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

Communion Sunday
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 7, 2021 10:00 AM

APPROACH TO GOD

Let us keep silence as we prepare for worship.

MEDITATION

"Compassion is sometimes the fatal capacity for feeling what it is like to live inside somebody else's skin. It is the knowledge that there can never really be any peace and joy for me until there is peace and joy finally for you too." Frederick Buechner

PRELUDE *Communion* L. Vierne
(1870 – 1937)

INTROIT *The Lord Is In His Holy Temple* F. R. Lund
STAFF SINGER QUARTET *(*1938)*
Composer-In-Residence

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Have you heard? God heals the broken and blesses the wounded.
People: Sing praise to God!
Leader: Have you heard? God forgives, and the past is over and done.
People: Sing praise to God!
Leader: Have you heard? God lifts up the downcast and gives peace to the troubled.
People: Sing praise to God!
Leader: Have you heard? God smoothes out rough paths and makes a way for us.
People: Sing praise to God!
Leader: Have you heard? God gives power to the weak and renews our strength. Sing praise to God.
All: We come to worship the Eternal God.

***HYMN #213** *Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me* PILOT

***OPENING PRAYER** (Unison)

Gracious God, hear our songs. Gather us in as one people, that we may worship you as one body. Heal our broken hearts and bind up our wounds that we may come into your presence healthy and whole. Bless us with your wisdom and help us experience your greatness, power and love. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI #513**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end, A-men, A-men.

GREETINGS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Isaiah 40:21-31**

Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing. Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God"? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Mark 1:29-39

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Pastor: This is the word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

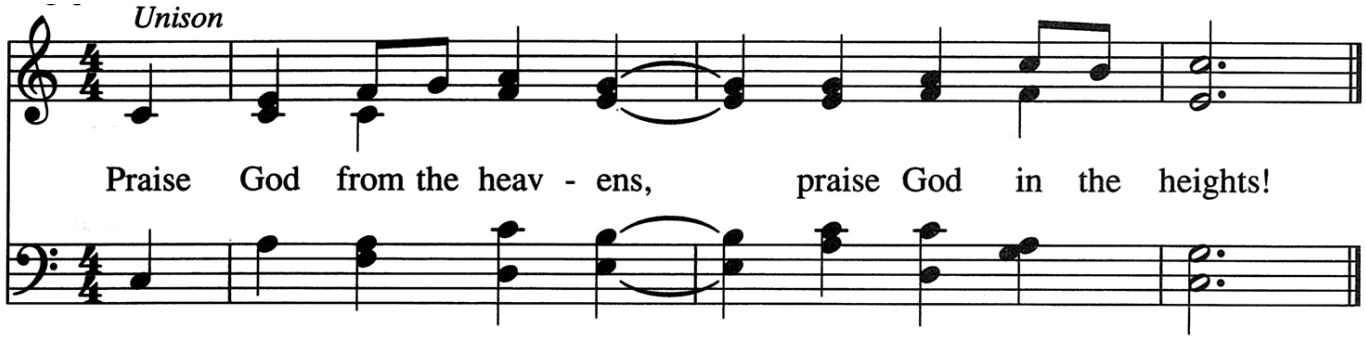
GRATIA TIBI *Thanks Be to Thee* T. Tallis
(1505 – 1585)

SERMON "The Law of Life" Rev. Dr. Andrew Armstrong

RESPONSIVE PSALM 148

The Psalm will be intoned once: The Congregation sings the same Response, and then again at the "℟" indication below.

Response



℟

[1]Praise God! Praise God from the heavens;
praise God in the heights!

[2]Praise God, all you angels of God;
praise God, all you host of heaven!

[3]Praise God, you sun and moon;
praise God, all you shining stars!

[4]Praise God, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens! ℟

[5]Let them praise the name of God,
for God commanded and they were created.

[6]God established them forever and ever;
God fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

[7]Praise God from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,

[8]fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling God's command!

[9]Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

[10]Beasts of the forest and all cattle,
crawling things and flying birds! ℟

[11]Rulers of the earth and all peoples,
nobles and all leaders of the earth!

[12]Young men and women alike,
old and young together!

[13]Let them praise the name of the Sovereign,
whose name alone is exalted, whose glory is above earth and heaven.

[14]God has raised up a horn for the people,
and praise for all the faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to God. Praise be to God! ℟

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Great God, we confess our weariness. We grow faint with our busyness. We have no energy to help the powerless. We look for strength and find exhaustion. We do not wait for You. Merciful God, forgive us, and lead us back to You, for in You our strength is renewed. Fill our voices with Your praise, that all might hear!

A time of silence for personal confession

KYRIE #545 *Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us* J. Merbecke

CONGREGATION JOINS IN SINGING *(1510 – 1585)*

Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ have mercy upon us;
Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Friends, hear the good news! God raised the Lord Jesus.
People: God will also raise us by His saving power.
Leader: Friends, believe the good news!
People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

OFFERTORY *God Is With Us* F. R. Lund

***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)

We give thanks for all we have received, O God: gifts of work and rest, friends and family, sight and sound. With these gifts, we praise you. Bless those who receive them, just as we are blessed in the act of sharing them. Amen.

The Communion

It is a tradition at First Church that we eat the bread and drink the cup together as the people of God renewing our covenant. We serve grape juice and gluten free bread.

Invitation, Sursum Corda and Communion Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up to God.
Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.
Leader: O God, the Mighty One of Glory, You have exalted Jesus Christ with great triumph to Your dominion in heaven. Though at Your right hand, He advocates for us and remains with us in the Holy Spirit. We thank You for

all that You have given us through Him. In Jesus, born of Mary, You fulfilled both the Law and the Prophets. By the baptism of His suffering, death, and resurrection, You gave birth to Your church, delivered us from sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. With the faithful in every time and place, we joyfully praise Your name:

Sanctus #550 S. Wesley
(1766 – 1837)

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory:
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. A-men.

Leader: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread and having blessed it, He broke it and gave it to His disciples saying, “This is My body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same way, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is of the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” By eating of this bread and drinking this cup, we proclaim Christ’s death, celebrate Christ’s resurrection, and await Christ's coming again.

People: Amen. Come, Christ Jesus!

Leader: Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith:

People: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Sharing of the Bread

Kyrie Eleison G. Oldroyd
from *The Mass of the Quiet Hour* *(1887 – 1956)*

Kyrie eleison	Lord, have mercy
Christe eleison	Christ, have mercy

Sharing of the Cup *Agnus Dei* G. Oldroyd
from *Mass of the Quiet Hour*

Lamb of God who takest
away the sins of the world
have mercy on us…

Grant us peace.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and 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.

***HYMN** *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* MAITLAND

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTUS**	*On Us Bestow Thy Blessing*	F. R. Lund
POSTLUDE	*Fanfare in D Major*	J.-N. Lemmens *(1823 – 1881)*

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

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

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HEARING AIDS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

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Have you remembered First Church in you will?

SUNDAY WORSHIP

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.

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.

Masks must be worn at all times inside the building.

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

Women's Wisdom and Spirituality will resume today from 12:00 to 1:30 PM via Zoom, with the study of Bad Girls of the Bible. Upcoming 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 register online. Contact the church office or visit the e-News for the link. **Please register by Wednesday, February 10.**

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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Mitten Tree Project Update - Thank you to all the Mitten Tree providers. We collected 152 pairs of mittens and 4 hats!

The Covid virus leaves none of our usual activities untouched, though, with public schools going virtual there is no convenient way for the staff to give the mittens to the students. But where there is need we will find a way! The Nashua Soup Kitchen distributes meals 3 times a week and is thrilled to have our warm mittens to include for children in need. The Adult learning Center's daycare has remained open and they, too, gladly received a bag for their children.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you, *Susan Testa*

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Thank you from the Adult Learning Center - The children and staff of the Adult Leaning Center's Early Childhood Adventures Program want to send a sincere thank you to all the First Church members who provided us with mittens. We were thrilled to receive them. Our little ones sometimes come in with wet mittens or missing mittens. It is wonderful to be able to provide them with new ones, especially during this time of COVID when children cannot share mittens. Our staff very much appreciates having an extra pair that they can keep at school. Thank you so much for the gift of mittens and to Susan Testa for delivering them to us!

Carol Baldwin, Executive Director, Adult Learning Center

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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!

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.

Follow this link to the readings: https://wp.me/ab3kUy-1Na. 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.

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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.

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!

Music in Worship Next Week

Sunday, February 14
10:00 Susan Cobb, soprano
Craig Plummer, tenor

Wednesday, February 17
Ash Wednesday
7:30 PM Organ

Foundations of Christian Formation

Confirmation - Class will meet **today, at 11:30 AM** on Google Meet. Contact LeeAnne at lsteenhoek@tfcucc.org, with any questions. On **February 14,** the Confirmands will attend Annual Meeting, virtually.

Horton Center is now registering campers for summer programs. Register 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. Contact LeeAnne with any questions.

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 **Thursday, February 18 at 8:00 PM**. Contact LeeAnne for the link.

At Home Devotions and Expanded Activities can be seen in the weekly e-News or by visiting 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!

FIRST MUSIC

FM

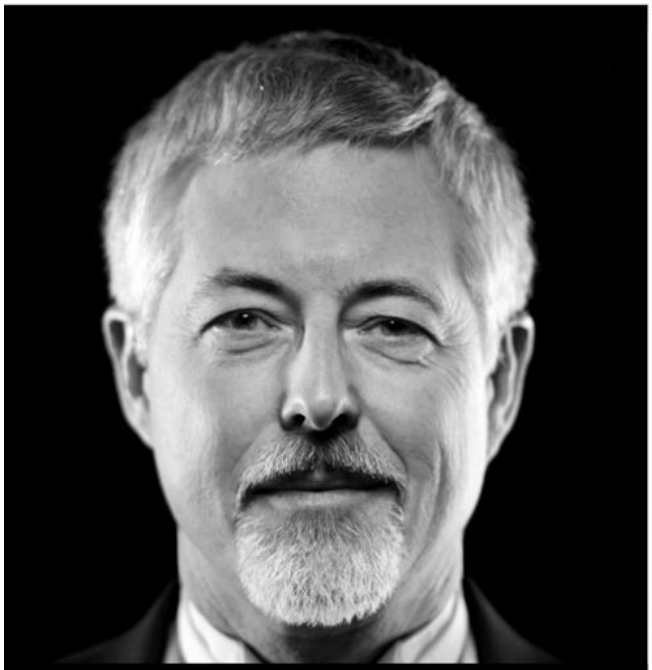
CONCERT SERIES 2020–21 SEASON

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 Chapel 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. New members are received during worship in November, February and May. 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
NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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