

*The Messenger of The First Church of Monson*  
*September 2017*

**All-Church Conversation**  
**September 17, 2017**



Hospitality, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers. The Bible contains many examples and exhortations relating to hospitality.

*Let mutual love continue. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.* – Hebrews 13:1-2

*Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.* – Romans 12:13

You are invited to join Pastor Rob and the Deacons for the first of four All-Church Conversations on Sunday, September 17, following the worship service. Our conversation of 'Church and Hospitality' will begin with a brief presentation, followed by a facilitated open conversation. Those attending may speak on the topic presented or whatever church-related topic they wish. This is your opportunity to share where we have been and where we are going and ask questions about our life together.

Three additional All-Church Conversations will follow; all are invited to the following:

October 22 – Church and Community

November 19 – Church and Stewardship

December 17 – Church and Mission

Please plan to attend one or all of these relevant discussions!

All women affiliated with First Church are invited to attend the

**Hearts Willing Club's  
Welcome Back International Dinner  
Wednesday, September 27, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.**



The members of the Program Committee will be providing a variety of ethnic foods from around the world.

Vegetarian and Gluten-free options available

Meal donation: \$5.00 for members

Guests are most welcome – no charge!

Member dues (\$5.00) may be paid this evening.

Program booklet for 2017-2018 will be available.

Please make reservations with President Jane or any member of the Program Committee by Sunday, September 24.

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The lot next to the church's ramp entrance is designated for those with handicap parking permits, except the reserved Pastor's space. As we start up a new church season, please use these spots only if you have a permit

## Stewardship News and Notes

In the fall our thoughts turn to our annual stewardship campaign. During this process we plan our budget for the next calendar year and gather pledges and commitments from our members and friends to fund that budget. The theme of this year's stewardship campaign is *Journey to Generosity*.



This year, Stewardship Sunday will be November 12. We will receive our pledges during worship and celebrate the continued financial health of our church at a luncheon after the service. Please mark this date on your calendar and make every effort to be in worship on this day.

In preparation for Stewardship Sunday, our boards and committees will be planning their programs and activities for the coming year and making budget requests for the money they need to carry out their plans. Any committee or board who will be requesting a salary increase for personnel must submit this request to Church Council by October 3, 2017. Final budget requests are due on October 22.

Our letters requesting pledges and gifts will be sent out to the congregation during the third week of October. If you have not pledged before, we ask you to pledge this year. Knowing ahead of time how much money we can expect to receive (from pledges) makes it much easier for us to plan a responsible budget and stay within it.

Your stewardship committee is also looking for growth in our campaign this year. We would like to grow the number of families who pledge to the church, and we would like to grow the amount pledged by each family. As costs for salaries, utilities, insurance, and maintenance continue to increase, we need to generate more money for the church just to stay even. Please give generously so that we can continue the worship and programs of First Church.

Faithfully,  
Your Stewardship Committee, Crystal and Doug

**Monson Town-wide Tag Sale  
Saturday, September 2, 2017**



Your SUPPORT is needed and much appreciated!

Stop by the church for grilled hot dogs and hamburgers.

Enjoy a baked treat from the Hearts Willing Club's Bake Sale.

Purchase a map of registered vendors. Sale begins at 8 a.m.

**Help make this event a huge success for First Church.**

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Electronics Recycling Day  
Saturday, September 9, 2017, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
First Church parking lot



Time for fall cleaning has arrived! Many household items can be recycled for a small fee. Accepted items include: **electronics** like monitors, computer towers, laptops, copiers, scanners, TVs, VCRs, DVD players, stereo equipment; **household items** like vacuum cleaners, radios, dehumidifiers, microwaves, exercise equipment, gas grills (no propane); **small engine** items like lawn mowers and snow blowers (no gasoline); and **appliances** like stoves, washers and dryers. Fees range from \$5 to \$30 per item. Bicycles, vehicle batteries and scrap metal are accepted with no fee. For more details, please contact the Church Office.



Outreach would like to thank all of those who came out to give blood for our Baystate Blood Drive on July 29; seventeen people presented with eleven able to donate. Thanks also for the overwhelming response to Pastor Rob's 'pasta and sauce' challenge for July's Monson Open Pantry collection. Another challenge will be coming soon!

Let's Eat Breakfast returns on Sunday, September 10, Rally Sunday! A full breakfast will be served every Sunday from 8 to 9:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Room. Please join us; bring your family and friends! Donations are appreciated

We will be collecting for Neighbors in Need (NIN) on Sunday, October 1, World Communion Sunday. NIN is a special mission offering that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the U.S. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Two-thirds is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants.

The daily lectionary for September can be found at

<http://www.macucc.org/files/files/documentsdailylectionary/sept+2017.pdf>



Adult choir rehearsals resume on Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. New voices are always welcome! Please see David or Permie Sears, Co-directors of Music, for more information.

Monson Farmers and Crafters Market  
Thursday, September 7, 2017, 3 to 6 p.m.  
First Church High Street parking lot

Seasonal produce, eggs, cookies & cakes, and crafts

Last market day of the season!



Rally Sunday will be celebrated on September 10 with the start of a new school year. Sunday School classes and Nursery Care will be offered during the 10 a.m. worship time.

## SUMMERFEST BOOTHS UPDATE



First Church sold pretzels, soda, and water at the June 24 fireworks, and more pretzels and beverages as well as strawberry shortcake and lemonade on July 4 at Summerfest. These booths raised \$1,878. Another \$388 was raised by selling space in our parking lot.

Donations for the purchase of supplies came from Florence, Jean, Roy & Lyle, and Betty. Joe prepared the luscious strawberries with syrup and handled the parking. Jane organized a committee of Hearts Willing volunteers who made and donated the delicious biscuits. Michelle arranged for the donation of all the soda and water for both events. Jean and Ken lent their pretzel maker and ordered the supplies. Suzanne paid for the rental fees for the booths.

Ted set up the fireworks pretzel booth by himself, which was a job that needed more help! Joan, Cat, Dori, and Mary manned the busy booth throughout the evening.

On July 4, Ted, Bill, Doug, Gary, and Chris set up and took down the Summerfest booths. Kate, Kathy & Larry, Bruce, Kim, Carolyn & Sprout, Suzanne, Joan & Ted, Anne, Grace, Judie, Mary, Liz, Gail, John & Chris, David, Tom & Carolann, and Joe manned the booths in shifts.

The weather cooperated and all three Summerfest booths were a success. Thanks to all who made it possible!

Suzanne Kelley, Summerfest Booths Coordinator