

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 8, 2019**  
**Second Sunday of Advent**



## **Share how you celebrate PEACE**

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

-Isaiah 9:6-7

## **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 THE CHRIST LIGHT**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Lighting of the Advent Candle for the Second Sunday of Advent: Peace**

- One: Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.
- Many:** **Then it was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.”**
- One: In the beginning was the Word—spoken and breathed, a promise made and kept.
- Many:** **Speak it loud and clear—God’s promise is true!**
- One: The Word was in the beginning, and through him all things come into being.
- Many:** **Eternal and near at hand, Already and not-yet, God’s promise is the foundation of all life.**  
(The first candle – the candle of HOPE – is lit.)
- One: Do not hold back! Speak out, giving voice to God’s peace that passes all understanding.  
(The second candle – the candle of PEACE – is lit.)
- One: May the Peace of Christ be with you.
- Many:** **And also with you.**
- One: Let us extend to one another the Peace of Christ.

\*HYMN #116 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vss 3, 4)

\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (in unison)

**How good it is to gather where garments of sorrow and affliction are removed. Here, we are wrapped in the beauty of God's glory and welcomed to life at its fullest. Surely You restore us to our best, mighty God, and equip us for productive living. Make a**

**difference within and among us today so we can work for a better tomorrow. Amen.**

**\*SONG OF PRAISE “Gloria in excelsis Deo”**

Special Music: Waiting for a King by J. Martin

**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**

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.**” Words & Music: Natalie Sleeth, © 1976 Hinshaw Music, Inc.; All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONE LICENSE #A-708716.

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD FOR US**

**OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 40:1-11**

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, cry to her that she has

served her term,

    that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the  
LORD's hand

    double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of  
the LORD,

    make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and  
hill be made low;

    the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough  
places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, all people  
shall see it together,

    for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup> A voice says, “Cry out!” I said, “What shall I cry?”

    All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of  
the field.

<sup>7</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of  
the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our  
God will

    stand forever.

<sup>9</sup> Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good  
tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem,  
herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear;

    say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!”

<sup>10</sup> See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules  
for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense  
before him.

<sup>11</sup> He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the  
lambs in his arms,

and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

## SERMON: Letting Go

### **WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER**

JOYS AND CONCERNS followed by PASTORAL PRAYER

HYMN #101 Comfort, Comfort O My People

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

### OFFERTORY INVITATION

What is a fitting offering that is pleasing to God? When we sense the wonder of God's majesty and realize the amazing extent of God's concern for us, we can only respond with all that we have and all we are. What we place in the plate is a small measure of our gratitude. The morning offering will now be received.

### 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**

**How good You have been to us, gracious God! How  
meagerly we have responded. You have restored our**

**fortunes when we felt all was lost. You have filled our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy. We give thanks, not only with a portion of our income, but also through renewed commitment to righteous living. By Your grace, we share in the work Christ came to accomplish among us. May love abound in and through us. Amen.**

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

**\*HYMN #122 Come, O Long Expected Jesus**

## **BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE (Please remain seated during the Postlude)**

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

**MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH-** Members of the Congregation

**DEACON-** Sue Lindemann

**LAY READERS -** Ryan Lehoullier

**USHERS -** Dee Deranian, Nancy Berry, Michael Bryan

**GREETER-** Jean Brouder

**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 8, 2019*

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

**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 and the deadline is TODAY. Forms are in the back of Currier and in the lobby.

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

The "**Christmas In New England**" Concert Tour is on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at Pilgrim United Church Of Christ, 197 Middle Rd, Brentwood, NH. This one of a kind Christmas show features a seasonal blend of traditional, contemporary, and original Christmas Music performed with acoustic instruments and vocals. The cast of performers include some of the most talented musicians, vocalists and songwriters in the New England region: **Amy Gallatin, Karen Lincoln Wilber, Dave Dick, Roger Williams, Ken**

**Taylor, Krissy Dick, Bob Dick & Rick Lang.** 5:30 PM – 6:45 PM A delicious dinner of soups, stews and chili with homemade bread 7:30 PM Show Starts (doors open at 6:45 PM) Tickets \$15 at the door

**January 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 back of 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 9<sup>th</sup> ~ 7:00 Finance Meeting

December 11<sup>th</sup> ~ 6:30 Choir is Wednesday this week

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

December 17<sup>th</sup> ~ 7:00 Blue Christmas

December 18<sup>th</sup> ~ 12:30 K.I.T.

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 8, 2019*

**PRAYERS OF JOY**

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.

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.