

## **Meet Your Church Family** Gailann Newton, Church Member

*Editor:* We asked our friend Gailann Newton to share a little about herself.

I started coming to First Congregational on the suggestion of my friend Mary Jo Powelson. I was born, raised, educated and married in the Catholic Church. After marrying and moving to New Hampshire, I started to attend the church here in town. Dan wasn't coming with me, and I really didn't want to go alone. He did not feel comfortable in that church and I really wanted a church that we both could attend and be happy. Mary Jo suggested coming to her church. Dan came with me and we both liked it. My parents were not happy with me switching, but they eventually understood and accepted.



We soon became involved and became members. I became a Sunday School teacher and a member of the Dorcas Guild and Dan became a Deacon.

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## **“Tip o’ the Hat”**

A big thank-you and “Tip o’ the Hat” to the tireless volunteers who help out with the Infant-Toddler Diaper Pantry. A special “tip” goes to Nancy Blackey, Audrey Moore, Isabel Pineo and Diane Vaughan. Thank you! Ω



## **Diaper Pantry News**

The Diaper Pantry is pleased to announce that it is about to enter its fourth year. It seems amazing that the time has gone by so quickly, and we have watched the Pantry grow from its infancy to where it is today. We were able to assist with over 900 sets of diapers and over 600 packages of wipes this past year, thanks to everyone's generosity!

We also sincerely thank the Dorcas Guild for their recent generous donation. This will allow us to continue this mission in the months to come.

We could always use wipes — any size and unscented, please. If you would like to make a monetary donation please make the check out the FCC-Missions and make sure to note “For Diaper Pantry” in the memo. Thank you! Ω

## Minister's Minute

When I was a boy I loved to mess around with the tools my dad had in the garage. He had tools for every project. Tools for electrical work, plumbing, carpentry, auto repair and so on. At times I would play with various tools and not put them back where they belonged. Consequently I would get scolded. I didn't realize why until I had children of my own who would leave tools in the yard or at someone else's house.



One day my dad brought home an arc welder. I was too young to know what that was until he explained to me what it did and the things he could do with it. He gave me one warning about the arc welder. "Don't look directly at the welding light; it can blind you." But a welding flame is cool and dangerous. So like most children who are told not to do something, I did it. I looked at the light. I fixated on the light. I saw spots for the rest of the day, but didn't tell anyone. I secretly feared that the radiance had actually blinded me.

The radiance of Christ is blinding — it was for Paul (Acts 9:1–31). In an epic hymn about the work of God's Son throughout history, the author of Hebrews calls Jesus "the radiance of [God's] glory and the representation of his essence, sustaining all things by the word of power" (Hebrews 1:3). It's easy to wonder if sustainability is possible, if the world will one day crumble and fall. But in Christ, there is hope.

Jesus is much like the sun. You don't always notice its power, warmth, or even that it's there. That is especially the case for the cloudy days. We forget that without the sun, there would be no life. It's easy to forget that it is warming us even through rain and clouds.

The same is true for Jesus in our lives. It's easy to forget Him until we desperately need Him. It's easy to overlook the daily miracles, such as life itself, when searching for something extraordinary. But the extraordinary is always present. It's here in the work of Christ, every day. His radiance shines upon us, even when we don't realize it. Ω

God's richest blessings to you.

I love being your minister,

Rev. Dave

## Annual Meeting deemed a success!

Our church's Annual Meeting was held Sunday, January 24, after a delicious pot-luck lunch. The business meeting was carried on without delay, headed by moderator, Art Morse. The 2015 annual report was available the week before, so all had a chance to read over the various individual reports to prepare for the meeting and the votes needed. In the event you did not get your annual report, there are a few copies still available. Thanks to Rev. Dave for having the reports a week ahead!

To review the members for the Board of Trustees, they are: Gloria Biron, Sue Bleckmann, Marilyn Thyng, Dave Powelson and Chris Ward.

The Diaconate members are: Peggy Jacobs, Merrill Vaughan, Pat Biron, Mary Jo Powelson, Linda Towle, Jaime Koladish, Kathy Bergeron, John Johnson, Wayne Pethic, Art Morse and Elaine Coffey.

Other committees saw little change from the previous year. Ω

## Ash Wednesday Service

An Ash Wednesday service will be held Wednesday, February 10, 7 p.m. As part of the service, there will be a time of prayer and reflection, the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion.

Rev. Dave will lead the service with the addition of special music by the Chancel Choir and the JuBellation Handbell Choir.

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, the 40-day period of repentance and preparation for the remembrance of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It culminates on Easter Sunday, March 27. Everyone is welcome to attend. Ω

## ❁ Inclement Weather ❁

In the event of inclement winter weather and hazardous driving and walking conditions, Sunday services and Sunday School *may* be cancelled. While the Trustees will try to post cancellations at least 12 hours in advance of Sunday services on Channel 9 (WMUR), people should use their own judgment about attending and being safe.

Since the weather reports and forecasts are sometimes uncertain, decisions may be made with short notice. Meetings/rehearsals through the week will be held at the discretion of those leaders. Ω

**Newton — Continued from Page 1**

Everyone was so friendly and kind that we immediately felt comfortable. That was about 23 years ago. Our daughter Amanda was seven years old.



Dan and I have been married for 33+ years and we are the parents of one daughter, Amanda. We have our son-in-law, Kevin, our granddaughter, Harper and the many foster children who came to live with us for their “port in the storm.”

My current occupation is library coordinator at Pittsfield Elementary School. It is a new position to me. I had been subbing and working in various positions for over 20 years. Before working at PES, I worked at Concord Hospital on the maternity unit.

I have a few rewarding experiences being a member of this church. The love, care, concerns and prayers during tough times were so greatly appreciated. When I endured major surgery, the death of my parents, Dan’s prostate cancer and most recently, the premature birth of our granddaughter Harper, I experienced the kind fellowship of this congregation. It is an amazing feeling.

As far as a role model goes, I have to say I have a couple: my dear friend Mary Jo here in New Hampshire and my other dear friend Marianne Rivet. Both women showed me through their actions that I am a worthy child of God. It was through their guidance that I confidently changed my church choice and became comfortable talking *to* God and *with* God. This last year I finally started going to Bible study.

What I would like to see accomplished at FCC is continued growth with new families. I would love to have families see what my family had come to appreciate many years ago as new members.

A book I am reading right now is called *Hearts of Fire: Eight Women in the Underground Church and Their Stories of Costly Faith* by The Voice of the Martyrs. My friend Marianne suggested I get it. It is an incredible book. I am two-thirds through. Ω

**Hat/Mitten Report:** The Dorcas Guild offers sincere thanks for the donations of hats, mittens, gloves, and other items for the Mitten Tree. The project was again successful this year, with fewer items than last year, however. The donated items went to the children of the Barnstead and Pittsfield Elementary Schools and Blueberry Express Daycare Center. Thank you! Ω

**Dorcas Guild Update**

The January meeting of the Dorcas Guild began with a call to order and welcome by newly installed President Mary Jo Powelson.

For devotions, Evelyn Sheehy Richard read a piece illustrating how one of God’s greatest gifts is for us to be a blessing to others. Paula Corriveau read a devotional “Wisdom in a Doughnut Shop” – concentrating on the doughnut and not the hole!

Updates were made on our shut-ins and the cards sent. Other correspondence, including various thank-yous, was read. The minutes were approved as written; the treasurer’s report provided by Bev Murdough was also accepted.

The food basket brought by Evelyn went to Nancy Fogg, who will bring it in February, next slated for Gailann Newton; the mystery package brought by Mary Jo was won by Linda Towle.

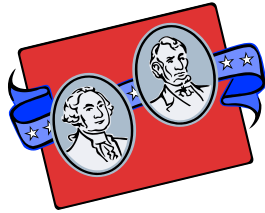
Nella Hobson reported on the purchase of new tablecloths for use at collations. There were several ideas proposed for our 2016 Service Project: “A Million Pillowcases” for local charities; care packages for the VA Home in Tilton; and blankets for veterans. Nancy made a motion to do a project concerning veterans of New Hampshire, which was approved. A motion was made and approved for a donation to the church’s Building Fund in memory of Sally Lewis, who passed away in December.

Discussion on our missions’ disbursements followed with donations going to the four local food pantries: Pittsfield, Barnstead, Chichester and Epsom; the Infant-Toddler Diaper Pantry; and the Community Action Program.

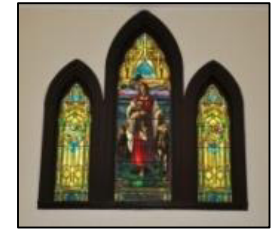
The group discussed replacing the older heavy wooden tables in the vestry and Pilgrim Room. Also discussed was the current meeting time of 7 p.m. with a possible change to 6:30 p.m. A motion was made and passed to move our monthly Tuesday evening meetings to 6:30 p.m.

The completed program guides for 2016 were distributed as we enjoyed our refreshments on the birthday theme. Our book exchange followed. We will continue to provide for the Fellowship Hour the week after our evening meetings.

The next evening meeting will be February 9 at 6:30 with “Banana Splits” as the theme. Please bring along an item or donation for the Diaper Pantry. Larger size diapers (5/6 or overnight) and wipes are needed. Wednesday workgroup meetings will begin February 3, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Ω



# February 2016



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Groundhog Day</b> Infant & Toddler Diaper Pantry 9-11 am	<b>3</b> Dorcas Guild work group 10-2, vestry  Bible Study 7-8:30pm	<b>4</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm JuBellation Rehearsal 7:45 pm, vestry	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Worship Service 10 am <i>Holy Communion</i> Sunday School 9:50 am Fellowship Hour 11 am	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Men's Breakfast <b>8 am</b> Parker's Restaurant  Dorcas Guild – Meeting <b>6:30</b> pm, vestry	<b>10</b> Dorcas Guild work group 10-2, vestry  <b>Ash Wednesday</b> <b>Service 7 pm</b>	<b>11</b> <b>NO</b> Choir Rehearsals	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
 <b>14</b> <b>Valentine's Day</b> Deacons meet 8:45 am Worship Service 10 am Sunday School 9:50 am Fellowship Hour 11 am	 <b>15</b> <b>Presidents' Day</b>	<b>16</b> Infant & Toddler Diaper Pantry 9-11 am  Trustees Meeting 6 pm	<b>17</b> Dorcas Guild work group 10-2, vestry  Bible Study 7-8:30pm	<b>18</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm JuBellation Rehearsal 7:45 pm, vestry	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> Worship Service 10 am Sunday School 9:50 am Fellowship Hour 11 am	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>  Last day for <i>Pittsfield</i> <i>Pilgrim</i> news -- forward to Nella Hobson.	<b>24</b> Dorcas Guild work group 10-2, vestry  Bible Study 7-8:30pm	<b>25</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm JuBellation Rehearsal 7:45 pm, sanctuary	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Worship Service 10 am Sunday School 9:50 JuBellation plays Fellowship Hour 11 am	<b>29</b> <b>Leap Day</b>					