

First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road
East Derry, New Hampshire 03041
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August 27, 2017 Proper 16



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)

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 TO ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS; GOT GRATITUDE?
SHARING JOYS & CONCERNS**

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP (Please stand in body or Spirit.)**

One: Our help is from God, who made heaven and earth.

All: God has gifted each one of us in unique ways.

One: In our variety, we complement one another.

All: We rejoice in God's love and faithfulness.

One: Blessed be our God, whose word is true.

All: In thankfulness, we bring our joyous songs.

***HYMN #377 - Forward Through the Ages**

***INVOCATION**

Holy God, who revealed to Peter the significance of Jesus' loving ministry, open our ears to hear your Word for us, and our eyes to see ways you are working among us today. We seek the keys to your realm where all are welcome and freedom is offered to become all we can be. May cheerfulness, generosity, and compassion abound among us. Amen.

***SONG OF PRAISE**

**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 YOUNGER DISCIPLES

At this time, all children are invited to come forward for the children's offering, and children's time. An offering is not required for participation. All are welcome, especially first time visitors.

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

"Jesus Loves Me"

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

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

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 #456 - More Love to You, O Christ

OLD TESTAMENT

Psalm 124

If the LORD had not been on our side—let Israel say—² if the LORD had not been on our side when people attacked us, ³ they would have swallowed us alive when their anger flared against us; ⁴ the flood would have engulfed us, the torrent would have swept over us, ⁵ the raging waters would have swept us away. ⁶ Praise be to the LORD, who has not let us be torn by their teeth. ⁷ We have escaped like a bird from the fowler's snare; the snare has been broken, and we have escaped. ⁸ Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

NEW TESTAMENT

Romans 12:1-8

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. ⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your^[a] faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,^[b] do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

GOSPEL

Matthew 16:13-20

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter,^[a] and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades^[b] will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be^[c] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be^[d] loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

We are invited to give with generosity, to minister in caring ways, to lead with diligence, to teach with enthusiasm. We cannot be all things to all people. But we can tithe the many gifts God pours out on us and do our best to live up to God's trust in us.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY #785

**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Receive our offering, gracious God, as an expression of our thankfulness. In your church, we are privileged to cultivate the dimensions of our lives that give meaning and purpose to all we do. Here we become aware that the greatest gifts we receive are not material, and we learn how best to use the particular gifts you give us. At the same time, you show us how our material advantages can help others. May many be blessed through our sharing of these offerings and our sharing of ourselves.

WE GO OUT TO LOVE AND SERVE A LOVING, SERVING GOD

*HYMN #306 - The Church of Christ in Every Age

*BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE: Let There Be Peace On Earth

**Indicates all that are able may stand.*

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

DEACONS OF THE MONTH

LAY READER

USHERS

GREETER(s)

SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER

MUSIC DIRECTOR

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Members of the Congregation

Diane Dunn and Cyndi Gray

Sarah Keller

Becky Fleury, Verna Elwell, Margie Ives and Michael Bryan

Beth Hunter

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

Susan Handy

Christine Lehoullier

Chris Ferrin

Hannah Collier