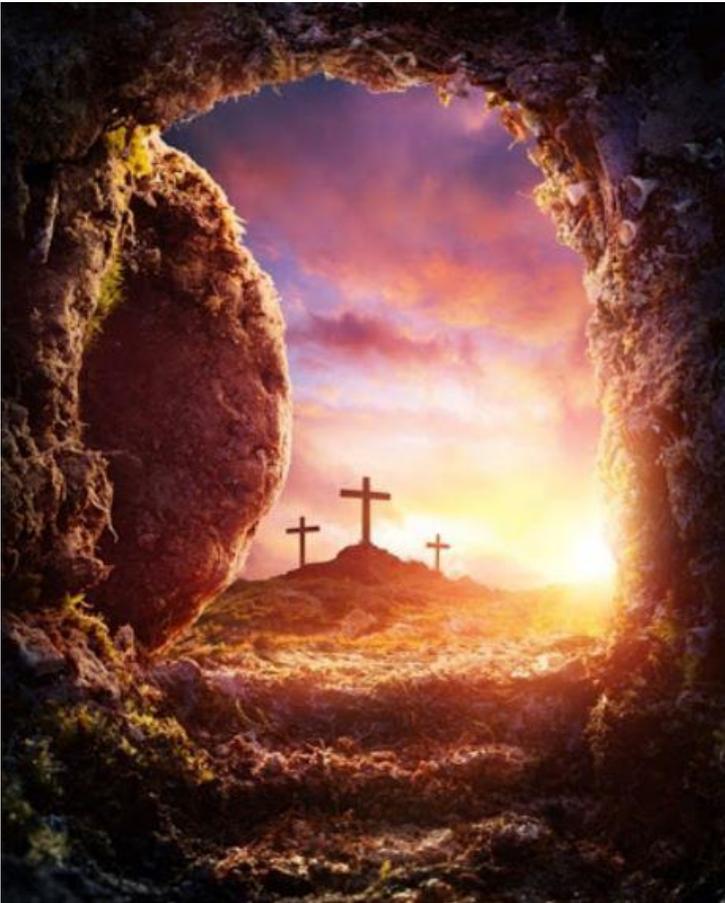


First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road East Derry, NH 03041 Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

April 4, 2021 Easter Sunday



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)

No matter who you are,
No matter where you are
on life’s journey –
you are welcome among us!
Welcome!

“Never place a period where
God has placed a comma.”
Gracie Allen

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

WELCOME

Please receive your bulletin as you enter. As you exit, you may leave your financial gift.

OPENING HYMN #233 *Christ the Lord Is Risen Today*

Christ the Lord is risen today. Alleluia! Mortal tongues and angels say: Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia! Sing, glad heavens and earth reply:
Alleluia!

Let the Victor’s people sing, Alleluia! Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!
Dying once, Christ lives to save, Alleluia! Where your victory, O grave? Alleluia!

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We gather for worship in awe and wonder.

Many: **God has answered our prayers with salvation.**

One: Let us sing songs of praise, for God is good.

Many: **The tomb is empty; death will not be the last word.
Jesus Christ is alive and we, too, shall live.**

One: Let us open our hearts and minds to the risen Christ.

Many: **Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

INVOCATION

God of abundant life, we greet the dawning brightness of this special day with hopes renewed. We have known grief and sorrow, loss and tears, fear and failure. Meet us here, living Christ, for we need this time of resurrection. Amen.

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

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

HYMN #238 *Now the Green Blade Rises* (vs. 1, 3)

Now the green blade rises from the buried grain;
Wheat that in dark earth for many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.

Christ came forth at Easter, like the risen grain,
Jesus, who for three days in the grave had lain,
Quick from the dead the risen One is seen:
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.

OUR SACRED STORY

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.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

GOSPEL: Luke 24:1-12

¹But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. ²They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³but when they went in, they did not find the body. ⁴While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. ⁵The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. ⁶Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." ⁸Then they remembered his words, ⁹and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹²But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

EASTER REFLECTION: An Idle Tale

HYMN #230 *Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain* (vs 1, 2)

Come, you faithful, raise the strain of triumphant gladness;
God has brought all Israel into joy from sadness;
Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke Jacob's sons and daughters;
Led them with unmoistened foot through the Red Sea waters.

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.

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

When we have seen the Christ, our worldview changes. When we have encountered the living water of Jesus, we can no longer pursue the ways of selfishness. And when we realize how much we have received from a loving God our gratitude must pour forth in eagerness so that others may learn what we know to be true.

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

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Heavenly Creator, we consecrate all of the gifts that are brought forth to share. May the message of hope spread through the streets and across the lands, and may they begin within the boundaries of our hearing and burst out for all the world to see. As forgiven and forgiving people, may we look for even more clever ways to make our world a more loving place in these days of social distancing. Amen.

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

HYMN #245 *The Day of Resurrection* (vs 1, 3)

The day of resurrection! Earth, tell it out abroad;
The Passover of gladness, the Passover of God.
From death to life eternal, from earth unto the sky,
Our Christ has brought us over with hymns of victory.

Now let the heavens be joyful, let earth its song begin,
The whole world keep high triumph, and all that is therein;
Let all things seen and unseen their notes of gladness blend,
For Christ again has risen, our joy that has no end.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH
SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER
CHOIR DIRECTOR/ ORGANIST

Members of the Congregation
The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof
Joan Virga

First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is a community of faith built upon a firm foundation of worship, prayer and education. In affirming diversity, we are dedicated to welcoming all people who seek the Word of God, Christian fellowship and service to others. In partnership with Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to the ever-widening community through active and loving ministry.

IN OUR PRAYERS - April 4, 2021

PRAYERS OF JOY

Outpouring of support for our staff's performance this past year!!

Spaghetti Supper – 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!

First Virtual choir rehearsals! Thank you, Joan! This begins again after Easter!

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.

Welcome to Rory Jean, born January 4! Congratulations to Kayla and Christopher, and to Grandma Cindy and Grandpa Mark!

PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION

Prayers for the family and friends of Manny Madayag (member of the Guerrin family) who died 3.26.21; prayers for Mace L., dear friend of Joan's, whose wife died.

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 541,200 deaths in the US due to COVID.

PRAYERS OF STRENGTH, HEALTH, AND HEALING

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 better gun control so that innocent lives are not so regularly taken.

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

Hospital Personnel, and All Nurses and Doctors, especially Parkland, 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 expanded facility

Everyone in Zimbabwe, a country riddled with revolution 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