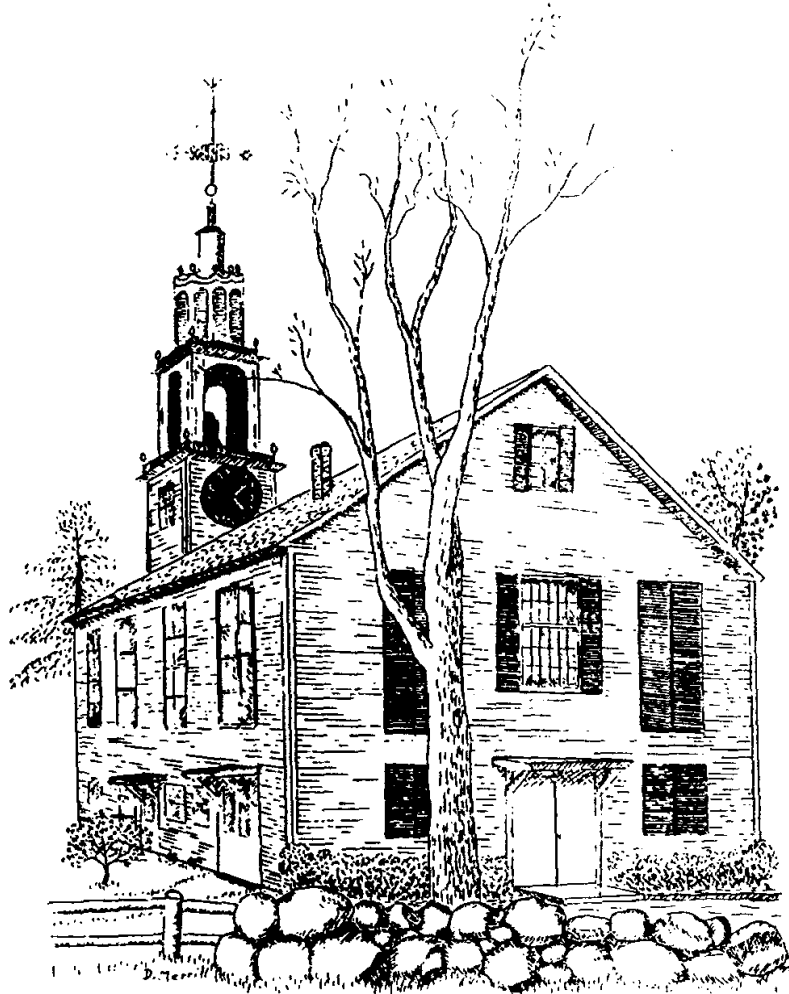


First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road
East Derry, New Hampshire 03041
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

December 28, 2014

First Sunday After Christmas



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 28, 2014 First Sunday After Christmas

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS & SHARING OF OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We enter into worship under the light of God's star.

All: We follow in the path of wandering seekers of long ago.

One: We have experienced Christmas: let us center its meaning in our lives.

**All: Our prayers, our songs, our hopes,
even our fears are holy through God's gift of love.**

*HYMN NO. 129 *"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"*

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (in unison)

Gentle God, the tinsel falls, the year turns, the carols fade. The blessing of Bethlehem that touched all the gray in our lives with star-silver is past. In this turning season of long cold nights, we ask God's presence beyond our holidays into the wintering times of our lives, so that we can begin to grow and become strong, filled with wisdom and the favor of God. 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

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.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

*HYMN NO. 133 *"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

HEBREW SCRIPTURE Isaiah 61:10-62:3 (O.T. p. 768)

GOSPEL Luke 2:22-40 (N.T. p. 60)

SERMON "My Eyes Have Seen Your Salvation" The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

WE RESPOND WITH OUR STEWARDSHIP AND OUR PRAYERS

*HYMN NO. 148 *"What Child is This?"*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

We are invited to praise God with the offerings of our best. In the generous spirit of this season, we give thanks for God's providence with an answering generosity. What a privilege to act for God through our giving!

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

Awesome God, when we recount your gracious deeds and praiseworthy acts, we want to imitate them. Because of your mercy and favor and the abundance of your steadfast love, we are moved to respond. Thank you for the gift of life, for all you have entrusted to us, for your watchful care over us, for surrounding us with love when loss and suffering overwhelm us. It is when we give with generous hearts that we begin to understand how much we have been given. Thank you, God. Amen.

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

*HYMN NO. 144

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

**Indicates all that are able may stand.*

FLOWERS Offered by Cyndi Gray - In Memory of Sam Gray on his birthday

Welcome Visitors!

As members of the United Church of Christ we say: "No matter **who** you are or **where** you are on life's journey, **you** are welcome here! We mean it!"

Please introduce yourself to an usher and come meet Pastor Deborah.

Feel free to join us for refreshments in Currier Hall immediately following the service.

If you would like information about our church or would like to be added to our mailing list, please fill out a bright yellow "How May We Serve You"/ "Communication Options" card located in the pews and at the back of the Sanctuary. We also have cards available in the church office. Thank you for worshiping with us. We are honored to have you with us today.

First Parish Congregational MISSION STATEMENT: This is who we are!

First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ,

is a community of faith built upon a firm foundation of worship, prayer and education.

In affirming diversity, we are dedicated to welcoming all people who seek the Word of God, Christian fellowship and service to others.

**In partnership with Christ and led by the Holy Spirit,
we reach out to the ever-widening community through active and loving ministry.**

Membership – Interested in becoming a member of First Parish? Please contact Pastor Deborah at pastordebora@fpc-ucc.org.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

If you want contributions to be included in your tax returns for 2014, they must be at the church on or before **January 11, 2015** and should be dated **December 31, 2014**. The books will be **closed Monday, January 12, 2014**.

Thank you, Pat Crowell

P.S. We deeply appreciate end-of-the-year charitable gifts.

ANNUAL REPORT deadline is January 1, 2015.

A Note from our Stewardship Board:

We have received **101** pledge cards. Our goal is **148**. It's not too late!

Fran Berube, John Bartel, Carl Hepworth, Pat Crowell and Pastor Deborah

SoulCollage®: SoulCollage® is a fun, creative, intuitive and absorbing process of creating cards with collated images. Liz Greenberg recently returned from an intensive weekend workshop in which she was trained to share this process with others. Her excitement and passion is overflowing and she would love to share her enthusiasm and knowledge with her church family by **offering a 3-hour introductory workshop from 9-noon on Saturday, January 10 in A/B**. SoulCollage® is *stress-free* fun, with all materials provided. **Advanced registration is necessary:** please RSVP by e-mailing Liz at lizgreenberg26@gmail.com.

Family Promise: The next week that our church is scheduled to co-host for the Family Promise program, with People's United Methodist church of Fremont, is **Jan 11-17**. Hosting takes place, as always, at the Calvary Baptist church just a mile or so down East Derry road from our own church. If you can help out that week by (1) cooking and delivering a meal, (2) spending a few hours on a weeknight evening or on Saturday the 24th with the families, or (3) spending an overnight there, please call Randy Brown at **603-612-0489**, or email me at sueandrandybrown@gmail.com.

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
Pat Plouff
Becky Fleury, Verna Elwell
Tom and Andrea Cooper
Michael Bryan
Lisa Hall
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

PO BOX 114, 47 East Derry Rd East Derry, NH 03041 Tel. 603.434.0628 Fax. 603.437.3001

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/fpccucc



Scriptures – December 28

Isaiah 61.10-62.3

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

² The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

³ You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Luke 2.22-40

22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'),²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law,²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.'

33 And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

36 There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.