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

March 13, 2022 8:30 & 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) Dale Neth

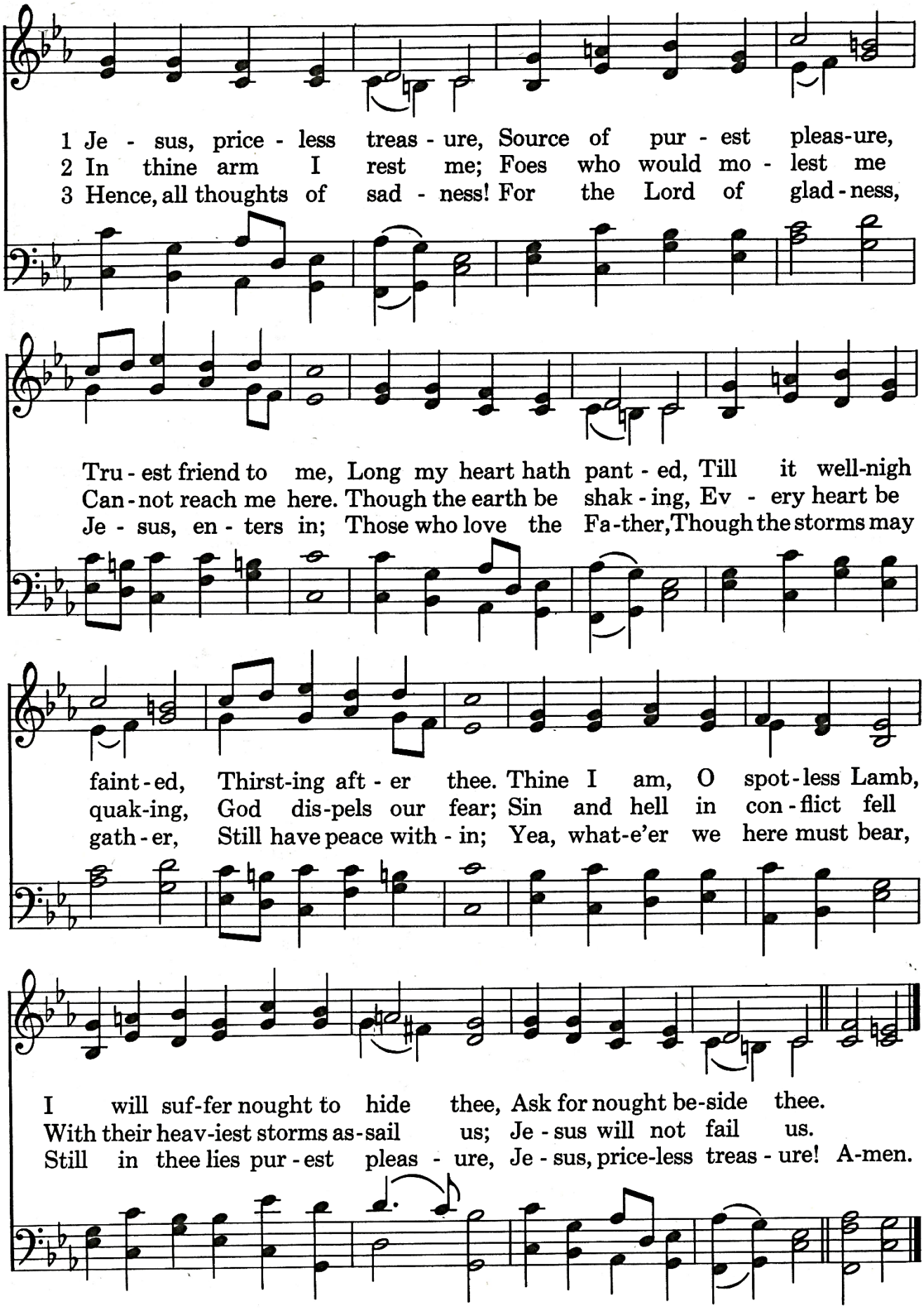
MEDITATION "To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible." Thomas Aquinas

PRELUDE *Erbarm' Dich Mein, O Herre Gott* J. S. Bach
Be merciful to me, Lord God *(1685 – 1750)*

CALL TO WORSHIP (inspired by Psalm 27)

Leader: God is our light and our salvation; whom shall we fear?
People: God is our shelter and refuge on the days of trouble, and our hope and joy on the days of celebration!
Leader: Day after day, we seek God's face and the assurance of God's holy love:
People: O God, do not turn from us or hide your face from us! Be our guide and our light instead!
Leader: One thing we ask of God:
People: That we may live in God's dwelling place all the days of our life, and never cease to behold the beauty of God's home.
Leader: Beloved of God, enter this worship in thanksgiving, for God is among and within us!
People: Thanks be to God!

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



***PRAYER OF CONFESSSION** (Unison)

We call you Lord, Jesus, Yet it is too easy for us to worship other things, other activities, other relationships, other gods. You tell us we cannot serve two masters, yet we spend more time focusing our energies elsewhere, diverting our time, our energy, our money, our attention away from you. When our hearts are led astray and we serve other gods, forgive us gracious Savior. We turn away from our distractions and sin. Strengthen us to set our faces toward Jerusalem to take up our cross and follow you. We pray this, counting on your grace. Amen.

A time of silence for personal confession.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: God does not give us up to the temptations and ways of the world, but shelters us with love, with hope, with grace. We are forgiven people. Our songs of joy are lifted to the One who forgives us and saves us.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.

***PRAISE #177/1** *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* HAMBURG

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

GREETINGS

AFFIRMATION OF MINSTRY (10:00)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (10:00)

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18**

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great."

But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Then he said to him, “I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.” But he said, “O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?” He said to him, “Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.
As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.
When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,

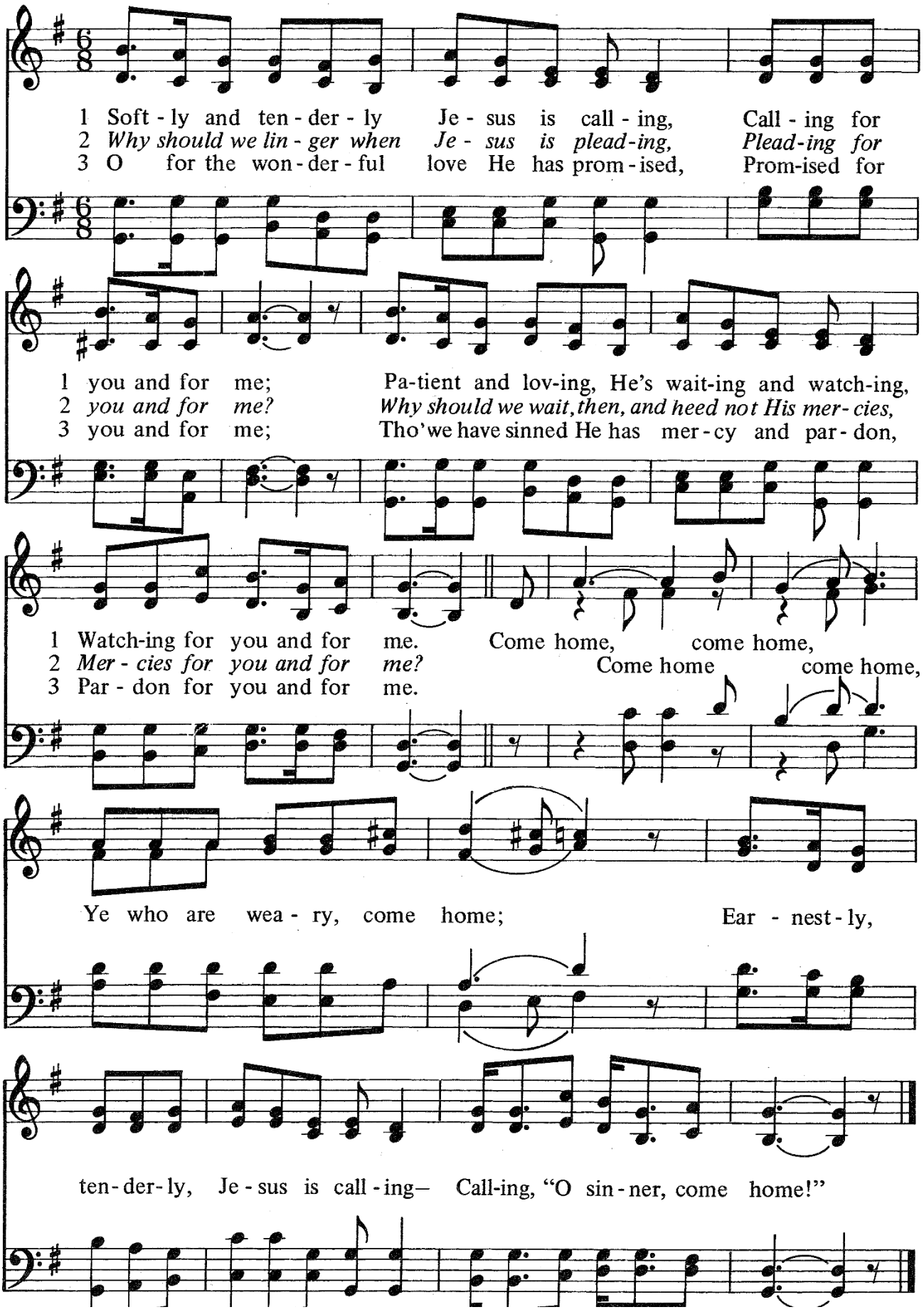
Luke 13:31-35

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

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

SERMON “The Fox and the Hen” Rev. Dr. Andrew Armstrong

***HYMN** *Softly and Tenderly* THOMPSON

(10:00)

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

***LITANY**

Leader: God touches the world, and the world changes.
People: God touches us, and we are transformed.
Leader: In the brightest of day, in the deepest of night, on mountain, in valley, everywhere.
People: In this time, together, at prayer, we invite God to open our eyes to the transformation of our lives.

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.

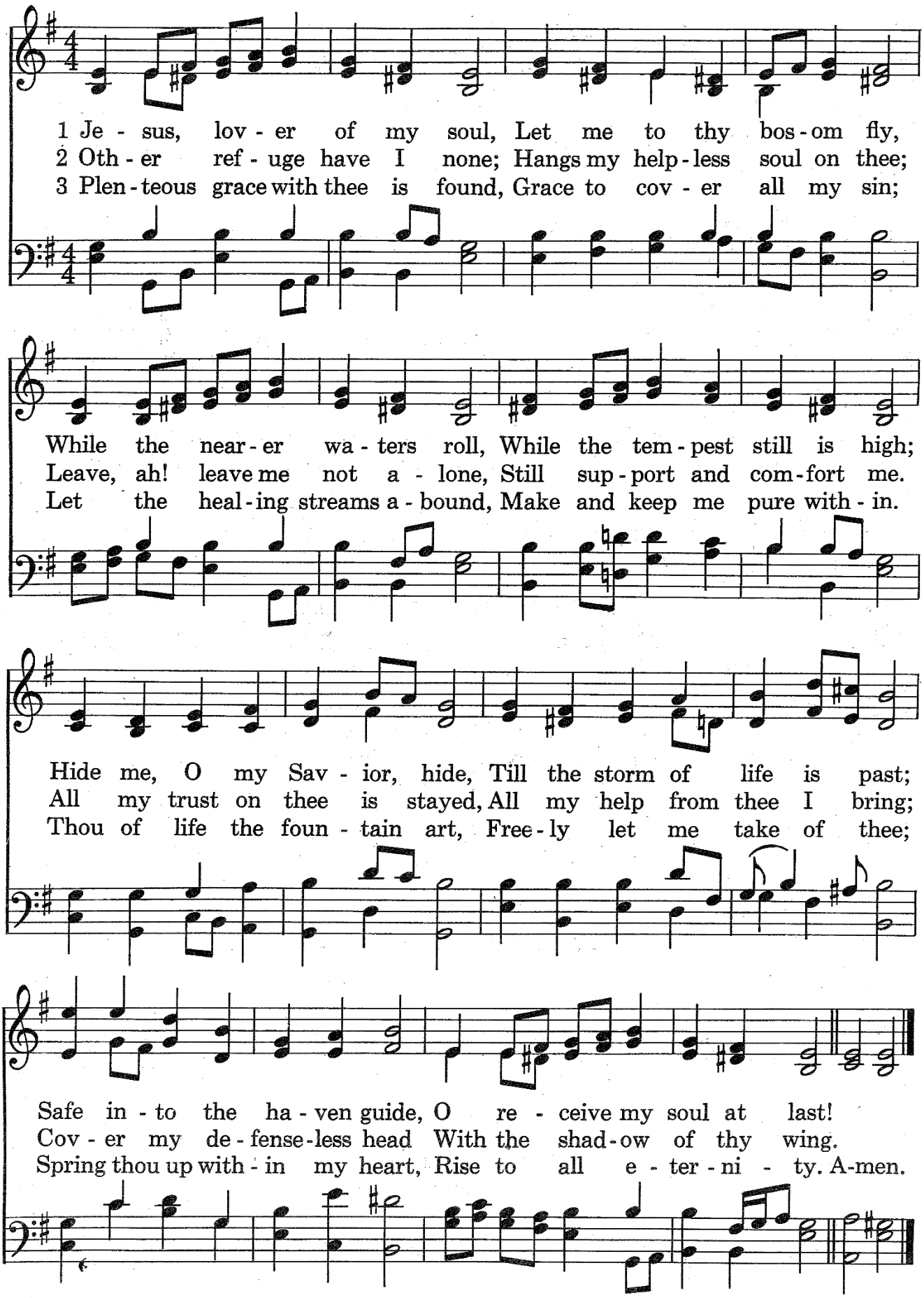
OFFERTORY *At the Cross* R. E. Hudson
FIRST FOLK *(1843 – 1901)*
J. H. Hewitt
(1801– 1890)
arr. Cindy Berry

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

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)

Now we know, Gracious God, that Jesus is our Savior. The One who carried the cross in love and faithfulness to You in love for the world. He carried the cross for us; a debt that we can never repay. So we offer You our thanksgiving and these gifts as our pledge to live lives worthy of our salvation in Christ's name. Amen.

***HYMN #211** *Jesus, Lover of My Soul* ABERSTWYTH

***BENEDICTION**

BENEDICTUS *Go Now in Peace* D. Besig
*(*1936)*

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

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
COVER ART: Mother Hen Mosaic from Jerusalem
DEACON OF THE DAY: Andy Dillman
HYMNS: Pilgrim Hymnal, Hymns for the Family of God, #3034682
STAFF SINGER QUARTET: Janet Poisson, soprano; Brianne Biastoff, alto; Jason Iannuzzi, bass

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The flowers in the pulpit are given in loving memory of John Potfora, husband, by Kay Potfora.

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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 OPTIONAL INSIDE THE CHURCH BUILDINGS.

Worship Schedule

8:30 AM: In-person Worship
10:00 AM: In-person Worship, Livestream, Sunday School & Nursery Care
Radio broadcast at 10:00 AM on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

Christian Formation Corner

The Nursery opens for our youngest members (infants through age 2) at 9:45 AM during the 10:00 AM worship service. Nursery coordinators are on hand to greet parents and explain the procedure for checking in and picking up your child.

In the Sunday School this month:

- Pre K-Grade 2 learn about Mary and Martha, Parable of the mustard seed, Parable of the Sower, Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the Upper Room.
- Grades 3-6 learn about Jesus in the Temple, Jesus washing the Disciples' feet and breaking bread with Disciples.

Alleluias have been put away in honor of Lent. We will bring them back in a great Alleluia! Praise ye the Lord after Easter.

Pretzel Sunday is Today!!! Emily and Mike A. are making pretzels with our children today. Children are learning about pretzels as a symbol of prayer and the Holy Trinity. Yum!

Heifer International - Students selected piggy bank collection cans based on the animal they wish to save towards during Lent. Students are encouraged to earn money by doing chores or invite friends and family to contribute to ending world hunger. Cans will be collected Palm Sunday.

Heifer's mission statement: to work with communities to end hunger and poverty while caring for the Earth. Heifer does this by providing appropriate livestock, training and related services to communities of small-scale farmers worldwide.

Please support this mission by encouraging your child to participate in this longstanding First Church tradition.

Members of the congregation are encouraged to make donations to our Sunday School Heifer mission. We will count and share our donations on Palm Sunday.

Make a Difference (M.A.D.) continues learning about tornado relief efforts and raising awareness and money for this need. They will be making cookies as a fundraiser on Palm Sunday. They will be sending out care packages to our college students the last week of April.

Parents of College Students - Please send your child's name and current address for the Finals Week care packages to LeeAnne at lsteenhoek@tfcucc.org, by April 18. We are generating a new list of labels.

Family Forum on Religion and Spirituality and how they help youth, families and their caregivers with Mark Baddeley and LeeAnne Steenhoek was held on Thursday March 10th. Please reach out to LeeAnne or Sue for the link to watch the recording.

High School Youth Group is starting on March 20 in the dining room. Calling all high school students in grades 9-12!!! Are you looking for a safe and welcoming community within First Church to spend some time bonding with friends and having fun? A place where you can feel free to share both your triumphs and concerns? Well, the new senior high youth group is YOUR group!

Holly C. and Shana D. are leading this group. It will meet ***every 2 weeks*** after the service from 11:30 AM-1:00 PM.

We would love to see you at the first meeting of games, pizza, getting to know each other, and deciding on a name for the group!

March is Volunteer Appreciation Month. Take a few minutes to thank our teachers, assistants and Office volunteers for all their hard work either in person or in a note. Baskets to collect your thoughtful notes will be at the Welcome Center and Christian Formation Table.

Lenten Activity Packets for Sunday School Children - In March, Lenten Activity Packets are being mailed to all of the young children in the Sunday School. The packets include a Lenten Bible Story and activity pages. Also included are links to the reading of the Bible Story by Stacey P. and to a sing-a-long with Steve B.

The Christian Formation Board hopes that this special mailing will support families' efforts at home to help their children understand the Seasons of the church and that God loves all of our church family, especially the children.

As with adult church members, it has been difficult for children to join us at church at times. This mailing also sends the message that Sunday School is open and we look forward to seeing all of our children again on Sunday mornings.

We hope that all families will encourage their children to open the packet they receive, learn about Lent and have some fun with the activities. They might even like to share these activities with a friend or family member.

Confirmation Class meets on the following dates:
March 13, 11:30am-1:00pm: Fireside Room
March 27, 11:30am: Mentor's Lunch & Resurrection Gardens Assembly.
Pick-up at 3:00pm

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

Women's Wisdom and Spiritualty meets today at 12:00 PM on Zoom.

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Lenten Study Series for 2022 for First Church Study Groups - In person study groups are returning to First Church just in time for Lent! In addition to Monday Morning Bible, Coffee and Friends and Wednesday Morning Men, we will be adding a 5-week Tuesday evening Lenten study group. Each group will be exploring Devotional Classics by Richard Foster, which is considered among the finest compilation of Christian spiritual resources available today.

Prepared materials will be available to you at the sessions.

The Tuesday Lenten Study Group meets in the dining room beginning on Tuesday March 8 at 7 PM and will continue through April 5.

Week 1. Preparing for the Spiritual Life-C.S. Lewis: "Giving All to Christ"
Week 2. The Prayer–Filled Life-Brother Lawrence: "An Habitual Sense of the Presence of God."
Week 3. The Virtuous Life-Richard Rolle: "The Spiritual Flame"
Week 4. The Spirit–Empowered Life-Catherine of Genoa: "Waiting Upon God"
Week 5. The Compassionate Life-Hannah Whitehall Smith: "Recovering the Joy of Service"

*In addition summary to author's thoughts on related subject, each entry includes a related biblical passage, discussion questions, and individual and group exercises.

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Bible, Friends, and Coffee Mondays at 9:30 AM in Fellowship Hall. The class follows the Lenten Series *Devotional Classics*

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The Wednesday Morning Men's Group meets in person at 8:00 AM in Fellowship Hall. The group will follow the Lenten Series *Devotional Classics*

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Membership Orientations - For anyone wishing to join the church, there will be two orientations on **Sundays, March 20 and 27 at 11:30 AM** in room 15. You only need to attend one session. The joining date will be **Sunday, April 3**, during the 10:00 AM worship service. Please contact Sue in the church office to register.

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The First Music Concert Series is looking for members and friends in the congregation, who might be willing to hang 10 posters for upcoming concerts, in regional and local venues that allow non-profit posters to hang in their windows or on their bulletin boards. Please contact Joseph in the music office, jolefirowicz@tfcucc.org or 603 882 4861 x15 to sign-up or for more information.

The 2022 First Church Scholarship application is available for any First Church Seniors who will be graduating in June and plan to continue their education beyond high school.

The 2022 First Church Continuing Education Grant application is available to any member of the church pursuing further training or education. Please contact Scholarships@tfcucc.org with any questions, or to request an application.

Scholarship Applications are due no later than April 15,2022. Late scholarship applications will not be accepted. First Church Scholarships are awarded on Children's Day.

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Coffee with Rev. Nancy – Join Rev. Nancy at Riverwalk Café, on Tuesdays from 2:00 until 3:00 PM for coffee and conversation. Sign-up is not necessary.

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The April newsletter deadline is Monday, March 14. Please send your items to Sue in the church office.

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Tower to Tower Fundraiser - During his spring sabbatical Rev. Andy will be going on the road for a 2,000 mile Tower to Tower Historical Ride that will take him from Nashua, Iowa to Nashua, NH to raise awareness of The First Church Nashua's profound history and raise $75,000 for our tower renovations. Nashua's Goodale's Bike Shop will support Rev. Andy's cycling needs on this week's long trip.

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Soup Kitchen Emergency Shelter Tours – Construction is now well under way on NSKS's Spring Street emergency shelter. Construction is on schedule for completion this fall. They are offering tours in the coming weeks for anyone who would like to see the new shelter in progress. All meet at 35 Spring Street at 4:00 PM. Tours will take place on: Monday, March 14, Tuesday, March 29, Monday, April 11 and Tuesday, April 26. Please contact Susannah Abbot to make a reservation at susannah@nsks.org.

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MUSIC IN WORSHIP THIS WEEK
March 20, 2022
8:30 Decibells
10:00 Chancel Choir & Decibells

Ukraine Assistance – The United Church of Christ is appealing for support of the folks in the Ukraine. Gifts made to UCC Ukraine Relief Fund will provide shelter, food, and other care to war refugees and internally displaced people. It also will help refugees and asylum seekers from African, Middle Eastern and other countries who had sought refuge in Ukraine and now are twice displaced, as well as other citizens of more than 125 countries living in Ukraine.
All donations will be deposited into the International Disasters fund designated for "Ukraine Relief." Your generous financial support will be used by our partners in the areas of greatest need.

Donate at https://support.ucc.org/global-h-o-p-e/ukraine-emergency-appeal or mail a check made payable to the United Church of Christ PO BOX 71957 Cleveland, OH 44194. Please be sure to note "Ukraine Relief Fund" on your check in the memo section.

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Easter Flowers - Help decorate the sanctuary for Easter. Lilies and chrysanthemums will be available to purchase for **$12.50 per plant** (note the change in price from the March newsletter form). Forms are available at https://tfcucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/EASTER-FLOWERS-2022-1.pdf and are included in the March and April newsletters. You may also stop by the table in Fellowship Hall on April 3 and 10

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First Church e-News – Stay in touch with what's happening at First Church each week. Contact Dianne Smigliani to sign up.

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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.

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 Sunday School, and/or the worship 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: Sunday School Cancelled or All Services Cancelled and will be announced by 6am on the Sunday in question.

Assist Folks with filing their taxes - United Way is seeking volunteers to help folks with filing their taxes. For more information, reach out to Sara Ceaser, Director of Volunteer and Community Engagement, United Way of Greater Nashua. 603-438-2173 or sceaser@unitedwaynashua.org. To register, go to: https://www.volunteergreaternashua.org/need/detail/?need_id=656996

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The First Church Thrift Shop is open on **Thursdays, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM.** They are now accepting donations of *SPRING & SUMMER CLOTHING:* Boys' and girls' clothing up to size 14, baby clothes, women's clothing (all sizes), costume jewelry, pocket books and accessories, small knickknacks. Leave donations - *clean and in good repair* - in the marked bin in the courtyard lobby. Contact the church office with any questions.

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Aspects of Christianity - In an effort to further feed the Spirit that is within each of us, First Church is making available small brochures that are based on one particular area of Christian concern, and consist of scripture and other helpful quotes on that topic. The brochures are displayed on the windowsill opposite the Welcome Center. Please feel free to take one of the brochures, and an information sheet about the project. Each brochure has a black and white drawing that you may color if you like.

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Prayer Shawl Ministry – Crafted by the loving hands and hearts of parishioners, this ministry strives to bring comfort and healing to those in need and to those celebrating. Upon completion of each shawl, a final blessing is said before being sent to the individual. Prayer shawls bless recipients by knowing they are wrapped in loving prayers of healing and celebration from their fellow parishioners. This vital ministry is looking for more knitters and crocheters. For more information, speak with Rev. Jami.

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The NH Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will present a program featuring Harold Stover, Composer & Organist on Saturday, March 19, 2022 at 2:00 PM, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 21 Centre St., Concord, NH. Free admission. All are invited to attend. More information: www.nhago.org or 603-424-4743.

This Week at First Church

SUN MAR 13	10:00am	Worship, Livestream, Radio Broadcast
	11:30am	Confirmation Class, Fireside Room
	12:00pm	Women's Wisdom & Spirituality, Zoom
	3:00pm	First Music Concert, sanctuary
MON MAR 14		April Newsletter Deadline
	9:30am	Bible, Friends & Coffee, Fellowship Hall
TUE MAR 15	10:00am	Staff Meeting
	4:00pm	First Church at NSKS
	6:00pm	First Folk, Sanctuary
	7:00pm	Lenten Study, dining room
WED MAR 16	8:00am	Men's Group, Fellowship Hall
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir
THU MAR 17	10:00am	Thrift Shop
	12:00pm	Chamber of Commerce, dining room
	7:00pm	Decibells, Balcom Room
SAT MAR 19	10:00am	Organ rehearsal, sanctuary
	10:00am	DAR, rooms 10,11
	11:00am	Sisters in Sobriety, Nauss Hall
	12:00pm	NCMS, Nauss Hall

FIRST MUSIC

FM

CONCERT SERIES 2021 – 22 SEASON

SEASON XIV
STAYING ALIVE!

BRINGING the JOY of MUSIC to the GATE CITY

DIVA, DIVA, DIVO!

BRIANNA ROBINSON & **MICHELLE TRAINOR** soprano
DAVID RIVERA BOZÓN tenor
LEONA CHEUNG piano

SUNDAY MAR 13

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
Interim Associate Minister, *Rev. Nancy Haynes*, nhaynes@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.