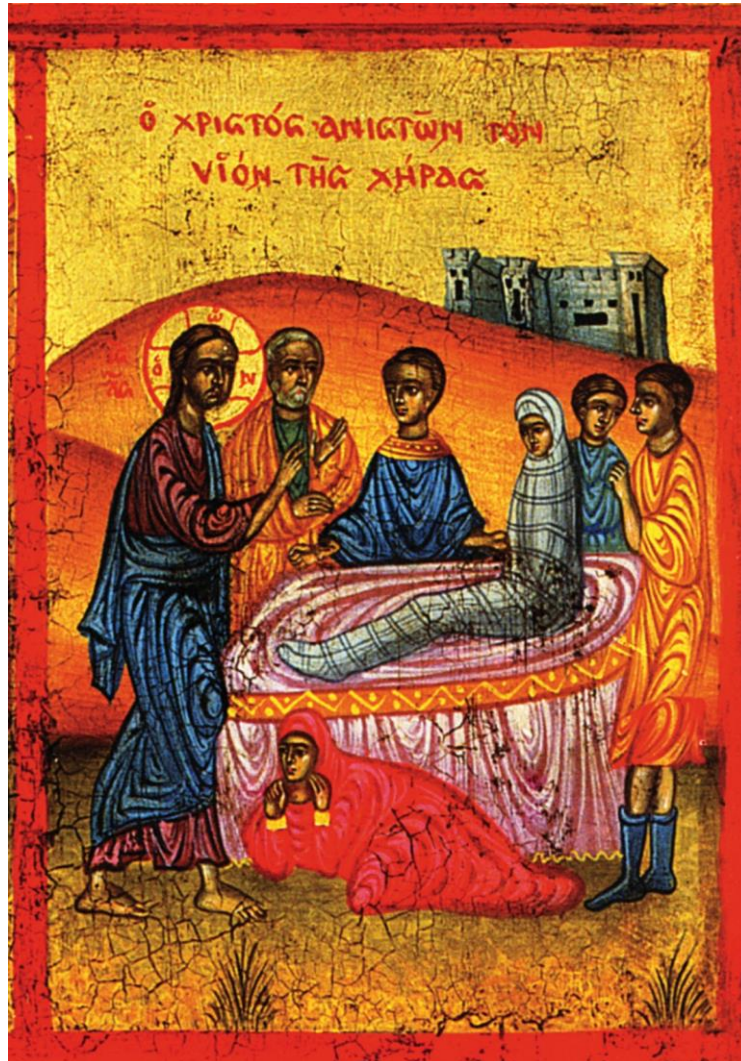


First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road
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February 7, 2021



Raising the Widow's Son

February is Black History Month

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 # **Take My Life, God, Let It Be**

Take my life, God, let it be consecrated faithfully.

Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my spirit, let it move at the impulse of your love.

Take my intellect and use all its powers as you choose.

Take my will, your will be done! Make your will and mine be one.

Take my heart, and by your grace make of it your dwelling place.

Take my love and help it grow; let my loving overflow,

Take me now and help me be part of Christ's community.

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Let us worship the God of creation!

Many: God does not faint or grow weary.

One: How good it is to sing praises to our God!

Many: We lift up our eyes to see God's wonders.

One: Let us sing to God with great thanksgiving.

Many: And open our ears to receive God's Good News.

INVOCATION (unison)

Wonderful God, we dare to approach you because you assure us that we are not like mere grasshoppers to you. Our individual potential is not hidden from you, and the faithfulness of your church is important to you. We have gathered with great expectation, seeking to have our strength renewed and our hope restored. Make yourself known among us as we unite in your praise. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Claim your unity in Christ with all God's children. And let us realize how we need to confess our brokenness and seek healing.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy One, We often act as if the words we recite on Sunday were kept in a special box marked "Use when needed." The truth is that your grace and your compassion are always needed and we forget to act accordingly. Forgive us, O God. Restore us to Yourself, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God calls each one of us by name. The One who knows our hearts is eager to forgive the truly penitent. God promises that your strength will be renewed in these moments, that you will mount up with wings like eagles, that you will run and not be weary, that you will walk and not faint. Praise God!

SONG OF PRAISE: Glory, glory alleluia, glory, glory, alleluia, glory, glory, alleluia, God's truth is marching on.

GOD'S YOUNGER DISCIPLES

He's Got the Whole World in his Hands (repeat)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

COMMUNION HYMN #330 **Let Us Break Bread Together**

Let us break bread together on our knees; (twice)

(2nd verse through: Let us drink wine together on our knees, (twice)

(3rd verse through: Let us praise God together on our knees; (twice)

All verses sing: When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
 My God have mercy on me.

OUR SACRED STORY

PEACE HYMN: **I've Got Peace Like a River**

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river in my soul. (Repeat)

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST (Please extend a hug or a handshake and say "Peace be with you" to others.)

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION and 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.

SHARING the MEAL

BLACK HISTORY MONTH TRIBUTE

In November of 2016 Washington National Cathedral, Howard University, and Wesley Theological Seminary hosted a concert that featured spirituals, the great Christian music of African slaves in the US. Rev. Kelly Brown Douglas, the cathedral's canon theologian, talks about the history of spirituals and their ever-relevant message of faith and freedom. (Religion and Ethics NewsWeekly)

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

SCRIPTURE: Luke 7: 1-17

¹After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ²A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. ³When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. ⁴When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy of having you do this for him, ⁵for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us." ⁶And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; ⁷therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." ⁹When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." ¹⁰When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

¹¹Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹²As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!" ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!" and "God has looked favorably on his people!" ¹⁷This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

SERMON: When Miracles Terrify Us

HYMN I Will Trust In the Lord

I will trust in the Lord, (Sing three times) till I die. (Repeat all)

I'm gonna' treat everybody right, (Sing three times) till I die. (Repeat all)

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

SHARING JOYS & CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

We are entrusted with a commission to share the Gospel and to give freely of our time and abilities. Let us continue to give generously. The morning offering will now be received.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

DOXOLOGY: I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me, (Sing three times)
singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

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.

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

HYMN **God Be with You**

God be with you till we meet again; By good counsel guide uphold you,
With a shepherd's care enfold you; God be with you till we meet again. **Refrain**

Refrain: Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Jesus' feet;
Till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again; Wings of shelter safely hide you,
Daily manna still provide you: God be with you till we meet again. **Refrain**

God be with you till we meet again; When life's perils thick confound you,
Put unfailing arms around you: God be with you till we meet again. **Refrain**

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
GREETERS – Jack Martin, Sue Lindemann
LAY READER – Cathy Zylinski
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 - February 7, 2021

PRAYERS OF JOY

Jo Worthen's sister, Sue and her husband, Bruce, are home after having Covid.
Successful and peaceful Annual meeting. Gratitude to all of the tech support!
Over 100 scarves knitted by Sharon Hartmann!
Spaghetti Supper – The frigid weather did not stop our team! Nearly 100 dinners were served in spite of the frigid cold temperature and brisk wind.
Family Promise had a successful work day; thanks to Liz Greenberg, Wendy Williams and the Browns for representing First Parish in the Mission. (Ken Gould is smiling.)
Peaceful transition of power in Washington
Very productive Council meeting; grateful for lay leaders; grateful for people who participate financially to the mission of this church!
Tuesday night Adult Faith conversations were rich and rewarding.
Thank you to the Paper Angels!
Gratitude for our Irish Friends who worship with us every week!
Gratitude for our friends in Zimbabwe!
Gratitude for member in Georgia and Laconia and other faraway places!
Gratitude for the people who put themselves in harm's way for our country's safety.
Congratulations to the Pingree family: Welcome to Rory Jean, born January 4!
Congratulations to Kayla and Christopher, and to Grandma Cindy and Grandpa Mark!
Happy New Year! Happy Epiphany!
Dr. Kennedy Gondongwe is recuperating from Covid.
Successful COVID-19 Vaccine being distributed.
Paul Lindemann's work on the prerecorded Christmas Eve service.
Progress on the connector and elevator!
Mission giving does so much good!
Our first "drive-in" church was a lot of fun! Thank you everyone who made it possible!
Council is grateful for all of the positive things that are happening despite Covid!
Gratitude texting groups: three groups uphold one another in prayer and gratitude
Labyrinth finger walks and growing appreciation in this ancient spiritual practice.

PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION

Prayers for Pat Crowell's sister Judy, whose husband, Bruce, died 2.4.21 from Covid
Prayers for Jo Worthen's family as Uncle Rudy has died (2.5.2021)
Prayers for Eileen Cox and family: Eileen's brother Jake (in Florida) died 1.18.21;
Trudie Bergeron, whose brother died; for the family and friends of Avis Hanson, who
died recently (the wife of Marge Palmer's cousin); 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 over 394,000
deaths in the US due to COVID 19.

PRAYERS OF STRENGTH, HEALTH, AND HEALING

Pam Pillsbury needs prayers of encouragement.
The Gordon Family continues to have COVID in their house. Their grandson &
daughter tested positive so they will continue to quarantine until the end of the month.
Carl (friend of Melanie Pawl) had open heart surgery. Pray, too, for his wife Sandy for
comfort while he's in the hospital as she can't be with him.
Manny, brother-in-law of the Guerrins, hospitalized in Chicago with leukemia.
Anne Engelhardt and her family
Wendy William's health concerns.
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
Teachers and all school personnel; Medical Professionals of all levels and in all
locations; pastors; world and local leaders
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
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,
parents, and sister) Last year at 32, he was diagnosed with glioblastoma (brain
and is approaching the end of his life. 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; 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. 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

Law Enforcement and other protectors of our safety and democracy; especially Active National Guard Military; First Responders;
Family Promise in their new expanded facility
Everyone in Zimbabwe, a country riddled with revolution and pandemic
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 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
Aghadowey Rural Kinship – all of our friends in Northern Ireland
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
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