

First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road East Derry, NH 03041
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COMMUNION SUNDAY - God Speaks to Elijah
November 7, 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 THOUGHT by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

“Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.”

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

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP (Led by lay reader, Carol Guerrin)

One: God is ready for us to seek what is eternal.

Many: Our spirits long for God, as a deer longs for water.

One: God seldom comes in the earthquake, wind or fire.

Many: In moments of sheer silence God is revealed.

INVOCATION (Led by lay reader please join in.)

Holy God, our refuge and our hope. Come among us today to give us the energy and sense of purpose we need to do your will. Amen.

HYMN: # 421 **We Gather Together** (vs. 1)

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing, to live in community, seeking God's will. We come now, as sisters and brother, confessing the sins that divide and the wrong in us still.

CALL TO CONFESSION (lay reader)

When we are tempted to participate in socially acceptable behaviors that in fact exclude or diminish other children of God, we are met with an all-inclusive Creator who calls us to repentance.

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

Almighty sovereign and forgiving God, we confess that in an effort to "fit in" our lives do not always glorify you and your compassionate ways. We draw lines of distinction rather than celebrate our humanity. Forgive us and mold us into whom you would have us be. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (lay reader)

God puts a new song on our lips and alleluia in our hearts. We are forgiven. Amen.

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

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

COMMUNION HYMN: #283 **Spirit of the Living God** (vs. 1)

Spirit of the Living God Fall fresh on me (2x)

Melt me, mold me; Fill me, use me; Spirit of the Living God Fall fresh on me

OUR SACRED STORY

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION 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.

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. You will be able to dispose of your communion cup on your way out of the sanctuary.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 19:1-18 The Message

^{19: 1-2} Ahab reported to Jezebel everything that Elijah had done, including the massacre of the prophets. Jezebel immediately sent a messenger to Elijah with her threat: "The gods will get you for this and I'll get even with you! By this time tomorrow you'll be as dead as any one of those prophets."

³⁻⁵ When Elijah saw how things were, he ran for dear life to Beersheba, far in the south of Judah. He left his young servant there and then went on into the desert another day's journey. He came to a lone broom bush and collapsed in its shade, wanting in the worst way to be done with it all—to just die: "Enough of this, God! Take my life—I'm ready to join my ancestors in the grave!" Exhausted, he fell asleep under the lone broom bush.

Suddenly an angel shook him awake and said, "Get up and eat!"

⁶ He looked around and, to his surprise, right by his head were a loaf of bread baked on some coals and a jug of water. He ate the meal and went back to sleep.⁷ The angel of God came back, shook him awake again, and said, "Get up and eat some more—you've got a long journey ahead of you."

⁸⁻⁹ He got up, ate and drank his fill, and set out. Nourished by that meal, he walked forty days and nights, all the way to the mountain of God, to Horeb. When he got there, he crawled into a cave and went to sleep.

Then the word of God came to him: "So Elijah, what are you doing here?"

¹⁰ "I've been working my heart out for the God-of-the-Angel-Armies," said Elijah. "The people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, destroyed the places of worship, and murdered your prophets. I'm the only one left, and now they're trying to kill me."

¹¹⁻¹² Then he was told, "Go, stand on the mountain at attention before God. God will pass by."

A hurricane wind ripped through the mountains and shattered the rocks before God, but God wasn't to be found in the wind; after the wind an earthquake, but God wasn't in the earthquake; and after the earthquake fire, but God wasn't in the fire; and after the fire a gentle and quiet whisper.

¹³⁻¹⁴ When Elijah heard the quiet voice, he muffled his face with his great cloak, went to the mouth of the cave, and stood there. A quiet voice asked, "So Elijah, now tell me, what are you doing here?" Elijah said it again, "I've been working my heart out for God, the God-of-the-Angel-Armies, because the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, destroyed your places of worship, and murdered your prophets. I'm the only one left, and now they're trying to kill me."

¹⁵⁻¹⁸ God said, "Go back the way you came through the desert to Damascus. When you get there anoint Hazael; make him king over Aram. Then anoint Jehu son of Nimshi; make him king over Israel. Finally, anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. Anyone who escapes death by Hazael will be killed by Jehu; and anyone who escapes death by Jehu will be killed by Elisha. Meanwhile, I'm preserving for myself seven thousand souls: the knees that haven't bowed to the god Baal, the mouths that haven't kissed his image."

SERMON: "Still, Small Voice"

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION (lay reader)

God has so richly provided all that we need for life's journey. Let us share according to God's generosity.

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.

MISSION MOMENT: Thanksgiving Baskets - Carol Guerrin

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.)

God of all times and places, may our offerings reflect confidence, not cowardice; altruism, not egotism; inclusiveness not exclusiveness. May our dedicated dollars reflect a consecrated congregation. Amen.

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYERS

SUNG RESPONSE: #423 ***Great is your faithfulness!***

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

HYMN: #28 ***For the Beauty of the Earth*** (vs. 1)

For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies.

Refrain: God of all, to you we raise this, our hymn of grateful praise.

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 – Carol Guerrin

NOVEMBER GREETERS – Sue Brown, Sue Lindemann (Remote)

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 – November 7, 2021

PRAYERS OF JOY

Beautiful fall; magnificent colors and lots of sun

The gorgeous glass garden sculptures/totems are beautiful!

Beautiful flooring and fresh paint – inside and out!!! Gratitude to Facilities and to the BAC for their hard work!

Handsome chairs for Pastor Deborah's office and the foyer – thank you, Breedens!!

Dangamvura – UCCZ – Zimbabwe African Church has been in touch with us after many months of silence. They hope to reconnect with us!

So many diapers collected going to needy families with young children!

Gratitude for in-person worship.

Gratitude for members and friends in Georgia, Zimbabwe, and Northern Ireland.

Courtney married Andrew right here at First Parish! Bountiful blessings.

So much joy and gratitude for Paul and his tech helpers!

Derry Public Library was named New Hampshire's best library by the NH Library Trustees Association!

PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION

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 **740,000+** people who have died in the US due to COVID. (10/29/2021)

PRAYERS OF STRENGTH, HEALTH, AND HEALING

Rick, son of Dick Crow, who is hospitalized in Annapolis with kidney failure.

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

Thavy, friend of the Guerrin family, during her high-risk pregnancy.

Gail & George, Jo's friends, going through a difficult time with age related changes.

Benjamin Plouff, Dick's brother, suffering from cardiac issues, breathing now difficult

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

For those with 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

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

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

People of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Friends of the Meetinghouse Board of Directors