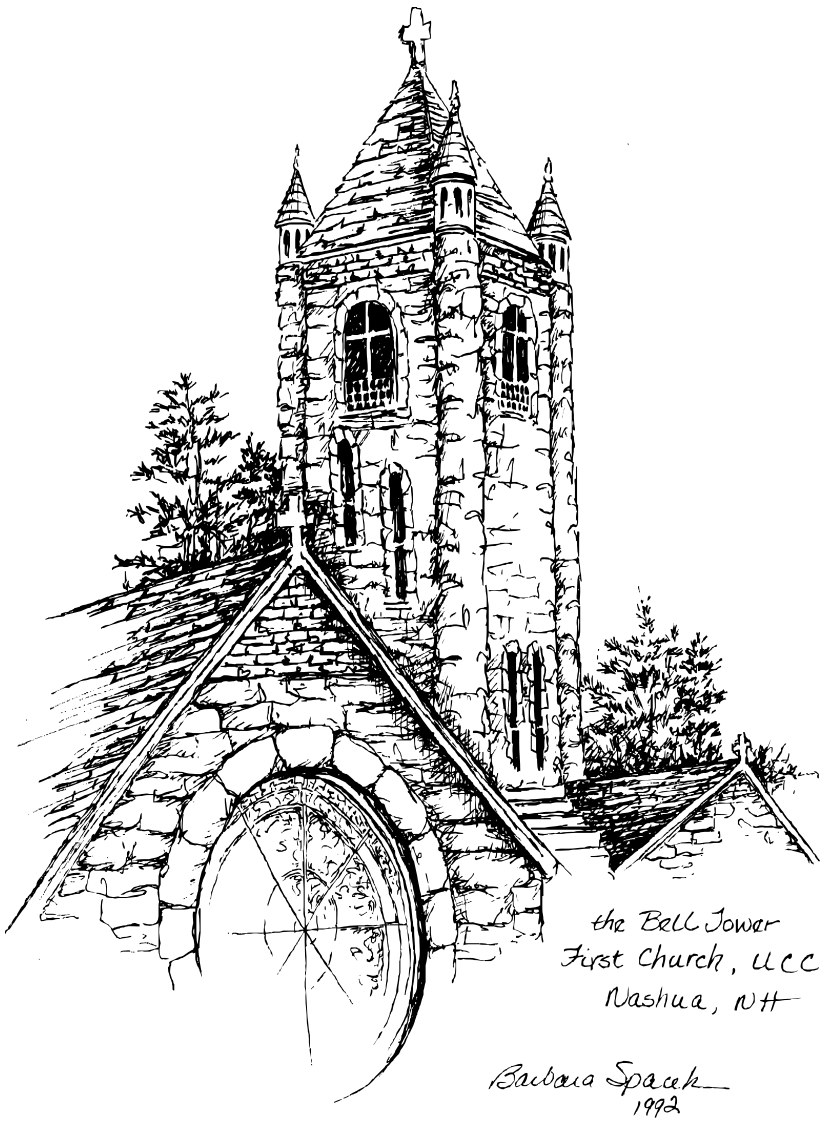


THE FIRST CHURCH

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

Communion Sunday
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 3, 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 "For everything there is a season, and a time for everything under heaven…"-Ecclesiastes 3:1

PRELUDE *Old Rugged Cross* Benton Price
The Old Rugged Cross *(1912 – 1988)*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: We gather to give thanks to You, O Lord, with all our heart!
People: We will sing Your praises before all creation, and rejoice in Your steadfast love!
Leader: You have created us O Lord, and made us for Yourself,
People: In You we become everything You have made us to be!

***HYMN** *The Old Rugged Cross* *(V. 1&4)* OLD RUGGED CROSS
(at the end of the order of worship)

***OPENING PRAYER**

Creating God, You are the source of summer's splendor—the beauty and fragrance of delicate flowers, and sweet sound of birds. All creation sings to Your glory. We come to You this morning joining our voices in harmony with this chorus of praise. We are grateful for all of Your wonders. As the fields produce their harvest, may Your love grow within us, that we too may produce a harvest of love, hope, and joy in Christ's service. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI #513**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end, A-men, A-men.

GREETINGS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Ecclesiastes 3:1-13**

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.
What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil.

Romans 5:6-11

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

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

SERMON "A Time for Everything" Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong

***HYMN** *How Can I Keep from Singing?* ENDLESS SONG
(at the end of the order of worship)

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Leader: Let us ask the Lord to forgive us that we have not always lived according to the spirit of the commandments.

People: Almighty God; we enter Your presence confessing the things we try to conceal from You and the things we try to conceal from others. We confess the heartbreak, worry, and sorrow we have caused, that make it difficult for others to forgive us, the times we have made it easy for others to do wrong, the harm we have done that makes it hard for us to forgive ourselves. Have mercy and forgive us, O God, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A time of silence for personal confession

KYRIE #545 *Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us* J. Merbecke

CONGREGATION JOINS IN SINGING *(1510 – 1585)*

Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ have mercy upon us;
Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: God of mercy, You know us better than we know ourselves. In Christ, You have declared forgiveness to those who put their trust in You.

People: We hear Your word and believe.

Leader: Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit that we might be doers of Your word and not only listeners.

People: Thanks be to God! Amen.

OFFERTORY *Deep River* Traditional

MARK A. CLEVELAND, bass-baritone *arr. Beck*

***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)

God of all blessings, source of all life, giver of all grace: We thank You for the gift of life and precious time: for the breath that sustains life, for the food of this earth that nurtures life, for the love of family and friends without which there would be no life. These gifts return to You that You may provide all the more through us and Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Communion

It is a tradition at First Church that we eat the bread and drink the cup together as the people of God renewing our covenant. We serve grape juice, bread and gluten free bread.

Invitation, Sursum Corda and Communion Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up to God.
Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.
Leader: Let us pray.

SANCTUS #550 S. Wesley
(1766 – 1837)

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory:
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. A-men.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE

COMMUNION *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* Charles A. E. Harriss

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

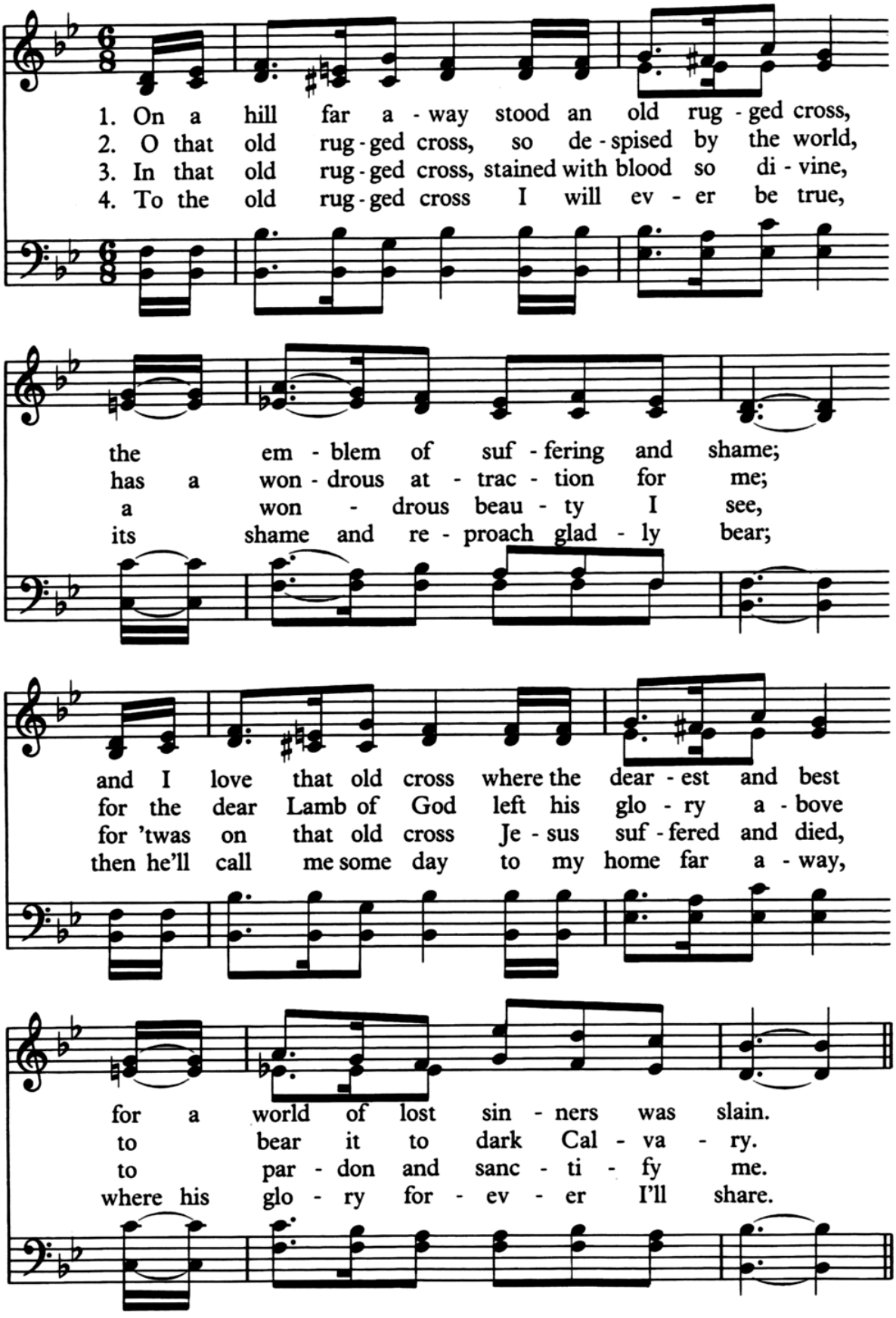
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done,
On earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day, our daily bread
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

***HYMN #489** *I Would Be True* PEEK
(at the end of the order of worship)

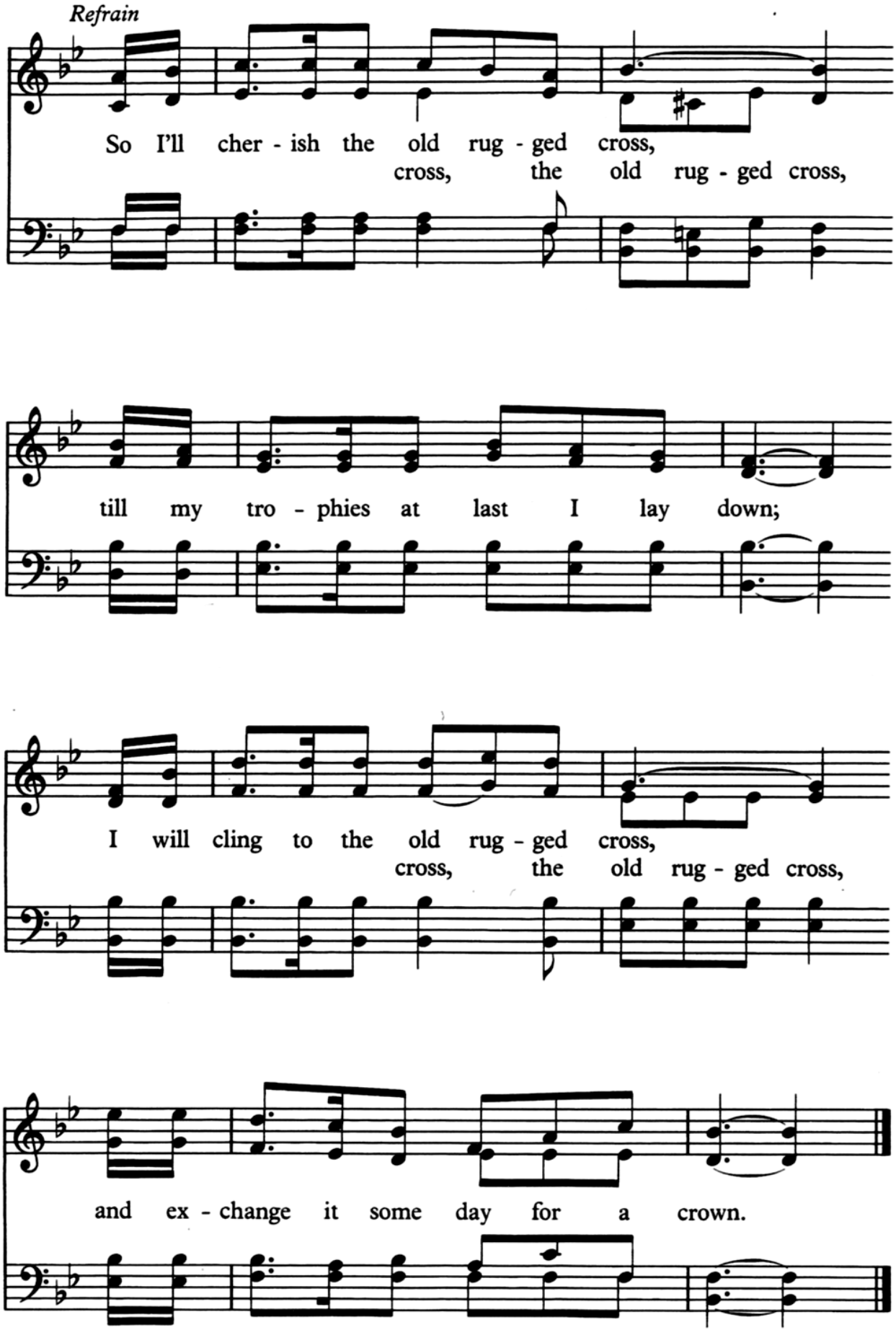
***BENEDICTION**

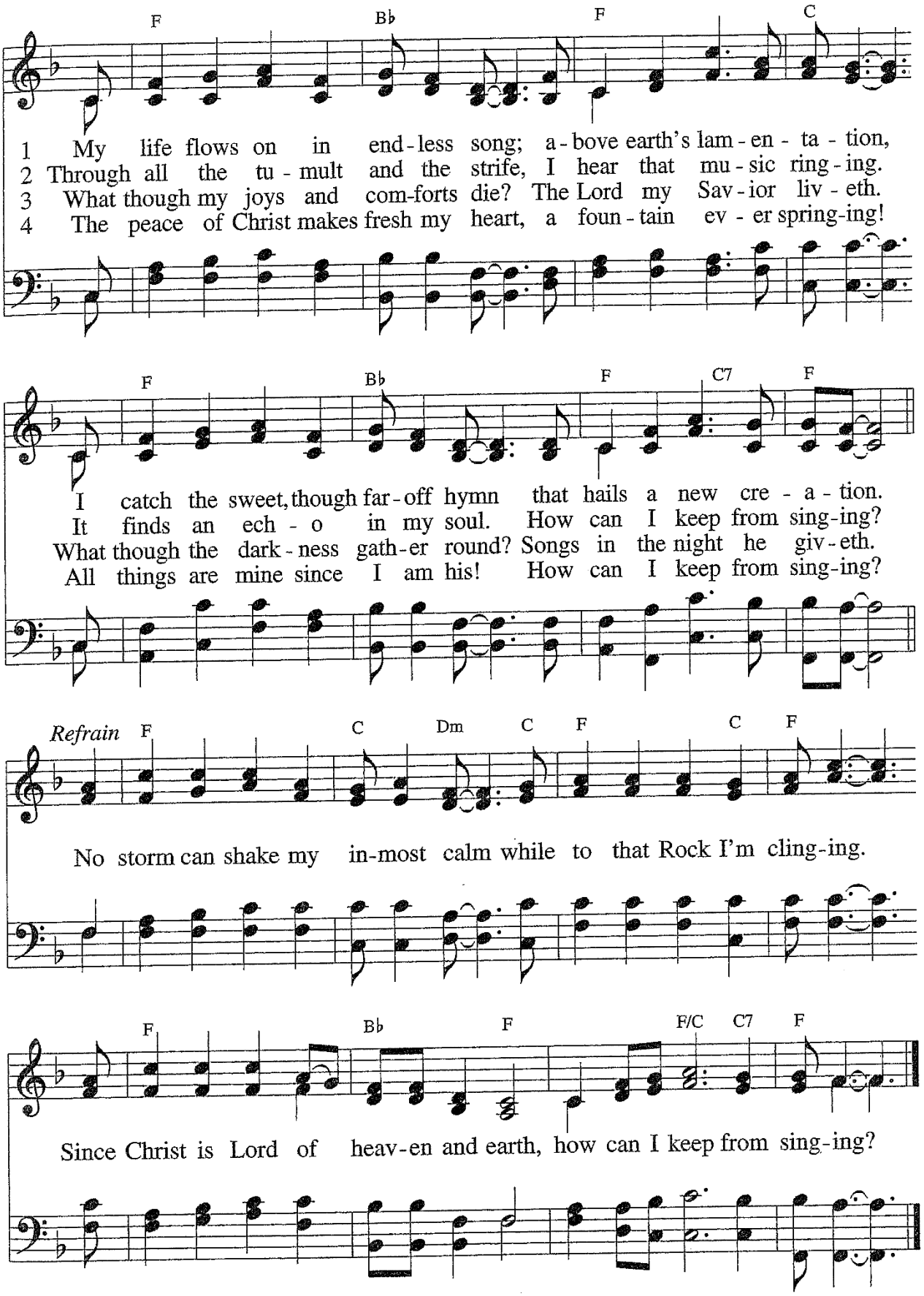
POSTLUDE *Fugue in F Minor* Charles Burney
(1726 – 1814)

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

***HYMN** *The Old Rugged Cross*

WORDS: George Bennard, 1913 (1 Cor. 1:22-25)
MUSIC: George Bennard, 1913

THE OLD RUGGED CROSS
Irr. with Refrain

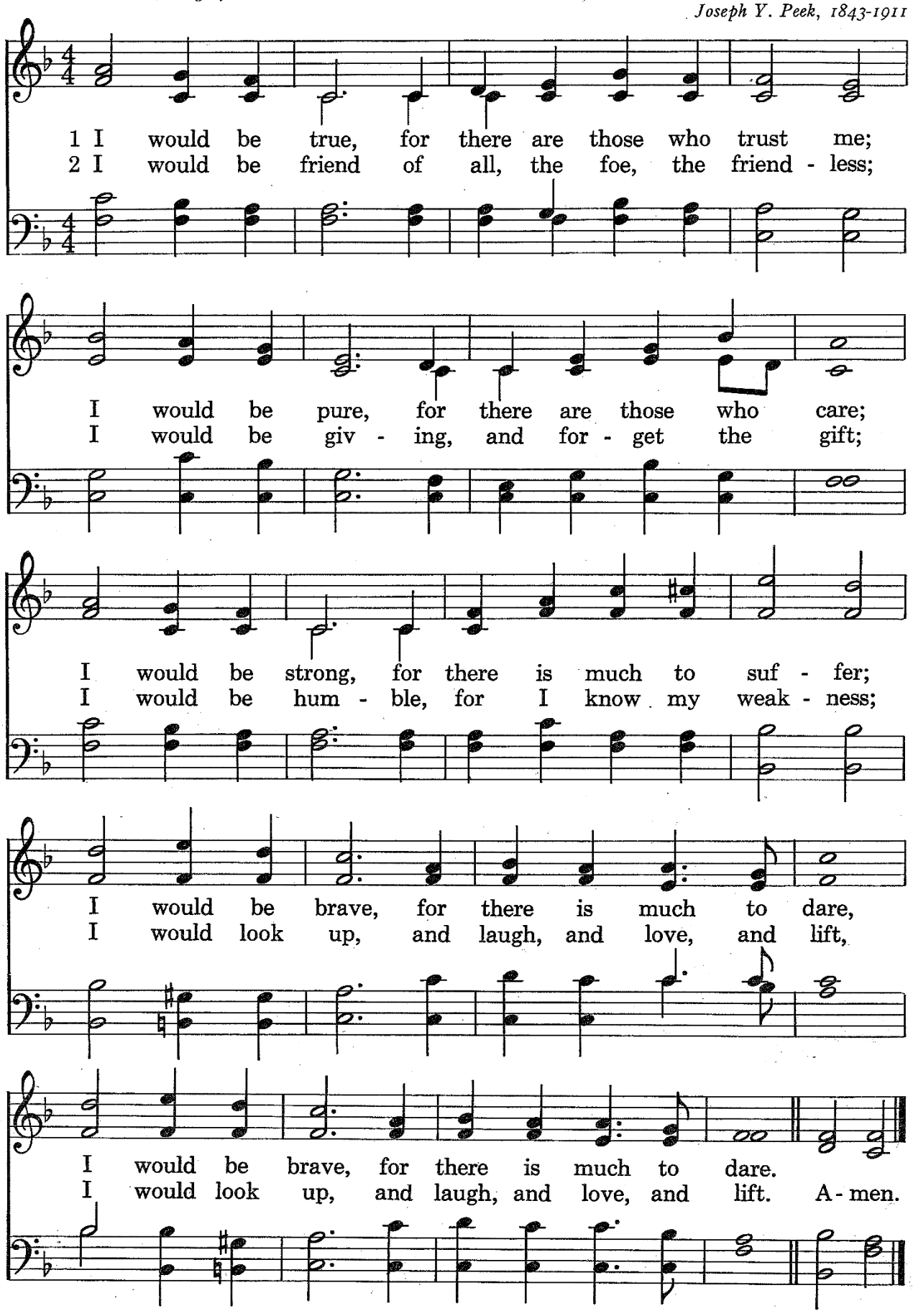

Refrain
So I'll cher - ish the old rug - ged cross,
cross, the old rug - ged cross,
till my tro - phies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rug - ged cross,
cross, the old rug - ged cross,
and ex - change it some day for a crown.

***HYMN** *How Can I Keep from Singing?*

WORDS and MUSIC: Robert Lowry (1826-1899), alt.

ENDLESS SONG
8.7.8.7.Ref.

*HYMN #489 *I Would Be True*

Howard A. Walter, 1883-1918

PEEK 11.10.11.10.10.
Joseph Y. Peek, 1843-1911

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AV TEAM CAMERA CREW: Craig Neth & Lee Hauenstein
COVER ART: Drawing by Barbara Spacek
GUEST DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: Brett Greene
LICENSING: CCLI (print) 3034682; CCLI (streaming) 20119862; CCS 12820; OneLicense A-736284
SCRIPTURE: NRSV reprinted by permission of the National Council of the Churches of Christ

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The flowers in the pulpit are given in honor of their 55th wedding anniversary, by Lloyd and Carol Butler.

****

HEARING AIDS 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.

****

Have you remembered First Church in you will?

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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 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

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.

Announcements - New/Current

Did you Know? The inner ring of the communion tray contains Gluten Free cups (indicated by a blue "Gluten Free" label). They are provided for our members who adhere to a gluten free diet to allow them to share in the Sacrament. PLEASE DO NOT take one if your diet is not restricted. Thank you!

++++

All-Choirs Potluck! The Music Committee will host a gathering on **Tuesday, September 5 at 6:30pm** for an All-Choirs Potluck in the dining room. This is open to all returning and new choir members and their families. Please bring a dish to share; beverages will be provided by the Music Committee.
Come and join together in an evening meal with your choir colleagues and friends of the Music Ministry! We look forward to welcoming you!

++++

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.

++++

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.

++++

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 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 16th at Greeley Park. Online donations can be made using our Water Walk 2023 link: https://givebutter.com/water-walk-2023

Help the folks in Maui - The Hawaii Conference and Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ have both issued appeals to support those impacted by wildfires across Hawaii, including the Maui fire which took more than 100 lives and is being called one of the deadliest US wildfires in the past 100 years. For more information, go to https://www.sneucc.org/newsdetail/how-to-help-in-hawaii-17539151.

++++

Friends of First Music is excited about our upcoming *SWEET SIXTEEN* 2023-2024 concert series (see poster)!! First Music has been so successful due to volunteers and donors who have built it up over the years. Our artist line-up is the most ambitious yet and part of our music outreach is to continue to offer **free admission** for all of our concert programs. Donations to First Music allow us to bring in first-class concert talent, subsidize print and advertising costs, and help First Music secure planning for future seasons. For more information, letters can be found in the Welcome Center, or seek out a member of our Music Committee (black name tags). We thank you for your continued support.

++++

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.

++++

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.

Are you interested in becoming a member of First Church? Join us on **Sunday, October 1 at 11:30 AM** for an orientation. The joining date is Sunday, October 15. For more information, and to reserve a spot, please call the church office.

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Bible, Friends and Coffee will resume on Monday, **September 18 at 9:30 AM** in the Ladies' Parlor. Led by Rev. Andy, the study will review the lectionary text for the upcoming Sunday. If you have a Bible, please bring it; if not, one will be supplied for you. No sign-up is required.

++++

The Wednesday Morning Men's Group will resume on **September 20 at 8:00 AM** in the Ladies' Parlor. Join Rev. Andy for a weekly one-hour devotion and discussion. This Fall we'll study the Book of Revelation, which is full of symbolism and imagery that makes it difficult to understand. Still, it is also a book that can be deeply encouraging for our faith and gives us confidence in God's future. As always, knowledge of the Bible and Christian faith is not a prerequisite to attend our studies because we believe that the relationships we build in Christ are as important as what we learn. You may email Rev. Andy with any questions.

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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 Gribbin.

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

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St. Joseph's Mobile Health Clinic is at First Church on the first Thursday of the month, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM (new schedule). Services include: women's health, wellness checkups, vaccine clinics (including Flu and Shingles), smoking cessation, blood pressure screenings & nutrition education.

"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. 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.

++++

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 for more information.

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.

For information on the research base for the program, visit nami.org/research.

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This Week at First Church

SUN SEP 03	9:00am	Worship & Livestream
	11:00am	Worship Service Radio Broadcast
MON SEP 04		Office Closed (Labor Day Observance)
TUE SEP 05	4:00pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter
	6:30pm	Choir Meet & Greet (dining room)
WED SEP 06	11:45am	BNI (dining room)
	4:00pm	Craft Group (dining room)
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir
THU SEP 07	10:00am	St. Joseph Mobile Health Clinic
FRI SEP 08	3:00pm	Hunt Communion
SAT SEP 09	9:00am	Quilt Guild (Nauss Hall)
	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
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 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 Chapel 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. New members are received during worship in November, February and May. 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 & 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.