

# *The Pittsfield Pilgrim*

First Congregational Church  
24 Main Street  
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

Jane Osborne, Choir Member

*Editor:* We asked our friend Jane Osborne to share a little about herself.

I was born in Haverill, Massachusetts and was one of 16 children – #12 and the last of the 10 girls. I grew up in Manchester and attended Manchester schools graduating from Central High School, which is the oldest high school in the state.



I met my soulmate Bill in 1986 and we were married in 1988. We were married for 26 years until kidney failure due to diabetes took him home to “Our Father.” Pastor Dave kindly visited him and was there for prayer and comfort just before he passed in December 2014.

I was blessed with my son, Kenneth, in 1972. He joined the Air Force when he was 18 and has served 26 years to date.

**Osborne — Continued on Page 3**

## “Tip o’ the Hat”

A special “Tip o’ the Hat” to the family and friends of Joan Riel for our lovely new set of Schulmerich handchimes given in her memory. Thank you! Ω



## World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer service will be held this year at our church, Friday, March 3 at 7 p.m. The ladies of the Dorcas Guild are hosting this event.

People of more than 170 countries and regions will celebrate this event. World Day of Prayer is an ecumenical movement of Christian women of many traditions coming together to observe a common day of prayer the first Friday of March.

Each year a different country’s committee serves as writers for the World Day of Prayer service. This year the ladies of the Philippines have written the program with the theme, “Am I being unfair to you?”

Plan to join in prayer and song in this community of faith service. All are welcome — it’s not just for women! For more information, contact Nella Hobson. Ω

## Minister's Minute

Lent is not normally thought of as an occasion for humor, but ... a Catholic priest working in an inner city was walking down an alley one evening on his way home when a young man came down the alley behind him and poked a knife against his back. "Give me your money," the young man said.



The priest opened his jacket and reached into an inner pocket to remove his wallet, exposing his clerical collar. "Oh, I'm sorry, Father," said the young man, "I didn't see your collar. I don't want your money."

Trembling from the scare, the priest removed a candy bar from his shirt pocket and offered it to the young man. "Here," he said. "Have a candy bar."

"Oh, no, I can't do that," the young man replied, "I gave up chocolate for Lent!"

Yes, we have arrived at the season of Lent, that period of the church year in which people figure we are supposed to feel miserable. After all, just prior to Ash Wednesday we run into Fat Tuesday — *Mardi Gras* in French — a time of joy and revelry, which stands in stark contrast to the observance that begins the next day. The fun stops. At least that is the popular understanding.

Strange, the word "Lent" originally meant "springtime," not misery. Because the church season always fell at this time of year, the name came to apply to the ecclesiastical observance, as well.

The Lenten observance has changed over the centuries. The early church celebrated Lent only for a few days before Easter. Over time, the length of the season grew until it was several weeks long. In the seventh century, the church set the period of Lent at 40 days (excluding Sundays) in order to remind people of the duration of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

The Lenten observance began as a time of purification and preparation. In the early church, baptism was performed only on Easter Sunday — an entire year's worth of converts to the faith would be baptized and brought into the church on that day. Lent was the time before Easter in which these converts would fast and pray, preparing themselves to be members of Christ's church.

As years went by, the church began to baptize and confirm people on days other than Easter Sunday. Lent was no longer a time of preparation for these events, but it remained as a special time of prayer and fasting. After the Reformation, the discipline of fasting became unpopular (and it has never regained much favor). Thus, as a way of preserving Lent as a time of self-

sacrifice, the church leaders encouraged people to give up something they enjoyed during Lent.

Lent is still the church season in which we prepare for Easter Sunday. It is a time to remember the temptation, the suffering, and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Remember the admonition of the gospel lesson to do it right — "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' ... your piety... before men, to be seen by them." This is not show time! It is a special time of prayer and reflection, of confession and self-sacrifice. Most of all, it is a time to ready ourselves for the sheer joy of Easter morning — it is a time to ready ourselves to meet our risen Lord once again! Ω

I love being your minister,

Rev. Dave

### From the Board of Trustees



well as refinishing the front doors of the church. These projects are complete, and the Trustees have set a goal of having the fund-raiser wrapped up by April 1. We are just \$5,000 sort of the \$45,000 fundraising goal. The Trustees ask for your support in helping us wrap-up this fundraiser by **April 1** of this year. Please consider donating to the building fund this Sunday.

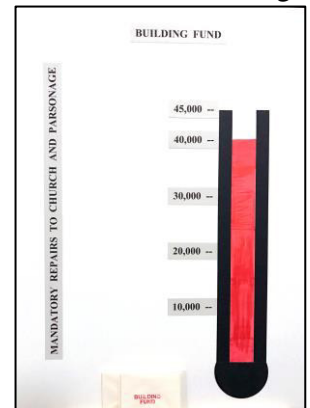
The pipe organ has been silent for the past several weeks while repairs were made to the blower motor. The work included replacement of a 1938 electric motor and work on the shaft and blower. Before 1938, air was hand pumped through a bellows in the closet at the right of the organ.

The repair effort has been completed. A new motor has been installed, and we are now waiting for Andover Organ Company to tune the organ. We are happy to have the organ back in service.

As always, if you have any questions, ideas, or concerns feel free to let any of the trustees know — Marilyn Thyng, Gloria O'Connor Biron, Sue Bleckmann, Chris Ward or Harry Vogt. Ω

## Projects

Late last summer the Trustees started a fundraiser to cover the cost of roofing projects at the parsonage and the church as



*It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade. ~ Charles Dickens*

**Osborne — Continued from Page 1**

I've been attending First Congregational for several years, becoming a member in May of 2015. I was living in Pittsfield and through the encouragement of Diane and Merrill Vaughan, I joined the choir. They heard me singing and suggested I look into becoming part of the music program. I am very glad that I did and would likewise encourage anyone else to do the same.

As a career, I was in nursing for 12 years as an LNA, receiving my license through the Red Cross. I worked at several hospitals including Franklin Regional Hospital, Lakes Regional Hospital in Laconia and the New Hampshire Veterans Home in Tilton. Being retired now, I have time to enjoy my favorite hobbies of reading and music. I love Country and Western music as well as the old gospel hymns and singing them in the choir.

One important thing that I love about this church is the genuine warm and welcoming nature. I am very grateful for the unity and fellowship of the people; many are role models, and I find them inspirational and uplifting. They have helped me grow as a person and especially as a Christian.

Like many others, I would love to see more young families and children come to be a part of our church community. Today's unchurched young people are missing out on so much.

With my love of reading, I enjoy so many diverse types of books, but mysteries are my favorite. I enjoy John Grisham's novels and other mystery writers who keep you guessing!

To sum up, I love this church and the many friends I have made here; I am happy to be a part of it and would encourage others to become members and get involved in some facet of the work and activities. Ω

**Dorcas Guild Update**

The February 14 meeting of the Dorcas Guild began with a welcome by President Mary Jo Powelson. Nella Hobson presented devotions on Valentine's Day and showing acts of kindness all year long. Diane Vaughan led "The Lord's Prayer."

Diane reported on various cards sent for the ill and bereaved and shared correspondence received. Mary Jo read a letter from the Epsom Bible Church about Gen Real, an event planned for October. Cards were passed around for signing.

The January minutes were accepted as was the treasurer's report. The food basket from Gailann

Newton was received by Linda Towle and will go next to Mary Jo in March and then Audrey Moore in April. The mystery package brought by Bev Murdough was won by Linda Towle.

Nella presented the program outline and scripts for the World Day of Prayer event, March 3, and solicited participants and other volunteers.

Cookies, etc. solicited for SouperFest, occurring March 17, are due at the next meeting, March 14. Elaine Coffey will receive the donations.

The Guild continues to consider the 2017 service project. "Baby Threads" of N. H. is no longer in operation. "Children's Care Tote Bags" for local law enforcement/social workers and "Chemo Tote Bags" are some possibilities. Gailann and Mary Jo are making contacts.

Discussion followed on Christian camps, and the group suggested offering scholarships toward costs.

While enjoying dessert, the group wrote out Valentine notes to each other and placed them in their personalized "mail boxes."

Next month's meeting will be held March 14 at 6:30 with hostesses Elaine Coffey and Bev Murdough. We will draw "Prayer Partners." A toiletry item for the food pantry would be appreciated. Ω

**The church was blessed** and honored to receive a three-octave set of Schulmerich handchimes and dedicate them in memory of Joan Trace Riel February 26 during morning worship. The gift was made by her family and friends. The JuBellation Handbell Choir demonstrated them publicly for the first time immediately after the dedication playing "Canon" by Johann Pachelbel, one of Joan's favorites.

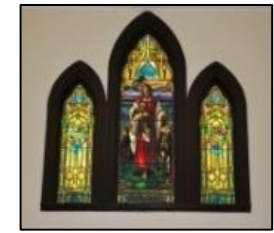





Anyone interested in learning more about the instruments or choirs can speak with Nella Hobson or the pastor. Ω

**Volunteer Needed** — At our January Annual Meeting a question came up about recording Sunday services for shut-ins and others. This is a possibility; however, we find we need someone to actually perform the function using software called "Audacity" on a church laptop in the rear of the sanctuary. The pastor is understandably not available on Sunday mornings at the time of services to implement this. It is not a difficult task. If there is someone who can step up to perform this undertaking, please contact the pastor for more information or to volunteer. If there is more than one person willing to accomplish this, so much the better. Ω



# March 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> Dorcas Guild work group 10-2, vestry Ash Wednesday Service 7 pm <u>NO</u> Bible Study	<b>2</b> <u>NO</u> Choir Rehearsals Calling hours for Paul Metcalf 5-8 pm sanctuary	<b>3</b> <b>World Day of Prayer Service 7 pm</b>	<b>4</b> Funeral Service for Paul Metcalf 11 am
<b>5</b> Worship Service 10 am <i>Holy Communion</i> Sunday School 9:45 am Fellowship Hour 11 am - Potluck	<b>6</b> "How Jesus Became God" video series 6:30-7:30 pm Pilgrim Room	<b>7</b> Infant & Toddler Diaper Pantry 9-11 am	<b>8</b> Dorcas Guild work group 10-2, vestry Bible Study 7-8 pm Pilgrim Room	<b>9</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm JuBellation Rehearsal 7:45 pm, vestry	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>Turn clocks ahead tonight ...</b> 
<b>12</b> <b>Daylight Savings</b> Deacons' Meeting 8:45 am Worship Service 10 am Sunday School 9:45 am Fellowship Hour 11 am	<b>13</b> "How Jesus Became God" video series 6:30-7:30 pm Pilgrim Room	<b>14</b> Men's Breakfast <u>8 am</u> Parker's Rest. Dorcas Guild Meets – 6:30 pm – vestry	<b>15</b> Dorcas Guild work group 10-2, vestry <u>NO</u> Bible Study	<b>16</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm JuBellation Rehearsal 7:45 pm, vestry	<b>17</b> <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>  SouperFest, Concord	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> Worship Service 10 am Sunday School 9:45 am Fellowship Hour 11 am (Dorcas Guild hosts)	 <b>20</b> <i>First Day of Spring</i> "How Jesus Became God" video series 6:30-7:30 pm Pilgrim Room	<b>21</b> Infant & Toddler Diaper Pantry 9-11 am Trustees' Meeting 6 pm	<b>22</b> Dorcas Guild work group 10-2, vestry Bible Study 7-8 pm Pilgrim Room	<b>23</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm JuBellation Rehearsal 7:45 pm, sanctuary	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> Worship Service 10 am <i>JuBellation plays</i> Sunday School 9:45 am Fellowship Hour 11 am	<b>27</b> "How Jesus Became God" video series 6:30-7:30 pm Pilgrim Room	<b>28</b> Last day for <i>Pittsfield Pilgrim</i> news -- forward to Nella Hobson	<b>29</b> Bible Study 7-8 pm Pilgrim Room	<b>30</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm JuBellation Rehearsal 7:45 pm, sanctuary	<b>31</b>	