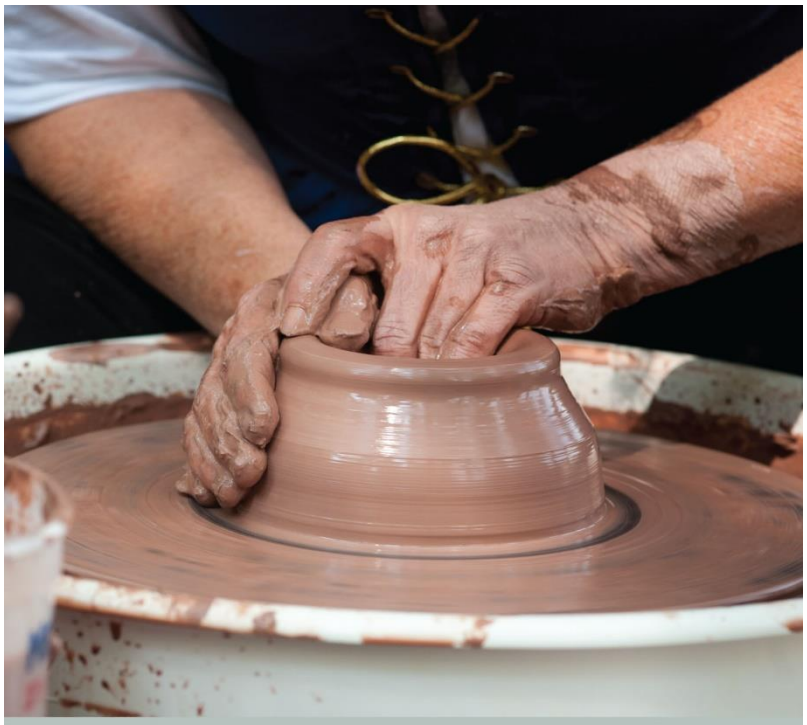

THE FIRST CHURCH

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

First Sunday after Christmas

December 26, 2021 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 CHIMES (10:00) Jim Stone

MEDITATION "You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in You." - St. Augustine

PRELUDE *Partita on* IN DULCI JUBILO J. Vivian *(*1974)*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Today is a day of joy.
People: May our eyes be clear to see it.
Leader: Today is a day of meaning.
People: May our minds be open to receive it.
Leader: Today is the day that the Lord has made.
People: May our hearts be shaped by God's love.

***HYMN #117** *Angels from the Realms of Glory* REGENT SQUARE

English, 19th century

*__OPENING PRAYER__ (Unison)

We arrive here, O God, from different homes and with different experiences. Gather us together that we may praise your name and renew our faith. During this week, our hearts have been filled with many things in our busy lives. Help us to be still, to find our center in your graceful presence and to set our lives in order. Amen.

GREETINGS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **2 Corinthians 4:5-10**

For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.

Luke 2:25-32

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SOLO *I Wonder As I Wander* J. J. Niles

CATHERINE KONDI, soprano *(1892 – 1980)*

SERMON "A Beginners Guide to Being a Clay Jar" Rev. Dr. Andrew Gilman

***HYMN #122** *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen* GOD REST YOU MERRY

English, 18th century

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

***CENTERING PRAYER** Julia Esquivel

Jesus said, "You ought always to pray and not to faint."
So we do not pray for easy lives;
we pray to be stronger women and men.
And we do not pray for tasks equal to our powers,
but for power equal to our tasks.
Then, the doing of our work will be no miracle -
we will be the miracle.
Every day may we wonder at ourselves
and the richness of life which has come to us by the grace of God. 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 *The Little Drummer Boy* K. Davis
(1982 – 1980)

***DOXOLOGY** OLD HUNDRETH L.M.

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 bring our gifts to you, O God, mindful of your many gifts to us, of life and food and shelter and friendship, and we worship you for the incomprehensible goodness of your love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

***HYMN #132** *O Come, All Ye Faithful* ADESTE FIDELIS

***BENEDICTION**

The congregation is kindly asked to be seated for the POSTLUDE.

POSTLUDE *Joy to World* Mary B. Bennett
*(*1954)*

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

AV TEAM CAMERA CREW: Doug Brenner, Joe Glajch, Lee Hauenstein, Craig Neth, Don Smith-Weiss and Dennis Webster
DEACON OF THE DAY: Rich Smigliani
GUEST ORGANIST: Kristjon Imperio
HYMNS: Pilgrim Hymnal, CCLI#3034682
COVER ART: Image from ChurchArt.com

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The flowers in the pulpit are given in memory of Paul Sipe, by the Sipe and Champigny Families.

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HEARING AIDS AND LARGE PRINT OF HYMNS AND PRAYERS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

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PLEASE USE THE VARIOUS 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?

MASK USE IS NOW REQUIRED INSIDE THE CHURCH BUILDINGS PER THE ORDER OF THE CITY OF NASHUA.

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

Nursery Care - The nursery will be closed on December 26 and January 2. Nursery care resumes on January 9, 2022 for the 10:00 AM Service.

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Sunday school classes will resume on Sunday, January 9, 2022.

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Today is Rev. Andy Gilman's last Sunday with us. We appreciate all that he has shared with us over this past year and we wish him well in his retirement (for real!). We look forward to his return in January, on a date to be determined, for a farewell reception.

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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 First Service, Sunday School, or All Services. Please visit the church webpage (www.tfcucc.org), or Facebook Page (First Church Nashua UCC) for any cancellation notices. You can also check media outlets WMUR Channel 9, or WZID 95.7 under the heading First Church Nashua. The notifications will read as follows: First Service Cancelled or Sunday School Cancelled or All Services Cancelled and will be announced by 6am on the Sunday in question.

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Year-End Reminder! All contributions for the 2021 tax year must be in the church office by December 31, 2021 or mailed in letter postmarked December 31, 2021. Contact Dianne Smigliani with any questions.

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Mission Trip to La Romana - First Church is sending a mission team of eight people to the Dominican Republic next spring. They are gathering a variety of supplies to take with them. See the list of items needed at the table in Fellowship Hall. ***Generic brands are okay.*** Please drop off the items in the marked bin in Fellowship Hall. Direct any questions to Rev. Andy or Beth Raymond.
For more information about the mission, visit https://centralmalaromana.org/

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Afghan Evacuee Resettlement - Over 600 Afghan allies are scheduled to be resettled in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Ascentria is working with the Nashua Host Home Network to resettle Afghan families who have helped our troops. Would you like to join a team that supports a resettled family or individual? Would you like to form your own Neighborhood support group? Do you have a live-in apartment or in-law space that is not being used? Please contact the Nashua Host Home Network to learn how you can help.
Paul Introcaso: p.introcaso@comcast.net
MaryAnn McHugh: m.a.mchugh@comcast.net

Adult Winter Retreat - Marie Joseph Spiritual Center - January 21 – 23, 2022
Reminder: The balance is due by January 7, 2022. Rev. Andy Armstrong will lead the retreat with a theme around simplicity and sabbatical. Contact the church office for more information.

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The First Church Thrift Shop will be closed on December 30.

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First Church of Nashua to receive $60k grant - On December 14, 2021, The Board of Directors of the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) announced the awarding of a $60,000 grant to The First Church of Nashua to support the historic preservation of our Church tower and bells. The work continues that was started last year. This includes the tower of the church building, both inside and out, as well as the 15 bells located near the top of the tower. Also being done is work on the roof of the tower and the 23 leaded glass windows to ensure good sealing and to prevent water damage. Exterior repointing and caulking as well as interior brickwork are other major items included in this major restoration. Work began in 2020 and the first two major areas (belfry interior and exterior and window sashes and frames) have been completed (total expense $130K). That work was funded through other sources. The remaining $190K is anticipated in 2022-2023 and will be aided by this grant. Our thanks go to the "Tiny" Tower Team members Curt Potter, Carol Baldwin, Peter Chaloner, Bill Thompson, Joe Glajch and (chair) Caryl Sullivan

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Tornado Disaster Relief – If you wish to contribute to the relief efforts for the recent tornados in Kentucky and other states in the Midwest, you may make donations online or by check. Make checks out to: United Church of Christ with "2021 Severe Storms" in the memo line and mail to: United Church of Christ PO BOX 71957 Cleveland, OH 44194 or go online: https://www.ucc.org/appeal-severe-storms-2021/

Our M.A.D. (Make a Difference) teens will also be collecting for the storm relief. With our love and resources, we turn rubble into rooms for storm survivors. Steve Buck is generously crafting a wooden bowl to receive our checks and cash for the UCC Storm relief fund. Stay tuned for more information about their creative collection efforts.

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Music in Worship Next Week
Sunday, January 2, 2022
2nd Sunday after Christmas
8:30 & 11:00 Chancel Choir

FIRST FRIDAYS at FIRST
ORGAN SERIES

The **First Music Concert Series** invites you to six "mini" organ recital offerings in addition to our Sunday music outreach programs. Recitals will be on the first Friday of the month and will begin at 12:15 p.m.

Regional organists will perform FREE 30-minute programs on our 4,000-pipe, 1926 Anderson Memorial Organ—each designed to replenish the soul with beautiful music for the workday or to get the weekend off to a great start.

2021 RECITALS

November 5 — **Scott Bergendahl**
St. Hedwig Roman Catholic Parish, Manchester, NH

December 3 — **Barbara Flocco**
Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, NH

2022 RECITALS

January 7 — **Bruce Adami**
Christ Church Exeter (Episcopal), Exeter, NH

February 4 — **Mary Jodice**
Saint Andrew Episcopal Church, Marblehead, MA

March 4 — **Kristjon Imperio**
Pakachoag Music School, Worcester, MA

April 1 — **Emily Adams**
Main Street United Methodist Church, Nashua, NH

THE FIRST CHURCH

1 CONCORD STREET • NASHUA, NH
FIRST-MUSIC.ORG • 603.882.4861

Parking behind the church building.
Handicap accessibility / elevator access is in the courtyard between old and new buildings.

FIRST MUSIC FM CONCERT SERIES 2021 – 22 SEASON

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 with us 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 nametags; they are members of the various boards and committees.

INFORMATION

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

PASTORAL CARE

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

COMMUNICATIONS

If you have a change of address, phone number, or email address, please let the church office know so that we may keep our records current.

All information for the weekly bulletin must be in the office by noon on Wednesday. All information for the monthly newsletter must be in the office by 4:30 PM on the second Monday of the month.

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

THE FIRST CHURCH
NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

One Concord Street * Nashua, New Hampshire 03064 * 603-882-4861
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00am-noon and 1:00-4:00pm
Visit our web site at www.tfcucc.org

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