

First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road East Derry, NH 03041
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February 6, 2022

Black History Month



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 // LIGHTING THE CHRIST LIGHT

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP (Led by Katie Cobban)

One: God is calling us to the place of healing.

Many: **We come to hear and be made well.**

One: The Word became flesh to dwell with humanity.

Many: **May God’s transformative energy dwell within us!**

HYMN: #282 ***Every Time I Feel the Spirit***

Refrain: Ev'ry time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart, I will pray.

Yes, ev'ry time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart, I will pray.

Upon the mountain when my God spoke,
out of God's mouth came fire and smoke.

And all around me, it looked so fine,

I asked my God if all was mine. Refrain

INVOCATION (Led by lay reader please join in.)

God of all Creation, you have provided living water to nourish us, heal us and sooth our damaged souls. Meet us here again in these moments that we may praise and worship you, giving thanks for all that we have received. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION (lay leader)

The gift of love is not incorporated into our lives without effort on our parts. Our intention does not always yield our desired goal. Some may be hurt due to our mistakes. Let us give our attention to the ways in which we falter.

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

Infinite God, look upon your finite creatures, broken and bereaved, with compassion and consolation. You offer wisdom and insight, but we misunderstand your counsel. O God, help us reflect Your love into the world so that the world may know you through our actions. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVNESS (lay leader)

God's gift of new life is ever available. The Holy Spirit is at work in our midst. God grant that we may open our eyes, unstop our ears, and live with empathy for all of God's children. With faith, we can live into our beliefs, praising God who has blessed us with the peace of Christ.

SONG OF PRAISE: #610 ***Glory, Glory Hallelujah!*** (x3) God's truth is marching on!

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

COMMUNION HYMN #330 ***Let Us Break Bread Together on Our Knees***

Let us break bread together on our knees. (x2)

Refrain: When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O God have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees. (x2) Refrain

Let us praise God together on our knees. (x2) Refrain

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

At home, you please use elements of your choosing to represent the bread and the cup. If you are with your family, please serve one another. Here in our Sanctuary, we will be using the individual cups that you picked up at the entrance. Lift one tab to retrieve the "bread". Carefully lift the second tab to drink the juice. You will be able to discard the empty cup as you leave the sanctuary.

As we celebrate Communion today, you will first be invited to take the "bread" – which you will hold. Once everyone is served, we will ALL take the bread at the same time. This act symbolizes that we are ONE BODY and that we are all one in the Spirit of Christ.

You will then be invited to take the cup of love which symbolizes the cup of wine that Jesus shared with his friends, saying "This is the cup of love poured out for you." You are invited to prayerfully drink from the cup at your own pace, in your own time. This demonstrates that we are each an individual in God's Presence – each one doing the best that he/she/they can – to be the hands and feet of Christ on this earth.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**Thank you, God, for life in the Spirit of Jesus:
For gladness in this bread and cup, for love that cannot die,
For peace the world cannot give, for joy in the company of friends,
For the glory of creation, for the mission of justice you have made our own.
In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.**

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

SCRIPTURE: John 4:46-54; 5:1-18

⁴⁶ Then (Jesus) came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." ⁴⁹ The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my little boy dies." ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way.

⁵¹ As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. ⁵² So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, “Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him.” ⁵³ The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So he himself believed, along with his whole household. ⁵⁴ Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

5 After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Bethzatha, which has five porticoes. ³ In these lay many invalids — blind, lame, and paralyzed. ⁵ One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”

⁷ The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.” ⁸ Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.” ⁹ At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk. Now that day was a Sabbath.

¹⁰ So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat.” ¹¹ But he answered them, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your mat and walk.’” ¹² They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take it up and walk?’” ¹³ Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there.

¹⁴ Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you.” ¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. ¹⁶ Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the Sabbath.

¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, “My Father is still working, and I also am working.” ¹⁸ For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

SERMON: Signs and Wonders

HYMN: #553 ***There is a Balm in Gilead***

Refrain: There is a balm in Gilead To make the wounded whole
There is a balm in Gilead To heal the sin-sick soul

Sometimes I feel discouraged, And think my work's in vain,
But then the Holy Spirit Revives my soul again. Refrain

If you cannot preach like Peter, If you cannot pray like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus, who lived to save us all. Refrain

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION (lay reader)

God has blessed us in more ways than we can count. Let us offer to God support for our world and healing for our communities.

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 – thanks from the NH Conference of UCC, Rev Gordon Rankin

DOXOLOGY: ***Masithi***

Amen siakudumisa. (x2) Amen bawo, Amen bawo, Amen siakudumisa.

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

For the people you have given us to love and the tasks you have called us to do, we give you thanks, O God. We dedicate our gifts and ourselves to your touch – that they may be multiplied by your loving Spirit. May your Presence be made known through our efforts. Amen.

WE RESPOND WITH GRATITUDE AND PRAYER

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

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

ANY FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN: ***Wade in the Water***

Wade in the water (repeat x 4), children; God's a gonna' trouble the waters

See that band all dressed in white - God's a gonna' trouble the waters
It look like a band of the Israelites - God's a gonna' trouble the waters (ref.)

See that band all dressed in red - God's a gonna' trouble the waters
Look like a band that Moses led - God's a gonna' trouble the waters (ref.)

BENEDICTION:

God's children are **accepted, loved** and **forgiven**.

We are God's children and our path is clear.

We are called to go into the world to **accept**, to **love** and to **forgive**. Amen

POSTLUDE

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 – Katie Cobban

GREETERS – Sue Brown, Sue Lindemann (Remote)

MUSICIAN – Laurel Devino

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR - Christine Lehoullier

OFFICE MANAGER - Michelle Guerrin

AV/ TECHNICAL – Paul Lindemann with Mike Schroeder

DREAM like Martin

HELP like Harriet

FIGHT like Frederick

SPEAK like Sojourner

INVENT like Madam C.J.

WRITE like Langston

DARE like Rosa

CREATE like Quincy

INSPIRE like Maya

LEAD like Barack

Black History
is **American History**

IN OUR PRAYERS - February 6, 2021

PRAYERS OF JOY

Storms do not prevent us from worshipping together!! Technology helps us worship!
Rumors of a balanced budget are TRUE!!! God's abundance and God's people's generosity!

Renewed energy for projects and events around the church!

Welcome to Laurel Devino, our musician today. She is no stranger to First Parish and we welcome her back with enthusiasm.

Thank you to Paper Angels!

Fred Merrill is a gift from God and an answer to prayer! He has served this congregation with grace and wisdom for several years. Words aren't enough to express how much we all appreciate his service to First Parish.

Congratulations! Pat and Dick Plouff on the birth of another sweet great-grandbaby!
Congratulations and joy to Mark and Cindy Pingree on the birth of their new grandbaby.

The staff was filled with joy for the generous monetary gift to each of us for Christmas!

Thank you for allowing us to serve you and thank you for seeing how much we care.

Cards of Care to Hospital workers at Dartmouth Hitchcock- Thank you for writing!

Thank you to everyone who pledged and to those people who have increased their pledge! Technology allows us to stay connected during this pandemic!

Gratitude to lay leaders who stepped up when Pastor Deborah had Covid;

Gratitude for members and friends in Indiana, Georgia, Zimbabwe, and N. Ireland.

PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION

Family & friends of Dolly Cabral (friend of the Guerrin Family) who died on Jan 31st from Covid complications. Family of Ruthlee Root, who died on January 20. Family of Danny, Mary Jane's brother who died from cancer; Marie Greene whose son Jeremy died suddenly- Cards of condolences can be sent to 2 Golen Dr.; Apt 364; Londonderry, NH 03053. The family of Betty Burnell (died on 12.11.21); For the family of Joe Merrill; For the families of Oxford, OH shooting victims: Tate Myre, 16, Hana St. Juliana, 14, Madisyn Baldwin, 17, Justin Shilling, 17; For family and friends of Brian, especially Wendy W. & Jeff S.; For the families of the **884,853** people who have died in the US due to COVID. (2/2/22)

PRAYERS OF STRENGTH, HEALTH, AND HEALING

Carol (Carol G.'s sister in law) facing multiple operations to deal with the effects of Parkinson's; Sue (Jo W's sister) still in the hospital awaiting surgery and family cannot see her; Gail and George (Jo's friends) in ME need our prayers; Lincoln, Karen W's nephew, struggling with Autism and other mental health concerns. Jenny, friends of Jeff S; Davida, Jo's friend, suffering from migraines after surgery; Thavy, friend of the Guerrin family, during her high-risk pregnancy- third trimester. 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 cancer: Caroline M's surgery was 1.27; BB Dinan (friend of the Bob and Karen) – approaching the end of his life; Bruce with stage 4 colon cancer; Janice P continues to fight her 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; Martha, close friend of Pat and Dick P, recurring leukemia

SPECIAL ONGOING PRAYERS

Law Enforcement, fire fighters; first responders, active military

Prayers for peaceful resolution to conflict situations around the world

Parkland Hospital personnel, Elliot Hospital personnel, staff at Dartmouth Hitchcock 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