

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

March 4, 2018 Third Sunday in Lent



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)

March 4, 2018 Third Sunday in Lent

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.

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

LIGHTING THE CHRIST LIGHT

Acolyte: Charlotte Dugan

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS; SHARING JOYS & CONCERNS

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

One: The heavens are telling the glory of God

Many: Let us celebrate the steadfast love of God, our Creator.

One: From the sun's rising to its setting, the creation speaks.

Many: God's love is perfect, calling forth our best.

*HYMN: - How Great Thou Art (insert)

***INVOCATION**

All-wise and all-loving God, we are drawn together in this place. All the pieces of our busy days need a center. At the cross, love went the distance for us and the paths of service were lifted above our passion for personal gain. You are our Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

***SONG OF PRAISE #760**

Amen siyakudumisa. (Amen, we praise your name)

Amen, Bawo; Amen Bawo; (Amen Father)

Amen siyakudumisa. (Amen, we praise your name)

CALL TO CONFESSION

The psalmist declared that our souls are revived by God's perfect law. At its center is the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. Let us confess those things in our lives that keep us from realizing that love.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In unison)

We confess that we sometimes forget whose house this is. We forget that all the word belongs to you as we scramble for all we can claim for ourselves. Our actions deny your love. Our minds have justified the bending and breaking of your law to suit current trends and feelings. We cry out for forgiveness. Clear us of hidden faults and redeem us from those we recognize and confess. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

When in awe before God, we truly seek forgiveness. The almighty becomes for us a guiding presence. We are healed, strengthened, and set free from our attachments to sin. In steadfast love, God claims us, saying: You are my people. Thanks be to God.

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

"I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing"

I'm going to sing when the Spirit says sing (repeat 3x)

And obey the Spirit of the Lord

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

In our hearts 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

Pastor Deborah

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

CHOIR ANTHEM:

"One Bread, One Body"

Foley, arr Larson

OUR SACRED STORY with the PRAYER of CONSECRATION

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.

SHARING the MEAL

This morning we will celebrate communion by coming forward to receive both bread (gluten free option will be served by the central server) and a cup of grape juice. You will come forward to receive and eat your morsel of bread. Move to the next server where you will receive and drink your cup of grape juice. You may then leave the empty cup in the basket provided before returning to your seat. Your children are invited to participate and we trust that you will teach them the sacred meaning of this holy meal.

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: #211 – Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

OLD TESTAMENT: Psalm 19:1-8, 14

GOSPEL: John 2:13-22

SERMON

"An Acceptable Sacrifice"

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

CHOIR ANTHEM

“If Anybody Asks You”

Mark Hayes

PASTORAL PRAYER

CHORAL PRAYER

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

The gifts we bring are important, but even more, we are invited to commit ourselves to God’s foolishness, to the way of love. May it be our passion to extend love to all earth’s people by giving with open hearts. The morning offering will now be received!

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

We bring our offerings, O God, to express our gratitude, and to further your mission. We seek to make this community of faith a center of values that are consistent with your will. May we be zealous in your service, willing to sacrifice for love’s sake, and eager to embrace your word in our everyday living. Amen.

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

*HYMN: #543 – Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life
(Please be seated after the hymn.)

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE (Please remain seated during the Postlude)

**Indicates all that are able may stand.*

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

DEACONS OF THE MONTH

LAYREADER:

USHERS

GREETER(s)

SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER

MUSIC DIRECTOR

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Members of the Congregation

Diane Breeden, Ryan Lehoullier & Julie Turner

Harry Handy

Diaconate and Michael Bryan

Verna Elwell and Shirley Dickason

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

Susan Handy

Christine Lehoullier

Chris Ferrin

Hannah Collier