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

Third Sunday after Pentecost

June 13, 2021 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM

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

APPROACH TO GOD

Let us keep silence as we prepare for worship.

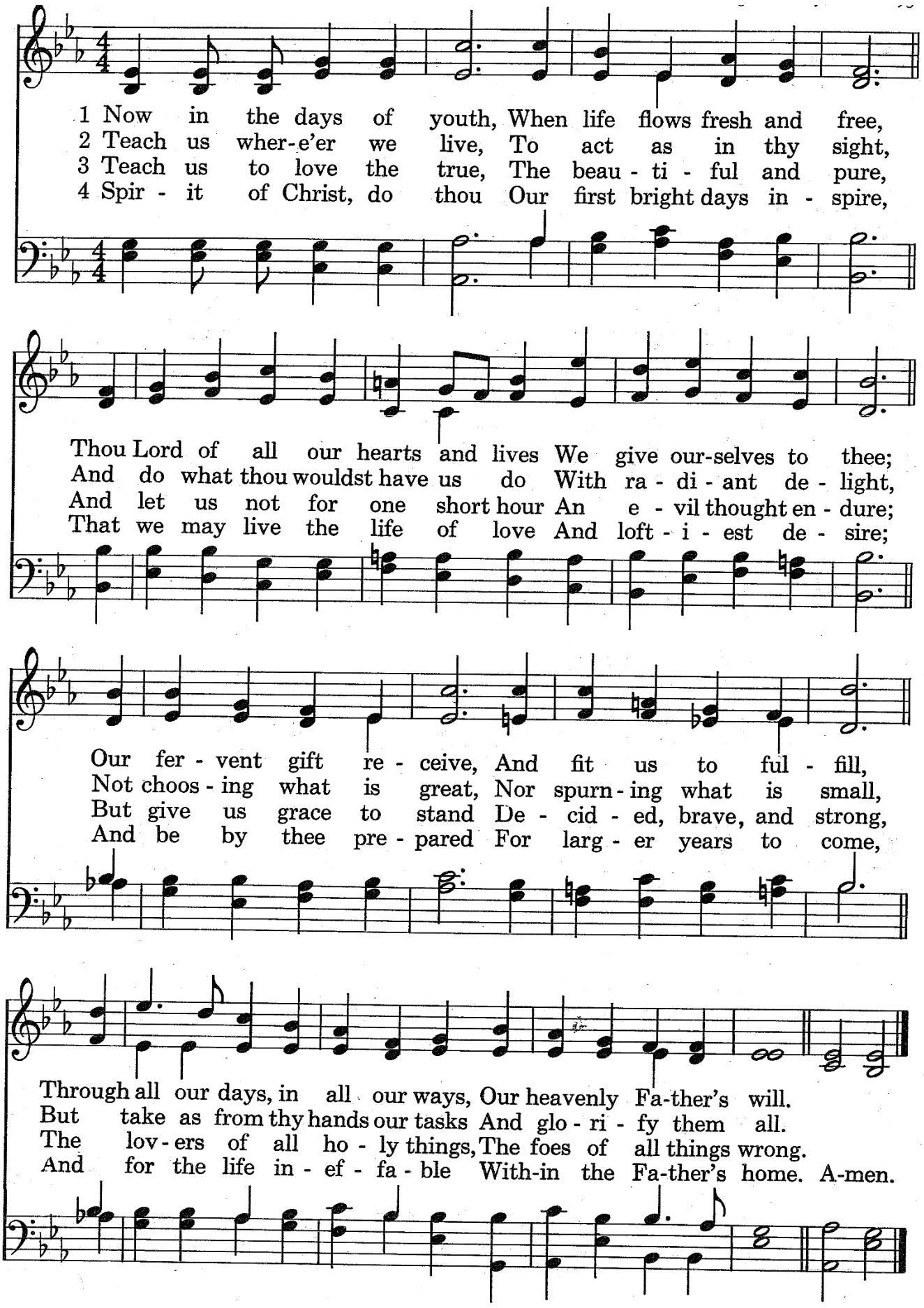
TOWER CHIME (10:00) Norma MacKinley Smith

MEDITATION Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1)

PRELUDE *Dix Pièces* (Ten Pieces) J. Langlais
iv. Flutes *(1907 – 1991)*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Sing to God, sing praises to God's name.
People: God protects the vulnerable and shelters the weak.
Leader: God gives a home to the homeless and leads the prisoners to prosperity.
People: Sing to God, sing praises to God's name.

***HYMN #490** *Now in the Days of Youth* DIADEMATA

*__PRAYER OF CONFESSION__ (Unison)

Lord Jesus, we confess that without You faith is impossible. This day we gather to confirm not what we have done, but what You have done for us. We believe in You; help our unbelief. We love You, yet not with perfect hearts. We long for You, yet not with our full strength. We trust in You, yet not with our whole selves. O Christ, may we have Your mind and Your spirit. Make us contrite, that we might be renewed from our sinful selves into new men and new women, according to Your will and for the sake of Your glory. Amen.

A time of silence for personal confession.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: The Word is very near to us, in our hearts and on our lips. In Christ, we are forgiven; our lives are made new, and our future of hope is restored.

People: Thanks be to God.

*__PRAISE #38/1__ *Morning Has Broken* BUNESSAN

Morning has broken like the first morning,
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them springing fresh from the word!

GREETINGS

PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS (10:00) Don Smith-Weiss

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Ezekiel 17:22-24**

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar; I will set it out. I will break off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs; I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it, in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest winged creatures of every kind. All the trees of the field shall know that I am the Lord. I bring low the high tree, I make high the low tree; I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I the Lord have spoken; I will accomplish it.

Mark 4:26-34

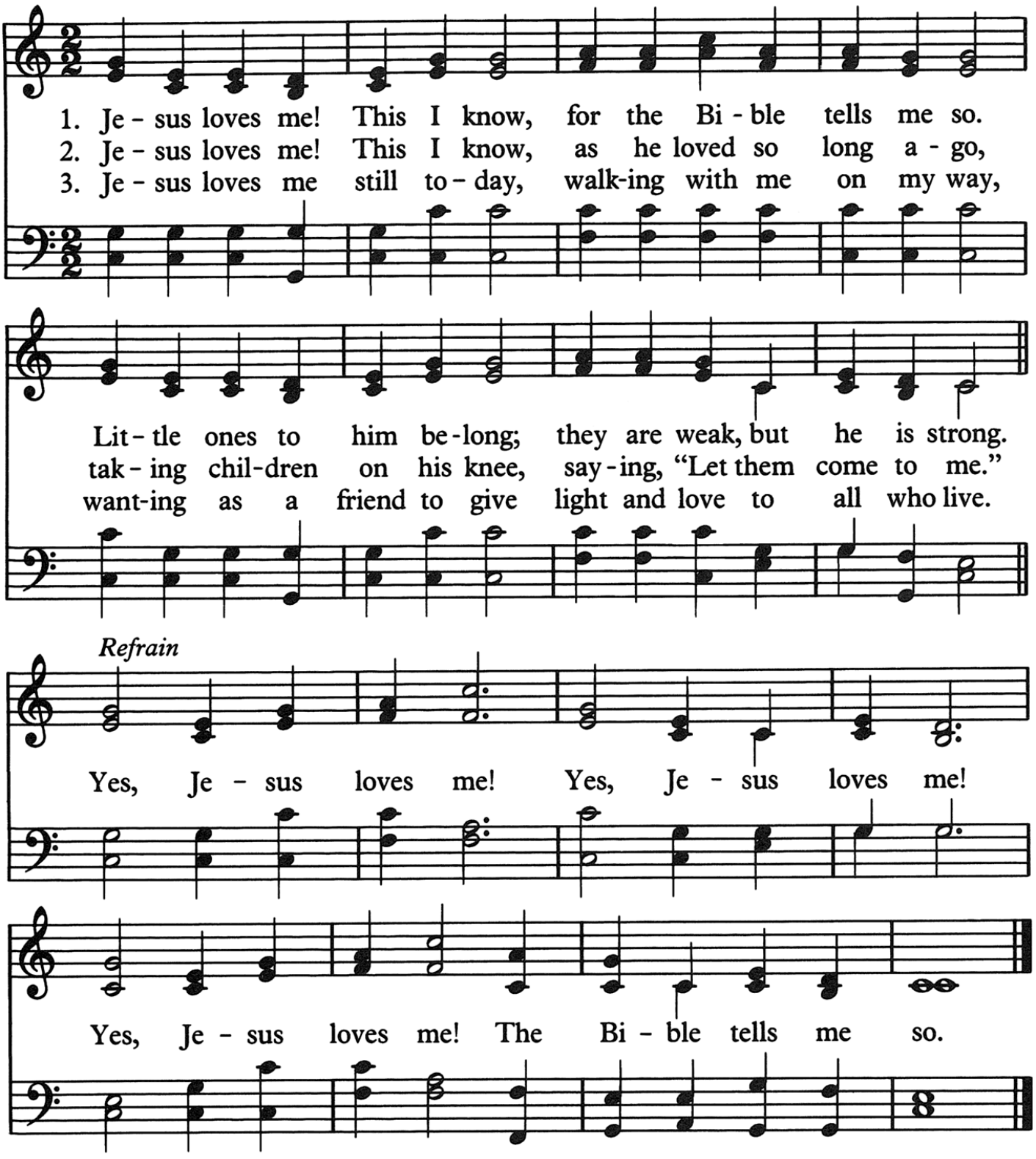
He also said, “The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.”

He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

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

SOLO *Your Grace Still Amazes Me* S. Craig & C. Harrington
JOSEPH R. OLEFIROWICZ, baritone *(21st century)*

SERMON “Difficult Conditions; Joyful Harvests” Rev. Dr. Andrew Gilman

1. Je - sus loves me! This I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so.
2. Je - sus loves me! This I know, as he loved so long a - go,
3. Je - sus loves me still to - day, walk-ing with me on my way,
Lit - tle ones to him be-long; they are weak, but he is strong.
tak - ing chil-dren on his knee, say-ing, "Let them come to me."
want-ing as a friend to give light and love to all who live.
Refrain
Yes, Je - sus loves me! Yes, Je - sus loves me!
Yes, Je - sus loves me! The Bi - ble tells me so.

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Question 28 from the Heidelberg Catechism)

Leader: What do we gain by acknowledging that God has created and still sustains all things?

People: That we may be grateful in adversity, thankful in prosperity, and trust our faithful God and Father for the future, certain that no creature will separate us from God's love, since all creatures are so thoroughly in God's hand that they cannot even move without God's will.

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.

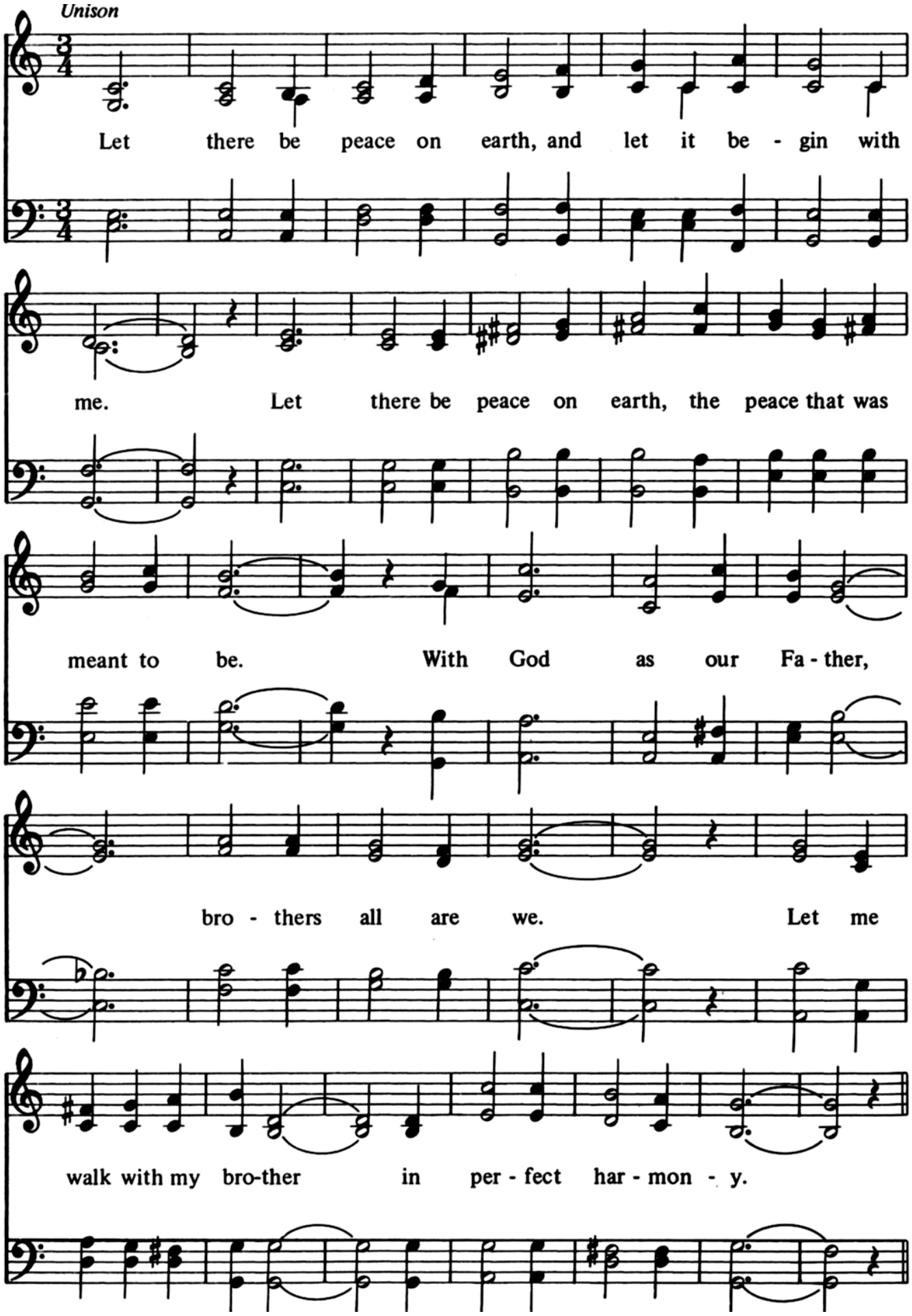
OFFERTORY *His Strength is Perfect* S. Chapman & J. Salley *(20th century)*

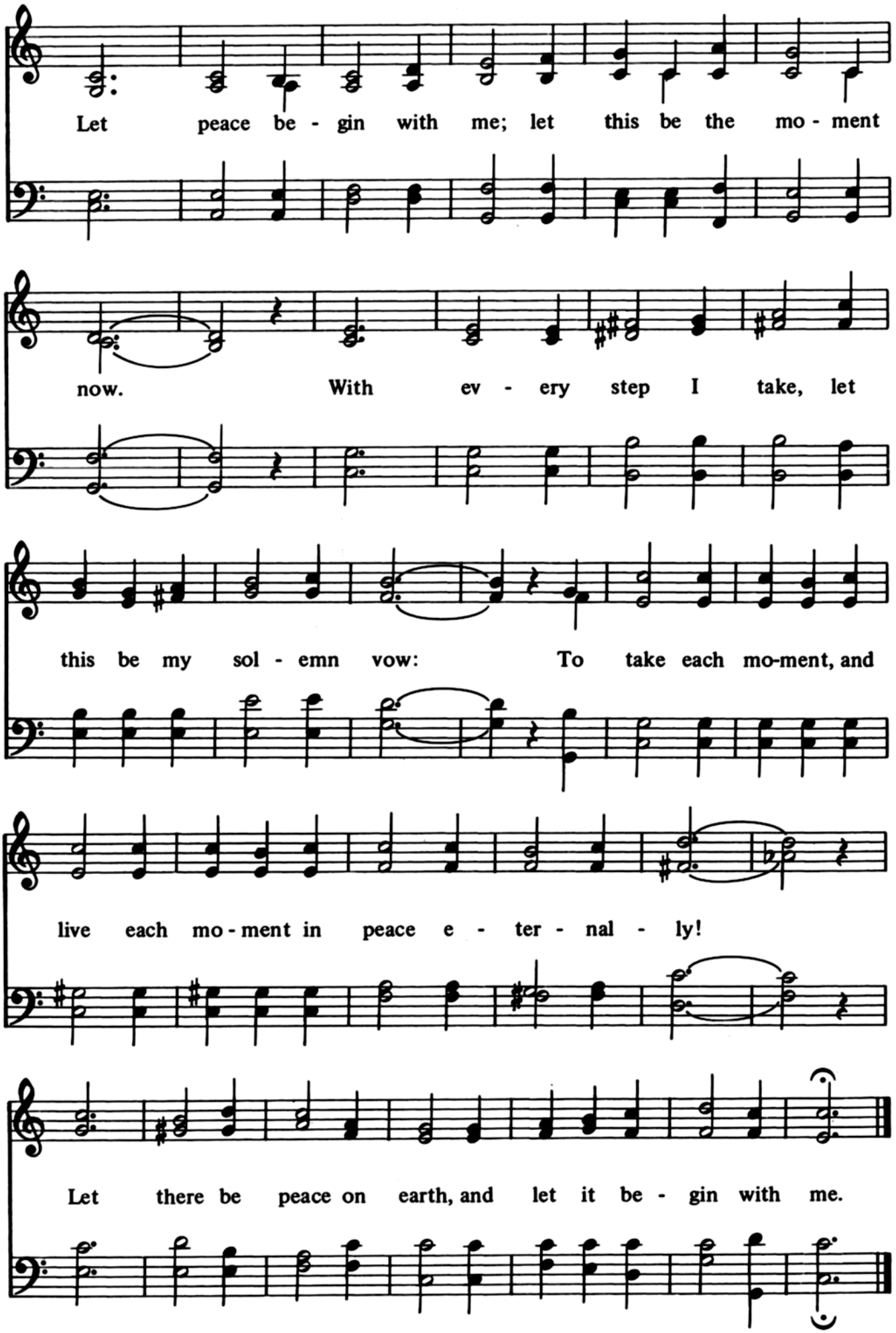
*__DOXOLOGY #515__ OLD HUNDRETH LM

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)

May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts and the giving of this offering all show our thankfulness to you, O God our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.


Unison
Let there be peace on earth, and let it be - gin with
me. Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was
meant to be. With God as our Fa - ther,
bro - thers all are we. Let me
walk with my bro-ther in per - fect har - mon - y.


Let peace be - gin with me; let this be the mo - ment
now. With ev - ery step I take, let
this be my sol - emn vow: To take each mo-ment, and
live each mo - ment in peace e - ter - nal - ly!
Let there be peace on earth, and let it be - gin with me.

***BENEDICTION**

The congregation is asked to kindly remain seated for the POSTLUDE, as a closing meditation.

POSTLUDE *Dix Pièces* (Ten Pieces) J. Langlais
x. Pasticcio

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

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AV TEAM: Doug Brenner, Joe Glajch, Chris Guild, Lee Hauenstein, Craig Neth, Roy Rumbaugh, Caryl Sullivan, Dennis Webster
COVER ART: ChurchArt Online
DEACON OF THE DAY: Kimberly Lynch
HYMNS: Pilgrim Hymnal & United Methodist Hymnal, CCLI#3034682

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The flowers in the pulpit are given in honor of all God's Children, by LeeAnne Steenhoek.

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HEARING AIDS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

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PLEASE USE THE CARDS IN THE PEW RACKS TO HELP KEEP THE STAFF INFORMED OF YOUR PASTORAL NEEDS.

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Have you remembered First Church in your will?

The church office is available by appointment between 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday-Friday. Please call ahead.
The First Church remains closed to all outside group use.

Summer Worship Schedule begins on June 20.
One service at 9:00am through September 5.
In-Person and Livestreamed

COVID 19 PROTOCOL UPDATE

It is with great pleasure that your Ministers and Staff, in accordance with recommendations from Safe Church, provide you with a few bullet points from our Robo-Call and e-News this week, regarding Covid-19 and longer-term protocols effective immediately:

MASK USE is now optional for all activities at the church. Continued use of masks is a personal choice, and welcome for anyone wishing to do so.*

The congregation will remain seated for the **POSTLUDE**, allowing our Live Stream and Radio broadcast to offer this closing meditation.

GENERAL EXIT after the Postlude is now possible through all doors off the Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, and the Link. Please proceed directly outside for any gathering in Fellowship.

Outdoor **LEMONADE FELLOWSHIP** will begin weekly *(weather-permitting)* in the Courtyard following the single Summer 9 AM service on Father's Day and continuing through Labor Day.

The **THRIFT SHOP** will re-open on June 17 for two weeks: June 17 and June 24.

The **CHURCH OFFICE** fully re-opens to the public for its summer hours in JULY.

We thank everyone for their patience and support in these unusual times, and look forward to seeing you back in community with **YOUR** church, **The First Church of Nashua. – God Bless!**

**The Nashua Board of Health continues to recommend that anyone who is unvaccinated continue to wear a mask "for their own protection and that of others that are fully vaccinated."*

Foundations of Christian Formation

Confirmation Retreat: October 1-3, 2021 at Horton Center - Both classes of confirmands and mentors from 2021 and 2022 will join together for this invaluable experience. Please register today!

Lamb of God Story Time - today! Join us for Lamb of God Story Time and Activity at 11:30 AM for families with young children in our courtyard. LeeAnne will read a story and there will an opportunity to meet and pet the baby goats!

River Walk with God – Two sessions left. **Thursdays, June 17, and 24: 6:00-7:30 PM** in the Fireside Room.

Spiritual practices grow us in our spiritual journey in this 6-session series for mature 12's-adult. We will learn to think about how God works in our lives and do spiritual practices such as labyrinths, letters to and from God, responding to God's word through art and percussion. For more information, contact LeeAnne Steenhoek, lsteenhoek@tfcucc.org.

Horton Center offers exciting programming all summer long. Please see Hortoncenter.org for important details and registration. Contact LeeAnne with any questions.

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

Women's Wisdom and Spirituality meets **today at noon,** at **Greeley Park** for their final gathering of the church year. All women are welcomed. Please bring your own lunch, a comfy chair or blanket, and a mask. Contact Rev. Jami if you have questions.

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The First Church Cyclists will ride **today at 2:00 PM** on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Crosspoint in Chelmsford, MA. The group invites anyone, regardless of age or ability to join them for fun, fresh air, and fellowship. Contact Ray Baldwin (contact the church office or see the church directory for his number) with any questions. The next ride is on June 27 in Derry. See the full schedule in the June Messenger, in the weekly e-News, and on the church website under "connect".

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Al Fresco Office Hours with Andy Gilman are held at the Riverwalk Café, from **10:00 until noon every Wednesday**. This is an opportunity for you to drop by, have a cup of coffee or tea, and chat. This is a non-scheduled time, so the conversation will include whoever shows up. If it is rainy or uncomfortably cold, we will not meet. Andy G. is also available for scheduled office hours, inside or out, on Wednesdays.

The Bible, Friends, and Coffee Bible Study meets on Mondays, June 14 and 21, from **9:30-11:00 AM**. The group meets outside in the courtyard (weather permitting) or in the dining room. Rev. Andy Armstrong and LeeAnne Steenhoek will facilitate the discussion group. No sign-up is required. If you have a Bible, bring it; if not, one will be supplied for you.

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Ever Wonder Who Sets the Covid Safety Standards for First Church? Following the guidance of the CDC, the State of NH and the city of Nashua, it is our First Church Safety Committee. Made up of Rev. Andy, Rev. Jami, Fred Daniels, Kimberly Lynch, Bill McIntyre (Chair) Bonnie Schommer, LeeAnne Steenhoek, Caryl Sullivan, and Jen Summers, this team meets monthly to review guidance and suggestions on all kinds of safety issues. This small but mighty team keeps current on notices from Homeland Security, local law enforcement, wellness guidelines and other resources. And thanks to the hard work of Bill, Caryl and Walter Marquis, First Church has received a $50k grant from the Department of Homeland Security to add cameras, automatic door locks and other security devices. Bill McIntyre is leading that effort. Please reach out to Bill with any questions

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2021 Holiday Fair: November 12 and 13 – To prepare for the fair, crafters will meet at 4:00 PM in the dining room on **Wednesdays, June 16, July 14, August 18**, and **September 15**. October dates are tbd. Contact Jocelyn Henning for more information or to share ideas. Her contact information is listed in the church directory or you may call the church office.

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Church Directory - Do we have a picture of you and your family in the directory? Is your contact information current? Do you know how to access the directory on your phone or computer? Would you like a hard copy of the directory? Please call or email Sue in the church office so we can update the directory and our files and assist you with access to the directory. Thank you.

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Attention gardeners! Grow Nashua, a community partner of the United Way offers a way to serve our local community by donating your extra homegrown vegetables to the Lil' Free Farmstand located at the UU Church of Nashua during the summer months. Non-gardeners may serve, too, by purchasing farm stand vegetables for donation! Visit https://www.grownashua.org/share or see the article in the June Messenger.

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Help keep your giving current - Our financial giving remains crucial to maintain our ministry, to support the spiritual health of the church family, and continue our Outreach to mission partners in and around Nashua. Please mail in your offering, set up automatic deposits through the First Church, set up automatic payment with your bank, or consider e-giving though our website at https://tfcucc.org/give/.

The First Church offers convenient e-giving options for pledges and other giving. Scan the QR code on the back cover of this bulletin to view one of the giving options available.

If you would like more information or have questions about any of the giving options listed above, please contact Dianne Smigliani in the church office.

The Horton Center All-Church Retreat is back! - Friday-Sunday, August 27-29, 2021
Held at the camp and retreat center, owned and operated by the New Hampshire Conference of the UCC on Pine Mt. in Gorham, NH, this weekend is open to everyone - adults, children, singles, couples, families. It is all about fun - hiking, swimming, visiting, reading, relaxing and enjoying the peace and beauty of northern New Hampshire in the late summer. This is a great way to spend time with and get to know other First Church members, especially if you are new to the community. Join the others who find this a wonderful way to end the summer.
For more information, and to sign up, call the church office, 882-4861, Joe Glajch, or LeeAnne Steenhoek.

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NSKS Backpack Program 2021 - The Outreach Committee invites you to help fill 70 backpacks for the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter's "Backpacks for Back to School" program. We are asking for monetary donations again this year (due to the variability of the virus) and also, bulk buying enables us to fill more backpacks. We hope to match the $2400 raised last year. A subcommittee from Outreach will purchase the supplies.

Please send in a check for whatever amount you wish to the church by July 25. Be sure to write "NSKS Backpack Program" in the memo line please. Many thanks to MaryBeth and Joe Glajch who have donated the backpacks again this year.

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New email addresses - Church treasurer, Joe Glajch and property management committee chair, Doug Brenner, can now be reached via email with any questions or concerns you may have for them at: Treasurer@tfcucc.org ; PM@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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Pulpit Flowers - If you would like to provide fresh flowers for the pulpit, please contact Sue in the church office to see what dates are available.

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Tower Update – The 23 stained glass windows and frames have been reinstalled. We are planning on lighting up the windows from the inside so that in the evening, you will be able to see the light shining through and the beautiful stained glass from quite a distance. The repair to the interior tower will begin in September. This is all brick work that, while repairs have been done over the years, is virtually original going back to 1893. We will be starting a fund raising campaign in early winter 2021 but if you are interested in contributing now, we are accepting donations. Checks can be made out to First Church with the words "Tower Project" in the memo line. To read more about the Tower work, please go to: https://tfcucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/TowerBrochure-26Mar21.pdf.

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Music in Worship Next Week
Sunday, June 20, 2021
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00 AM Men's Choir

First Church Calendar

SUN JUN 13	8:30am	In-Person Worship
	10:00am	In-Person Worship & Livestreamed
	11:30am	Lamb of God Story Time, courtyard
		Board Chairs Meeting, hybrid, room 10
	12:00pm	Women's Wisdom & Spirituality, Greeley Park
MON JUN 14	9:30am	Bible, Friends & Coffee, courtyard/dining room
TUE JUN 15	4:00pm	First Church at NSKS
	7:00pm	Men's Choir
WED JUN 16	10:00am	Al Fresco Hours with Rev. Andy G, Riverwalk
	4:00pm	Craft Group, dining room
THU JUN 17	6:00pm	River Walk with God, Fireside Room
	7:00pm	Men's Choir
		Property Management, room 10
SUN JUN 20	9:00am	In-Person Worship & Livestreamed

2021 Summer Music Schedule

Each summer, while the music ministry ensembles are on summer break, members of The First Church and the outside community bring their music offerings to our summer worship service. The following individuals and ensembles will enhance our services during the summer season…

JUNE 13
Joseph R. OLEFIROWICZ, baritone

JUNE 20
MEN'S CHOIR

JUNE 27
Anne LONGTIN, flute*
Nicole PAQUETTE, flute*

JULY 4
Nicole PLUMMER, mezzo soprano

JULY 11
Catherine CONDI, soprano

JULY 18
WOMEN'S CHOIR

JULY 25
Kristjon IMPERIO, piano

AUGUST 1
Craig PLUMMER, tenor

AUGUST 8
Aubrie CONNELLY, clarinet*

AUGUST 15
Susan COBB, soprano

AUGUST 22
Ainsley THERRIEN, clarinet*

AUGUST 29
Brian OBERTI, saxophone

SEPTEMBER 6
Mark A. CLEVELAND, bass-baritone

** In cooperation with the Nashua Community Music School*

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
Interim Associate Minister, *Rev. Dr. Andrew Gilman*, agilman@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*, sbuck@tfcucc.org

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.

Submit information for the weekly bulletin to the office by noon on Wednesday. Submit information for the monthly newsletter to 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

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

Office Hours: The office is open by appointment. The staff is available for phone calls, Monday-Friday, 9:00am-noon & 1:00-4:00pm. Visit our web site at tfcucc.org - Find us on Facebook

Give online. Scan the QR code to view one of the giving options available.