

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 30, 2018
First Sunday after Christmas



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)

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

LIGHTING THE CHRIST LIGHT

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS; SHARING JOYS & CONCERNS

*HYMN: #132- Joy To The World!

* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Men and women, old and young, together:
Praise God and exalt the Author of Life.

**Many: Praise God in the highest heavens.
Praise God, all dwellers on the earth.**

One: God commanded, and we were created.
God sustains us and enables us to grow.

**Many: Praise God, all who seek to live in faithfulness.
Glorify God's name and join the loving community.**

One: Know that we are chosen by God, holy and beloved.
We are called into one body, the church of Jesus Christ.

**Many: Let us draw close to God and to one another.
Let us join with all creation to worship God.**

*INVOCATION (unison)

Height and breadth, length and depth, the whole universe proclaims your glory, faithful God. Your wisdom fills the universe with possibilities we have not tapped. Your Word comes to us filled with riches we have not mined. Within ourselves is the potential for greatness as yet unrealized. Confront us here with your eternal claim on us that we may become the kind, compassionate, and patient people you intend for us to be. Amen.

***SONG OF PRAISE** There's a song of Love

There's a song of love in my heart,
Love is a gift from Jesus.

There's a song of love in my heart,
Love is a gift from God.

There's a song of joy in my heart,
Joy is a gift from Jesus.

There's a song of joy in my heart,
Joy is a gift from God.

There's a song of peace in my heart,
Peace is a gift from Jesus.

There's a song of peace in my heart,
Peace is a gift from God.

There's a song of hope in my heart,
Hope is a gift from Jesus.

There's a song of hope in my heart,
Hope is a gift from 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 and 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

Christine Lehoullier

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.

Children are excused as we sing: **"Go now in peace. Go now in peace. May the love of God surround you everywhere, everywhere you may go."**

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WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

OLD TESTAMENT: Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

NEW TESTAMENT: Matthew 25:31-46

SERMON: Take a Look in the Mirror

***Special Music: Debbie Gline Allen, recorder, Dani Gline Allen, guitar**

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

HYMN: # 128- In the Bleak Midwinter

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

In the name of Jesus Christ, we respond to God's forgiveness and empowerment with thanksgiving and praise. As we have been blessed, so we share. May our offerings express compassion and kindness within our faith community and in our outreach to our immediate surroundings and to the world.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

***DOXOLOGY Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below; Praise God above you heavenly host: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

We are thankful for the love that gave us life, for the mission that gives purpose to our days, and for the peace that Christ grants to us. Keep us from needless anxiety, that we may give without counting the cost. We give ourselves as well as our money, that your Word may spread where it is not known and take root where it has not been heeded. Amen.

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

***HYMN: # 154 – Go Tell It on the Mountain**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (Please remain seated during the Postlude)

**Indicates all that are able may stand.*

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH	Members of the Congregation
DEACONS OF THE MONTH	Sue Lindemann, Ryan Lehoullier
LAY READER	Joanne Worthen
USHERS	Brian Williams, Margie Ives, Michael Bryan
GREETER	Liz Greenberg
SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER	The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof
INTERIM DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY	Debbie Gline Allen
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR	Christine Lehoullier
ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST	Chris Ferrin
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Michelle Guerrin

The United Church of Christ: What We Believe

We believe in the triune God: A Creator, the resurrected Christ, the sole Head of the church, and the Holy Spirit, who guides and brings about the creative and redemptive work of God in the world.

We believe that each person is unique and valuable. It is the will of God that every person belong to a family of faith where they have a strong sense of being valued and loved.

We believe that each person is on a spiritual journey and that each of us is at a different stage of that journey.

We believe that the persistent search for God produces an authentic relationship with God, engendering love, strengthening faith, dissolving guilt, and giving life purpose and direction.

OLD TESTAMENT: Ecclesiastes 3: 1-13

¹For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

²a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

³a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;

⁴a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

⁵a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

⁶a time to seek, and a time to lose;

a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

⁷a time to tear, and a time to sew;

a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

⁸a time to love, and a time to hate;

a time for war, and a time for peace.

⁹What gain have the workers from their toil? ¹⁰I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. ¹¹He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. ¹²I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; ¹³moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil.



NEW TESTAMENT: Matthew 25: 31-46

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for 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, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?

³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

