

## Scripture Lessons:

### **Ephesians 4: 1-7, 11-16**

<sup>1</sup> therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

<sup>7</sup> But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore it is said,

<sup>11</sup> The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. <sup>14</sup> We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

### **I Corinthians 13: 4-6**

<sup>4</sup> Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant <sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; <sup>6</sup> it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

---

**We thank you for worshipping with us. Following the life and teachings of Jesus, we are a church that strives to be a place of grace, welcoming all regardless of theological expression, age, race, gender, sexual identity, national origin or financial means.**

**In our Church Constitution we recognize that "each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the word of God according to the dictates of his or her own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit." The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme, established in 1665, cherishes this proud Pilgrim tradition. We are honored by your presence among us, and we invite you to help us become what we endeavor to be.**

## Stewardship Message

Growing up, my family were members of the Waldwick Methodist Church. Sundays were always very full days what with Sunday School. Choir, church service and, in the evening, MYF – the Methodist Youth Fellowship. Sundays were special for me, but at the time, I couldn't have told you why. It wasn't until I was an adult and away from the church scene, that I realized that what made Sundays special, and what I was missing was being a part of a church family. How good it felt each Sunday to be with a large church family with adults and friends who I could talk and relate to, who had my back, and encouraged me when others did not. I missed that, but it took almost 40 years before I was able to find a new church family. There were a number of bumps along the road. As a member of the Queer community, it's not easy finding an accepting church. Many of you were here when I made my last testimonial and told how my late partner and I were told by the minister of a church we had visited that we were not welcome because we made his parishioners "uncomfortable".

When you have that kind of rejection, it's not easy to find one's way back to church. But luckily for me, I did. About 6 or 7 years ago, I came into FCCOL and found what I was looking for; an open, accepting church family. And things didn't end with just my becoming a member.

I've been a proud member of the Board of Deacons for the past 3+ years, and over the last year and a half we have assisted Steve, Laura and Carleen in finding our way through this COVID pandemic. And now that it appears the worst of the pandemic has passed and we're back in the Meeting House, we're hoping and helping to rebuild and refresh our congregation. Sadly, my term as a Deacon will be over at the end of the year, and I will miss my time with newly made friends. In addition, I am also a proud member on the board of the Ladies Benevolent Society. The LBS has been frustrated that we've not been able to host our usual events, but we are moving forward with a Holiday Sale that will take place on November 20 and 21. Hopefully we will be able to hold the beloved White Elephant Sale next July, and also hopefully we'll be able to start the monthly luncheons which are near and dear to my heart since I often get to be the chef for those events.

Can you guess that I'm a supporter of FCCOL? I hope so. FCCOL has so much to offer, you just need to know where to look. You are my church family – thank you for letting me be a part of it.

-Rick Strickhart