THE FIRST CHURCH

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

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 23, 2023 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 "Have patience with all things, but, first of all with yourself."
Saint Francis de Sales

PRELUDE Suite Gothique Léon Boëllmann
iii. Prière à Notre-Dame *(1653 – 1706)*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: If God is for us, who is against us?
People: He who gave us His son, now gives us the Spirit in power!
Leader: The Holy One is in our midst: equipping us for life in the service of Christ.
People: In Christ we are more than conquerors, for nothing in creation can separate us from the love of God!
Leader: May the all surpassing grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
People: And the unshakable love of God be with you.
Leader: The joyous communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.
People: And also with you!

***HYMN #351** *Nearer, My God, to Thee* BETHANY
(at the end of the order of worship)

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (Unison)

God, You know us better than we know ourselves. You know our thoughts, our weaknesses, our motivations, our sins. And You love us still. Forgive us when we don't believe such love is true or possible, when we wonder how You could love us just as we are, when we forget that we are fearfully, wonderfully made, in Your image! Remove from our minds every thought which keeps us from You. Break down the walls, push aside the pride, and help us to trust You once again. You know our hearts. And You love us still. Amen.

A time of silence for personal confession

PARDON

Leader: Friends, hear the good news! Christ proclaims peace to you who were far off.
People: Now we are made near by the power of His cross.
Leader: Friends, believe the good news!
People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

GREETINGS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSONS **Matthew 13:24-30,36-43**

He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’” Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SOLO *En Prière* Gabriel Fauré

SUSAN COBB, soprano *(1845 – 1924)*

Si la voix d’un enfant peut monter jusqu’à Vous,	If the voice of a child can reach you,
Ô mon Père,	O my Father,
Écoutez de Jésus, devant Vous à genoux,	Listen to the prayer of Jesus on His knees
La prière!	Before You.
Si Vous m’avez choisi pour enseigner vos lois	If You have chosen me to teach Your laws
Sur la terre,	On the earth,
Je saurai Vous servir, auguste Roi des rois,	I would know how to serve you, holy King of kings,
Ô Lumière!	O Light!
Sur mes lèvres, Seigneur, mettez la vérité	Place on my lips, o Lord,
Salutaire,	The salutary truth,
Pour que celui qui doute, avec humilité	So that whoever doubts, should with humility
Vous révère!	Revere You!
Ne m’abandonnez pas, donnez-moi la douceur	Do not abandon me, give me the gentleness
Nécessaire,	So necessary,
Pour apaiser les maux, soulager la douleur,	To relieve the suffering, to alleviate pains,
La misère!	The misery!
Révélez Vous à moi, Seigneur en qui je crois	Reveal Yourself to me, Lord, in whom I have faith
Et j’espère:	And hope,
Pour Vous je veux souffrir et mourir sur la croix,	I want to suffer for You and to die on the Cross,
Au calvaire!	At Calvary!

SERMON "The Patient Path" Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong

***HYMN #495** *We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder* JACOB'S LADDER
(at the end of the order of worship)

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

***CENTERING PRAYER** (Unison)

God of deliverance, like the people of old we follow in Your way. Remove the obstacles on our paths. Part waters. Set us free. Guide us when we are lost with cloud and fire. When we thirst for Your deeper presence, quench our thirst with gushing waters. When we hunger for Your Word, like manna from heaven feed us. Draw us together in this time of prayer and meet us at our deepest need. 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 *Panis angelicus* César Franck
(1822 – 1890)

Panis angelicus, fit panis hominum. Dat panis coelicus, figuris terminum. O res mirabilis, manducat Dominum Pauper et servus et humilis.	The bread of the angels becomes the bread of mortals The bread of heaven puts an end to prefigurations. O wondrous thing that the poor, poor humble servant may feed upon their Lord!
Te trina Deitas, unaque, poscimus, Sic nos tu visita sicut te colimus; Per tuas semitas duc nos quo tendimus, Ad lucem quam inhabitas. Amen.	We pray to you, Triune and One God, that you come to us, as we hold you holy; with your counsel guide us to what we pursue: to your light, your dwelling place. Amen.

***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)

Creator God, we humbly offer our gifts this morning as good seed for the growth our ministry in service to Christ. May these offerings become like seed and be sown in the best soil to create a harvest for those in need. Help us be faithful disciples who recognize that everything that has life is a gift from You. Inspire us to share all the more in response to Your unconditional love in Jesus' name. Amen.

***HYMN** *How Great Thou Art (Vs.1&4)* O STORE GUD

(at the end of the order of worship)

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *Zwei Stücke* Heinrich Scheidemann

(ca. 1595 – 1663)

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

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AV TEAM: Lee Hauenstein & Brenda Smith-Weiss
COVER ART: ChurchArt Online
GUEST DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: Brett Greene
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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. YOU MAY ALSO SUBMIT PRAYER CONCERNS ONLINE. FIND THE 'PRAYER REQUEST' BUTTON ON THE WORSHIP PAGE FOR ANY PRAYER CONCERNS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH REV. NANCY.

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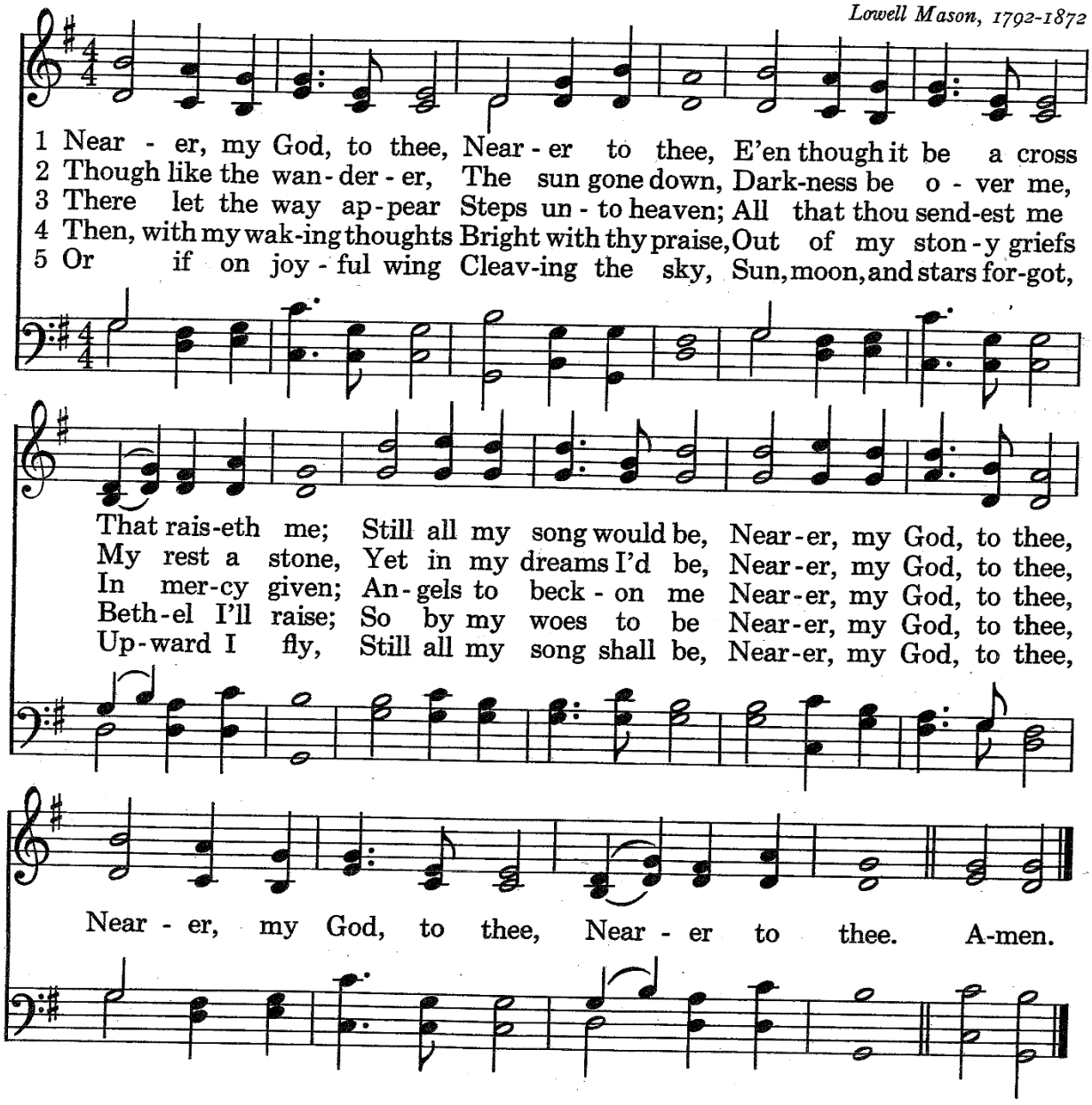
Have you remembered First Church in your will?

*HYMN #351 *Nearer, My God, to Thee*

Sarah F. Adams, 1805-1848

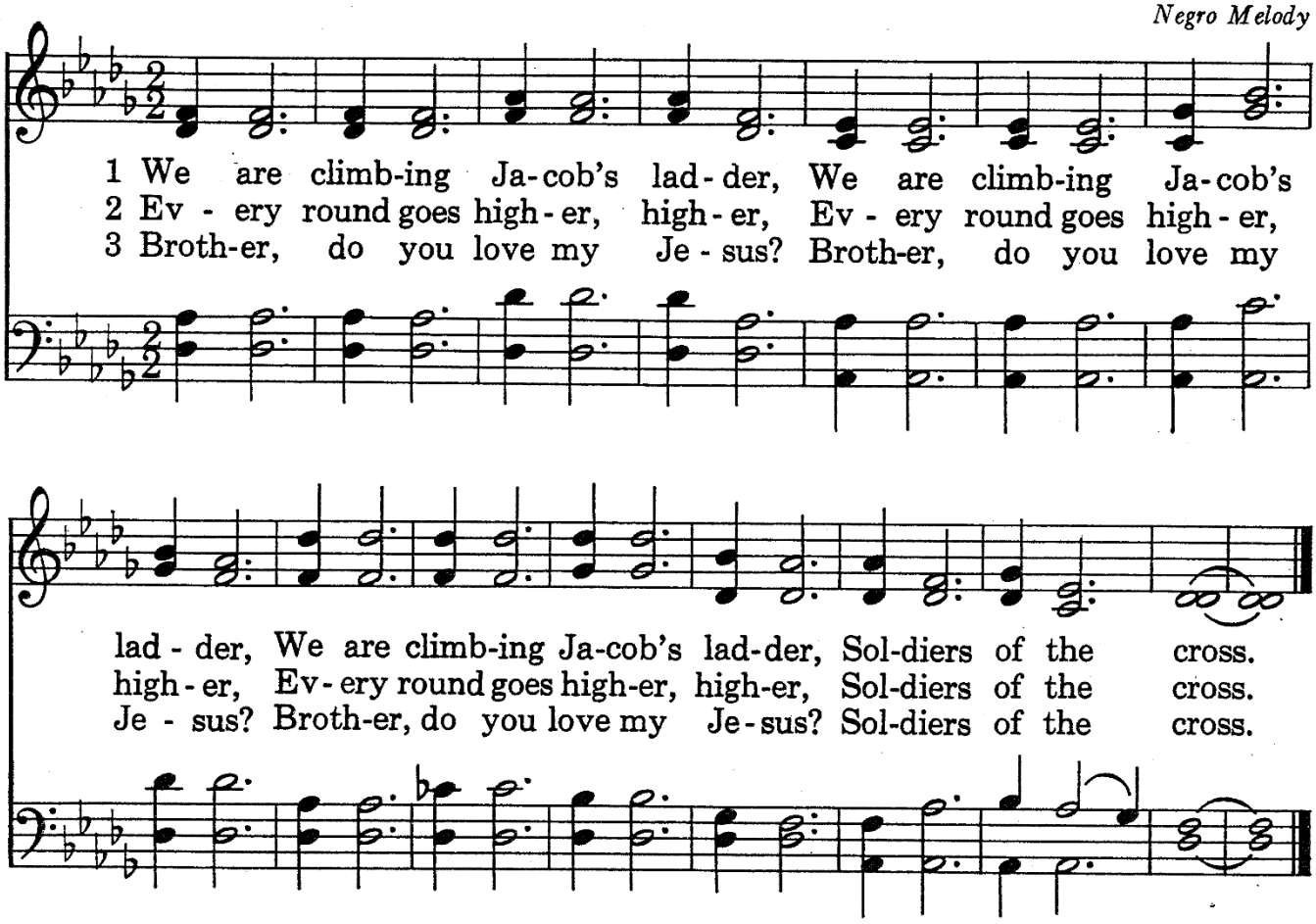
BETHANY 6.4.6.4.6.6.6.4.
Lowell Mason, 1792-1872



***HYMN #495** *We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder*

Negro Spiritual

JACOB'S LADDER 8.8.8.5.
Negro Melody



4 If you love him, why not serve him?
If you love him, why not serve him?
If you love him, why not serve him?
Soldiers of the cross.

How Great Thou Art

Stuart K. Hine

O STORE GUD
Stuart K. Hine

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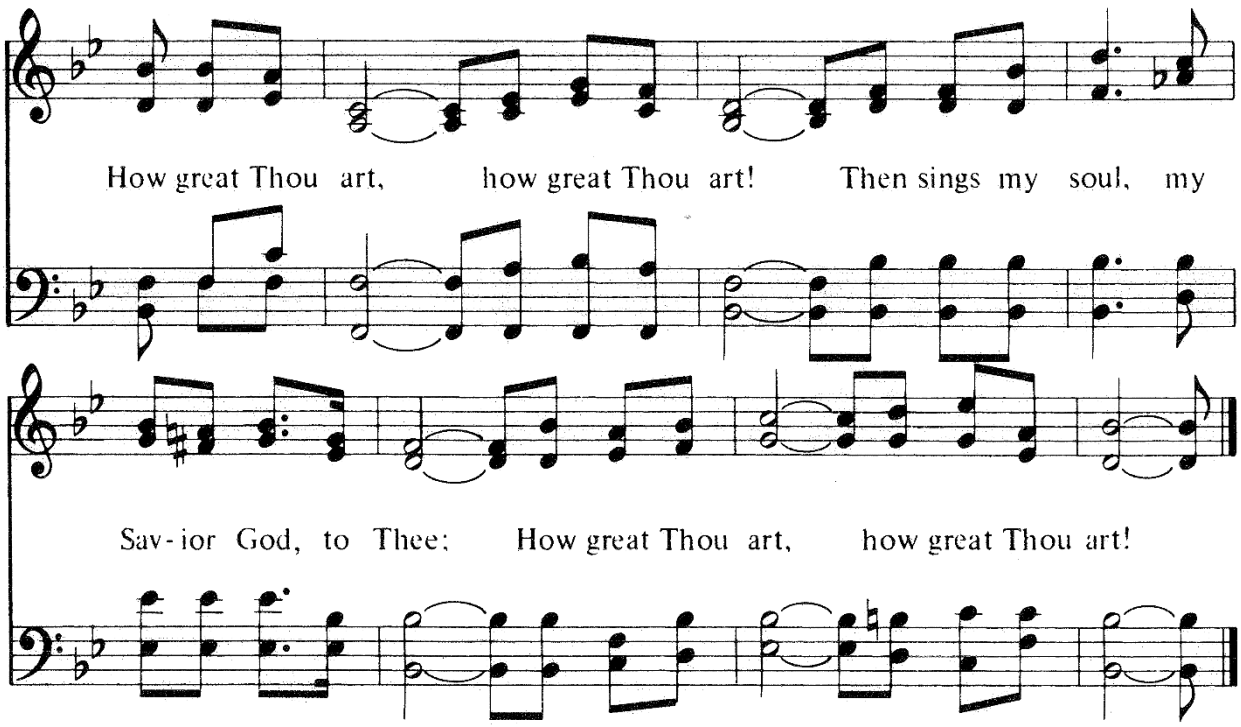

Summer Worship Schedule

June 18 – September 10, 2023

9:00am: Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream

11:00am: Radio Broadcast on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

Summer Office Hours

Monday-Friday: 9:00 AM-Noon and 12:30-3:30 PM

Sunday: Closed

Announcements - New/Current

Nursery Care is on break for the summer months.

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Summer Worship Busy Bags - During the summer months' children are welcomed to join their parents in worship. "Busy Bags" will be available to assist in keeping the children engaged. Pick up a bag at the welcome center or seek out an usher and they will assist you.

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Elevator Update – The elevator renovation is nearly completed. Thank you to all who have donated to our elevator appeal to date. Currently, we have raised in excess of $75,000 towards our goal of $103,000. Help us get to the top floor! Pledge cards are available on line, or at the welcome center. Thank you for your generous support.

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Help us fill 70 backpacks for The Soup Kitchen's Backpack Program. Stop by the Outreach Backpack/School Supply display near the Welcome Center to help fund this very important church/community project.

This program supports local children in grades K-12 with much needed school supplies! The Board of Christian Outreach is looking for financial donations of any amount to assist with the purchase of supplies. Our goal is to raise $2500.00, to fill 70 backpacks. **$40 will help to fill one backpack.** Please send a check by August 1st with "NSKS Backpacks"' in the memo line.

On Thursday, August 3, at 6:00 PM the Outreach Committee invites you to help them fill the backpacks. Contact Kathie McIntyre or the church office with any questions. Thanks so much for your support!

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"No Place Like Home" Charity Golf Tournament
August 7, 2023 - Nashua Country Club

Sponsored by The First Church, this is to support our mission to Family Promise, Front Door Agency, and Stepping Stones.

The deadline for golfer registration is July 28! Questions? Contact Margaret Brenner.

Scan the QR Code to register as an individual golfer or as a team.

Scan this code to view sponsorship information.

Lunch in Greeley Park - The Women's Association invites all women of the church to meet for lunch in Greeley Park on Fridays at noon. Meet near the bandstand (located on the right as you come from the church). Bring your lunch and a lawn chair. The group will not meet if there is inclement weather.

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Christmas Fair Craft Group will meet on Wednesday, August 16 at 4:00 PM in the dining room. New crafters are always welcome! Contact Sandy Gribbin with any questions.

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Giving Options - During the summer months and all year long we have several convenient options available to keep your giving up to date. You can mail in your offering, set up automatic donations through your bank, give during worship, or set up automatic donations online on our website tfcucc.org/give/. Scan the QR Code to view online giving, and set it up today!

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St. Joseph Mobile Health Clinic will be at First Church on August 3 and 17 from 9:00 AM-2:00 PM. The clinic offers non-urgent, walk-in nurse visits. The RV van parks in the lot near the thrift shop and the music school.

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THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

SUN JUL 23	9:00am	Worship & Livestream
	11:00am	Worship Service Radio Broadcast
MON JUL 24	7:00pm	Technology Committee (zoom)
TUE JUL 25	2:00pm	Visitation (parlor)
	2:00pm	Huntington Service
	4:00pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter
FRI JUL 28	4:00pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter
SAT JUL 29	11:00am	Sisters in Sobriety (dining room)

SUMMER MUSIC SCHEDULE 2023

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 at 9am.
The following individuals and seasonal ensembles will enhance our worship services…

June 18	Men's Choir *(TTBB)*
June 25	Steve Blunt, *baritone & guitar*
July 2	Joseph R. Olefirowicz, *baritone*
July 9	Craig Plummer, *tenor*
July 16	Vivian Halvorson, *clarinet*
July 23	Susan Cobb, *soprano*
July 30	Dale Neth, *solo handbells*
August 6	Debbie Nordyke, *mezzo soprano* Harry Nordyke, *tenor & guitar*
August 13	Don Fluckinger, *euphonium*
August 20	Brett Greene, *organ*
August 27	Richard Benefield, *organ*
September 3	Mark A. Cleveland, *bass-baritone*
September 10	Craig Plummer, *tenor*

FIRST MUSIC

FM

CONCERT SERIES 2023 – 24 SEASON

SEASON XVI
SWEET SIXTEEN!

BRINGING the JOY of MUSIC to the GATE CITY

KINGS RETURN

America's Premiere *A Cappella* Quartet

Sponsored by Edward and Suzanne Boyd

SUNDAY
NOV
19

SUNDAY
DEC
17

CHRISTMAS at FIRST

Chancel Choir of The First Church
Muddy Brook Brass
Poisson • Olefirowicz
Nicholas White MAGNIFICAT

3rd Advent Worship Services

ORGAN MASTERS V

Isabelle Demers, organ

SUNDAY
MAR
10

SUNDAY
APR
14

NEAVE TRIO

Grammy-Nominated Chamber Music

ATLANTIC BRASS QUINTET

Sasaki • Leopold • Orgel • Faieta • Manning

SUNDAY
MAY
05

UNDERWRITTEN by THE FRIENDS OF FIRST MUSIC

THE FIRST CHURCH
NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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
Acting Associate Minister, *Rev. Nancy Haynes*, nhaynes@tfcucc.org
Minister of Music, *Joseph R. Olefirowicz, CAGO,* jolefirowicz@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.

All use of the building must be scheduled by the Secretary.

THE FIRST CHURCH
NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

One Concord Street * Nashua, New Hampshire 03064 * 603-882-4861
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00am-noon and 12:30-3:30pm
Visit our web site at www.tfcucc.org