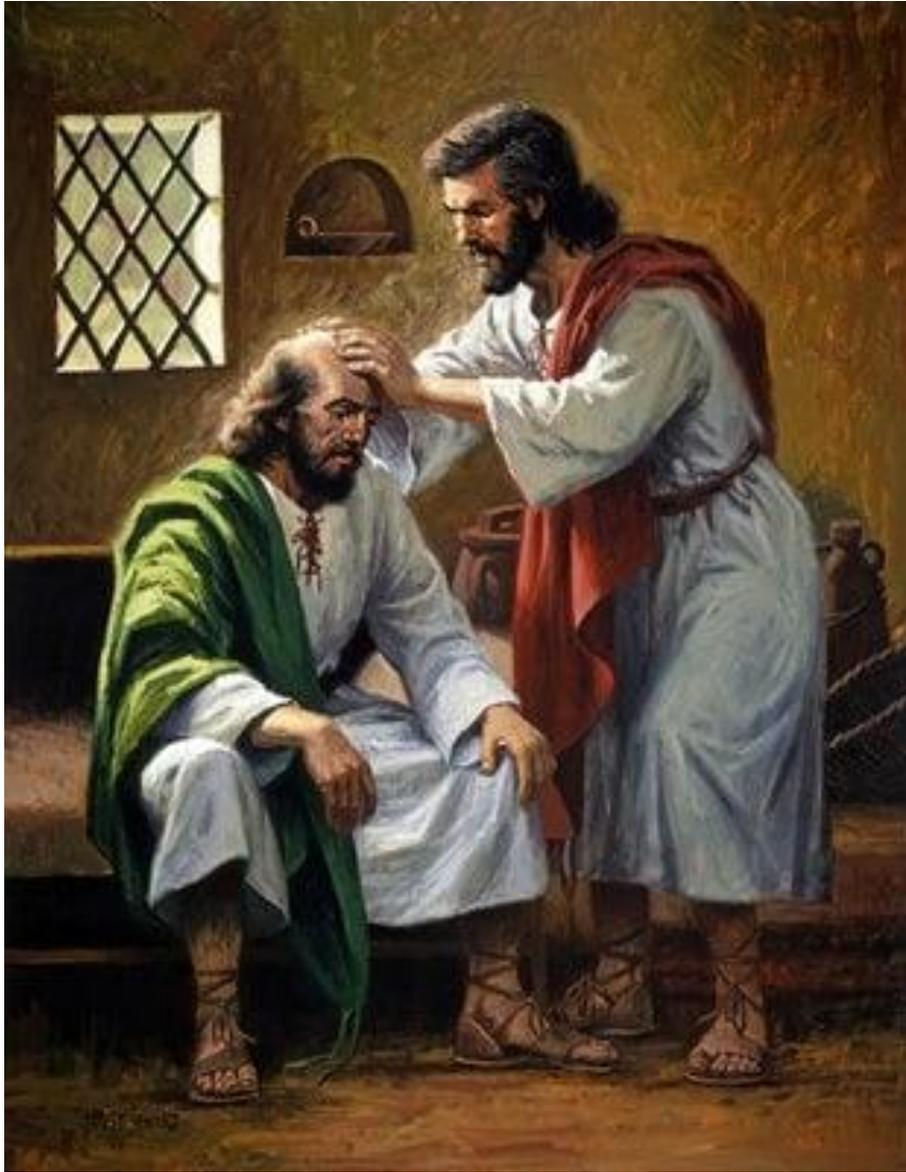


First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road East Derry, NH 03041
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

May 1, 2022



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 Nancy Murdock)

One: Sing praises to God and give thanks!

Many: Praise God for this new day and thank God for ever-present help.

One: Praise the One with lifts us out of defeat and upholds us in sadness.

Many: God sees us – and responds.

One: This is where we gather to acknowledge God's gifts and God's grace.

Many: We praise you, God, and hasten to worship together.

HYMN: #11 ***Bring Many Names*** (vs. 1-3)

INVOCATION (Led by lay reader please join in.)

Come to us as a light from heaven, Holy One. Pierce any shadows that separate us from You. Awaken within us new energy, new hope and new awareness of You. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION (lay leader)

Do we limit our God by our small visions and limited belief? Let us face our unbeliving and move further into believing and relationship with our abundant God.

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

Loving God, we admit to attitudes that reduce rather than expand your work among us. We separate ourselves from difficulties rather than embrace them as Your tool to help us grow in faith. Show us how to do better we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS (lay leader)

God's face shines upon all those whose word is impeccable and whose desire to be transformed is sincere. The One who knows our hearts is eager to forgive the truly penitent and to empower those who are growing weary. Praise God!

SONG OF PRAISE: #433 ***In The Bulb There Is a Flower*** (vs.1)

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION; OUR SACRED STORY; and PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

COMMUNION HYMN: #257 ***Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!*** (vs. 3, 4)

SHARING the MEAL

At home, you may 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.

The Bread of Life.... (we take together)

The Cup of Love... (we take prayerfully in our own time)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

WE HEAR GOD’S WORD FOR US

SCRIPTURE: Acts 9:1-19a

¹ Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

³ Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” ⁵ He asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶ But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” ⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” He answered, “Here I am, Lord.” ¹¹ The Lord said to him, “Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, ¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.”

¹³ But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; ¹⁴ and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.”

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; ¹⁶ I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”

¹⁷ So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

SERMON: "An Instrument of God's Choosing"

HYMN: #207 ***Just As I Am*** (vs. 1, 2, 4)

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION (lay reader)

Who carries the hope of Christ into the world? Our gifts do just that. They empower those who serve all the while expressing the goodness and greatness of our God! *If you are joining us virtually, please use the next few moments to share joys and concerns in the chat. Please use first names as our services are recorded. God knows who you mean.*

GETTING TO ANOTHER CHILD OF GOD: Reni Harnden

DOXOLOGY: #433 ***In The Bulb There Is a Flower*** (vs.3)

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

We bring our offerings to feed your lambs and tend your sheep, gracious God. Allow them to provide help where it is most needed, as well as opportunities for growth within your gathered believers. Amen.

WE RESPOND WITH GRATITUDE AND PRAYER

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER 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.

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

ANY FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN: #531 ***God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak*** (vs. 1,4)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (Please remain seated.)

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 – Nancy Murdock
GREETERS – Reni Harnden, Jo Worthen and Sue Lindemann (Remote)
MUSICIAN – Trina Brand
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR - Christine Lehoullier
OFFICE MANAGER - Michelle Guerrin
AV/ TECHNICAL – Paul Lindemann with Mike Schroeder

IN OUR PRAYERS - May 1, 2022

PRAYERS OF JOY

Nancy Murdock celebrates a milestone birthday – May 1!!
Caroline M completed all of her cancer radiation treatment and rang the bell!
Piano in Currier! It is a lovely addition to the worship service!
Music on Easter Sunday was amazing! Thanks to Laurel, our guest musician, and to Katie! Thanks to Diane Breeden for the Easter visuals and thanks to Miss Christine, for the lovely Easter display in the foyer!
Palm Sunday Parade through the Connector!!
Martha (Nancy M's sister-in-law) is doing much better!
Mission giving – we are blessed with generous hearts.
Our sister church in Zimbabwe – Dangamvura UCC – has invited us to write to them!
Music Committee is working hard to provide a program of music for worship services!
Gratitude for members and friends in Indiana, Georgia, Zimbabwe, and N. Ireland.

PRAYERS OF CONSOLATION

Christine Lehoullier and her family on the death of her cousin AmyLee
Tom Cooper on the death of his brother.
Paul Lindemann and his family on the death of Paul's mom 3.22.22
For the families of those who have died in the US due to COVID.

PRAYERS OF STRENGTH, HEALTH, AND HEALING

Safety for Jen's friend Heather and her family in Prescott AZ – so near the fires
Seminarists at the United Theological College in Zimbabwe due to food insecurity
Dave Beauchesne, father of two small children, had emergency brain surgery.
Gary (friend of the Guerrin Family) with stage 3 lung cancer;
Sue (Jo W's sister) still recovering but family can see her;
Carol (Carol G.'s sister-in-law) facing multiple operations;
Lincoln, Karen W's nephew, struggling with Autism and other mental health concerns.
Jenny, friends of Jeff S;
Davida, Jo's friend;
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: Sue Weaver (her operation isn't until 4.27.22)
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

Teachers – who continue to give their heart and soul with diminishing resources.

Ukraine – its people, its President.

Russia – its people, its Leaders.

Poland – who has received millions of refugees from Ukraine

Other NATO countries who are offering aid in Ukraine's time of crisis.

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; Tim B – Health & strength and

Bonnie H, friend of Tim B

Final Announcements:

“Path to the Sanctuary Initiative 2022-23” pledge cards are due into the office.

WE HAVE MADE A CHANGE IN SCHEDULE! The MAY Adult Faith Formation;

Tuesday from 6:45pm – 8:00 will read the Book of Acts from the Bible. Join us.

Upcoming Events:

- **1st Spring Fling** ~ Saturday May 21st: 8-1 Yard Sale, cookie walk, basket raffle, vendors, food and more. Volunteer Forms in the lobby.
- **UCC Rockingham Association- Spring 2022 Meeting** Sun May 22nd 1:45pm
- **Fundraising Footrace sponsored by Friends of the Meetinghouse** ~ June 25th: with Dave Breeden's [New England Timing](#) company are running a competitive race and fun run to raise money and awareness for Meetinghouse preservation.
- **Vacation Church Camp:** Rocky Railway July 25th – 28; 9 to 12:00 pm is for ages 4 to 12.