**Anchor Cross**

**Triumphant Cross**

**Graded Cross**

**Celtic Cross**

**Crucifix**

**Greek Cross**

**Latin Cross**

**Orthodox Cross**

**St. Andrew's Cross**

# 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

Second Sunday in Lent

February 28, 2021 10:00 AM

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*If it is comfortable for you to do so, please stand

## APPROACH TO GOD

*Let us keep silence as we prepare for worship.*

**TOWER CHIME** Norma MacKinley-Smith

**MEDITATION**

"So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, Till my trophies
at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some day for a crown." – "The Old Rugged Cross"

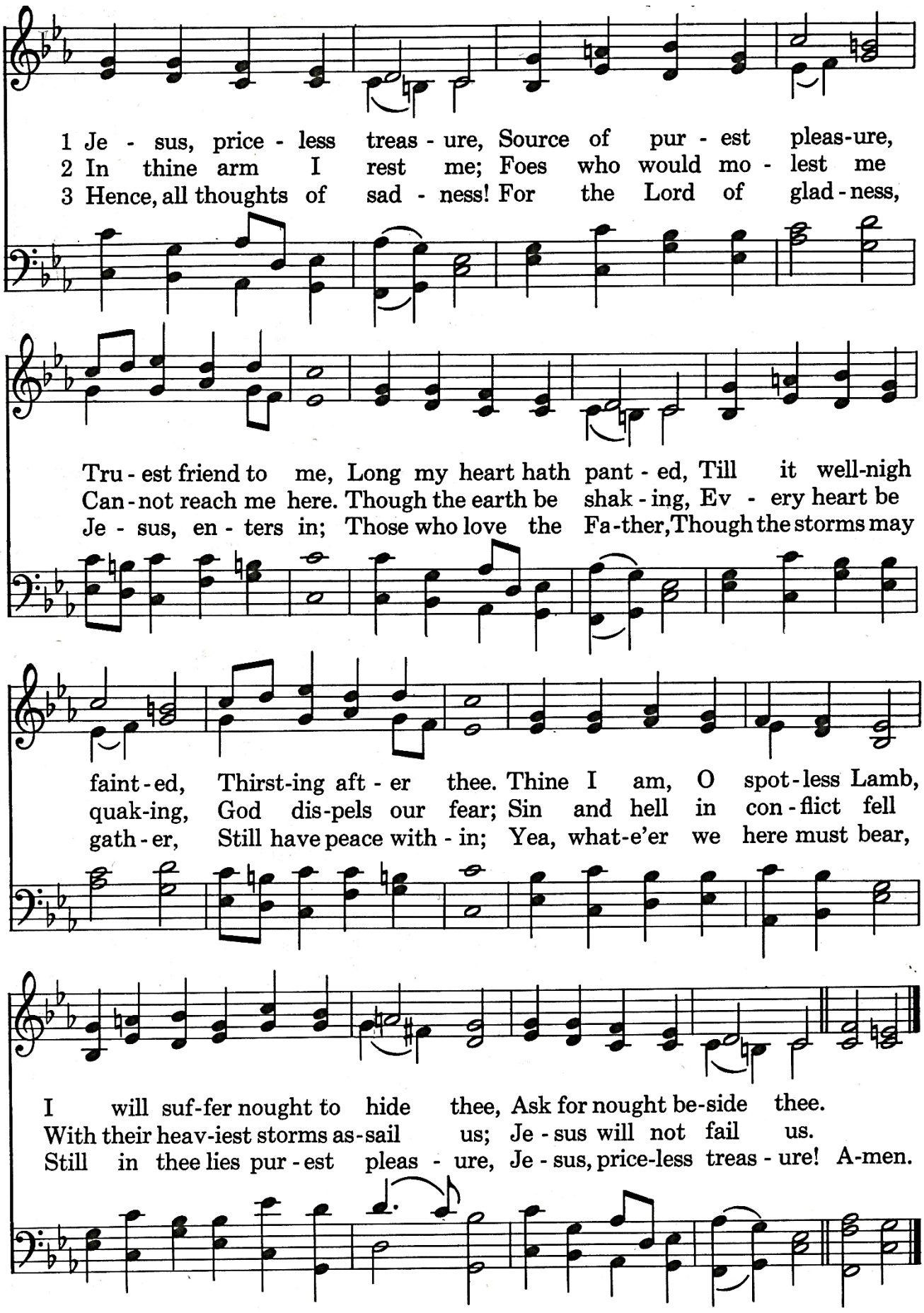
**PRELUDE** *Sonata quasi una Fantasia,* Op. 27, No. 2 L. van Beethoven
I. Adagio Sostenuto *(1770 – 1827)*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfector of our faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of God. Let us consider Him Who endured such opposition from sinful people, so that we will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:2-3)

*If comfortable to do so, please join in singing our hymns and sung responses during worship, while wearing your mask.*

***HYMN #222** *Jesus, Priceless Treasure* JESU, MEINE FREUDE



***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

O God, in gracious love You promise to care for the creatures of the earth; in steadfast love You keep Your promise. But we, who so quickly embrace Your covenant, just as quickly betray it; we, from whom You desire worship too often neglect our sacred vows. For making and then keeping Your promise, we sing your praises, Lord. For making our promise and then breaking our word, we humbly ask Your forgiveness.

*A time of silence for personal confession.*

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Leader: Jesus said, Come to me, all you that are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.
MT (11:28-30).

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.

***PRAISE #148/2** *Shall We Not Thy Sorrow Share?* HEINLEIN

Shall not we thy sorrow share,
And from earthly joys abstain,
Fasting with unceasing prayer,
Glad with thee to suffer pain?

**GREETINGS**

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS** **Genesis 17:1-7**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him,

"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.

I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

**Mark 8:31-38**

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

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** *Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley* Spiritual
*arr. Shackley*

**SERMON** “The Cross that Matters Most” Rev. Dr. Andrew Armstrong

## RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

**CENTERING PRAYER** (Unison)
Lord Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life: Do not let us stray from you, the Way, or distrust you, the Truth, or rest in anything other than you, the Life. Amen. (Erasmus)

**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.

**OFFERTORY** *The Potter's Hand* D. Zschech
*(*1965)*
*arr. Larson*

***LENTEN DOXOLOGY #515** OLD HUNDRETH LM

Lord Christ, throughout these Forty Days
Thy sacrifice our voices praise
Through thy temptation victory won:
Eternal life, Eternal Son.
Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Unison)

Holy God, we recognize that the greatest gift is the gift of love. May our offerings distribute this love to the world: the small world we inhabit with the suffering people we know; the larger world where the power of love is sorely needed. Amen.

1. On a hill far a - way stood an old rug-ged cross, The em-blem of
2. Oh, the old rug-ged cross, so de-spised by the world, Has a wondrous at-
3. In the old rug-ged cross, stained with blood so di-vine, A won - drous
4. To the old rug-ged cross I will ev - er be true, Its shame and re-
suf-f'ring and shame; And I love that old cross where the dear-est and best
trac-tion for me; For the dear Lamb of God left His glo - ry a - bove
beau - ty I see; For 'twas on that old cross Je - sus suf-fered and died
proach gladly bear; Then He'll call me some day to my home far a - way,
CHORUS
For a world of lost sin-ners was slain. So I'll cher-ish the old rug-ged
To bear it to dark Cal - va - ry.
To par-don and sanc-ti - fy me.
Where His glo-ry for - ev - er I'll share.
cross, the
cross, . . . . Till my tro-phies at last I lay down; I will cling to the
old rug-ged cross,
old rug-ged cross, . . . . . And ex-change it some day for a crown.
cross, the old rug - ged cross,

**DISMISSAL** *We kindly remind the congregation to be seated after the Benediction, and to wait for dismissal as the ushers come to your aisle. Depending on sidewalk conditions, you may be guided to a different door than the one nearest to your seating section.*

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTUS** *Were You There?* Spiritual

**POSTLUDE** *In reverence to the solemn season, remembering Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, a postlude will not be played during Lent.*

## OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

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**DEACON OF THE DAY:** Rich Smigliani
**HYMNS:** Pilgrim Hymnal, All American Church Hymnal CCLI#3034682
**STAFF SINGER QUARTET:** Janet Poisson, soprano; Brianne Biastoff, alto
Timothy Ayres-Kerr, tenor; Scott Taylor, bass

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Have you remembered First Church in your will?

## WORSHIP SERVICE CHANGE

In-person worship has resumed with one service at 10:00 AM.

The service is livestreamed on our YouTube channel and also airs 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 through the end of March.

## *Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current*

### 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. Please follow this link to the daily readings beginning on Ash Wednesday and concluding on Easter Sunday: https://wp.me/ab3kUy-1Na.

The Covid-19 pandemic has claimed so many lives; caused so much grief and exposed and/or increased tensions in our society that this is among our most pressing need. The readings are labeled according to the specific healing Jesus provides. In addition, 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. Each discussion will be recorded and you can request a link for those by reaching out to Sue at senglander@tfcucc.org.

**Tuesday, February 23, 7:00 PM**
Spiritual Healing with LeeAnne Steenhoek

**Tuesday, March 2, 7:00 PM**
Physical Healing with Rev. Andy

**Tuesday, March 9, 7:00 PM**
Emotional Healing with Rev. Dr. Cal Genzel

**Tuesday, March 16, 7:00 PM**
Relational Healing with Mark Baddeley

**Tuesday, March 23, 7:00 PM**
Communal Healing with Rev. Jami

**April 1, Maundy Thursday at 7:30 PM**
Rev. Andy and Rev. Jami

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**A Hard copy of the Annual Report** is available, for those who would like one. Contact Sue, senglander@tfcucc.org, to make arrangements.

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**We are looking for volunteers** to help church members and friends register for a COVID vaccine. If you are comfortable navigating websites and could walk someone through the process over the phone then you are needed! Please contact the church office to add your name to the list of volunteers.
Likewise, if you could use a volunteer to help you register for your COVID vaccine online, contact the office and we'll get you connected.

**CROP Walk update -** The Board of Christian Outreach thanks everyone who supported the 2020 CROP Walk. Our contributions helped put Greater Nashua into the top 20 walks nationally! We hope you will continue to support the 2021 CROP walk this fall.

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**Strategic Planning Team -** The Prudential Committee has baptized a small team to look to our congregation's future. Our effort includes identifying the mission, values and vision which have defined First Church then consider areas in ministry where God may call us to go. There's a practical dimension to this as we look at our resources and risks, liabilities and assets. Team members include Caryl Sullivan (Leader), Carol Kreick ,Chris Guild, Dave Almeda, Joe Glajch, Carol Baldwin and Rev. Andy. Expect to hear from us in the coming months for your feedback. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to any team member to learn more and share your ideas.

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**Women's Wisdom and Spirituality** will meet on March 14 and March 28 from 12:00 to 1:30 PM via Zoom, with the study of Bad Girls of the Bible. Email Rev. Jami for the link and more information.

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**Resurrection Gardens -** Prepared by our Confirmands as a gift to our First Church family, resurrection gardens offer us a new way to honor our time of waiting during Lent and feel and grow our hope as our gardens grow blossoming and preparing us for Easter Sunday April 4. Each garden includes a tomb, a stone, 3 crosses, various bulbs, ivy, and a petite palm tree in a dish. Roll away the stone from the tomb on Easter Sunday to see a tea light battery candle to illuminate the empty tomb and celebrate Easter. He is Risen! He is Risen indeed! We are Easter People!

Quantities are limited to 30, so place your order today! Please contact Sue at senglander@tfcucc.org.

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**Sign up to receive First Church e-News** to stay in touch with what's happening at First Church. 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.

**World Day of Prayer – Friday, March 5, 2021**
**Build on A Strong Foundation**

NH Women's Fellowship will present this service written by the women of Vanuatu on YouTube on March 5 at 10:00 AM. It will be available for three weeks. The link: https://youtu.be/oxurfju4Mlk.

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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.

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**Submit Prayer Concerns Online -** Find the 'prayer request' button on the worship page for any prayer concerns you would like to share with Rev. Jami. If you are in need, we would love to partner with you in prayer. You may also submit a confidential prayer 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 or on Sunday. 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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**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!

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**Church Cancellation Policy -** In the event of inclement weather, a power outage, or severe weather advisory, First Church may cancel the 10:00 service. Expect a robocall from Rev. Andy. Visit the church webpage (www.tfcucc.org), or Facebook Page (First Church Nashua UCC) for any cancellation notices or you can also check media outlets WMUR Channel 9, or WZID 95.7 FM under the heading First Church Nashua. The notifications will be announced by 6:00 AM on the Sunday in question.

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**Music in Worship Next Week**
**Sunday, March 7, 2021**
*Third Sunday in Lent*
10:00 AM Staff Singer Quartet

# Stonecorners of Christian Formation

**Confirmation -** Our next class is on **Sunday, March 7**. Come to worship on Sundays if you are able to attend. We will be assembling Resurrection Gardens and kits for families to create their own on Saturday March 13 and Sunday March 14. We will determine best times during our class March 7 as well as our distribution plan.

***Reflections on the Heart, an illustrated LENT for Families*** by Illustrated Ministry is available as a digital download. This is Christian Formation's devotions for families this Lenten season but ***all ages are encouraged to partake***. Please read this excerpt from the introduction:

Each Sunday in Lent has devotions written for all ages with appropriate questions and topics for your children no matter what the age. You do not need to do all the activities to have a meaningful experience. Each devotion consists of the following elements:

1. **Scripture:** selected from the Gospel concerning treasures and matters of the heart.
2. **Reflection:** a brief reflection is offered for each of the scripture texts. It might make sense for you to read this section to your family, or you may want to read it for yourself and see what questions or themes will resonate best for your family.
3. **Discussion and coloring page**: This is a chance for some family conversation. Since we love coloring here at Illustrated Ministry, we find some of the best conversations often happen while coloring and doing something creative together. We suggest discussing the questions offered (tied to scripture and activity) while coloring the week's coloring page.

If you wish to download a copy, contact LeeAnne, lsteenhoek@tfcucc.org or Sue, senglander@tfcucc.org for the link. Printed copies are available in the church office and at the welcome center on Sunday mornings. Contact the office so we can prepare to have your copy ready.

***Please note-*** *LeeAnne has emailed a digital download to all of her contacts at First Church. Please take a moment to email her if you have not received the email so that she is able to contact you in the future. This is a huge and much appreciated help.*

**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!

**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, March 4 at 8:00 PM**. Contact LeeAnne for the link.

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

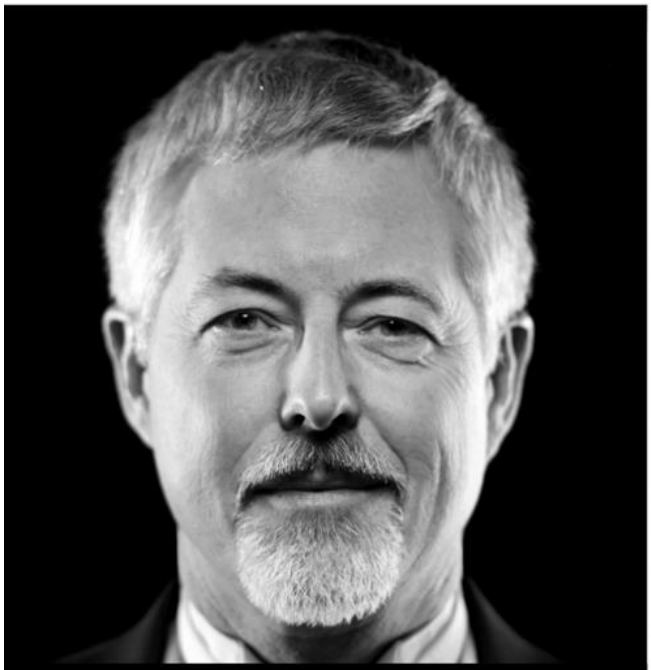
FIRST MUSIC
FM
CONCERT SERIES 2020–21 SEASON

# 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, *Steve Buck*

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

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## *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>**

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***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