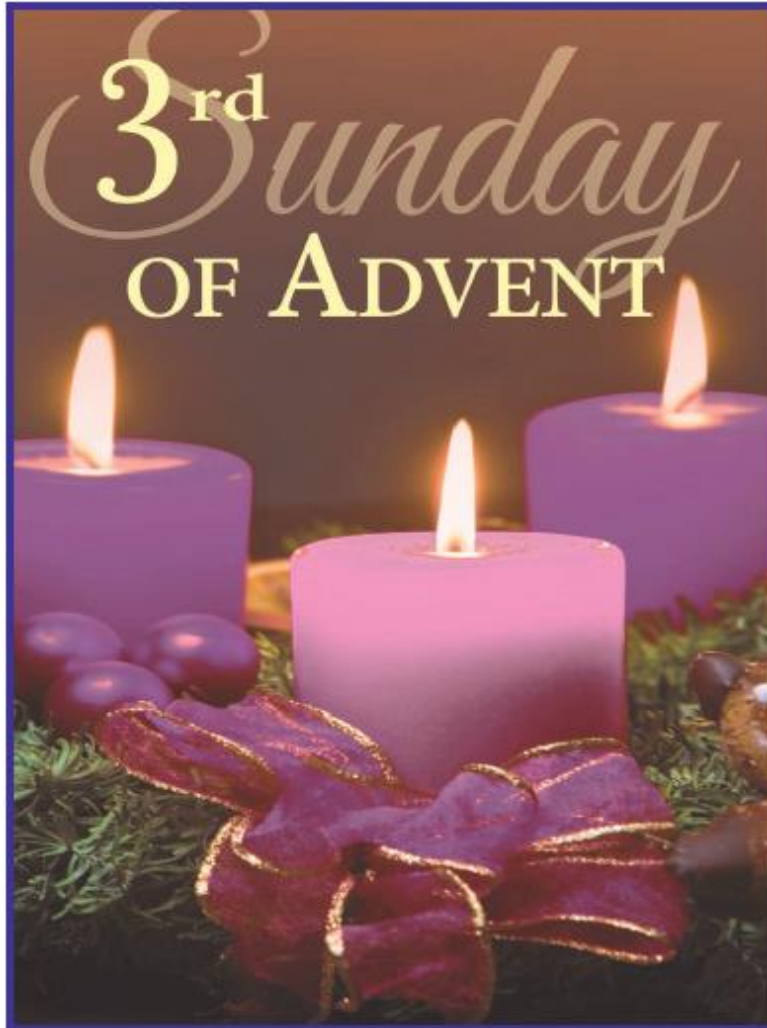


First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road, East Derry, NH Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

**December 13, 2020 – 10:00am Virtual Service**  
**Advent 3 – Joy**



### **CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

#### ***“Once in Royal David’s City”***

Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed.  
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

#### ***“Good Christian Friends”***

Good Christian friends rejoice, with heart and soul and voice.  
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today!  
Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

### **“Away in a Manger”**

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,  
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with you there.

### **“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”

### **“Some Children See Him”**

Some children see Him lily white, the baby Jesus born this night,  
Some children see Him lily white, with tresses soft and fair.  
Some children see Him bronzed and brown, The Lord of heaven to  
earth come down;  
Some children see Him bronzed and brown, With dark and heavy hair.  
Some children see Him almond-eyed, This Savior whom we kneel beside.  
Some children see Him almond-eyed, With skin of yellow hue.  
Some children see Him dark as they, Sweet Mary's Son to whom we pray.  
Some children see him dark as they, And, ah! they love Him, too!  
The children in each different place Will see the baby Jesus' face  
Like theirs, but bright with heavenly grace, And filled with holy light.  
O lay aside each earthly thing And with thy heart as offering,  
Come worship now the infant King. 'Tis love that's born tonight!

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

### **WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP and LIGHTING THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE - JOY**

One: We gather around wreaths to pray our lost hopes, broken peace, limited joys, and love so hard to find and share in this season of *coronavirus*. We affirm that our candles demonstrate how we claim the power to call this season **Advent**, *that time* when God's light comes into the world and nothing can overcome it. We light the candles of hope and peace.

(The candle of HOPE and the candle of PEACE are now lit.)

Many: **We will light the candle of joy today in spite of missing so many things we thought were essential to a merry Christmas – things like *shopping and parties: photos with Santa and chances to hug.***

One: God's joy cannot be extinguished.

(The candle of JOY is lit.)

God's joy will ignite its embers under great loss and sorrow this year; and God's joy will brighten the path to love.

Many: **Emmanuel, God be with us, in the week to come, lighting hope, peace and joy on the wick of our lives so that we may shine on our world with a simple smile, an unexpected laughter. Amen**

HYMN #102 "Oh How Shall I Receive" You vs. 1, 2

O how shall I receive you, how meet you on your way,  
Blessed hope of every people, my soul's delight and stay?  
O Jesus, Jesus, give me now by your own pure light.  
To know what e'er is pleasing and welcome in your sight.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you unto me.  
Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty,  
O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace  
In love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.

INVOCATION (Read by Lay Reader. Please join in at home.)

**Loving God, we rejoice in this season of anticipation, as we remember your promises and look forward to your winks into our lives. Strengthen us for the journey by renewing within us the gifts of your Holy Spirit: hope, peace and joy. We give thanks for your abiding Presence. Amen.**

**\*SONG OF PRAISE #125 Angels We Have Heard on High (Refrain)**

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo!

## **WE SPEAK TO GOD'S YOUNGER DISCIPLES**

### **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

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 61: 1-4; 8-11

<sup>1</sup>The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;

<sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; <sup>3</sup> to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

<sup>4</sup> They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

<sup>8</sup> For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. <sup>9</sup> Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

<sup>10</sup> I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. <sup>11</sup> For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

**SERMON:** "Choose These: A Garland, The Oil of Praise, The Mantle of Praise"

HYMN #116 O Come, O Come Emmanuel vs. 1, 2

O come, O come, Emmanuel And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;  
To us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

## WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION (lay reader)

Today God's voice is heard through the ministries our church helps to provide. We bear witness to the light born in Bethlehem by our contribution to the least of these. May we remember God's generosity as we reach into our own.

OFFERTORY MUSIC – Tom "Woody" Wood

DOXOLOGY # 780 Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

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

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (lay reader)

We bring gifts to your children, O God, and we ask that you bless and multiply our efforts. May the brokenhearted be comforted and may the hungry be fed. May the lonely be accompanied and may the stranger be welcomed. Thank you, God, for the blessings we now share. Amen.

**WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER**

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

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

HYMN # 117 Lift up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates vs. 3

Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to you; here, Christ, abide!  
Let me your inner presence feel; your grace and love in me reveal.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE **“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.*

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH - Members of the Congregation

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

LAY READER – Jack Martin

GREETERS – Rachel Cobban, Katie Cobban

CHOIR DIRECTOR/ ORGANIST - Joan Virga

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR - Christine Lehoullier

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT - Michelle Guerrin

AV/ TECHNICAL – Paul Lindemann

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

## *IN OUR PRAYERS - DECEMBER 13, 2020*

### **PRAYERS OF JOY**

Progress on the elevator!

Mission giving does so much good!

So many people participated in the Angel Tree Project. Santa is alive and well!

Gio is a joy to so many people! Thanks, Michelle, for sharing him!

Our first "drive-in" church was a lot of fun! Thank you everyone who made it possible!

Melanie and Alan Pawl came home from the hospital!

Grateful for Thanksgiving; Spaghetti Supper

Council is grateful for all of the positive things that are happening despite Covid!

The exterior of the connector is practically finished!!

Pastor Deborah had an incredibly inspirational Study Leave!

Walking prayer circles around Meetinghouse! We ended with a service of gratitude!

New Book Group began: Unbinding the Gospel! Books are still available.

Gratitude texting groups: three groups uphold one another in prayer and gratitude

Labyrinth finger walks and growing appreciation in this ancient spiritual practice.

Paul Lindemann's on-going help with our virtual worship.

### **PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION**

Rosemary, friend of Marge Palmer, died 11.28.20; Family and friends of Colleen

Robbins, who died on 11.7.20 (relative of the Guerrin Family); Family of Molly

Rockwell, who died in a car accident (Chris Cox was her Scout Leader and friend of the Robinson Family); Suzanne MacGibbon on the death of her 62-yr-old son Kevin

who died 11.2.20; Families of the 288k deaths in the US due to COVID 19.

### **PRAYERS OF STRENGTH, HEALTH, AND HEALING**

Melanie and Alan Pawl are both home from the hospital, but need prayers for recovery.

Pauline Gorgol (Stan's mother)

Kathleen McFadden (friend of Trudie Bergeron) recently diagnosed with cancer on her lung will have surgery after Thanksgiving.

Beth and her daughter Allison - both have Covid - friends of Nancy Murdock

Everyone in this post-election USA; Teachers and all school personnel; Medical Professionals of all levels and in all locations; pastors; world and local leaders

Pat Crowell: knee surgery on 11.4.20; 29 St Andrew's Way, Londonderry, 03053

Edie Cefaly (Pat Cefaly's) sister and her family: Edie is experiencing memory loss.

John Stewart, long-time member and friend of First Parish. Cards would be welcome:

1 Oak St.; Derry 03038

Lindsay Huber recovering at Brigham Health and Rehab, 77 High St, Newburyport, MA 01950 but is facing serious health issues. Cards of encouragement needed.

Dillingham Family (friends of Diana Sweeney) who lost their home in Oregon and at the same time a joy that they and pets are all safe

McKeil Family (friends of Diana Sweeney) for comfort and healing in the coming days due to a challenging diagnosis.

Trina & Terrance Brand's nephew Nathan and his family (wife, young daughter, and sister) At 32, he has been diagnosed with glioblastoma (brain 6-24 months to live. We pray for comfort and peace.

**For those with cancer:** Verna Elwell has stage 1 lung cancer (along with some other health concerns) cards can be sent to: 3 Hood Rd, #507; Derry;  
Kate, Jesse's friend is battling terminal cancer; Steph Lesko, friend of Pastor Deborah's daughters: 30-yr-old mother of a 1-yr old, diagnosed with advanced breast cancer that has spread to lymph nodes – had mastectomy - prayers for Steph and her whole family; Jay, Marjorie Palmer's friend, a 41-yr old father of 3 young children who has been recently diagnosed with multiple cancers and given possibly a year to live. Hanson, Marjorie Palmer's cousin's wife; Martha, close friend of Pat and Dick Plouff, recurring leukemia; Janice Paradzick; Bob Dinan (friend of the Wilson's), Danny with stage 4 cancer, brother of Mary Jane (friend of Cobban family)

## **SPECIAL ONGOING PRAYERS**

Paula Robinson

Tom and Andrea Cooper - health & strength

For the families of those who are hospitalized and are unable to visit them.

For teachers, staff, & students the uncertainty of going back to school.

For those who choose hate and those who choose violence

For people who are losing their livelihood due to this pandemic

Parkland Hospital Personnel, and All Nurses and Doctors, Hospice workers and employees of Nursing Homes and Extended care facilities

First Responders; National Guard Active Military; Aghadowey Rural Kinship

Our Covenant Partner: Pastoral Counseling Services, Inc.

Southern NH Family Promise; Sonshine Soup Kitchen; Marion Gerrish; Upper Room Dangamvura – UCCZ – Zimbabwe African Church

Union Theological College in Zimbabwe, as well as our friend Kennedy Gondongwe

Everyone in Zimbabwe, a country riddled with revolution and pandemic.

Tim Beers – Health & strength

Bonnie Hillsgrove, friend of Tim Beers

Brian Krantz and ALL of the Wildland Firefighters this fire season

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

People of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community

Friends of the Meetinghouse Board of Directors