THE FIRST CHURCH

NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Congregational – United Church of Christ

†

Gathered December 16, 1685

No matter who you are, whom you love, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Morning Worship

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

January 31, 2021 10:00 AM

APPROACH TO GOD

Let us keep silence as we prepare for worship.

MEDITATION "A friend is someone who knows all about you and still loves you."— Elbert Hubbard

PRELUDE *Prélude modal, Op. 6, No. 1* J. Langlais *(1907 – 1991)*

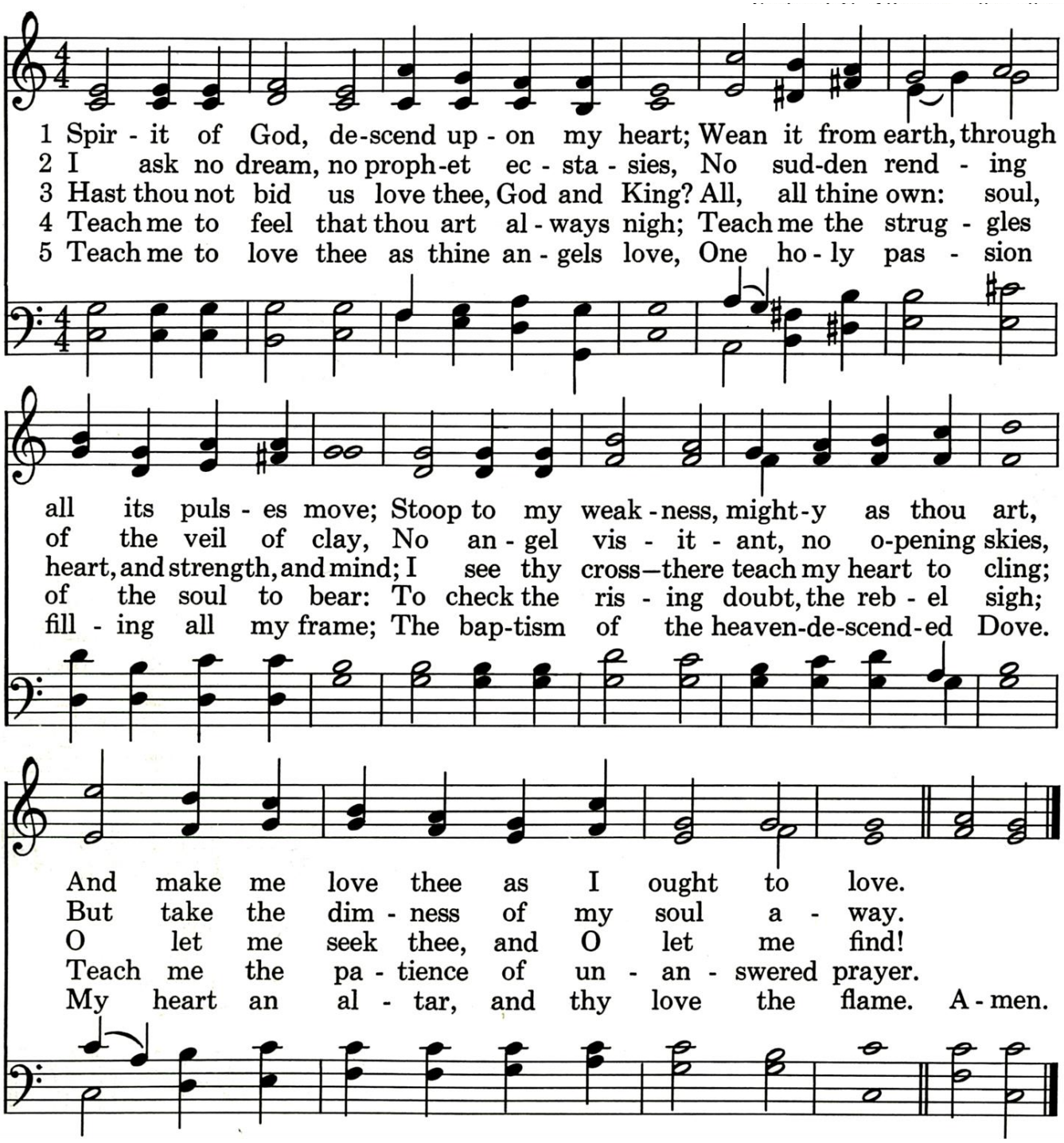
CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 111)

Leader: In the presence of God and in the company of one another, let us wholeheartedly offer praise and thanksgiving for God's greatness and glory and power.

People: We gather here to express our wonder and delight that God should care so graciously for us.

Together: Let us praise and worship God, Who is holy and awesome, faithful and just.

*HYMN #232 *Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart* MORECAMBE



***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (Unison)

Lord our God, Whose touch can heal the broken places of life, touch us today. Quiet our souls from the storms of confusion and despair; reassure us of Your power. Forgiving God, Whose call to repentance promises grace upon grace, place Your mercy in our hearts. We confess our need to You, and we turn to You with hearts filled with hope, remembering the promises You have made to us. May Your name be glorified in us and through us. We ask this in the name of Christ Jesus, Your only Son, Who is our Lord and Savior, and our brother and friend. Amen.

A time of silence for personal confession.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Hear the good news: Jesus, having been made perfect, became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him. (Hebrews 5:9) And so I declare to you: In Jesus Christ, we are renewed, we are cleansed, and we are forgiven.

People: Thanks be to God.

***PRAISE #8/3** *Thou Art Giving and Forgiving* ODE TO JOY

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother, all who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

GREETINGS

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Deuteronomy 18:15-20**

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

Mark 1:21-28

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL RESPONSE *Thanks Be to Thee* T. Tallis
STAFF SINGER QUARTET *(1505 – 1585)*

ANTHEM *Lord, I Lift Your Name on High* R. Founds
*(*1954-)*
arr. Wagner

SERMON "A New Teaching?" Rev. Dr. Andrew Armstrong

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

CENTERING PRAYER (Unison)
Almighty and everlasting God, You govern all things both in heaven and on earth. Mercifully hear the prayers of Your people; and in our time grant us Your peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER CONCERNS

SILENT PRAYERS and PASTORAL PRAYER

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.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE *Lead Me, Lord* S. S. Wesley
(1810 – 1876)

OFFERTORY *The Best of Rooms* R. Thompson
(1899 – 1984)

Christ, He requires still,
wheresoe'er He comes,
to feed or lodge,
to have the best of rooms

Give Him the choice;
grant Him the nobler part,
of all the house,
the best of all's, the heart

Robert Herrick (1591 – 1674)

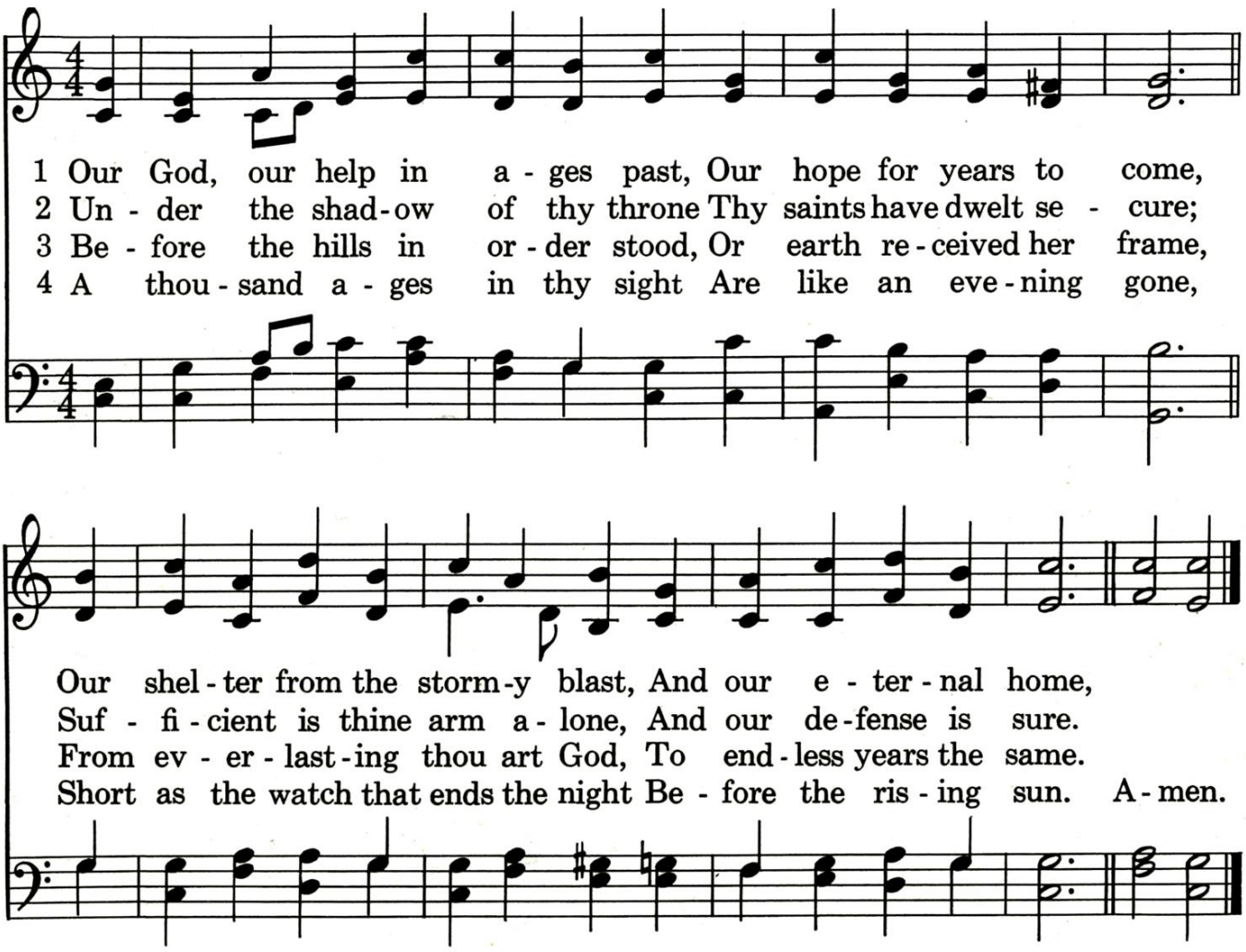
*** DOXOLOGY #515** OLD HUNDRETH LM

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Unison)

As we offer our treasure and hearts to you, O God, may we use them to pass on the promise of hope, of peace, of life, of community to all in need of your gifts and presence in their lives. Amen.

***HYMN #1** *O God, Our Help In Ages Past* ST. ANNE



5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

6 Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.

***BENEDICTION**

BENEDICTUS *Go Now in Peace* D. Besig *(*1936)*

POSTLUDE *Postludium* H. Schroeder *(1904 – 1984)*

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

DEACON OF THE DAY: Kimberly Lynch
HYMNS: Pilgrim Hymnal, CCLI#3034682
STAFF SINGER QUARTET: Janet Poisson, soprano; Brianne Biastoff, alto; Timothy Ayres-Kerr, tenor; Scott Taylor, bass

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The flowers this morning are given in loving memory of Joy Mohrmann, by her family.

There will be a graveside service at noon on Wednesday, February 3, 2021, at Edgewood Cemetery. The service will also be streamed live, and the link will be available through the Davis Funeral Home's Facebook page.

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Have you remembered First Church in your will?

WORSHIP SERVICE CHANGE

In-person worship is suspended until further notice. Our online service will continue to livestream at 10:00 AM each Sunday. The livestream link is on our website, Facebook, and Youtube channels. The service is also broadcast live on WSMN Radio AM 1590 and FM 95.3.

Masks must be worn at all times inside the building.

The church office is closed to visitors at this time. The staff is available to take your phone calls between 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday-Friday. The First Church remains closed to all outside group use for the foreseeable future.

Music in Worship Next Week
Sunday, February 7, 2021
5th Sunday after Epiphany
10:00 Staff Singer Quartet

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

Women's Wisdom and Spirituality will resume on Sunday, February 7 from 12:00 to 1:30 PM via Zoom, with the study of Bad Girls of the Bible. Future sessions: February 21, March 14 and March 28. There is no need to attend all sessions. Email Rev. Jami for the link.

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Annual Meeting - Sunday, February 14, 2021 at 11:30 AM

This year's Annual Meeting will be virtual. All First Church members who wish to attend the meeting need to visit the link below and fill out the form:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IKPb-3i3TsCpDM8hv_r-pA
Once the registration form has been completed, and reviewed by the office staff, you will receive your own link to the meeting and a link to the annual report. You MUST REGISTER to get the meeting link. Each individual needs to register in order for your vote to count. Contact the church office with any questions. A hard copy of the annual report is available by contacting Sue at senglander@tfcucc.org.

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Bruce Lund to Retire - It's with great sadness that I announce that our sexton, Bruce Lund, will retire on February 15. Simply put, not only did Bruce fulfill the role we asked of him, but he transformed it. He made a ministry of our maintenance and blessed the ministry team and our members with his kindness and commitment. Post Pandemic we will give them our proper thanks and appreciation as a church family. In the meantime, join me in wishing Bruce and Flo happy days in their well-deserved retirement. Please submit your inquiry for the position to Carol Baldwin at cbaldwin@nashuaalc.org or Dave Almeda at Dave.Almeda@ukg.com. *Rev. Andy*

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Ash Wednesday Service – February 17, 7:30 PM: Led by Rev. Andy and Rev. Jami, the service will be livestreamed. An in-person service is TBD. Stay tuned!

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All Church Devotional - Lent 2021: A Season of Healing

This Lent, First Church will focus on the stories of healing in the Gospel of Matthew. Daily readings will begin on Ash Wednesday (February 17) and conclude on Easter Sunday (April 4). In addition to the readings, your ministry team and guests will lead a Tuesday evening Zoom devotion and discussion on the major healing themes of Jesus' ministry: spiritual, physical, emotional, relational, and communal. Watch the e-news and the February newsletter for the links to the readings. Contact Sue (senglander@tfcucc.org) for the links to the discussion groups. Discussion dates: February 23, March 2, 9, 16 and 23. Each discussion will be recorded.

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Sign up to receive First Church e-News to stay in touch with what's happening at First Church. Included will be information on Sunday's sermons, choirs and guest musicians, Christian Formation news and activities, and upcoming classes and events. Contact Dianne at dsmigliani@tfcucc.org, and she will add you to the list.

Wednesday Morning Men's Group: Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes
Join Rev. Andy for a weekly devotion and discussion rooted in the Wisdom Literature of the Bible. One need not have knowledge of the Bible to join in. The fellowship we have is as important as what we learn. Each study stands on its own; join as you are able. The group meets from 8:00-9:00 AM on Zoom. Contact Sue, senglander@tfcucc.org, for the link.

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Mobile Ministry - Please contact Rev. Jami if you or a loved one have a need for someone to pick up your medications, grocery shop for food, or other items or if you would like to volunteer on this team.
Always check the First Church Website or Facebook page for our most current news and announcements. Thank you and God bless you.

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Prayer concerns may now be submitted online. Find the 'prayer request' button on the worship page for any prayer concerns you would like to share with Rev. Jami. Prayer is the conduit that connects us to God and opens up the opportunities for direction and understanding. If you are in need, we would love to partner with you in prayer. You may submit a confidential prayer online or by calling the church office.

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Consecrated Communion packets are available through the church office for those parishioners who wish to receive Communion while watching the online worship service. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. Contact Sue, 882-4861 or senglander@tfcucc.org, to arrange for a pick-up time.

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If you requested 2020 pledge envelopes, they are available in the courtyard lobby. You may pick them up during the week during office business hours. If you would like to have envelopes, but did not check the box on your pledge card, you may still request them.

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Donations Via Direct Payments - Just a reminder that if you donate via direct payments through the church office, your automatic withdrawals continue to occur until we receive written notice from you, indicating otherwise.
Please continue to submit your pledge cards each year to confirm your pledge information, or to make any changes. Did you know you can fill out a pledge card online? View and fill out your 2021 Pledge Card at: https://tfcucc.org/give/
Contact Dianne Smigliani with any questions. Your support of The First Church is greatly appreciated. It is through the pledges and gifts of our members and friends that the ministry of this church succeeds.

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Winter Parking Reminder – Use caution when parking along the north side of the church building. Heed the posted signs. Falling snow and ice can cause damage to your cars!

Foundations of Christian Formation

Confirmation - Class will be on Google Meet **today, 11:30 AM-12:45 PM**: Share your Gifts from God in each other with our class. Contact LeeAnne at lsteenhoek@tfcucc.org, with any questions.

Horton Center is now registering campers for summer programs. They are extending the deadline to February 1 for 'no-deposit' registrations. Register today at: HortonCenter.org to see what is right for you! There are camps for all kinds of interests and age levels from our environment in Climate Buddies to Archery and Art.

Parent to Parent, Tot to Teen - Parents and guardians are invited to join Amanda and John Steere, Holly and Chris Columbus and LeeAnne to share our joys, struggles and comedy as we strive to nurture, teach and support our children.
The group will meet via Google Meet on Thursdays, February 4 and February 18 at 8:00 PM. Contact LeeAnne for the link.

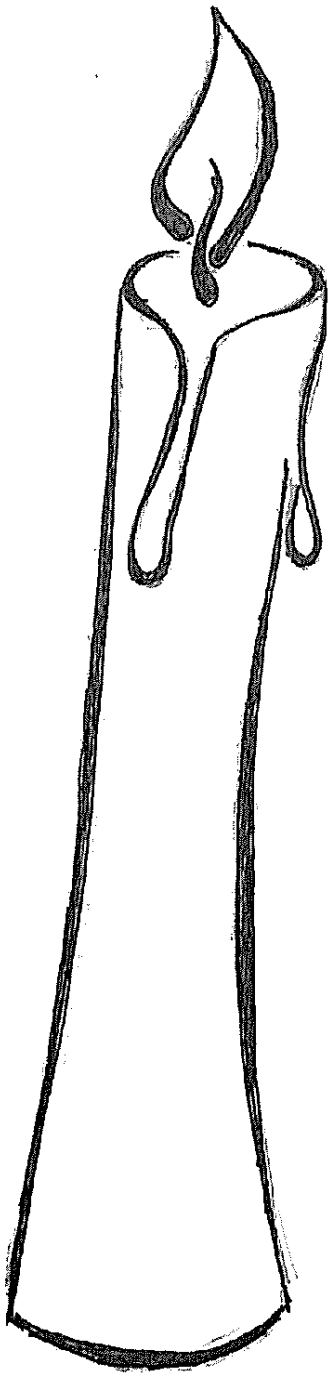
At Home Devotions and expanded activities for families are posted on the Christian Formation page on the church's website:
https://tfcucc.org/category/christian-formation/
Each week, LeeAnne adds a new activity that is an extension of her Sunday Children's Message. Check it out!

Today's message:
Have you ever heard of a Bethlehem candle? It's a candle that once lit in Bethlehem can never be fully extinguished. It's a literal candle and once lit, a Bethlehem candle can make more Bethlehem candles by lighting them- just like we do at the candlelight service Christmas Eve holding our candle steady and receiving the light from the Deacon or person next to us. We are also carriers of the light of Bethlehem. Remember the words to the hymn, *live in us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.* Each time you share your love and light, your comfort and your joy with family, friends or even the stranger, you are a living Bethlehem candle in the world shining for Jesus. As Kaiser's campfire song goes, "*It only takes a spark, to get a fire going, and soon all those around, will warm up to its glowing, that's how it is with God's love, once you've experienced it, you spread his love to everyone, you want to pass it on*." Shine Jesus Shine! "*Hide it under a bushel? No! I'm gonna' let it shine.*" Sing today! I've given you a few "ear worms". Know singing brings glory to God. Keep shining and sharing your light!

Feel free to color the drawing on the next page, and as you do, pray for a loved one, a family member, food for everyone in the world, creation, or Jesus.

Yours in Christ,
LeeAnne

I shine a light for _____



Pat Stahl

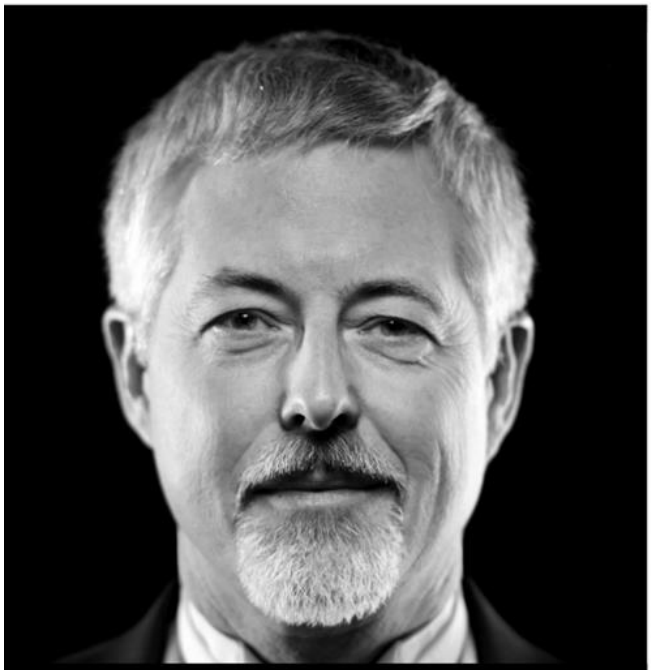
FIRST MUSIC
FM
CONCERT SERIES 2020–21 SEASON

SEASON XIII
MUSIC ALIVE!

BRINGING the JOY of MUSIC to the GATE CITY

WINTERREISE

(A Winter's Journey) Works by Schubert



MARK ANDREW CLEVELAND
bass-baritone

ELIKO AKAHORI
piano

Please bring your masks and enjoy the ample socially distanced seating.

SUNDAY FEB 28

FREE ADMISSION
ALL ARE WELCOME

3:00 PM

THE FIRST CHURCH
1 Concord Street
Nashua, NH
FIRST-MUSIC.ORG
603.882.4861

THE FIRST CHURCH

STAFF

Senior Minister, *Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong*, aarmstrong@tfcucc.org
Associate Minister for Congregational Care, *Rev. Jami D. Boyle*, jboyle@tfcucc.org
Minister of Music, *Joseph R. Olefirowicz, CAGO*, jolefirowicz@tfcucc.org
Director of Christian Formation, *LeeAnne Steenhoek*, lsteenhoek@tfcucc.org
Church Business and Marketing Manager, *Dianne Smigliani*, dsmigliani@tfcucc.org
Secretary/Receptionist, *Susan T. Englander*, senglander@tfcucc.org
Sexton, *Bruce Lund*

Pastors Emeriti, *Rev. James S. Chaloner and Rev. Dr. Jeffrey C. Evans*

WELCOME

A warm welcome is extended to all who are attending this worship service. A special greeting to those who are visiting or worshiping for the first time. Please sign the guest book in the back of the sanctuary or fill out the **visitor card** found in the pew racks. Fill out the back of the card, and put it in the offering plate or hand it to a minister, Usher or Deacon so we may acknowledge your visit. Join in the time of fellowship, in Fellowship Hall, following worship. If you have any questions about the life and ministry of First Church please seek out the individuals wearing colored name tags; they are members of the various boards and committees.

INFORMATION

First Church was gathered on December 16, 1685 as The Church of Christ in Dunstable. On the same day Thomas Weld was ordained and settled as minister of the church. The current building, built in 1894, is the tenth building to house the First Church community. In 1961, the church entered fellowship with the United Church of Christ. We welcome into our membership any who will own the covenant of First Church and seek to continue the ministry of Jesus Christ in the community and world. Those interested in joining the church should contact the church office for information. The Sacrament of Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month and the Sacrament of Baptism on the last. First Church is supported almost entirely by pledges. Every member is expected to make a financial pledge according to their ability.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral Care is available to all in need. Please keep the ministers informed of occasions of sickness, sorrow, and joy. Let the church office know if you or family member or friend is hospitalized.

COMMUNICATIONS

If you have a change of address, phone number, or email address, please let the church office know so that we may keep our records current.
All information for the weekly bulletin must be in the office by noon on Wednesday. All information for the monthly newsletter must be in the office by 4:30 PM on the second Monday of the month.

<u>All use of the building must be scheduled by the Secretary.</u>

The First Church * One Concord Street * Nashua, New Hampshire 03064 * 882-4861

Office Hours: The office is currently closed to visitors.
The staff is available for phone calls, Monday- Friday, 9:00am-noon & 1:00-4:00pm

Visit our web site at www.tfcucc.org
Find us on Facebook