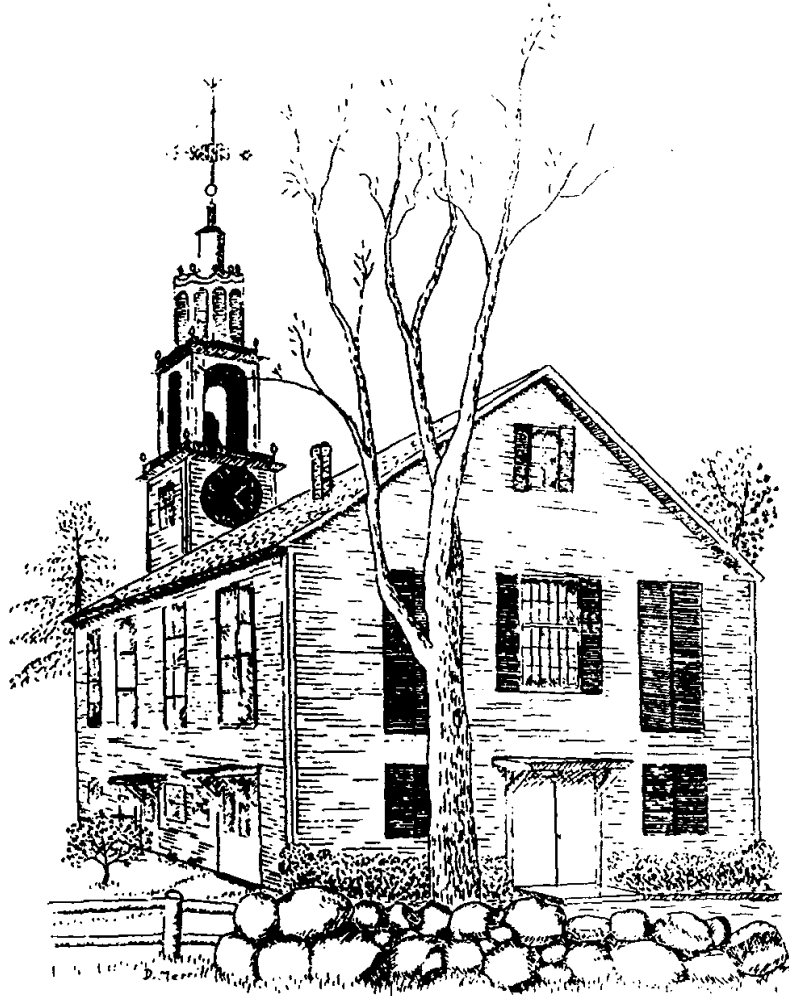


First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road
East Derry, New Hampshire 03041
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

December 21, 2014 Advent 4 Year B



Doris Merrill

ALL ARE WELCOME

*“Friend, you enter this church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God.
Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks upon your lips,
and offer God today your love and your service.”*

(Adapted from a 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England)

December 21, 2014 Fourth Sunday of Advent Year B

Christmas Caroling

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS & SHARING OF OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

CHIME CHOIR "Angels We Have Heard On High" Arranged by Linda Lamb

*Lighting of the Advent Candle: Fourth Sunday of Advent: Love
- with help from the Simpson Family*

One: Hope is a light given by God to every Child of God.

All: We light the candle of Hope as we remember Christ's gift.

(Light the candle of Hope)

One: The flame of Peace, just as the Peace of Christ, is the true order of life.

All: We light the candle of Peace as we remember to live in Christ's Peace.

(Light the candle of Peace)

One: Joy is the celebration given by God through the light of the world.

All: Let us dance and sing and shout for joy. Christ is coming again!

(Light the candle of Joy)

One: Love is the wick given by God that is central to the life itself.

All: Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. (Light the candle of Love)

*HYMN NO. 119

"My Soul Gives Glory to My God"

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Blessed are those who walk in God's light and love.

All: Let the heavens proclaim the enduring love of our God.

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (in unison)

We bring our spiritual hungers to this place, O God, hoping to be fed.

We bring our weariness, expecting to find rest for our souls. We bring our dullness, asking that we might be alerted to those things that you consider important. Reveal yourself to us here, we pray in the name of One who came to share our common lot. Amen.

*SONG OF PRAISE NO. 759 **Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit - Three in One; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S LITTLE CHILDREN

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

Hymn No. 138

Jesus, Our Brother, Strong and Good

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

In our thanks, these gifts we bring, for you give us everything. Teach us how to follow you, in all we say, and all we do. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE – We are on our way to Bethlehem. Who Is in the Stable today?

RECEIVING THE PEACE LIGHT OF BETHLEHEM FROM BOY SCOUT TROUP 405

GOD'S WORD IN SONG

CHOIR CANTATA

"Images of Adoration"

Pepper Choplin

Beautiful Candlelight (Lead Us to the Light of the World)

Beautiful Christmas, Beautiful Child

Little Bitty Babe in a Manger

Forever Evergreen

Red Is the Color of Love (The Christmas Flower)

We Have Seen the Star!

As We Bow Before the King

Celebrate the Child

WE RESPOND WITH OUR STEWARDSHIP AND OUR PRAYERS

PASTORAL MEDITATION FOLLOWED BY PRAYER

Followed by THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

"Come to Me"

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

God gives us responsibilities in the church and the world to carry good news, to build and not destroy, to feed the hungry and house the homeless, to be faithful in all things. Our financial offerings are one sign of faithfulness and obedience.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

***DOXOLOGY #780 Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below; Praise God above, you heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Our best we give to you, loving God, for you have given your best to us in the mystery of the incarnation. May our offerings proclaim Jesus in ways that will be received with joy. Send your Word to the world in this season through our caring service. May we share it with one another in ways that help us all to grow. We are your servants. The gifts we dedicate are already yours. Thank you for all the ways you have provided for us. Amen.

WE ARE SENT OUT TO LOVE AND SERVE A LOVING, SERVING GOD

*HYMN NO. 105

"Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine"

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

"Christ, be our Light"

POSTLUDE

**Indicates all that are able may stand.*

FLOWERS Offered by Sue and Rod Hunt in memory of Sue's parents, Sanford and Ruth Archer

From the Pastor's Desk:

Merry Christmas to you! This is our last Sunday before Christmas Eve services. I pray that you and yours enjoy a very blessed and sacred Christmas together. If you can be among us at one of the Christmas Eve services, I look forward to seeing you then. If you are traveling, be safe and stay warm.

We arrive at the end of our fiscal calendar, as well. Whereas we had an amazing reaction and much support for our Capitol Campaign, achieving our \$800,000 goal for the rehabilitation projects, we seem to be coming up short on our regular church income. The pledged amount to First Parish was \$185K, but we have only received \$160K. This is only 86% of our target. We need your help to catch up.

In twelve step programs like AA, one of the valued traditions states: "We are self-supporting through our own contributions." The fact is that as a church, we, too, are "self-supporting." Three-quarters of our income is financial support given by members and friends on or because of Sunday morning.

A clergyperson once announced to his congregation: "I've got good news and I've got bad news. The good news is that we have all the money we need to balance our budget and continue doing our mission work... And the bad news is that the money is still in your pockets."

Jesus says: "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back." Luke 6:38 (NRSV)

Can you help? First Parish Congregational Church does great work here on the hill in East Derry and in the community below. In a variety of ways we feed the hungry, we help the helpless and the homeless. We provide hospitality through spaghetti and Family Promise. We welcome the stranger and the outcast. We visit the sick and the imprisoned. All of these things, Jesus calls us to do for "the least of these." Your financial contribution is needed and it is, of course, tax deductible. Please consider adding to your financial support of First Parish. God loves a cheerful giver! (Yes, the Bible really does say that! 2 Cor. 9:7)

Leaving you with Hope, Peace, Joy and Love,
Pastor Deborah

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH
DEACONS OF THE MONTH
LAY READER
USHERS

GREETER(s)
PASTOR
AFFILIATE PASTOR
MUSIC DIRECTOR
ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST
OFFICE MANAGER
NEWSLETTER/CE CONSULTANT

Members of the Congregation
Diana Sweeney and Sandy Carter
Sandy Carter
Ross and Linda Webber
Kevin and Diane Gordon; along with Michael Bryan
Ruth Honnors
The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof
Rev. Chester R. Ham
Susan Handy
Jeff DeLangie
Lindsey Roman
Julie Daysa

First Parish Congregational Church United Church of Christ

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Office Manager: Lindsey Roman Email: officemgr@fpc-ucc.org

Office Hours: Tues, Wed & Fri: 9:00-3:00pm; Thurs 10:30-6:00

Our website www.fpc-ucc.org Find us and 'friend us' on Facebook www.facebook.com/fpcucc

