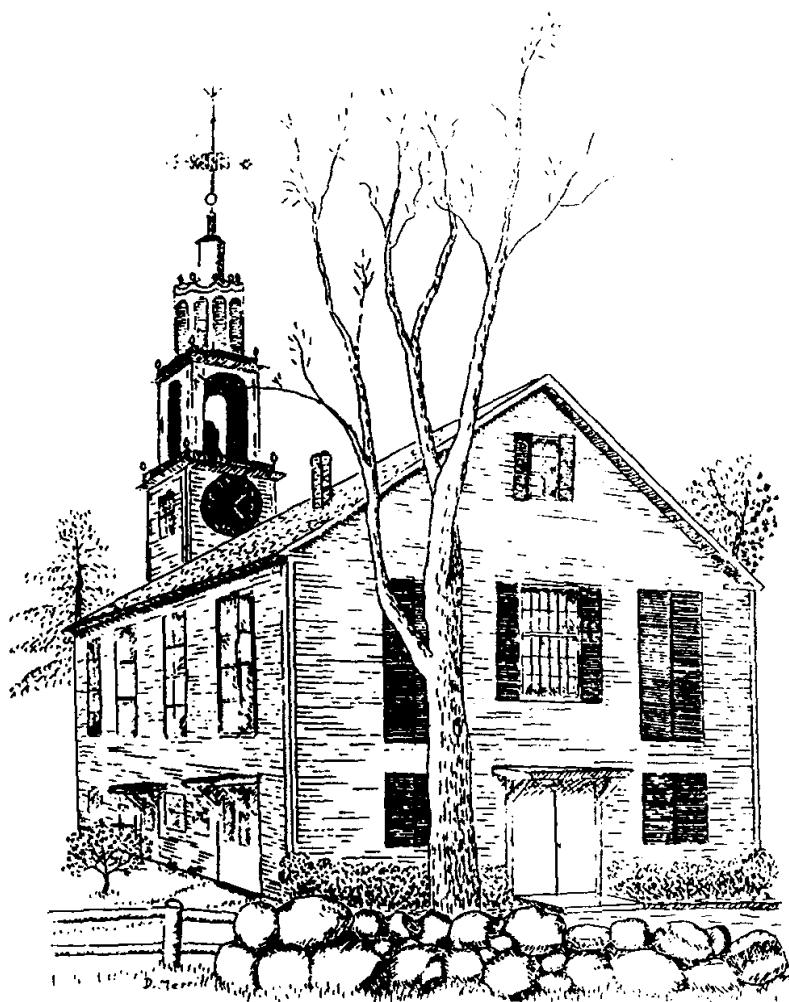


First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road
East Derry, New Hampshire 03041
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

April 3, 2016 Second Sunday of Easter



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)

April 3, 2016

Second Sunday of Easter

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.

WELCOME

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

*HYMN NO. 230

"Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain"

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: God is our strength and our salvation;

All: let everything that breathes praise our God!

One: This is the day that God has made;

All: We will rejoice and be glad in it!

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (in unison)

God of all our beginnings, may this day and every day begin with our praise to you. Let every breath become a witness to your Spirit, dwelling within and among us. Open our hearts and loosen our tongues! May the noise of our celebration help your people to sense your powerful presence and to claim the joy of serving you, in Christ's name. Amen.

*SONG OF PRAISE #236 Halle, halle, halleluja. Halle, halle, halleluja.

Halle, halle, halleluja. Halle, halle, halleluja.

CALL TO CONFESSION

The frantic pace of our busyness has left little time or energy to ponder the marvelous works of God. We have closed the doors of our hearts to a presence who longs to claim us. Let us join in humble confession.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

God of our ancestors, how easily we have made you a relic of the past. We are ruled by fears more than faith, by hostility more than peace, by a sense of failure more than feelings of accomplishment and victory. Forgive our misuse of the precious days you have entrusted to us. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

We are loved. We are forgiven. The steadfast love of God endures forever. Fill the sanctuary with joyous praise!

WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S LITTLE CHILDREN

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

"I'm Gonna Sing"

I'm goin' a sing when the Spirit says sing (x2)

I'm goin' a sing when the Spirit says sing, and obey the Spirit of the Lord.

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

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. 342

"Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread"

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. 257

"Alleluia! Gracious Jesus"

HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Psalm 150

(O.T. p. 646)

GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

(N.T. pp. 119-120)

SERMON

Recognizing Christ

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

CHOIR ANTHEM

"In this Very Room"

Ron and Carol Harris

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

COMMUNITY TIME

What is happening at First Parish?

PASTORAL PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE

"Jesus, Remember Me"

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

As the apostles filled Jerusalem with their teaching about Jesus, we are called to bring good news to the world. Our witness is in word and deed, in time and treasure. Give thanks in all things, for God is good. With our gifts we express thanks for God's steadfast love which endures forever.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY #775 **And God will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of God's hand.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

For the breath of life, for eyes to see, for insight to believe, for courage to witness, we give thanks, gracious God. May this offering witness to your grace and peace. Grant your Spirit as a transforming power among us that inspires and enables our service. Amen.

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

*HYMN NO. 253 *"Yours is the Glory"*

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *"Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"*

POSTLUDE

**Indicates all that are able may stand.*

FLOWERS – Offered by Beth Hunter in memory of Richard (Dick) Hunter
& celebration of his 70th birthday

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

DEACONS OF THE MONTH

LAY READER

USHERS

GREETER(s)

PASTOR

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

MUSIC DIRECTOR

ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Members of the Congregation

Fred Merrill and Joanne Worthen

Ashley Cox

Diaconate

Michael Bryan

Verna Elwell and Shirley Dickason

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

The Rev. Heidi Carrington Heath

Susan Handy

Jeff DeLangie

Lindsey Roman

Scriptures – April 3

Psalm 150

¹ Praise the LORD!

Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty firmament!

² Praise him for his mighty deeds;

praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

³ Praise him with trumpet sound;

praise him with lute and harp!

⁴ Praise him with tambourine and dance;

praise him with strings and pipe!

⁵ Praise him with clanging cymbals;

praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

⁶ Let everything that breathes praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD!

John 20.19-31

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' ²⁸ Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' ²⁹ Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.