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 27, 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.

TOWER CHIME Dale Neth

MEDITATION "Cast all your anxiety on Christ, because he cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7)

PRELUDE Meditation on *Brother James' Air* Harold Darke *(1888-1976)*

CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Exodus 3:5)

Leader: Turn off your cell phones and bring your conversations to a close.
People: For where we stand is holy ground
Leader: Come love your neighbor and do good to all around you.
People: For where we stand is holy ground
Leader: Come and respect all life and God's creation
People: For where we stand is holy ground
Leader: Love God, yourself, family, friends and enemies alike
People: For we are all standing on holy ground.

***HYMN #192** *The Day Of Resurrection* LANCSHIRE

(at the end of the order of worship)

***OPENING PRAYER** (Unison) (based on Matthew 16: 21-28)

Loving God, You call us to turn away from our own selfish interests, to take up our cross, and to follow after You— to find our lives by giving them up to Your greater purpose. So we come before You this morning with open hearts and open hands, eager to hear Your Word, and eager to know Your will. Through the power of Your Holy Spirit, move within us and among us as we worship. Open our eyes to Your presence; open our ears to Your call, open our hearts to one another. And then send us back out into the world, to live and work as Your faithful disciples. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, Amen.

GREETINGS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON **Exodus 3:1-12**

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a

bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.' When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the LORD said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.' But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' He said, 'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.'

1 John 4: 7-12

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VOLUNTARY *Passacaglia semplice* Carson Cooman
Richard Benefield *(born 1982)*

SERMON "The Saving Faith of other People" Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong

***HYMN** *In the Garden* GARDEN
(at the end of the order of worship)

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

***AFFIRMATION OF PRAYER**

Leader: What is prayer?

People: Prayer means calling upon God whose Spirit is always present with us. In prayer we approach God with reverence, confidence and humility. Prayer involves both addressing God in praise, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication, and listening for God's word within our hearts. When we adore God, we are filled with wonder, love and praise before God's heavenly glory. When we confess our sins to God, we ask for forgiveness with sorry hearts. When we give thanks to God, we acknowledge God's great goodness in all that has been provided for us. Finally, when we call upon God to hear our requests, we affirm that God is always near to us in times of need and sorrow.

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 Meditation on *In the Garden* Dale Wood *(1934-2003)*

***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)

Lord God, in deep gratitude for this moment, we give ourselves to You. Take us out to live as changed people because, after our experience of You, we cannot remain the same. Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage many through us. Ground us in grace and make sacred the people and causes we serve by the Holy Spirit's leading. Amen.

***HYMN #13** *Praise the Lord Ye Heavens Adore Him* HYFRYDOL
(at the end of the order of worship)

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *Rigaudon* André Campra
(1660-1744)
arr. E. Power Biggs

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

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AV TEAM: Lee Hauenstein & Brenda Smith-Weiss
COVER ART: Moses at the Burning Bush by David Ascalon, used with permission
GUEST ORGANIST: Richard Benefield
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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?

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Summer Worship Schedule

June 18 – September 10, 2023

9:00 AM: Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream
11:00 AM: Radio Broadcast on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

Summer Worship Busy Bags are available at the welcome center for our children who are worshipping with their parents.

Summer Office Hours

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

Rally Sunday: September 17

10:00 AM: Worship, Livestream, Sunday School, Radio Broadcast
Post worship cookout!

***HYMN #192** *The Day Of Resurrection*

John of Damascus, c.696-c.754
Tr. John M. Neale, 1818-1866, alt.

LANCASHIRE 7.6.7.6.D.
Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879

***HYMN** *In the Garden*

C. Austin Miles — Genesis 3:8 GARDEN C. Austin Miles

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***HYMN #13** *Praise the Lord Ye Heavens Adore Him*

Based on Psalm 148
"Foundling Hospital Collection," 1796

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7.D.
Melody by Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887

Introducing Our New Prayer Ministry, **today** following the 9:00 AM service. Led by Rev. Andy, Lynda Pearson, and Jeanne Chaloner, this ministry aims to create a space of solace and spiritual connection following worship services. Join them in the warm and inviting environment of the family room for a time of heartfelt prayer, guided by our dedicated team.

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Rally Sunday: September 17

10:00 AM: Worship, Livestream, Sunday School, Radio Broadcast

Post Worship Cookout – the Christian Formation Board will supply burgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers. The Stewardship Committee will provide the ice cream truck. The congregation is asked to bring a side dish or salad to share.
The Christian Formation board is seeking volunteers to assist with the day. Could you help set up, break down or serve? Contact the church office for more information.

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The elevator renovation is COMPLETE!! 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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Winter Retreat 2024 - Many of us were saddened to learn that the Marie Joseph Spiritual Retreat Center has closed. We are so grateful to have enjoyed the Sisters' hospitality for nearly three decades. We mourn with them the loss of this sacred space, but trust that God has a new future in store for them. First Church will now look to the Craigville Conference Center on Cape Cod to host this year's retreat. This lovely facility overlooking the ocean and area marsh has a long history of hosting retreats in the Massachusetts Conference UCC. Feel free to explore what they have to offer https://www.uccr.org/craigville. The dates will be **January 26-28, 2024**. Information about deposits and the theme will be forthcoming.

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Note of Thanks from the Tower Chime Team - Those of us who have the great honor of chiming are so appreciative for ALL the donations, time, and effort that have been graciously given to restore the tower and chimes to their original splendor. The uplifting music from the First Church bell tower benefits all within hearing distance, and is a gift to the community, thanks to MANY who have contributed in various ways.

The First Church Thrift Shop is now accepting fall and winter clothing for women and children (infant to size 14). *Please, no summer clothing.* Leave items, clean and in good repair, in the marked bin near the stained glass window at the courtyard entrance. Contact the church office with any questions.

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Mission to La Romana 2024 - First Church is planning to send another mission team to partner with The Good Shepherd Hospital network to provide public health and spiritual support to Haitians living in the sugar cane fields throughout the DR. **The dates will be February 23 - March 3.** Rev. Andy will host a Question and Answer session about this opportunity on a Zoom call on **September 20th at 6:30 PM**. Please sign up at the Welcome Center or send an e-mail to Dianne Smigliani (dsmigliani@tfcucc.org) or Rev. Andy (aarmstrong@tfcucc.org) to receive a link. In the meantime, you can learn more at http://www.wamsucc.org/services-la-romana-main.html. There will be other ways to help. In addition to your prayers, we're gathering a variety of supplies to take with us. In the Messenger you'll see a list of items we'll be collecting in the coming months.

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Water Walk- The Thank You Project (TYP) annual Water Walk takes place on Saturday September 16, 2023. The TYP is trying to raise $35,000 for their next Water Well and are also hoping to provide $720 annually ($60/month) in maintenance costs **for each well** (there are at 6 wells so this is an additional $4,320 **needed every year**). You can register to walk on the website https://thankyouproject.org/ or join us on September 16 at Greeley Park. Online donations can be made using our Water Walk 2023 link: https://givebutter.com/water-walk-2023

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Holiday Fair Craft Group will meet on Wednesday, September 20th at 4:00 PM in the dining room. New crafters are always welcome! Contact Sandy Gribbin with any questions.

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Silent Auction: If you have handmade items, baskets, gift cards or other items that you would like to donate to the silent auction, contact Sandy.
The Fair will be held on November 3, 4-7pm, November 4, 9am-2pm, November 5, post worship

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Giving Options - 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!

Pastoral Counseling Services (PCS) will host its 27th Good Samaritan Awards celebration on Sept. 14, 2023 from 5-7 PM. This year's honorees: Amy Chhom, an Affordable Housing & Community Advocate; Tom & Chrissy Harte, Ambassadors for Make-A -Wish New Hampshire; the Rev. Jed Rardin, UCC Pastor and Justice Advocate; and, Lynn Stanley, the Executive Director of the New Hampshire and Vermont Chapters of the National Association of Social Workers.

For more information, see the bulletin board in the link or visit www.pcs-nh.org.

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"Coffee and Causes" - United Way of Greater Nashua invites seniors (and those who support them) to join them at the Nashua Senior Activity Center at 10:30 AM on Friday, September 8th for a conversation with representatives from the NH Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS) about the 2024 - 2027 New Hampshire State Plan on Aging. The State Plan on Aging is part of a statewide outreach effort to improve BEAS's understanding of the needs of people who are aging in New Hampshire. Some of the topics covered will be caregiver support, equity for seniors, and home-based community services. This is the first in a series of monthly talks for seniors. To register to attend contact United Way at info@unitedwaynashua.org or (603)882-4011.

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NAMI NH Family-to-Family - The next 9-session course will begin on Monday, September 25th. The sessions will be held virtually from 6:00-8:30 PM. Registration is required; space is limited. Contact Norma at nashuanaminh@gmail.com or Kathie at roy.kathie@comcast.net.

Family-to-Family is a *free*, designated evidence-based educational program for family, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions. The course includes presentations, discussions and interactive exercises and provides information about anxiety, depressive disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and other mental health conditions. Other topics covered include communication, problem solving, treatment, and recovery.

The course is designed to increase understanding and advocacy skills while helping participants maintain their own well-being. The program is taught by trained family members who have a loved one with a mental health condition. For information on the research base for the program, visit nami.org/research.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

SUN AUG 27	9:00am	Worship & Livestream
	10:00am	Healing Prayer (family room)
	11:00am	Worship Service Radio Broadcast
MON AUG 28	6:30pm	Bell Quartet, Balcom Room
	7:00pm	Tech Committee
TUE AUG 29	10:00am	Staff Meeting
	4:00pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter
SAT SEP 2	11:00am	Sisters in Sobriety

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Looking ahead…

Monday, September 4, Labor Day
Church Office is Closed
Rally Sunday, September 17
10:00 AM: Worship, Livestream, Sunday School, Radio Broadcast
Sunday, September 24
8:15 AM: Worship resumes in Shaw Chapel

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SUMMER MUSIC SCHEDULE 2023

While the music ministry ensembles are on summer break, the following individuals and seasonal ensembles bring their musical offerings to 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
Secretary, *Tasha Drew*, tdrew@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