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

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 22, 2021 9:00 AM

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

APPROACH TO GOD

Let us keep silence as we prepare for worship.

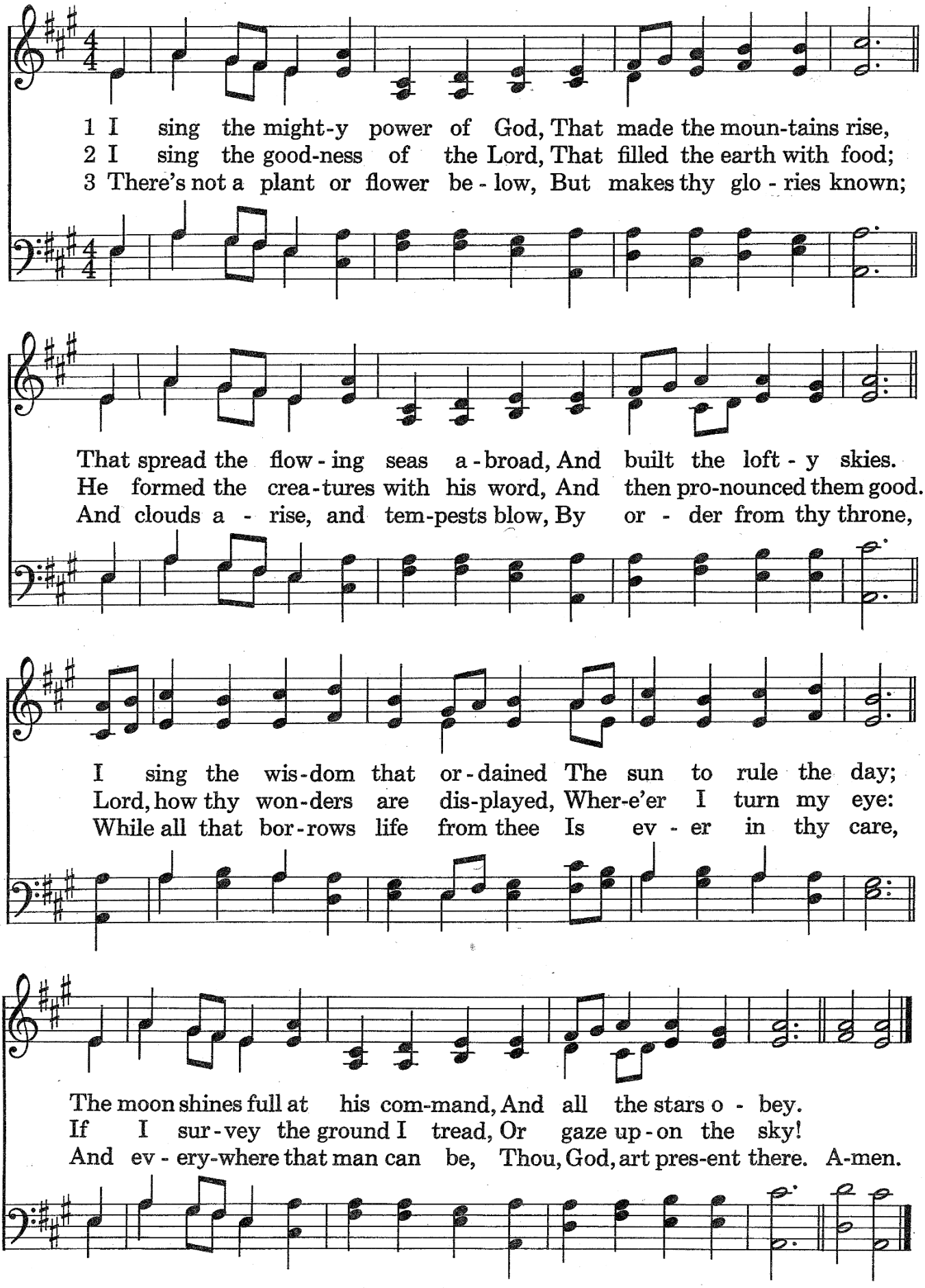
MEDITATION "In a world of noise, confusion and conflict it is necessary that there be places of silence, inner discipline and peace. In such places love can blossom." Thomas Merton

PRELUDE *Mélodie* A. Guilmant
(1837 – 1911)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The Spirit of God invites us to worship.
People: In God's Spirit, we rejoice and give thanks.
Leader: The glory of God calls us to praise.
People: In God's glory, we enter holy mysteries.
Leader: The wisdom of God summons us to live with thanksgiving and truth.
People: In God's wisdom, we find grace for living our lives.
Leader: The love of God invites us to service.
People: In God's love, we are filled with strength and peace.
Leader: The peace of God calls us into abundant life.
People: Let us turn our hearts and minds to worship, and to living always as God's beloved ones.

***HYMN #68** *I Sing the Mighty Power of God* ELLACOMBE



*__PRAYER OF CONFESSION__ (Unison)

Holy God, You call us to imitate Jesus your son and our Lord. You call us to speak truth to one another, but we are afraid and silent. You call us to be angry when we see injustice, but we are angry with those we love. You call us to encourage one another with our words, but we speak ill of our brothers and sisters. You call us to forgive one another as Christ has forgiven us, but we are bitter and resentful, not wanting to forgive. How we must grieve Your Holy Spirit, O God. Forgive us, yet again. Point us toward Christ. Empower us through your Spirit into new life.

A time of silence for personal confession

*__ASSURANCE OF PARDON__

Leader: Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ (Ephesians 2:12-13). The Good News is this: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and renewed.

People: Thanks be to God.

GREETINGS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Ephesians 6:10-20**

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

John 56-69

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

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

VOLUNTARY *Cross of Jesus* E. Kerr
(1915 – 2011)

SERMON "The Armor of God" Rev. Dr. Andrew Armstrong

***HYMN #274** *How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings Fair* BISHOPTHORPE

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

CENTERING PRAYER (Unison)

God of Healing and Transformation, we hunger and thirst for your abundant life. We bring you our sorrow and ask for the bread of joy; we bring you our despair and ask for the bread of hope; we bring you our weariness and ask for the bread of inspiration. Meet us in prayer and give us the bread of heaven to sustain us as we journey to find our way to be one with you. In Jesus' name we pray. 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.

OFFERTORY *Six Studies* R. Vaughan Williams
(1872 – 1958)

ii. Andante Sostenuto
vi. Allegro Vivace

AINSLEY THERRIEN, clarinet

***DOXOLOGY #515** OLD HUNDRETH LM

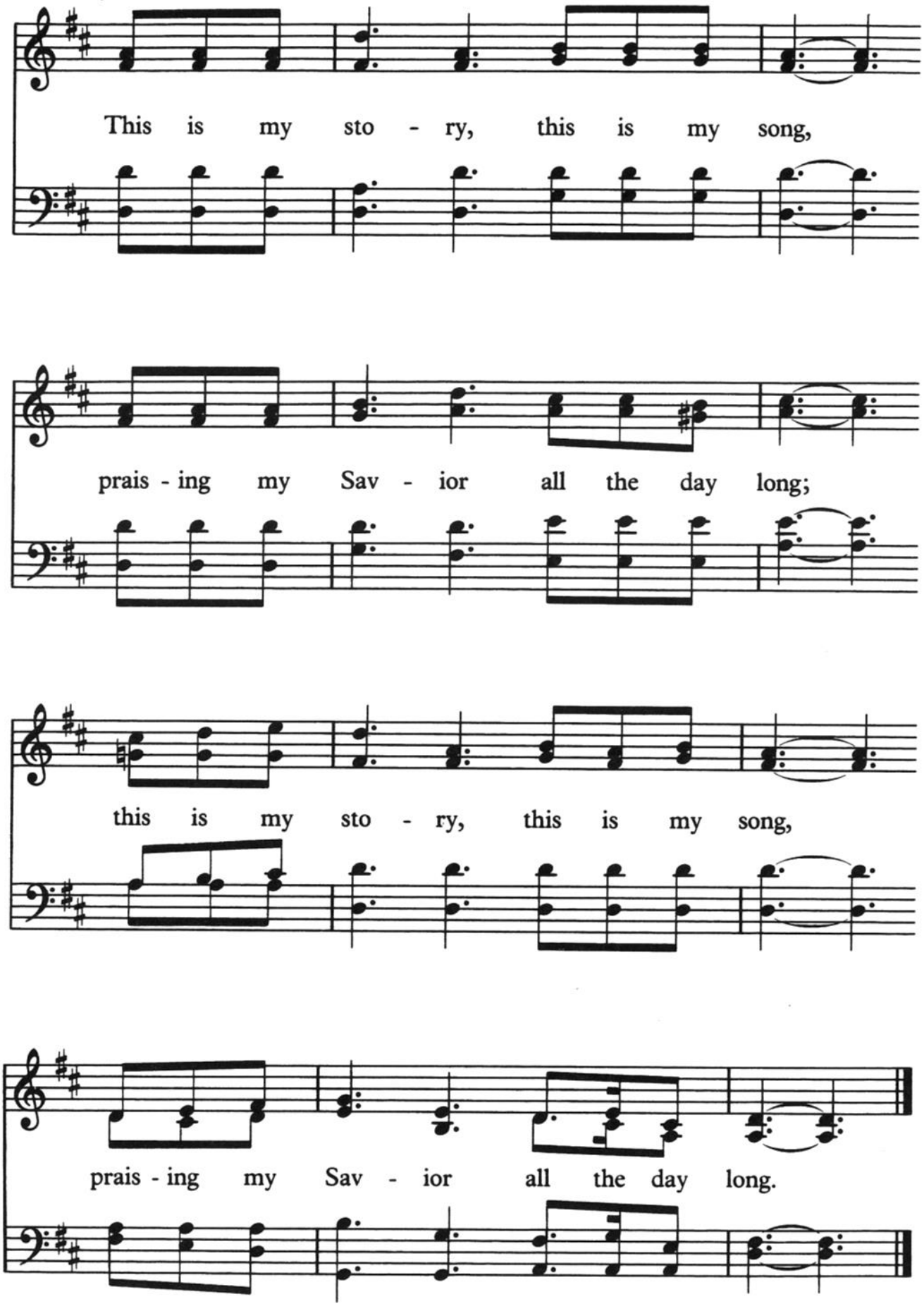
Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Unison)

Holy and Almighty God, you are the maker of all things and life itself. You've fashioned a universe and us to speak on its behalf. Receive these gifts as our praise for everything you have made in the world visible and invisible. Amen.

1. Bless - ed as - sur - ance, Je - sus is mine!
2. Per - fect sub - mis - sion, per - fect de - light,
3. Per - fect sub - mis - sion, all is at rest;
O what a fore - taste of glo - ry di - vine!
vi - sions of rap - ture now burst on my sight;
I in my Sav - ior am hap - py and blest,
Heir of sal - va - tion, pur - chase of God,
an - gels de - scend - ing bring from a - bove
watch - ing and wait - ing, look - ing a - bove,
born of his Spir - it, washed in his blood.
ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.
filled with his good - ness, lost in his love.

Refrain


This is my sto - ry, this is my song,
prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long;
this is my sto - ry, this is my song,
prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

***BENEDICTION**

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

POSTLUDE *Trumpet Tune* H. Purcell
(1659 - 1695)

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

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AV TEAM CAMERA CREW: Doug Brenner, Joe Glajch, Lee Hauenstein, Craig Neth, Don Smith-Weiss and Dennis Webster
DEACON OF THE DAY: Rich Smigliani
HYMNS: Pilgrim Hymnal & United Methodist Hymnal, CCLI#3034682
SOLOIST: Joining us in morning worship, in collaboration with
Nashua Community Music School

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The flowers in the pulpit are given in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary on August 21, by Pat and Jay Darrin.

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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 The First Church in your will?

MASK USE UPDATE

MASK USE IS NOW STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

The most recent CDC guidelines are encouraging facemask coverings indoors due to the current surge in the Delta COVID Variant. In an effort to continue keeping our congregation safe in the midst of this new strain and surge, we also **strongly recommend** facemask wearing while inside the church buildings.

Summer Worship Schedule

One service at 9:00 AM through September 5
In-Person and Livestream
Radio broadcast: 11:00 AM on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

Church Happenings and Outreach

Join us for lemonade and fellowship in the courtyard following worship (weather permitting).

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Gathering and Giving in Gratitude 2021 – We all look forward to gathering together again on Rally Sunday, September 12. When the church regathered following the pandemic of 1918, they invited members and friends to bring an offering in support of their mission and ministry with *Glory to God.* You are invited to do the same as an expression of gratitude in order to strengthen our ministries as we fully re-open. Our ministry is a worthy investment in faith to bring the Good News of God to the lives of our members and community.

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Last Call for the Horton Center All-Church Retreat!!
Friday-Sunday, August 27-29

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.

For more information, call the church office, 882-4861 or Joe Glajch. Sign up at the welcome center, through the church office, or on the First Church website.

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3rd Annual First Church Golf Tournament - Wednesday, September 22
The Overlook Golf Course in Hollis, NH

Join as a sponsor and or as a player. Proceeds from the tournament will benefit local outreach partners: Family Promise of Southern NH, Stepping Stones, and The Front Door Agency. For tournament information and registration forms, to go: https://wp.me/ab3kUy-25S or contact Joe Glajch or Mike Winton with any questions.

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Childcare Available on September 5 - The nursery will be open on Sunday, September 5 during the 9:00 AM service for infants through age 2. Contact LeeAnne Steenhoek with any questions.

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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! Contact LeeAnne for more information.

Sunday School Staff Orientation for all Sunday school lead and assistant teachers takes place on Thursday **September 9 from 6:00-8:00** PM in the Shaw Chapel.

The session includes planning with teammates. It is vital that all Sunday School teaching staff attend this meeting. If you absolutely cannot attend this meeting, be sure to contact LeeAnne Steenhoek ahead of time. The schedule for the evening includes:

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Rally Sunday, September 12, 2021

Sunday School and the New Program Year begins!
8:30 & 10:00 AM: Worship
10:00 AM: Worship and livestream, Sunday School and Nursery Care
Followed by our traditional Rally Day Cookout
Christian Formation will supply the burgers, veggie burgers,
hot dogs, beverages *and side dishes* ***(new this year).***
The Stewardship Committee will provide an ice cream truck!
Join us for good food, fellowship, music, face painting, games.
See the September newsletter, weekly bulletins and
weekly E-News for the full slate of upcoming program offerings.

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First Church Mission Opportunity

First Church will be participating in an international mission opportunity to the **Dominican Republic on February 26th through March 6th**. Adults and youth (16 unaccompanied or 15 accompanied by parent/guardian) are invited to share their talents to meet many needs of Haitian and Dominican poor centered in La Romana. Whatever skill you bring will be put to use. For example:

…If you have medical skills, you can serve local clinics that minister to sugar cane workers.
…If you have construction, skills you can help build the Good Samaritan Hospital.
…If you have computer skills, you can assist hospital administrators.
…If you have teaching skills, you can participate in array of educational activities.
…If you love children, you can participate in Vacation Bible School.

Rev. Andy will be leading the trip. He will host a Zoom call on **September 14 at 7:00 PM**. Please e-mail Dianne (dsmigliani@tfcucc.org) or Sue (senglander@tfcucc.org) for the link. He also invites you to an informational meeting following church service at **11:30 AM on September 19** in room 15. In the meantime, feel free to contact him with your many questions and go to https://centralmalaromana.org/ to learn more and view pictures of previous missions.

Be a volunteer at the Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter! Since September there has been a core group of individuals helping to serve dinner every Tuesday. They are looking for more volunteers to join this group. They serve dinner from 3:45-6:00 PM each week. This is a rewarding and enjoyable way to help out in our community. If you are interested in substituting, or helping on a rotating basis, please contact Patti Mullin. Her contact information is in the church directory or you may call the church office.

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Holiday Craft Fair Silent Auction - Please contact Rebecca Small if you have items to donate to the silent auction or if you'd like to assist her in finding/calling donors. See the church directory or call the church office for her contact information.

Join the crafters on Wednesday, September 15 at 4:00 PM in the dining room to help make crafts for the fair. 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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New Tenant for the Walker Building – After over 41 years at First Church, Title 1 is relocating to Broad Street Elementary School. Starting September 1st, the Nashua Community Music School will relocate to the Walker Building from their current facility in the mill yard. Their general hours of operation will be Monday – Thursday, 2:00 – 8:00 PM. Some of our church members are students at the School and we have already seen a few of their students in our Sunday services as guests. Be sure to welcome those people as you see them!

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Men's Retreat: The Hero's Journey - The Wednesday Morning Men's Group is hosting a retreat at Rolling Ridge Retreat Center in Andover, MA from **Sunday**, **November 7th through Tuesday, November 9th**. Our time together will include conversation around "Heroic Leadership" written by Chris Lowney. While the book is now required reading in leading business schools, all US Service Academies, and the War College, it's relevant and inspiring for everyone who wants to deepen their walk with God. Lowney presents the truth that self-awareness, ingenuity, and love, are at the root of heroism, leadership and the Christian life. There will be plenty of time to walk the grounds, read, and relax. The cost for twin rooms is $290, which is all-inclusive. **A deposit of $145 is due by September 21**. Please sign up online or at The Welcome Center and make checks payable to First Church with "Men's Retreat" in memo. Please direct your questions to Rev. Andy.

Bible, Friends and Coffee begins a new season on **Monday, September 13** at 9:30 AM in room 15 in the Walker Building. This year we are going to wrap our hearts and minds around what we are to believe today as Christians in 2021. Stay tuned for more information.

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Wednesday Morning Men's Study resumes on **Wednesday, September 15** at 8:00 AM in the Ladies' Parlor. This season we'll continue with reflections and discussions on Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

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Empty Nest Fellowship - If you are a parent/s whose young adults have taken or are about to take the next step towards independence, then this group is for you. We meet for fun, fellowship and discuss important themes associated with the transition we are making to life with an "Empty Nest". Our next gathering will be on **Monday, September 20** at 7 PM. Rev. Andy and Janice will host us.

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The First Church Thrift Shop is now accepting donations of ***FALL & WINTER CLOTHING***. Here is a list of the items we need:

Boys' and girls' clothing up to size 14, baby clothes, women's clothing (all sizes), costume jewelry, pocket books and accessories, small knickknacks

Leave your donations - ***clean and in good repair*** - in the marked bin in the courtyard lobby between the hours of 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday, or on Sunday morning. Contact Gale Cummings, Beth Bartlett or the church office with any questions. The shop will open on **Thursday, September 16.**

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Thank you Project's 7th Annual Water Walk
September 18, 2021 ~ 9:00 AM ~ Greeley Park

The Thank You Project is honored to invite First Church, Nashua to our 7th annual Water Walk. First Church has been the backbone of everything we have accomplished thus far in our humble effort to bless others with our blessings in this great country. Together, we have completed two water boreholes in Nigeria and have sent two students to Universities to study Medicine and Engineering respectively. Thanks to the generous donations of our supporters, we are poised to complete our **third** water borehole this year, in Achi, Ijeoma's village. This is a testament to the good in all of us. Thank You!

Please come with your friends and neighbors too. Also, please continue to pray for the vision and mission of Thank You Project. Blessings! www.waterwalk.org. www.thankyouproject.org/donate/

Church Directory - Do we have a picture of you and your family in the directory? Is your contact information current? 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.

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Al Fresco Office Hours with Andy Gilman: Wednesdays, 10:00 AM-Noon at the Riverwalk Café, weather permitting. 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. Andy G. is also available for scheduled office hours, inside or out, on Wednesdays.

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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.
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 or go to https://tfcucc.org/give/. Contact Dianne Smigliani with any questions.

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Donate your extra garden produce (or purchased produce) to the Lil' Free Farmstand located at the UU Church of Nashua during the summer months. Bring your donations to the stand between 9:00 AM and noon on Sundays. Visit https://www.grownashua.org/share for more information.

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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. You may also submit a confidential prayer by calling the church office.

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Pulpit Flowers – If you would like to provide fresh flowers for the pulpit on Sunday morning, sign up on the chart located on the window sill near the welcome center or contact Sue in the church office to see what dates are available.

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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.

First Church Cyclists - The group invites anyone, regardless of age or ability to join them for fun, fresh air, and fellowship. All rides are on Sundays at 2:00 PM. Rain date is the following Sunday. Contact Ray Baldwin (contact the church office or see the church directory for his number) with any questions.

August 22: Assabet River Rail Trail, Wilkins St, Hudson, MA
September 12: Goffstown Rail Trail, Fisher Cats Stadium, Manchester, NH
September 26: Charles River Bike Path, Museum of Science, Boston, MA
October 3: Reformatory/Narrow Gauge Trails, Depot Park, Bedford, MA

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First Church Calendar

SUN AUG 22	9:00am	In-Person Worship & Livestream
	10:00am	Fellowship Time, courtyard
	11:00am	Radio Broadcast on WSMN
MON AUG 23	7:00pm	Property Management, room 10
WED AUG 25	10:00am	Al Fresco Hours w/ Rev. Andy G, Riverwalk
	6:45pm	Staff Singer Quartet
FRI AUG 27	4:00pm	First Church at NSKS Horton Center Family Weekend to Aug. 29
SAT AUG 28	11:00am	Sisters in Sobriety, dining room

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: Monday-Friday, 9:00am-noon & 12:30-3:30pm.
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.