

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

September 5, 2021



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

“Let There be Peace on Earth”

Let There be Peace on Earth and let it begin with me.
Let There Be Peace on Earth; The peace that was meant to be
With God our Creator; family all are we
Let me walk with my neighbor In perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me; Let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry step I take Let this be my solemn vow
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP - (Led by Rebecca Brook)

One: We come longing to hear the life-affirming word of God.

Many: We lean in together to hear God's promises, echoes of mercy & whispers of love.

One: We come longing for hope, courage & compassion to face the living of these days.

Many: We will follow after Jesus, stay close in His footsteps, to find strength for today & bright hope for tomorrow.

One: We come believing that death, darkness & despair do not have the final word.

Many: For we will see Jesus, the resurrection & the life. Who comes to ransom & redeem all of us...and all parts of us.

One: We come longing for light because our lives are crowded with shadows.

All: We come because God loves us out of darkness into light over & over again.

INVOCATION (Led by Rebecca Brook please join in.)

Lord Jesus You humbled Yourself; You stepped down into darkness; not to condemn the world but that we might be saved through You; called by name as loved & beloved of God. You are well-acquainted with grief; Jesus You wept. We come to You in our sorrow & tears — knowing You remain close to the broken-hearted. You speak peace to the fears that bind us that we might rest in You. We come to You with gratitude, even in our grief & doubts, knowing You promise to be with us. And that is the Good News. That is our blessed assurance. That you are with us. Always. Amen.

HYMN: #473 *Blessed Assurance*

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!

Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in Christ's blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

Perfect communion, perfect delight! Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;

Angels descending, bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love. [Refrain]

Perfect submission, all is at rest, I in my Savior am happy and blessed;

Watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in Christ's love.

[Refrain]

CALL TO CONFESSION (Rebecca Brook)

If we confess our sins God is faithful to forgive us for all the ways we are quick to anger, quick to speak without listening, quick to see with harsh not gentle, soft eyes. We fixate on others' wrongs rather than see ourselves clearly. We do not live into the generosity of spirit & resilient hope of the Gospel. So we come to the throne of grace with confidence that as we confess we are met with compassion & loving-kindness. Amen. Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Led by Rebecca Brook, please join in.)

Lord You are compassionate & gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. You do not treat us as our sins deserve. We confess that we do not follow in the footsteps of Jesus. We love with condition. We judge and condemn others... and also ourselves. We too often cast the first stone, with logs in our eyes we do not see our neighbors, all our neighbors, as loved & beloved of God. Though we carry the heavy weight of our sins, shortcomings & shame — You remove our transgressions from us. We pray for the courage to confess our sins, the strength to live without keeping record of wrongs, without keeping score — instead keeping hearts filled with the hope that Your grace awaits us, sustains us & carries us. And extending that grace to others. In the Name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Rebecca Brook)

We are chosen, called by name, welcomed as loved & beloved of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us respond to such wondrous grace by walking humbly with God, walking gently through the world with courage, compassion & peace. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE: HYMN #591 *This Is My Song* (vs.1)

This is my song, O God of all nations,
a song of peace for lands afar and mine.
This is my home, the country where my heart is;
here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine;
Both other hearts in other lands are beating with hopes
and dreams as true and high as mine.

GOD'S YOUNGER DISCIPLES

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE *Jesus Loves Me*

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

COMMUNION MUSIC: Rebecca and Shellie Brook

OUR SACRED STORY

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

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 (We will take the bread together to represent that we are One in Christ. We will take the juice as the Spirit moves us to represent that maintain our individuality in the eyes of God.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING



WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

SCRIPTURE: John 11:17-44 A Narrative Reading

Narrator: On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him saying,

Martha: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus: "Your brother will rise again."

Martha: "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus: "I am the resurrection and the life.

The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Martha: "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

Narrator: Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there. When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said,

Mary: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

Narrator: When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. Jesus asked where they laid him. The people replied "come and see." Jesus. Wept.

Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.

Jesus: “Take away the stone.”

Martha: “But, Lord, by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”

Jesus: “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

Narrator: So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up... and said,

Jesus: “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

“Lazarus, come out!”

Narrator: The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus: “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

SERMON: Jesus Wept

HYMN: ***Great Is Thy Faithfulness***

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be

Refrain:

Great is Thy faithfulness, great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside (refrain)

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.

OFFERTORY INVITATION (Rebecca Brook)

Were the whole realm of nature mine that were an offering far too small. Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all. Lord Jesus we give our gifts & our lives to you as a response to Your amazing love & amazing grace. Amen.

DOXOLOGY: #785 We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Led by Rebecca Brook, please join in.)

God of new life, out of the abundance of our lives we offer these gifts to You. We are blessed to be a blessing in Your Name. May the light of Christ shine bright in this faith family & the community we are called to serve. For Your is the kingdom, the power, the glory forever and ever. Amen.

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS and PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE



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

ANY FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN: #403 ***My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*** (vs.1 & vs.2)

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' love and righteousness;
I dare not trust this earthly frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name

Refrain:

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
all other ground is sinking sand,
all other ground is sinking sand.

When shadows veil my Savior's his face, I rest upon unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil. (refrain)

PASTORAL PRAYER

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.*

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

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH - Members of the Congregation

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

GREETERS – Anne-Marie Merrill, Sue Brown

LAY READER – Rebecca Brook

MUSIC DIRECTOR – Jonathan Cote

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR - Christine Lehoullier
OFFICE MANAGER - Michelle Guerrin
AV/ TECHNICAL – Paul Lindemann with Brian Williams and Mike Schroeder

IN OUR PRAYERS - September 5, 2021

PRAYERS OF JOY

United Theological College in Harare, Zimbabwe received our donation for food.
Spaghetti Supper – it is of note that the First Parish spaghetti angels have NEVER missed a month of providing delicious dinners to those in need!!! Thank you!
Labyrinth field trip to Windham, followed by a trip to Moo's!
Jonathan Cote is the new Music Director at FPC!
What a joy to worship together outdoors 8.15 and baptize three children!
John and Ginnie “tied the knot” on Saturday August 14!
Prayerful planning for our return to indoor worship – whenever it may come!
Field trip to Keene to see two different labyrinths! Labyrinth walkers who were able to attend really had a great experience!
Times of gathering again with families and friends.
Christian Education's In person Puppet Show and a Craft- Wonderful experience with Christine & her team of puppet friends!
Gratitude for members in Georgia, Zimbabwe, and Northern Ireland.

PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION

For the families of the soldiers lost in Afghanistan.
For the family of Matthew Foster, a senior at UVM, who died on July 19.
For Kennedy G and his whole family: Kennedy's sister died from Covid.
For the families of those who were lost due to Hurricane Henri.
For the families and friends of Sue Morin, Scott Lovejoy, Marge and Glenn Allen.
For the families of loved ones who perished in the collapsed building in Surfside, FL.
For the families of those who were lost due to Hurricane Elsa.
Families of the 631,008+ people who have died in the US due to COVID.
Tender prayers for the countries of Brazil, Peru, Nepal, and India facing unprecedented COVID cases and deaths. For those who have lost loved ones to the virus.
Prayers for Israel and Palestine in the wake of isolated violence.

PRAYERS OF STRENGTH, HEALTH, AND HEALING

Woody, who lost almost everything in his home.
Victims of flooding and fire
Gail & George, Jo's friends, going through a difficult time with age related changes.
Jo's sister Sue, in the hospital awaiting nursing home placement. Her husband died recently. Sue is very distraught and afraid for what her future holds.
Benjamin Plouff, Dick's brother, suffering from cardiac issues, breathing now difficult
Judy Dobson, Rachel C's stepmom, who lost her home to a fire.

Brian, friend of Wendy W. & Jeff S. Bless the friends who are ministering to him.
Jim, Jeff S.'s father, for prayers of confidence and healing
Prayers for Andrea & Tom who thank everyone for their support and prayers.
Erin H. friend of Nancy Murdock. She has a serious autoimmune disease.
Raymond C, son of Maryann's friend Linda, needs a heart transplant.
Stephen, nephew of Eileen Cox, diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma stage 3

For those with cancer: Priscilla with colon cancer; Tracey with aggressive cancer who has 3 children/ only 46 years old; Liza D's husband's Uncle Walt has Stage 4 cancer; Kate, Jesse's friend is battling terminal cancer; 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.)

SPECIAL ONGOING PRAYERS

Prayers for war-torn and violence-ridden areas of the world, e.g. Afghanistan

Prayers for peaceful resolution to conflict situations around the world

Prayers of peace and healing of divisions in our own country.

Parkland Hospital personnel, and all nurses and doctors, Hospice workers and employees of nursing Homes and extended care facilities

Law Enforcement, fire fighters and other protectors of our safety and democracy; especially all first responders, active troops, and National Guard Military.

Family Promise in their new Nashua expanded facility and our FP team that brings dinner each month.

That vaccine distribution will be increasingly possible around the world, and in the US will continue to build our common resistance. For those who continue to be taken ill and lose family members.

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 and Bonnie H, friend of Tim B

Refugees and their families seeking asylum and safety.

People of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Friends of the Meetinghouse Board of Directors.