

First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
P.O. Box 114, East Derry, NH 03041 Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

**April 25, 2021**



<https://gardenofpraise.com/>

**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.”*

**WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

**CENTERING MUSIC AND LIGHTING THE CHRIST LIGHT**

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CALL TO WORSHIP (Led by Katie Cobban)

One: Christ gives us two things: a Great Commandment and a Great Commission.

**All: Love one another as I have loved you; Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.**

One: Here we claim these words so that we might live boldly in his name.

**All: We are changed by sacred time. In turn, we can seek to change the world.**

One: **Come together then. Let us enter in and worship Almighty God!**

### HYMN: #301 **Crown with Your Richest Crowns**

Crown with your richest crowns the Lamb upon the throne;  
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own.  
Awake, my soul, and sing of Christ who died for you,  
And to your risen Savior bring your thanks for life made new.

Crown Christ the truth, the life who triumphed o'er the grave.  
And rose victorious in the strife, this fallen world to save.  
Christ's glories now we sing, Christ's name we magnify,  
Who died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

Crown Christ who holds the years, embracing space and time,  
Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime  
All hail, Redeemer, hail! For you have died for me;  
Your praise shall never, never fail throughout eternity.

### INVOCATION (Led Rachel Cobban— join in at home.)

Beckoning God, come among us this hour. By the work of your Spirit lift our eyes that we may envision new horizons. Tune our ears to hear your call in this new day. Awaken us to every opportunity to speak for you and to serve you. We ask these things in Name of Christ. Amen.

### SONG OF PRAISE: #236 *Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah*

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

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE – 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

### NEW TESTAMENT: Acts 8: 26- 40

<sup>26</sup> Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) <sup>27</sup> So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup> and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." <sup>30</sup> So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" <sup>31</sup> He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. <sup>32</sup> Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,  
so he does not open his mouth.

<sup>33</sup> In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is taken away from the earth."

<sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" <sup>35</sup> Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup> As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" <sup>38</sup> He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup> When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. <sup>40</sup> But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

### SERMON: An Opportune Meeting

#### HYMN: #522 I Love to Tell the Story

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,  
Of Jesus' radiant glory, of Jesus' endless love.  
I love to tell the story, because I know it's true;  
It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.  
I love to tell the story; and when I am in glory  
I'll tell the old, old story of Jesus' endless love.

I love to tell the story; more wonderful it seems  
Than all the golden visions of all our golden dreams.  
I love to tell the story, I tell it now to you  
Because I want to share it, because I know it's true.  
I love to tell the story; and when I am in glory  
I'll tell the old, old story of Jesus' endless love.

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best  
Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it, like the rest.  
And when I sing in glory, I know the new, new song  
Will be the old, old story that I have loved so long.  
I love to tell the story; and when I am in glory  
I'll tell the old, old story of Jesus' endless love.

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

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S BLESSINGS:** Use the next few moments to share joys and concerns in the chat. Our services are recorded. Please use first names. God knows who you mean.

**GETTING TO KNOW ANOTHER CHILD OF GOD – Cathy Pottle**

**OFFERTORY INVITATION (Led Katie Cobban)**

Let us not lay up for ourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but let us lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven... For where our treasure is, there will be our hearts also. (Matthew 6: 19-21, adapted)

**OFFERTORY MUSIC**

**\*DOXOLOGY #780 *Praise God from whom all blessings flow***

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Pastor Linda)**

Thank you for the chance to give financial resources God, for when we do we join in your quiet and mighty-work to make life on earth a little more like heaven. Receive them we pray, and multiple them in your grace. We pray a blessing on this, your beloved community and on those ministries that these gifts make possible. In the name of Christ, we ask it. Amen.

## **WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER**

**SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYERS**

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

### HYMN: #4 **Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You**

Joyful, joyful, we adore you, God of glory, God of love,  
Hearts unfold like flowers before you, opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the storms of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

You are giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blessed.  
Wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!  
Loving Spirit, Father, Mother, all who love belong to you;  
Teach us how to love each other, by that love our joy renew.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus which the morning stars began,  
Boundless love is reigning o'er us, reconciling race and clan.  
Ever singing, move we forward, faithful in the midst of strife,  
Joyful music leads us onward in the triumph song of life.

### 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  
SABBATICAL COVERAGE PASTOR – The Rev. Linda Lea Snyder  
LAY READER – Katie Cobban  
GREETERS – Jack Martin, Sue Lindemann  
CHOIR DIRECTOR/ ORGANIST – Joan Virga  
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR – Christine Lehoullier  
OFFICE MANAGER – 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 25, 2021*

### PRAYERS OF JOY

Continued prayers for Pastor Deborah as she travels her sabbatical Journey. Prayers for Pastor Linda serving as our Sabbatical Coverage Pastor!

We share the joy of

Spaghetti Supper, Friday April 30<sup>th</sup>, 5-6pm – continuing to provide To-Go  
Successful COVID-19 Vaccines being distributed across the country! Thank you, God!  
Kevin R. (friend of Liza D) is doing much better!

Rehearsals for virtual choice will take a break until the beginning of May. Tune your voices now!

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 continue to put themselves in harm's way for our country's safety.

## **PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION**

Prayers for the family and friends of Marie Parker (Tim Hepworth's mother in law) who died on 4.3.21, Prayers for the family and friends of Manny Madayag (member of the Guerrin family) who died 3.26.21; Prayers for George Turner's family (Ed's dad) who died 3.22.21 Prayers for family and friends of Barbara (known as Gram), friend of Paula Cox and a long-term Walmart employee died on 3.21.21 Families of the over 563,900 deaths in the US due to COVID.

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

Tom's procedure went well. Andrea & Tom thank everyone for their support and continued prayers.

James S (Jeff's dad) who needs dialysis

Erin H. friend of Nancy Murdock. She has a serious autoimmune disease.

Young 8 yr old Nash needs healing prayers; his family needs strength

Raymond C, son of Maryann's friend Linda, needs a heart transplant.

Stephen, nephew of Eileen Cox, diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma stage 3, spreading quickly.

Kate (friend of Chris C) dealing with difficulties in pregnancy

Anne E and her family

Wendy W's health concerns.

Teachers and all school personnel; medical professionals of all levels and in all locations, pastors, world and local leaders

**For those with cancer:** Liza D's husband's Uncle Walt has Stage 4 cancer; Kate, Jesse's friend is battling terminal cancer; Jay, Marjorie P's friend, a 41-yr old father of 3 young children who has been diagnosed with multiple cancers. Martha, close friend of Pat and Dick P, recurring leukemia; Janice P; Bob Dinan (friend of the Bob and Karen); Danny with stage 4 cancer, brother of Mary Jane (friend of Rachel and Alec); Kathleen M (friend of Trudie B) diagnosed with cancer

## **SPECIAL ONGOING PRAYERS**

Prayers for peaceful resolution to difficult issues. Prayers for compassion, not hate.

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

Law Enforcement and other protectors of our safety and democracy; especially active National Guard Military; First Responders;



Family Promise in their new Manchester expanded facility  
Everyone in Zimbabwe, a country riddled with corruption, environmental impacts, and pandemic  
Tom and Andrea C - 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  
Aghadowey Rural Kinship – all of our friends in Northern Ireland  
Southern NH Family Promise; Sonshine Soup Kitchen; Marion Gerrish; Upper Room  
Dangamvura – UCCZ – Zimbabwe African Church  
United Theological College in Zimbabwe, as well as our friend Kennedy Gondongwe  
Tim B – Health & strength  
Bonnie H, friend of Tim B  
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

