

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

April 19, 2020



You Shall Be My Witness

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

CENTERING MUSIC and LIGHTING THE CHRIST LIGHT

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN #240 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today! vs, 1,3

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!

Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!

Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!

Suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!

“Hasten now to Galilee,” Alleluia!

“Tell the other what you see!” Alleluia!

With excitement trembling, Alleluia!

Off they run, good news to bring, Alleluia!

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come together expecting great things as we await the promises of God.

Many: Is this the time when God will come to reign? What will we receive?

One: In God's time, the Holy Spirit will come to you as you sense God's Peace.

Many: Here we listen to what Jesus taught - looking for guidance for today.

INVOCATION (unison)

Appear to us again, risen Savior, for we wonder at your disappearance from the tomb. We seek wisdom and revelation in order to cope with the confusion we face every day. We who seek to be your body, the church, need the eyes of our hearts to be enlightened once more so we may once more embrace hope and know your joy. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE Halle – halle – halle - lu- jah!

WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S YOUNGER DISCIPLES

Jesus said, “Let the little ones come unto me.” Let's sing “Jesus loves me”

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.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

NEW TESTAMENT: ACTS 1: 1-11

¹ In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning ² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴ While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

SERMON: "Looking up toward Heaven"

HYMN # 257 Alleluia! Gracious Jesus! vs 1,2

Alleluia! Gracious Jesus! Yours the scepter, yours the throne! Alleluia!
Yours the triumph, yours the victory alone!
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood;
Jesus, out of every nation you've redeemed us by your blood.

Alleluia! Not as orphans are we left in sorrow now. Alleluia!
You are near us; faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received you when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget your promise, "I am with you ever more."

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

As we navigate this life experience of breathing communally while living separately, we are called to be witnesses to God's love for us in Jesus Christ. In spite of our difficulties, we still have much to share with those who have less. May our generous gifts praise God and give radiant testimony to the faith we share.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

DOXOLOGY Masithi

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy God, May our offerings leave no doubt that You, God, are not just the head of our church: You are the inspiration for our lives. Empower our ministries with the fullness of Christ that we may be inclusive in our outreach and effective as teachers and healers. We here dedicate our money and our lives. Amen.

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

HYMN # 230 Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain vs. 2, 4

Spring has dawned on earth today; Christ has burst from prison,
and from three days' sleep in death as the sun has risen;
All the winter of our sins, long and gray, is flying;
From the Light, to whom we give laud and praise undying.

Neither might the gates of death, nor the tomb's dim portal,
Nor the watchers, nor the seal hold you as a mortal;
But today amid the twelve you still stand, bestowing;
Peace and joy which evermore passes human knowing.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "Go now in peace. Go now in peace. May the love of God surround you everywhere, everywhere you may go."

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MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH - Members of the Congregation
SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER - The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof
LAY READER – Cyndi Gray
CHOIR DIRECTOR/ ORGANIST - Joan Virga
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR - Christine Lehoullier
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT - Michelle Guerrin

Visit our FaceBook page or our website for recent videos of services and moments of Christian Faith Formation and inspiration.

IN OUR PRAYERS - April 19, 2020

PRAYERS OF JOY

Zoom meetings are happening! Calls are happening! Connection is happening! Joy! So many people are adapting to this era of on-line existence! We are learning so much! Things are different but people are finding ways to connect!

The Ministry of Care Team is spreading so much happiness with their cards! Gratitude to spouses of Pastor Deborah and Joan (Liz and Joe) – for helping Maundy Thursday!

So many cases of people helping people!

Thanks to everyone for your patience and for helping one another at this difficult time.

Zoom attendance at fellowship events and CE family events! Community at work!!

PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION, HEALTH, AND HEALING

Friends of Lianne Deranian's sisters, Brittany and Tom, had triplet preemies in February. Two of them were rushed into surgery on April 15. Let's pray for Avery, Conner, and Bradley, as well as their mom Brittany and Dad Tom.

For people who are losing their livelihood due to this pandemic.

For health care professionals who are "on the front lines" of this war against covid-19

Trina Brand asks for prayers: The crew of the USS Roosevelt (aircraft carrier) where COVID-19 is spreading rapidly and our friend (the priest on board) is trying to give hope and peace, along with the USNS Comfort, now in NYC, where our friends on crew are trying to help the sick of that city.

For Lisa Hall, whose father passed away.

For the Smith and Martineau families on the tragic death of their wife, sister & mother.

To the family of Marge Allen; our prayers of comfort and support

Joan Virga and her family who are grieving the death of her mother, Vima LeJeune. Sheryl Hall (sister of Wayne Hall) has died. Pray for her wife Chris, Wayne and Lisa and their family

CANCERS: Avis Hanson, Marjorie Palmer's cousin's wife; Jo Worthen's friend **Cindy** & her family continue to struggle with cancer, as well as the loss of her (Cindy's) sister and Cindy's father's recent diagnosis; from Nutfield Coop: Grace Theroux; Martha, close friend of Pat and Dick Plouff, recurring leukemia; Joan (friend of Wendy Williams) liver cancer; Janice Paradzick; Bob Dinan (friend of the Wilson's)

Jo Worthen's friend Diane & family: dealing with a fatal disease of her daughter, Terri. Diane Breeden and her family as they grieve the loss of Aunt Barbara McKeen, who was married to Diane's uncle Donald Wyman McKeen.

Nancy Murdock's friend Erin Hutchinson has some serious medical issues

Bonnie Hillsgrove, friend of Tim Beers

SPECIAL ONGOING PRAYERS

Parkland Hospital Personnel, All Nurses and Doctors, Hospice workers and employees of Nursing Homes and Extended care facilities; First Responders; National Guard Active Military; Aghadowey Rural Kinship; Southern NH Family Promise

Andrea Cooper health & strength

Dangamvura – UCCZ – Zimbabwe African Church

Tim Beers – Health & strength

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.

