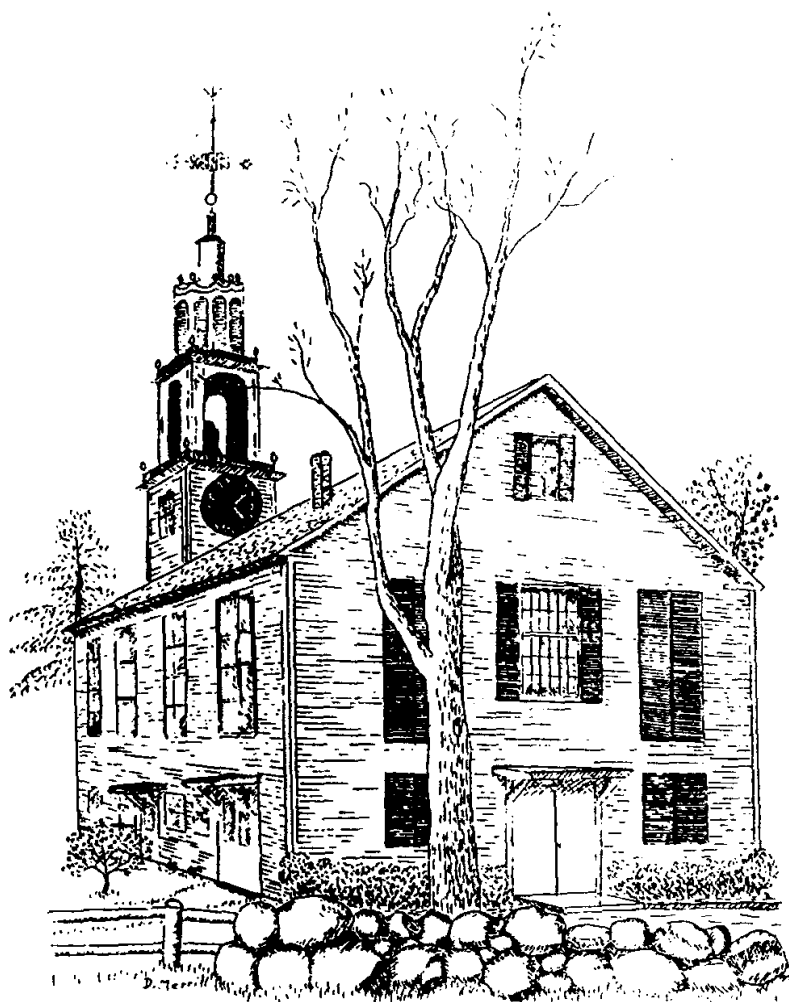


First Parish Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road  
East Derry, New Hampshire 03041  
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

**January 3, 2015      Second 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)

**January 3, 2015**

**Second Sunday after Christmas**

**Jesus said:** 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and **you gave me food**, I was thirsty and **you gave me something to drink**, I was a stranger and **you welcomed me**, I was naked and **you gave me clothing**, I was sick and **you took care of me**, I was in prison and **you visited me.**' (Matthew 25:34-36)

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS & JOYS AND CONCERNS

**WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Lighting the Candles

\*HYMN NO. 148

*"What Child is This?"*

\*CALL TO WORSHIP RESPONSE

One: This is a time for beginnings, a time to encounter God.

**All: God is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.**

One: Look to the heavens and wonder at the magnitude of space.

**All: God calls us to minister to all God's children.**

\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (in unison)

**God of creation and newness, we bring you our past, that it may teach us. We bring our future, that it may be blessed with vision and hope. We bring this present moment, that you may fill it with your transforming presence. We want to be part of your new heaven and new earth. We seek to enjoy your creation without destroying it. Teach us, guide us, love us into your will. Amen.**

\*SONG OF PRAISE #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.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

Jesus promised a time of judgment when our faithfulness to God and one another would be tested. Let us seek forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

**O God, you have entrusted to us the stewardship of the earth. We confess that we have seen the hungry without giving food, the thirsty without digging wells to fill their cups, the homeless without standing beside them to build shelters from the cold. Forgive our misjudgments, our inaction, our lukewarm faith, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God is making all things new. Our past does not prescribe our future. God will dwell with us to make us a new people, responsive to God's eternal design.

**WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S LITTLE CHILDREN**

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

**Dear God, we offer you our gifts with thanks and praise, be with us and guide us all of our days. Teach us how to love each other, and to shine your light into the world. Amen.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pastor Deborah

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.**

### THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

HYMN NO. 336                    *"Here, O My Lord, I See You" (Communion, v. 1, 2, & 5)*

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER of CONSECRATION

OUR SACRED STORY: JESUS in the BREAKING of the BREAD and CUP POURED OUT

SHARING the MEAL

Pastor Deborah says the words of institution: **"This is the body of Christ, broken for you."**

You may eat the bread when you receive it. This symbolizes that we, each, have a private relationship with God. Please hold the cup until everyone is served. We will drink the Cup of Salvation in unison, which symbolizes that we are together in a community of faith.

To the best of your ability and comfort level please participate in this sacrament with your eyes and your voice. Make eye contact with your neighbor and say the words **"The Bread of Life."** Respond with: **"Amen"** or **"Thanks be to God."**

As you pass the tray of grape juice, please say the words **"The Cup of Salvation"** or **"The Cup of Love"**. Again, your response is: **"Amen"** or **"Thanks be to God."**

If you are accompanying your children: they are invited to participate and we trust that you will teach them the meaning of this sacred meal.

Gluten-free bread is available. Let the server know.

PRAYER of THANKSGIVING (in unison)

**Thank you, God, for life in the Spirit of Jesus:**

**For gladness in this bread and cup, for love that cannot die,**

**For peace the world cannot give, for joy in the company of friends,**

**For the glory of creation, for the mission of justice you have made our own.**

**In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.**

### WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

\*HYMN NO. 128

*"In the Bleak Midwinter"*

HEBREW SCRIPTURE I

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

(O.T. pp. 683-684)

HEBREW SCRIPTURE II

Revelation 21:1-6a

(N.T. p. 282)

GOSPEL

Matthew 25:31-46

(N.T. pp. 29-30)

SERMON

A Clean Slate

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

CHOIR ANTHEM

### WE RESPOND WITH OUR PRAYERS

PASTORAL PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE

*"Come to Me"*

Bell

### WE RESPOND WITH OUR MONETARY GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

As God wipes away tears and reframes our suffering into opportunities for growth, we are challenged to reach out to those who are suffering in our own community and in other lands.

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 (UNISON)

**Generous and loving God, receive our gifts; receive our lives made new by your blessing. May we plant seeds, heal wounds, and build up your world. May we love and seek and embrace your children. We dedicate these offerings and ourselves toward the realization of your realm in our midst. Multiply and prosper our ministries in Christ’s name. Amen.**

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

\*HYMN NO. 159 *“As with Gladness Those of Old”*

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *“Christ Be Our Light”*

POSTLUDE

*\*Indicates all that are able may stand.*

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH  
DEACONS OF THE MONTH  
LAY READER  
USHERS

Members of the Congregation  
Pat Plouff and Cyndi Gray  
Libby Keller  
Diaconate  
Michael Bryan

GREETER(s)  
SENIOR PASTOR  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR  
AFFILIATE PASTOR  
MUSIC DIRECTOR  
ORGANIST  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Verna Elwell and Shirley Dickason  
The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof  
The Rev. Heidi Carrington Heath  
The Rev. Chester R. Ham  
Susan Handy  
Jeff DeLangie  
Lindsey Roman

**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. Thank you for worshiping with us. We are honored to have you with us today.**

**A MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

If you want contributions to be included in your tax returns for 2015, they must be at the church on or before **January 8, 2016** and should be dated **December 31, 2015**. The books will be **closed Monday, January 11, 2016**.

**Thank you, Pat Crowell**

**Annual Report:** Reports are due to Lindsey by Tuesday, Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> by end of day (4:30pm). Thank you!