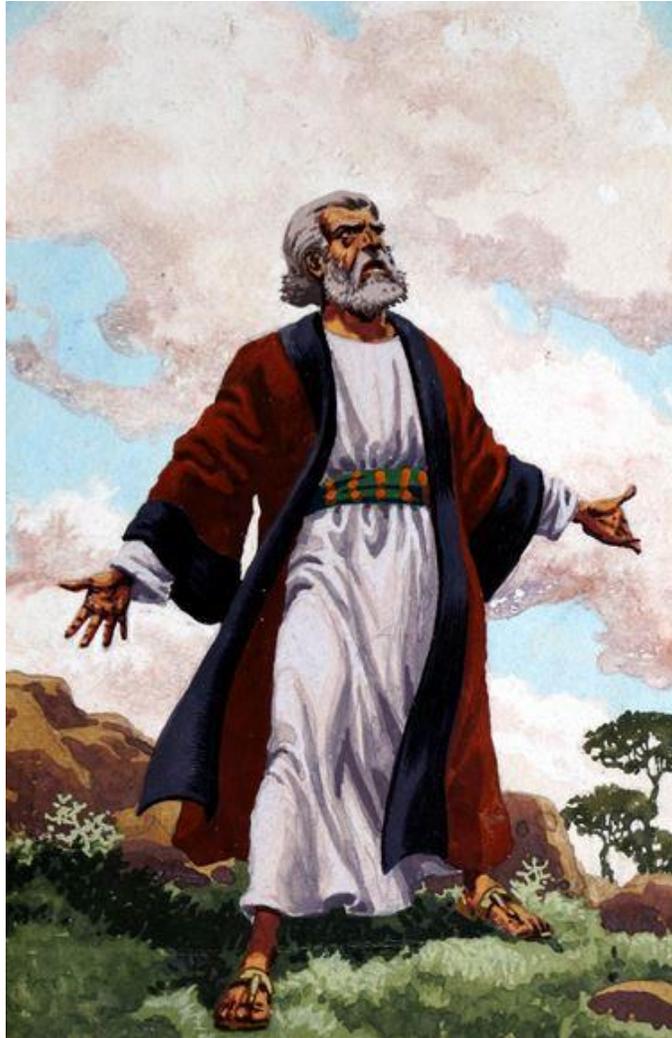


First Parish Congregational Church  
P.O. Box 114, East Derry, New Hampshire 03041/ 47 East Derry Road  
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

**September 20, 2020**



**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 #24 The God of Abraham Praise (vs. 1, 4)

The God of Abraham praise, all praises to God's name  
Who was and is and is to be, fore'er the same.  
The one eternal God, before what now appears;  
The First, the Last: beyond all thought through timeless years!

The God of Sarah praise, all praises to God's name  
Who was and is and is to be, fore'er the same  
The one eternal God, before what now appears.  
The First the Last: beyond all thought through timeless years!

CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: The storms of life do not have the last word. Our faith is our buoy.  
**Many: Our doubts lead to greater faith. Our losses allow possibilities.**  
One: Let the hearts of all who seek God rejoice and call on God's name.  
**Many: We will sing of God's wonderful works and share God's love.**

INVOCATION:

We seek your presence, holy God. Break through all our pretenses that we might sense the vibrant energy embracing the whole universe. How amazing are the miracles of life that surround us! We praise you. We thank you. In this hour, we pray that our faith may be enlivened, our trust deepened, our commitment expanded to meet the challenges of our times. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE *Gloria*

Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, Gloria, alleluia, alleluia

**WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S YOUNGER DISCIPLES**

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

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: Genesis 15:1-6**

<sup>1</sup>After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." <sup>2</sup>But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup>And Abram said, "You have given me no

offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.”<sup>4</sup> But the word of the LORD came to him, “This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.”<sup>5</sup> He brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”<sup>6</sup> And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

SERMON: “When the Word of the Lord Contradicts What We See”

HYMN #20 God of Abraham and Sarah

God of Abraham and Sarah, God of Moses, Miriam’s Guide  
God of David and the prophets, God in Jesus glorified  
Up from the dust you raise a people, breathe in the breath of life, of soul;  
Down through the years the people praise you till alleluias make them whole!  
God who dances in creation, spinning stars above our heads;  
God whose face is scribed in music, by whose hand the earth is fed.  
Up from the ground you raise the mountains, raise our spirits, lift our eyes;  
Down through the years your people praise you till alleluias flood the skies!

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

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Like Abram, we have been entrusted with our Creator’s blessings. We are stewards of all that God places in our hands - our time, our talents, our accumulated treasures and life itself. Our offering is not just about gifts for the church's mission – although without our support our church could do nothing. Our offering is about rededication of all of life in Christ's service.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

\*DOXOLOGY

Masithi, Amen, siyakudumisa, Masithi; Amen, siyakudumisa, Masithi;  
Amen, Bawo, Amen, Bawo, Amen, siyakudumisa.

Sing amen, Amen, we praise your name, O God, Sing Amen  
Amen, we praise your name, O God. Sing Amen  
Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, we praise your name, O God.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God, we cannot deceive you with the appearance of generosity. You know how we manage the wealth entrusted to our care.  
Help us to know the joy of sharing from the abundance you provide.

Help us to trust when we feel we do not have enough. We give thanks that you enable us to be givers, not just receivers. May what we offer here provide a helpful ministry to many. Amen.

## **WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER**

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYERS

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

HYMN #1 Immortal, Invisible, God only Wise

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,

In light inaccessible hid from our eyes.

Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,

Almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,

Not wanting, not wasting, but ruling in might;

Your justice like mountains high soaring above,

Your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

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

ZOOM/FACEBOOK GREETERS- Anne-Marie Merrill, Sue Lindemann

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 - September 20th, 2020*

### **PRAYERS OF JOY**

Courtney and Andrew's wedding at the church next year – preparations have begun!  
Jane Krantz has moved to Hanover Hill Health Care Center for rehab and therapy. The address is 700 Hanover St., Manchester NH 03104.

Outdoor service last week was lovely!

Michelle and Giovanni are so grateful for the care, support and cards.

Pastor Deborah and Liz had a wonderful week in Acadia, our version of Heaven on Earth. We are grateful for the gifted Members in Discernment who cover while Pastor Deborah is away. Grateful to Debbie Gline Allen for leading the service last week. Grateful to Shellie Aseltine – for leading worship service in August!

Larry & Jane Krantz would like to express their sincere gratitude for the cards, letters, phone calls and prayers over the past 4 weeks. We are so blessed!!

Diana Sweeney would like to share a huge joy and expression of gratitude for the staff, doctors, nurses at Parkland for their care of the whole family during this extremely challenging time.

Verna Elwell is at home & on the mend. She thanks everyone for prayers & cards.

Many thanks from Christine & Michelle for the gracious and generous bonus!

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

August Spaghetti Supper- Served many To GO dinners!

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

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

**For the families of those who have died in our community:** Family and friends of Alexander Bosse Sr. who died. Family and friends of Joyce Smith who died 9/5/20. Joyce was a long time member of First Parish and also a member of Diaconate. The Deacon's closet in the Meetinghouse is named in her honor; family of Jack Kluk, who passed away last week; Alan Pawl and family on the loss of Alan's mother; families of: Jo Worthen's Aunt Sandra

**For Courage and Strength:** Paula Robinson; pastors; teachers; leaders

**For Healing:**

John Stewart, long-time member and friend of First Parish.

Lindsay Huber recovering at Brigham Health and Rehab in Newburyport but is facing multiple organ shut down. Cards of encouragement desperately needed.

Tana and her family (friends of Paula Robinson) who live in Oregon and are on watch to be evacuated.

Dick Crow, heart issues, is recovering at home. Prayers still 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

Aaliayah & her newborn son, Jaxon, (granddaughter of Joanne Worthen's friend Sandra). He needs heart murmur surgery and new Mom can't go with him.

Rick (the father of Joanne Worthen's coworker Cindy) tested positive for Covid19, and struggling with an infection from a bypass heart operation.

Alan Pawl, recovering from back surgery and then a fall.

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

Marcie Zingo is recovering from leg amputation (19R Juniper Rd, Derry)

**For those with cancer:** 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 – Must have double 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; 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), Danny with stage 4 cancer, brother of Mary Jane (friend of Cobban family)

## **SPECIAL ONGOING PRAYERS**

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.

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

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; as well as our friend Kennedy Gondongwe and 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 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.