

7First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road East Derry, NH 03041  
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

**November 21, 2021**

For unto  
us a  
Child ✨  
is born  
ISAIAH 9.6

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 (*Every Time I Feel the Spirit*) // LIGHTING THE CHRIST LIGHT  
WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Psalm 95) (Led by Cyndi Gray)

- One: O come, let us sing to the Lord;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
- Many: Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
- One: The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.  
For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.
- Many: In his hand are the depths of the earth;  
the heights of the mountains are his also.

**HYMN: #12 *I Sing the Mighty Power of God* (vs. 1, 2)**

I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise,  
That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies.  
I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;  
The moon shines full at God's command, and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of our God that filled the earth with food;  
God formed the creatures with a word, and then pronounced them good.  
Oh, how your wonders are displayed, where'er I turn my eye:  
If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky!

**INVOCATION (Led by lay reader please join in.)**

Lord of Lords, King of Kings, we gather in thanksgiving for a year of bountiful blessings and mysterious God-winks. We acknowledge that things are difficult right now: disease and discord run rampant. And yet, in the midst is your Presence and your promise of a new day. We will await the child with hope, faith, joy and love. In your holy name and in your holy love. Amen.

**SONG OF PRAISE: #765 *Alleluia* (words: Alleluia)**

**WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US**

**SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 9: 2-7 (NRSV)**

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup> For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup> For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

**SERMON: "For Unto Us a Child is Born"**

HYMN: *I Am Grateful* by Heather Pierson (used with permission)

For all the gifts I have received, I am grateful.

For all the lessons I have learned, I am grateful.

For the rising of another day, I am grateful.

And for the life that I've been given I am grateful. I am grateful. I am grateful.

## WE RESPOND WITH OUR PARTICIPATION

### RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

**Pastor:** We invite to come forward those who wish to affirm their baptism by uniting with us in this household of faith. We welcome Shirley and Kevin Foster, Julie Greenfield and Deanna Butler. (Introductions)

**Pastor:** Friends in Christ, we all are received into the church through the Sacrament of baptism. These people have found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ here at First Parish. Through prayer and study, they have been led by the Holy Spirit to affirm their baptism and to claim in our presence their covenantal relationship with Christ. They are here for service to Jesus Christ, using the gifts which the Holy Spirit bestows.

**Deacon:** You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are equally citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus alone being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in Christ, in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

**Pastor:** I ask you now these questions: Do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ? **New Members: I do**

Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

**New Members: I do**

Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior? **New Members: I do**

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

**New Members: I promise, with the help of God.**

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

**New Members: I promise, with the help of God.**

Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?

**New Members: I Promise, with the help of God.**

**Deacon:** Let us, the members of First Parish, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ:

**People:** We, then, the members and friends of this church, extend to you a Christian welcome, and do heartily receive you into the fellowship of this church.

We desire to share with you its responsibilities and privileges, its sacrifices and rewards. We pledge to you Christian sympathy and concern.

We promise to walk with you in the ways of loving service, to be jealous of your good name, and to hold your peace and welfare as our own.

God grant that loving and being loved, serving and being served, blessing and being blessed, we may be prepared, while we dwell together on earth, for the perfect fellowship that is above.

**Pastor:** let us pray.

O God, we praise you for calling us to faith and for gathering us into the church, the body of Christ. We thank you for your people gathered in this local church and rejoice that you have increased our community of faith. Together may we live in the Spirit, building on another up in love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of Jesus Christ. AMEN

And all God's people proclaim: Thanks be to God! Welcome!

SONG OF PRAISE: #765 *Alleluia* (words: Alleluia)

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

OFFERTORY INVITATION (lay reader)

Prophets urge us to pay attention to the Presence of God that breaks into our daily lives. God's gifts surround us: family, friends, faith and the air we breathe. Let us be mindful of the abundance that is ours to share.

If you are joining us virtually, please 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 A MEMBER Cyndi Gray

DOXOLOGY: #425 *For the Fruit of All Creation*

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.

For God's gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Led by lay reader, please join in.)

For the wondrous gift of life, we are thankful, O God. Your generous outpouring of grace reminds us of the fruitful life we are called to bear. May these gifts of time, treasure and talent, therefore, embody our desire to share and contribute to your Presence among us. Amen.

## WE RESPOND WITH GRATITUDE AND PRAYER

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYERS, followed by  
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.

SUNG RESPONSE: #423:

Great is your faithfulness! (2x) Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed, Your hand has provided;  
Great is your faithfulness! God unto me.

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

ANY FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

A WORD FROM OUR VICE-MODERATOR, RANDY BROWN

HYMN: #35 O Mighty God, When I Survey in Wonder (Vs 1&2)

O mighty God, when I survey in wonder the world that formed when once the word you said.

The strands of life all woven close together, the whole creation at your table fed.

**Refrain: My soul cries out in songs of praise to you O mighty God!**

**My soul cries out in songs of praise to you, O mighty God! O mighty God!**

When your voice speaks in rolls of thunder pealing, your lightning power bursts in bright surprise. When cooling rain, your gentle love revealing, reflects your promise, arcing through the skies. Sing Refrain.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: *Halle, halle, halle-lujah*

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

LAY READER – Cyndi Gray

NOVEMBER GREETERS – Sue Brown, Sue Lindemann (Remote)

MUSICIAN – Jonathan Cote

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR - Christine Lehoullier

OFFICE MANAGER - Michelle Guerrin

AV/ TECHNICAL – Paul Lindemann with Brian Williams and Mike Schroeder

# *IN OUR PRAYERS - November 21, 2021*

## **PRAYERS OF JOY**

### **Sugar Plum Angels**

Church Wifi was upgraded – with joy and appreciation to Paul and Dani  
New Walkway on the west side of the connector! Thanks to Bill and Fred!  
The gorgeous glass garden sculptures/totems are beautiful! Ready for Sugar Plum!  
Beautiful flooring and fresh paint – inside and out!!! Gratitude to Facilities and to the  
BAC for their hard work!  
Dangamvura – UCCZ – Zimbabwe African Church has been in touch with us  
Gratitude for in-person worship and everyone's willingness to follow safety protocol.  
Gratitude for members and friends in Georgia, Zimbabwe, and Northern Ireland.

## **PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION**

For family and friends of Brian, especially Wendy W. & Jeff S.  
Karen Wilson, her siblings and ALL the family on the loss of Karen's mother.  
Friends of Tommie Pitts, who passed away suddenly last week.  
For the families of the soldiers lost in Afghanistan  
For the families of those who were lost due to recent hurricanes and fires.  
Families of the **759,000+** people who have died in the US due to COVID. (11/15/21)

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

Jenny, friends of Jeff S.; Davida, Jo's friend, suffering from migraines after surgery.  
Nancy's friend Erin H.- Prayers that her medical condition will improve enough that her  
boys will be able to return to live with her  
Benjamin Plouff, Dick's brother, suffering from cardiac issues, breathing now difficult  
Jim, Jeff S.'s father, for prayers of confidence and healing

**For those with covid:** Mary L.; Aleigha;

**For those with cancer:** Bruce with stage 4 colon cancer; Janice P needs another  
round of chemo; 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; Martha,  
close friend of Pat and Dick P, recurring leukemia; Bb Dinan (friend of the Bob and  
Karen); Danny with stage 4 cancer, brother of Mary Jane (friend of Rachel and Alec.)

## **SPECIAL ONGOING PRAYERS**

Law Enforcement, fire fighters and other protectors of our safety and democracy;  
especially all first responders, active troops, and National Guard Military.  
Prayers for peaceful resolution to conflict situations around the world  
Parkland Hospital personnel, and all nurses and doctors, Hospice workers and  
Southern NH Family Promise; Sonshine Soup Kitchen; Marion Gerrish; Upper Room  
United Theological College in Zimbabwe, as well as our friend Kennedy Gondongwe  
Tim B – Health & strength and Bonnie H, friend of Tim B  
Friends of the Meetinghouse Board of Directors