



The Bridge

ONE SERVICE
10:00 a.m.
August 5
September 2
&
September 9
RALLY DAY

**BE SURE TO
 MARK YOUR
 CALENDARS!**
**September 9 is
 RALLY DAY!**
**This year we will
 have one service,
 held outside, at
 10:00 a.m.
 followed by an
 all-church picnic.**
**Look for the sign
 up sheets in
 Cleveland Hall
 starting in
 August.**

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Pastor's Perspective...

I recently read an interesting book titled, *The Spirituality of Imperfection; Storytelling and the Journey to Wholeness*, by Ernest Kurtz and Katherine Ketcham. Early on the authors spend part of a chapter distinguishing between religion and spirituality. They write:

“Viewing religion, ‘the spiritual’ see rigidity; viewing spirituality, ‘the religious’ see sloppiness. Religion connotes boundaries, while spirituality’s borders seem haphazard and ill-defined. The vocabulary of religion emphasizes the *solid*; the language of spirituality suggests the *fluid*.”

The authors then seem to come down mostly in favor of spirituality as they unfold some of the weaknesses and pitfalls of religion. On this latter point they’re not wrong. Religion can be one of the most dangerous and damaging things in the world. Among populations of people religion can result in judgmental attitudes, unnecessary division, and violence. For individuals religion can become empty, an end to itself. Rituals and practices that are meant to assist in helping us encounter God become mindless, rote practices with no deeper application. Ironically, religion can also become a source of pride and used as an opportunity for self-aggrandizement. Of course, these very things are what Jesus himself spent so much time warning against: religious practice untethered from sincere, heartfelt devotion to God.

But what about spirituality without religion?

Pastor Lilian Daniel has passionately written about this subject here https://www.huffingtonpost.com/lillian-daniel/spiritual-but-not-religio_b_959216.html, and with a bit less acerbity here <https://www.christiancentury.org/article/2011-08/you-can-t-make>

For those who aren’t reading online, I’ll make a couple of the points here.

For starters, a personal spirituality tends to simply reflect the trends of the times. It’s also limited to one’s own imagination; there’s little that is counterintuitive which has the potential to bring insight, challenge, or realignment.

Secondly, it has occurred to me that the church (that is, the gathered community) often serves as a crucible for faith. A generic spirituality is often individualistic and self-referential. Christian faith, on the other hand, directs us toward the other and calls us into community. And here’s the thing. Community is hard. Community is hard because people are hard. I may feel like a superbly spiritual person while taking in the beauty of the earth from a mountaintop or while appreciating the sights and sounds of nature on a hike or while spending quality time with people who are kindred spirits.

(continued on page 2)

Musical Note

So far, our Summer season has featured a wonderful variety of musical offerings. On June 24th, our own Jonathan Fowler sang my composition, “I Stand in Awe.” On the following Sunday, July 1st, we held our communion service outdoors, with music by members of our Praise Band: Kevin Tarleton on guitar, Tom Coverdale on bass guitar and Caleb Nketiah on percussion. Children from the Vacation Bible School also performed some songs with motions for us.

On July 8th, Angela Biggs, a harpist and vocalist from Claremont, New Hampshire, joined us at our 9am service to sing and play beautifully. On the following Sunday, July 15th, we held a traditional hymn sing at our 9am service, and a contemporary hymn sing at our 11am service. Members of the congregation requested their favorite hymns; it was enjoyable to sing some hymns we haven’t sung recently, as well as hymns that everyone loves.

On July 22nd, vocalist Michael T. Brown II offered dynamic versions of “He Looked Beyond My Fault” (by Dottie Rambo) and “Turn Your Radio On” (Albert E. Brumley, Jr.) at the 9am service, and also the traditional “I Know the Lord Will Make a Way” at the 11am service. Then, on July 29th, we will be graced with two pieces by Vesilind Brass, “Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us” and “Cantate Domino” (Hans Leo Hassler). Vesilind Brass is Pam Maurer, trombone/baritone; Peggy Prew, euphonium; and Ako Shiffer, french horn. All are members of the Kearsarge Community Band, and our handbell choir. They are named for Aarne Vesilind, the brilliant engineer, composer and musician who passed away earlier this year.

We have more special music planned for the rest of the season; what an inspiring way to praise the Lord!

Pastor’s Perspective... cont.

But how “spiritual” am I when I don’t like someone? How “spiritual” am I when someone legitimately wrongs me? How does my “spirituality” hold up in circumstances where I need to put another’s needs or desires before my own? How does my “spirituality” serve me whenever I encounter hatred, meanness, or deception? Christian faith and practice demands that I express my spirituality through acts of courage, forgiveness, kindness, peacemaking, reconciliation, gentleness, humility, and sacrificial love. You see, it’s in the context of community that I find out how Christian, how “spiritual” I really am. Christian spirituality doesn’t allow me to remain in a fuzzy, hazy sentimentality. Rather, the Lord Jesus specifically directs me to be conformed to his image and likeness. I don’t want to be religious without being spiritual, but I don’t want to be spiritual without being religious either. Though each have their weaknesses, we do not have to make false choices. In fact, it is because there are perils that come with each that religion and spirituality need to be matched together. We need not settle for one or the other. My response to Kurtz and Ketcham would be that the journey to wholeness takes both the solid boundaries of religion and the inexplicable mysteries of spirituality. Each half makes the whole. *Pastor Charles*

1 Ernest Kurtz and Katherine Ketcham, *The Spirituality of Imperfection; Storytelling and the Journey to Wholeness* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 23.



*In happy moments, praise God. In difficult moments, seek God.
In quiet moments, trust God. In every moment, thank God.*

Flu Vaccination Clinic: Thursday, September 27, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Celebrating the Arts: Sunday, September 23rd following the 9:00 service.

The Prayer Shawl Knitters will be exhibiting prayer shawls!

Come see the different designs and visit with the ladies that knit them.

Baking Bread with John: September 29th – “Crafting Artisan Sourdough Bread”.

Do you want to know how John makes those delicious breads?

You have a chance to learn. There is a 10 person limit and a signup sheet will be available mid-August. There will be a \$10 charge for supplies.

“Volunteering Two Hours a Week can Boost Your Well Being!”

We are working on our Stone Soup Programs for January, February and two weeks in March.

We need volunteers to help in the kitchen chopping, or greeting or serving. We prepare on Mondays and serve on Tuesdays. Be a part of the fellowship and fun of Stone Soup.

Let a member of Health Ministries know if you are interested.

Health Ministries Committee

Beth Frost, Linda Gardner, Claire Kettler

Cathy Todd, Allan and Joan Gould



This year's theme for Hospital Days is *Reflections of Our Community*. FBC has been invited to join other faith groups as we *walk together in hope* on Saturday, August 4th at 2:00 p.m. Please let us know if you are able to join us. We are also in need of bags of candy to disperse along the parade route. If you would like to donate please drop candy off at the church office prior to August 4th.



AUGUST 4, 2018 8:15 AM – 1:00 PM

Donations of baked goods are greatly appreciated and will be accepted at the tent outside the NL Town Hall on Saturday, August 4, between 7:30 and 9:00 a.m. There will be a drop off zone in front of Town Hall and volunteers to help carry items. For more information please contact Nancy Collins at 526-5133 or nancy.collins@newlondonhospital.org.

FROM THE DEACONS' BENCH



So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Luke 11:9

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

These are two very familiar statements that Jesus said, and they encapsulate the desire of the Diaconate here at First Baptist of New London. Instead of looking at church and its teachings as informational, our desire for all congregants--including ourselves--is that the experience is **transformational**. That is the “picture” presented by these quotes: People who are in pursuit of transformation toward a true Jesus-likeness. That has been the focus of Charles’ current sermon series, Things Jesus Said -- focusing on the means by which Jesus instructed His disciples to practice this transformed life. This is the focus that we want to highlight as we continue to pursue the overarching theme of Grow, Love, Serve that has started the year.

In the interest of these directives, many events have demonstrated this focus in fellowship over the past several weeks: Vacation Bible School; Vision Day; Bike and Build; a first-ever outdoor combined communion service; and hymn-sing services. We are now looking forward to the Sunday school Rally Day on September 9th -- with all-church activities to follow the one service at 10:00 a.m.

In addition to the weekly prayer meetings at FBC, the deacons want to prayerfully support FBC congregants who have specific and pressing needs as they attend services on Sunday mornings. We will introduce an opportunity for interested attendees to do this immediately following each service on Sundays. Pastor Charles will clarify this initiative during announcements in both services.

I scream--you scream--we all scream for ice cream!! The diaconate will be providing ten-dollar gift cards that will be distributed randomly in church bulletins to encourage FBC congregants to seek out another (the idea is to mix older and younger folk--the recipient needs to find someone of 20-years difference) to share an ice cream and conversation at the ice cream shop. If you get a card, cash in on an opportunity to get to know someone from church--start out by finding out what flavor ice cream they like!

Due to the unavailability of many local musicians during the month of May, The Jane Ann McSwiney concert will be held at a later date. Stay tuned for details.

If you have any ideas to share or that you would like to see regarding any of these (or other) aspects of life here at FBC, don’t hesitate to contact any of your deacons.

Membership: Carole Wood, Kari and Bill Novick

Pulpit: Mollay Jallah, Cathy Narowitz, Kathleen Belko

Worship and Music: Cheryl Churchwell, Tracy and Tom Coverdale

August 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 Bible Study 7:00	2 Community Coffee 8:00-10:00	3	4
			NEW LONDON HOSPITAL DAYS			
5 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 One Worship Service 10:00	6	7 Women's Book Study 8:45 Prayer Ministry 1:30 <i>Deacons 5:30</i>	8 Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 Bible Study 7:00	9 Community Coffee 8:00-10:00 <i>Health Ministries 2:00</i> SMA Concert 7:30	10	11
12 Choir Rehearsal 8:30 Worship Service 9:00 The Gathering 11:00	13	14 Women's Book Study 8:45 Prayer Ministry 1:30 <i>Trustees 5:30</i>	15 Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 Bible Study 7:00	16 Community Coffee 8:00-10:00	17	18
		<i>Middle School Chinese Exchange Students – Host families needed</i>				
19 Choir Rehearsal 8:30 Worship Service 9:00 The Gathering 11:00	20	21 Women's Book Study 8:45 Prayer Ministry 1:30 <i>Church Council 5:00</i>	22 Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 Bible Study 7:00	23 Community Coffee 8:00-10:00 SMA Concert 7:30	24	25
26 Choir Rehearsal 8:30 Worship Service 9:00 The Gathering 11:00	27	28 Women's Book Study 8:45 Prayer Ministry 1:30	29 Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 Bible Study 7:00	30 Community Coffee 8:00-10:00	31	

Shipwrecked: Jesus rescues us from the storms of life.

Sailing through a week of VBS.



This week went by soooo fast, said one of our Crew Leaders on Friday afternoon, as we dissembled 12- foot palm trees, a glittering waterfall, bamboo huts and even a 21' ship. Indeed, for a week filled with so much activity and so much energy, and given the potential for rocky waters, this year's Vacation Bible School went swimmingly!

It couldn't have happened without a remarkable team of creative, resourceful, fun-loving, committed individuals who clearly have a heart for children and who want to share the stories of Jesus. Its a message worth telling: of God's abiding presence, guidance and strength offered to us all in the calm and the tumultuous times of life.

Each year FBC does such an incredible job throwing open its doors to our community, inviting young and old alike to come discover, play, sing and learn together. This year 68 elementary students, 29 middle school helpers and countless adults (on the scene and off), joined in this week-long camp experience on the "campus" of the First Baptist Church.

Here are but a few highlights from our 2018 Shipwrecked VBS:

Festive Music: We learned new songs like *My Lighthouse* and *Never Let Go of Me*. We learned old songs like *Soon and Very Soon* and *'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus*. We learned that music helps us celebrate our faith by saying "Thank you God" and "Help!" when we are feeling lost at sea.



Dramatic Skits: Each day Jim Noland and his side kick visited us with a new dilemma and lesson in survival on this Island of Hope. Each day Dan helped teach Jim about the importance of trusting In Jesus to rescue us when we are lonely, when we worry, when we struggle, when we do wrong, when life makes us feel powerless.



Crafts – Our team of creative artists and craftspeople put together a series of island projects: everything from sand art to painted shells. Each day the classes visited a new booth with a new craft and a new craftspeople with an opportunity to use elements of nature to create together.



God Sightings: Each day the students and crew were asked to look for ways God working in us, through us and in others. The sightings became the patchwork for our "torn" sail that in the end, helped us get off the Island with grace and gratitude!

Survival Station: The kids learned new survival techniques each week: from reading a compass to knot tying... especially how to use good judgement and to call on God for help!



Bible Discovery: The children gathered for story time around the bow and stern of our Meeting House Sailing Ship each day to hear stories about Jesus: his parables, his encounters with friends, his own struggles with life, his healing power in forgiveness, and his desire for us to know and love God.



Ship Rec Games: Clearly one of the highlights of VBS was stationed out on the side lawn with the Crew that sent the kids running!...and jumping and hiding and water sporting. Each day a new challenge and game. Each day a chance to play together.

Mission **Let's Get Growing**: Our students and crew learned about the beauty and the struggles on the island of Haiti. We also learned that the gift of \$10 will feed a child for one whole year. Our VBS kids and crew raised over \$700 to purchase drought resistant seeds and provide educational farming opportunities to our brothers and sisters in Haiti.

Tropical Treats: From Graham cracker Rafts to Sand-dune Pudding, each day featured a most creative sampling from this Sunny Snack Shack!



Little Monkeys



Seahorses (Grades Kindergarten & 1st)



Toucans (Grade 2)



Jaguars (Grade 4)



Manta Rays (Grade 5)



Sloths (Grade 6)

We are so blessed each year to share this Story of Love with our world, to have a venue in which to share this good news, and to belong to a family of faith who generously offers their time and talent in such a joyful, creative, and impactful way. Thanks **be to God for this opportunity and privilege....and thank you, FBC, for your support.** Pastor Cindy

First Baptist Church

461 Main Street (next to the College)

Worship ~ 9:00 am & 11:00 am

Communion 1st Sunday One Service ~ 10:00 am

Nursery Available



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SEPTEMBER ISSUE

NEXT DEADLINE:

THIRD THURSDAY OF AUGUST

MAILING AND WEB POSTING:

FOURTH TUESDAY OF AUGUST

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
Paid
New London, NH
Permit No. 6

IN THE FAMILY

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

04 John Bowman
05 Judy Barrett
11 Caroline Foy
13 Katie Cottrill
14 Molly Jallah
19 Barbara Brown, Kevin Tarleton
21 Douglas Foy, Bill Gundy
22 Bob Messer, Doris Phippen
26 Heidi Clarke, Scott Hafner
28 Robert Foy
29 Beverly Benson
31 Mildred Guyette, Nancy Marsh



ANNIVERSARIES

(50+ years)

8/11 Margrit & Kurt Wunderli (62 years)
8/16 Alan & Joan McLean (60 years)



PLEASE PRAY FOR



Diana Seamans and family at the passing of her daughter Jane Seamans Swan on June 11; Midge Cross and family; Court passed away on June 23; Harriet Messer and family at the passing of Peter on June 25; and Peg Bowen and family at the passing of David on July 5.

THANK YOU

Oh my Gosh; the cards, the calls, the hugs and the condolences have been so overwhelming and very much appreciated from so many. My sister Anne was the oldest of the five of us and her leadership, guidance and love helped us all everyday. She is missed and lives on through so many memories and special times together. Thank you all for thinking of us during this transition. You are the best, Read Clarke



Bike & Build

THANK YOU to Vicki Jepson, our chef extraordinaire, who made sure all of the cyclists' dietary needs were met and bellies were full... to all who came out to host and share dinner with these wonderful young adults...and to the NLPD who escorted the cyclists down Seamans Rd. as they left on their journey west.