

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 1, 2019**  
**Advent 1**  
**Communion Sunday**



**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.

## **CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

### **WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

#### **WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS & JOYS AND CONCERNS**

Lighting of the Advent Candle for the First Sunday of Advent:  
Hope

**One:** Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

**All:** **Lead us in your truth, and teach us, for you are the God of my salvation; for you we wait all day long.**

**One:** In the beginning was the Word— spoken and breathed, a promise made and kept.

**All:** **Listen and hear— God's promise is true!**

**One:** The Word was in the beginning, and through him all things come into being.

**All: Eternal and near at hand, Already and not-yet, God's promise is the foundation of all life.**

One: Listen! Hear the covenant anew, giving voice to a future with hope.  
(The first candle – the candle of HOPE – is lit.)

\*HYMN #116 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vss 1, 2)

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Make straight the way of the Lord! The day of the Lord is drawing near.

**Many: Christ is coming for God is doing a new thing.**

One: As you wrap presents and put up trees, be mindful of our Lord's gift.

**Many: Let us prepare for the coming of Christ's hope.**

\* INVOCATION (in unison)

**In compassion and trust, we approach you, God of the Covenant. Day by day, your promises are fulfilled among us. Help us to prepare ourselves and our communities for Christ's coming. Amen. (You may be seated.)**

CALL TO CONFESSION

An air of anticipation challenges us to fresh beginnings. Do the cares of life weigh us down by? Do we come from a place of kindness or criticism in this world where criticism runs rampant and kindness is so needed? This is a time to rid ourselves of old ways and embrace the newness God offers.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of promises and possibilities, we admit that we color the world according to our own limited vision. We look at situations and forget to give others the benefit of the doubt ... and we judge.**

**Hear us now as we confess our shortcomings to you and entrust them to your forgiving care. Help us to let go of them and forgive ourselves. Help us to renew our covenant with you and to live constructively with one another. In the spirit of Jesus Christ, whose coming among us we await with great expectation. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God's mercy is available to us every day. We can choose to accept the difference it can make within us. God's steadfast love is waiting to embrace us as whole people, to instruct us and to lead us in the paths of truth. Let us put our trust in God, for that is our only security.

**\*SONG OF PRAISE** "Gloria in excelsis Deo"

ANTHEM "Emmanuel, Expected Jesus" by Ruth Schram

## **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

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

COMMUNION HYMN #257 Alleluia! Gracious Jesus! (vs 1, 3)

OUR SACRED STORY

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION and 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

As we celebrate Communion today, **you will remain seated.** The elements will be brought to you - the **ushers will serve each half-row.** You will first be invited to take the bread – **which you will HOLD so that we can ALL take the bread together.** This symbolizes that we are ONE BODY and that we are

all one in the Spirit of Christ. (Please let us know if you need gluten-free bread.)

You will then be invited to take a cup of grape juice which symbolizes the cup of wine that Jesus shared with his friends, saying “This is my blood shed for you.” You are invited to prayerfully drink the cup in your own time. This demonstrates that we are each individuals in God’s Presence - each one doing the best that they can to be the hands and feet of Christ on this earth.

PRAYER of COMMUNION 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.**

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: Jeremiah 33:14-18

<sup>14</sup> The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>15</sup> In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>16</sup> In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

<sup>17</sup> For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, <sup>18</sup> and the levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to make grain offerings, and to make sacrifices for all time.

## NEW TESTAMENT: Mark 8: 27-29

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah."

SERMON: Fulfilling the Promise

### **WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER**

PASTORAL PRAYER

### **WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS**

OFFERTORY INVITATION

As our love for one another increases and abounds, so does our generosity. The circle of our concern widens. Our passion for justice expands. Our desire to join in Christ's redeeming work extends to the whole human family. What a privilege to have so much to share! We will now receive the morning offering.

## 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.  
Amen.**

## **\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Thank you, God, for this family of faith, which enriches our lives and enables us to share. Thank you for helping us to reach outside ourselves. We are grateful that you show us ways to lift the burdens of our sisters and brothers. May our offerings further this ministry among us and beyond our community.  
Amen.**

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

**\*HYMN #104 We Hail You God's Anointed**

## BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (Please remain seated during the Postlude)

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



MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH-Members of the Congregation

DEACONS-Diane Dunn, Ryan Lehoullier

LAY READERS- Julie Turner

USHERS -Diaconate

GREETER-Tom "Woody" Woods

SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER-The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

CHOIR DIRECTOR/ ORGANIST-Joan Virga

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR -Christine Lehoullier

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT-Michelle Guerrin

## **General Announcements December 1, 2019**

**Christmas Caroling at 9:45 every Sunday in Advent.  
Come sing with us!**

**Advent Workshop today**

**Christmas Pageant sign-up sheets** are in the Rainbow Room/ John. Children of all ages for the Pageant 4pm on Christmas Eve.

**Worship Flowers and Coffee Hour Sign-up sheets** ~ A wonderful opportunity to acknowledge special people and events in our life- sheets are available in the lobby.

**Poinsettias~ Order your Christmas Poinsettia!** They are \$8 each, please order by December 8<sup>th</sup>.

**We are looking for ushers!** If you are interested in this important ministry, please contact Diane Dunn or Michelle in the office.

**January's Adult Faith Formation:** We are excited to announce that we will be reading Anne Robertson's 1st volume of her new series, " Exploring Justice: The Ten Commandments." Signup for class and get more information in Currier.

**Used Clothing Drop-Off Shed** is Ready for donations! Items accepted; Clothing, shoes, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, pillowcases, curtains and stuffed animals. Reduce waste in landfills, the items are used worldwide and we receive funding based on the weight. These donations can also be used by us when we have a specific need as identified by R.E.A.C.H. or Missions. Please take a flyer.

**Brunching for Dollars - December– Sunday, 10am-3pm!** East Derry Tavern will donate 10% back to First Parish Church. Please take a flyer and head over for Brunch!

**Mark your calendars!**

December 6<sup>th</sup> ~ 6:00 Labryinth

December 14<sup>th</sup> ~ 8:30 Breakfast with Santa

Purchase or reload your  gift cards after church.

**You can help the church budget by when you shop at Hannafords.**

A percentage of the dollars that you **already** spend at Hannafords can help the church.

Checks can also be dropped off at the church during office hours. Thank you!

Holiday Shopping is around the corner! Amazon shopping:  
Do your Amazon shopping by going FIRST to the church website: [www.fpc-ucc.org](http://www.fpc-ucc.org). There is a link on the front page under events. This program is different from Amazon Smile. We receive a much larger percentage of profit by going through our website.

## **First Parish Congregational Church IN OUR PRAYERS – December 1, 2019**

### **PRAYERS OF JOY**

Sugar Plum Fair – What a joy when a community comes together on a beloved project!

Visit from the Aghadowey Rural Kinship

Brittany (Pastor Deborah's daughter) & Jeremy welcomed Harlan Nathaniel, at 6:54pm on Oct. 21!

Thank you, Bill Smallwood of W.J. Smallwood Landscaping! Bricks look great!

Thank you, Paper Angels! We are good for now!

Gratitude to people who are catching up with their pledges!

Kindness Rocks – with gratitude to Christine Lehoullier, our kindness ambassador

### **PRAYERS OF HEALTH and HEALING**

Selma Gould and Ken's children who are grieving the death of Ken on November 23.

Pauline Gorgol, Stan Gorgol's mother, for her healing after a car accident

Jorge Alpizar, fiancé of Liz's daughter Rebekah is undergoing treatment for prostate and bladder cancers.

Cole Ferry, Cindy Pingree's nephew, was in a car accident and is in an induced coma.

The family of Bill VenderWoude, who passed away after a long struggle with cancer

Prayers for Paula Robinson and family

Alyssa Mulhern and her family, she is a friend of Diane Breeden, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and surgery is planned in a month.

Marge Palmer's sister Ruth in Wisconsin is in need of our prayers.

Jo Worthen's sister Barb continues to struggle with cancer.

Marge Palmer's Brother in law, Steve, passed away. Prayers for Nancy and the family.

Jo Worthen's co-worker Cindy lost her sister to cancer, leaving her husband and a 9 year son

Family and friends of Alice Coller who passed away on October 8<sup>th</sup> in West Lafayette, Indiana.

Martha, close friend of Pat and Dick Plouff, being treated for recurring leukemia.

Lynn Dinan, continued prayers for health and healing

Connie Cox's sister, Suzie: her husband Kent passed away after a long illness.

Randy Lariviere and his wife Dee - Medical Concerns (Randy)

Jessie Brooks, friend of Tim Beers, for strength

Tommie Pitts – medical concerns

## **SPECIAL ONGOING PRAYERS**

Andrea Cooper health & strength

Aghadowey Rural Kinship

Southern NH Family Promise

Avis Hanson, Marjorie Palmer's cousin's wife, battling, and in treatment for, cancer

Dangamvura – UCCZ – Zimbabwe African Church

Jay Bingel – Health & strength

Tim Beers – Health & strength

Bob Dinan, father of Karen & Bob Wilson's friend Kristen Wilson, ongoing struggle with cancer

Brian Krantz and ALL of the Wildland Firefighters this fire season

Victims of floods and fires and violence; Refugees and their families

People of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community

Friends of the Meetinghouse Board of Directors

Our Covenant Partner: Pastoral Counseling Services, Inc.