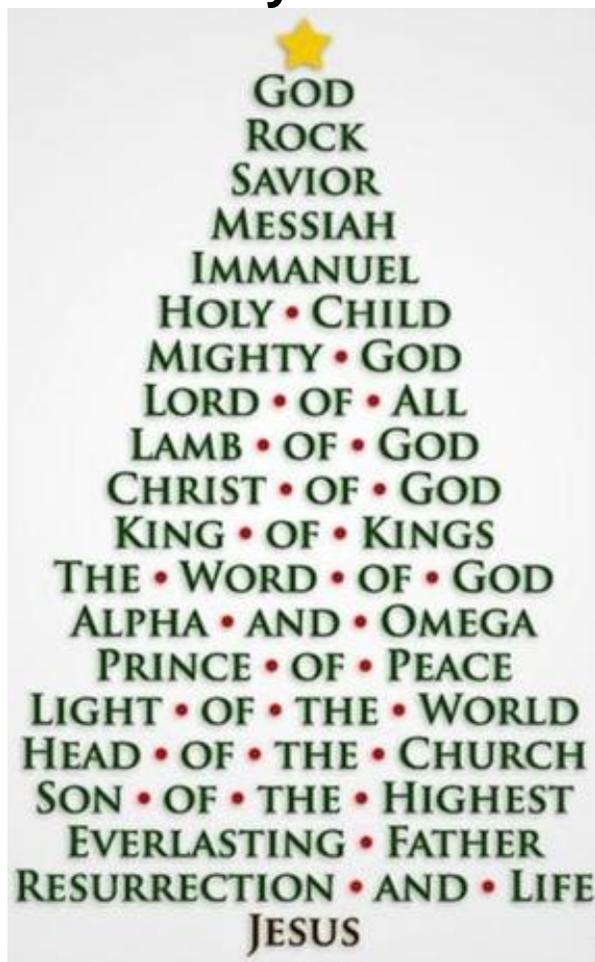


First Parish Congregational Church  
P.O. Box 114, East Derry, New Hampshire 03041/ 47 East  
Derry Road  
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

**December 29, 2019**  
**First Sunday of 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

\*HYMN # 448 Take My Life, God, Let It Be

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

One: Our souls wait for God who is our hope and our fortress.

**Many: God is our rock and our refuge.**

One: Trust in God and pour out your hearts.

**Many: In God's sight, no one is more important than another.**

One: Let us worship God and open our lives to God's steadfast love.

**Many: We await your message, God of all places and times.**

\*INVOCATION (unison)

**Holy One, God of all times and places, You call us out of our comfort zones to do new things and try better ways. You direct us to reach out to people with whom we seem to have little in common. Speak your truth to us in this service so we can carry it to the places where you want us to go, to the people you are eager to reach. Amen.**

\*SONG OF PRAISE "Gloria in excelsis Deo"

## **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 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: Psalm 91:9-12

- <sup>9</sup> Because you have made the LORD your refuge,  
the Most High your dwelling place,  
<sup>10</sup> no evil shall befall you,  
no scourge come near your tent.  
<sup>11</sup> For he will command his angels concerning you  
to guard you in all your ways.  
<sup>12</sup> On their hands they will bear you up,  
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

NEW TESTAMENT: Mark 1:1-20

- <sup>1</sup> The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.  
<sup>2</sup> As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way;  
<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" <sup>4</sup> John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup> I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

## The Baptism of Jesus

<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

## The Temptation of Jesus

<sup>12</sup> And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

## The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

<sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

## Jesus Calls the First Disciples

<sup>16</sup> As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. <sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” <sup>18</sup> And immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>19</sup> As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. <sup>20</sup> Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

## SERMON

## HYMN #451 Be Now My Vision

## **WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER**

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

### **OFFERTORY INVITATION**

When our riches increase, we are tempted to put our trust and confidence in them. But riches are not meant to satisfy us. They are placed in our hands that we might accomplish some good purpose. Giving through the church grants us that opportunity.

### **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**

**God of steadfast love, we pray that you will love the world through the moneys we dedicate today. We pray that your work of transformation will be carried forward by our gifts. As a church, we seek to follow where Jesus leads. As individuals, we heed the call to discipleship. Bless our efforts to fish for people-for their sakes, not our own. Amen.**

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

\*HYMN # 454 Lord, I Want To Be a Christian

BLESSING

POSTLUDE (Please remain seated during the Postlude)

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

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH - Members of the Congregation

DEACON - Joanne Worthen

LAY READER - Dee Deranian

USHERS - Margie Ives, Joe Weaver, Michael Bryan

GREETER - Carol Guerrin

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 29, 2019**

**A message from the Financial Secretary-** If you want contributions to be included in your tax returns for 2019, they must be at the church on or before January 5, 2020 and should be dated December 31, 2019.

The books will be closed Monday, January 6, 2020. Thank you, Pat Crowell, Financial Secretary

The Annual Report deadline is Monday, January 6, 2020. Please send your reports to the office. They will be accepted early!

**January Adult Faith Formation:** We meet Tuesday evening from 6:30-8pm. We are excited to announce that we will be reading Anne Robertson's 1st volume of her new series, "Exploring Justice: The Ten Commandments." The books have arrived, please see Christine.

On behalf of those who purchased poinsettias this year, a donation of \$100.00 was placed in the offertory on Christmas Eve.

**Used Clothing Drop-Off Shed** is ready for donations! Items accepted; Clothing, shoes, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, pillowcases, curtains and stuffed animals. Please take a flyer in the lobby.

**Food Pantry** – During end of the year cleaning, please take a look in your pantry, do you have unexpired items, that you haven't enjoyed? Please drop off at the church and they will be delivered to those in need.

**Budget Updates-** Finance and Council have been working to manage the 2019 budget and draft the 2020 budget. Our financial challenges continue to be significant. Our latest projections show we're likely to end 2019 with a deficit. Anything you can do to fulfill your pledges or possibly give an additional gift at Christmas time could help us end the year in a better position.

The larger concern is the status of the 2020 budget. The current draft has a \$45,000 deficit. Obviously this isn't a viable budget. The solutions won't be easy. We need your help to find the solutions that are best for our congregation.

We are offering budget information sessions after worship on January 5th and 19th. We'll provide budget overviews and as much detail as anyone wants. We hope you'll join us to better understand the issues we're dealing with, hear the ideas we're contemplating, and offer your ideas.

**Brainstorming for Pastor's Sabbatical:** Pastor Deborah has delayed her sabbatical until 2021 in order to work with members of the congregation in crafting a proposal that will benefit both the pastor and the congregation. We will be writing a Lilly Foundation grant proposal for a significant amount of money (up to \$50k; \$15k for the church and \$35k for the pastor's expenses). "What will make your heart sing?" is the lead question of the grant. What kind of programs might the church participate in during Pastor Deborah's absence that would renew and rejuvenate the church? We invite you to participate in a brainstorming session on January 12<sup>th</sup> after church. Schedule: brainstorm in January; compile and distill our ideas in February and write in March.

**Our Amazon account:** We experienced an unfortunate miscommunication and needed to remove the link. We will share updates to this as we receive them. In the meantime, we are still part of the Amazon Smile program, please select to support First Parish Congregational Church!

**Mark your calendars!**

January 1<sup>st</sup> ~ Happy New Year!

Purchase or reload your  gift cards after church. A percentage of the dollars that you **already** spend at Hannafords can help the church. Checks can also be dropped off during office hours. Thank you!

## **First Parish Congregational Church IN OUR PRAYERS – December 29, 2019**

### **PRAYERS OF JOY**

Another successful year of community fellowship with monthly spaghetti supper! Thank you to Spaghetti Angels. Christmas Eve Services ~ Pageant, Carols, Lessons and Candlelight!

K.I.T. enjoyed listening to Marge Palmer telling Christmas stories. It was wonderful!

Santa Breakfast was a huge success. Thank you everyone! The Derry Fire Department for their diligence in visiting our Church numerous times to update their maps and records and Facilities for continued efforts to keep our Church safe. Advent Talk 'n Walk on the Labyrinth – so peaceful.

Advent Workshop – what a 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**

Rev. Renee Rouse on the death of her son, Tre.

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

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.

## **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

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.