# 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

Second Sunday in Lent

February 25, 2024 10:00 AM

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*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** Jim Stone

**MEDITATION** "So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, 'till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown."

-The Old Rugged Cross

**PRELUDE** *Partita sopra - Jesu, meine Freude* J. G. Walther *(1684 – 1748)*

1. Tranquillo
2. Andante
3. Un poco mosso (sempre leggiero)
4. Allegro
5. Tranquillo
6. Dolente
7. Moderato
8. Affetuoso (ma non allegro)
9. Allegro, ma non troppo

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Welcome this day to the second step on our Lenten Journey.

**People: We come with great hope and expectation as we walk the way of Christ.**

Leader: Do not be afraid to answer the call to discipleship.

**People: What does the call require?**

Leader: Letting go of our life as we know it. Following the way of the cross.

**People: We step out in the way of Jesus by losing our life to save it.**

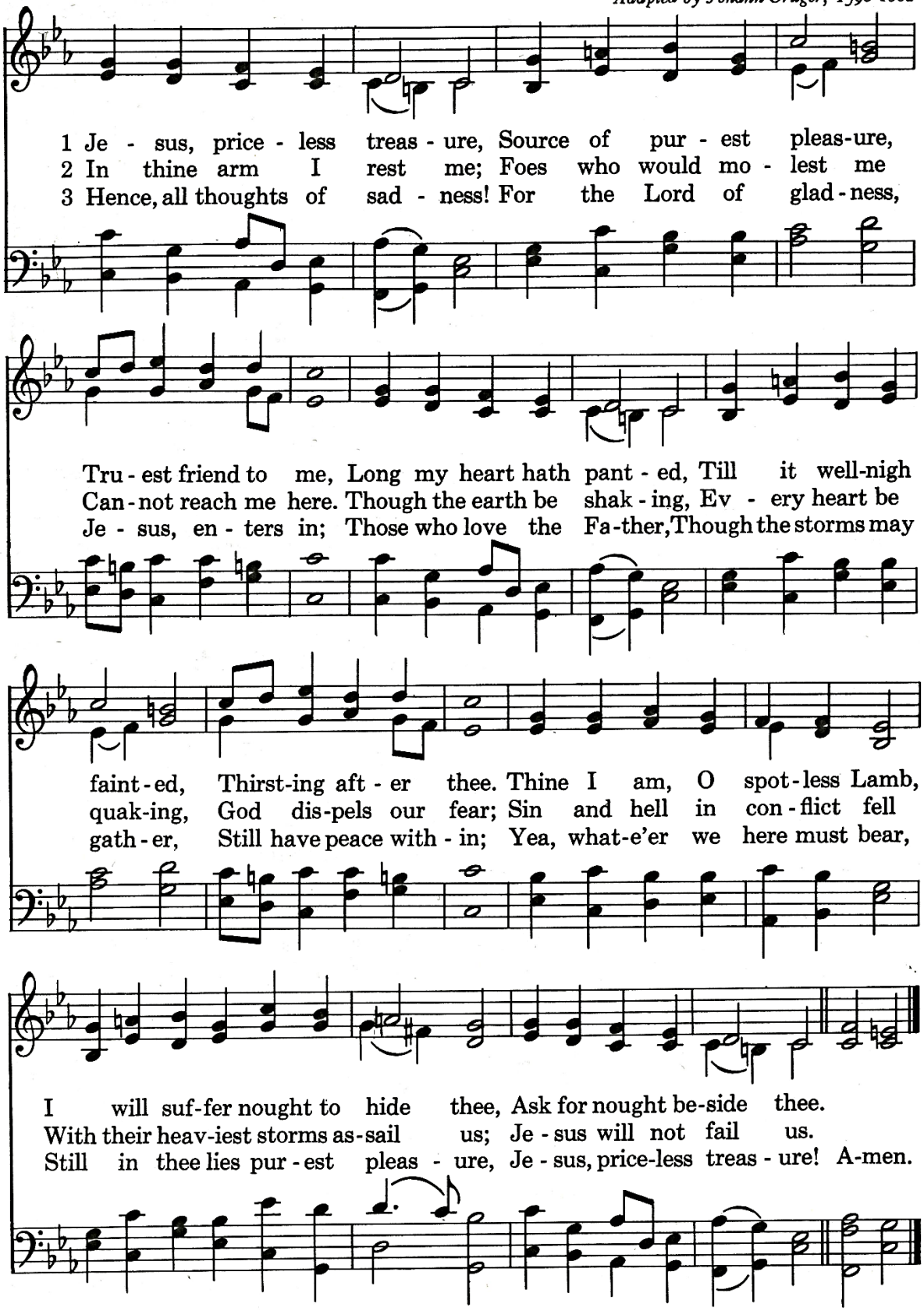
Leader: Do not be afraid to walk in the way of Jesus.

**People: We answer the call, unashamed and unafraid. Amen.**

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

*Johann Franck, 1618-1677*
*Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878*

JESU, MEINE FREUDE 6.6.5.6.6.5.7.8.6.
*Traditional German Melody*
*Adapted by Johann Crüger, 1598-1662*

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***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (Unison)

**Holy God, like Peter, sometimes we think we know better than You do. We make our own attempts to save ourselves and others from the cross filled path You have called us to walk. Help us to get behind You, because it has become easier to rely upon ourselves, rather than on Your strength and presence. Grant us grace and help us to let go of our need for control so that You and Your way might be our guide and path forward. Amen.**

*A time of silence for personal confession*

**DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Dear ones, may the God of compassion, Jesus the wounded healer, and the Holy Spirit who shapes and transforms us anew, grant you peace and hope for your soul. For we know that the One who calls us to follow in the way of Jesus is merciful and offers the consolation of love in a world of empty promises.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GREETINGS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

## PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

**SCRIPTURE READINGS** **Psalm 22: 23-31**

You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; he did not hide his face from me, but heard when I cried to him.
From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD. May your hearts live forever!
All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.
For dominion belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations.
To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.

Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord,
and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

**Mark 8: 29-38**

He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.
Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."
He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

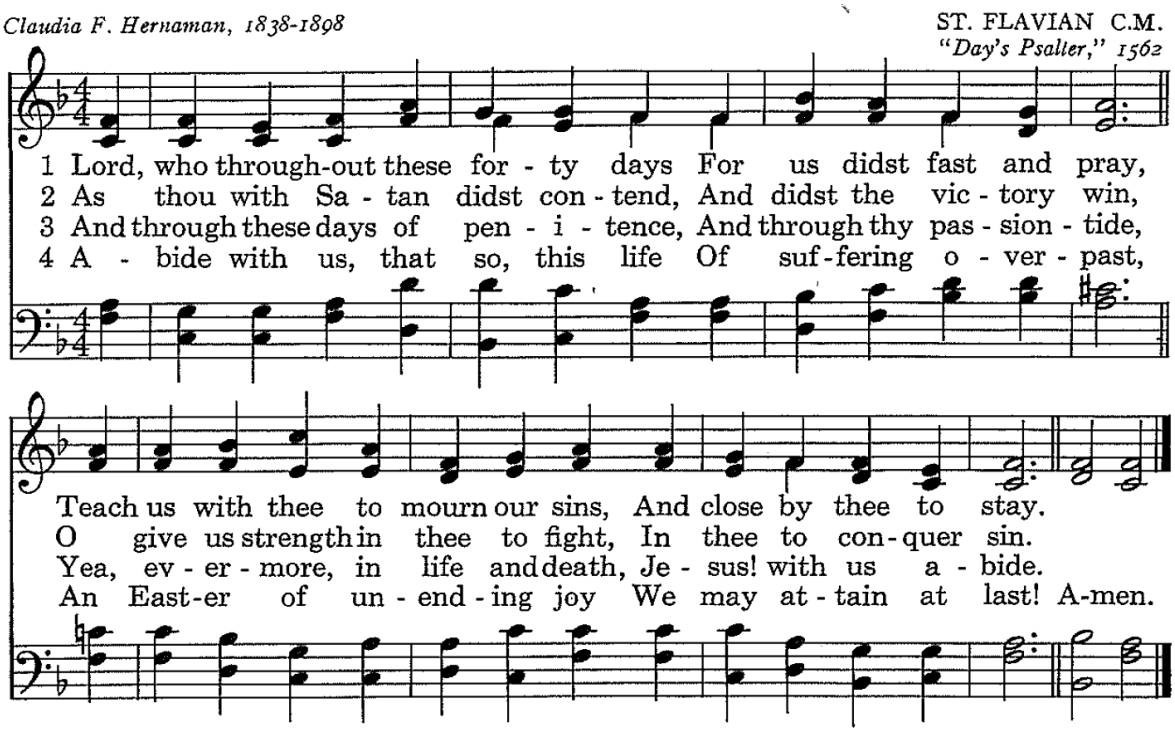
Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRATIA TIBI** *Thanks Be to Thee* T. Tallis
**STAFF SINGERS QUARTET** *(1505 – 1585)*

**ANTHEM** *Drop, Drop Slow Tears* J. Willcocks
*(*1953)*

**SERMON** "Struggles of a Faithful Disciple" Rev. Nancy Haynes

***HYMN 153** *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days* ST. FLAVIAN

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## RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

**CENTERING PRAYER**: (Unison)

**O God, we are offered every opportunity to embrace the path that helps us gain the world at the expense of our soul. Instead, You have called us to Yourself and to follow in the way of love and compassion. Teach us about Jesus' way and lure us away from the paths of self-absorption and greed. You have called us to discipleship, to self-emptying, and embracing Your way with courage.**
**May it be so. 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.**

**PRAYER RESPONSE** *Let the Words of Our Mouths* R. Langdon
*(1729 - 1803)*

**OFFERTORY** *Wonderful, Merciful Savior* E. Wyse
**FIRST FOLK** *(*1971)*
*arr. Schrader*

***LENTEN DOXOLOGY** OLD HUNDRETH LM

**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)

**Giving God, Jesus invited us to give our lives away, take up our cross, and to follow. May our offerings and the sharing of these gifts, nurture our commitment to walk in Your way. In the name and way of Jesus, we pray. Amen.**

***HYMN 160** *Beneath the Cross of Jesus* ST. CHRISTOPHER
(see next page)

***BENEDICTION**

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

# *Beneath the Cross of Jesus*

*Elizabeth C. Clephane, 1830-1869*

ST. CHRISTOPHER 7.6.8.6.8.6.8.6.
*Frederick C. Maker, 1844-1927*

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## OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

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**AV TEAM:** Lee Hauenstein and Bill Thompson

**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.

**COVER ART:** https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/actimagelink.pl?RC=31748 [retrieved February 16, 2024]. Original source: Prof. Patout J. Burns.

**STAFF SINGERS:** Janet Poisson, soprano; Brianne Biastoff, alto; Zoe Harper, tenor; Joshua L. Gore, bass

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

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*The flowers in the pulpit this morning, are given by Arlene Richmond, in loving memory of Tom.*

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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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### *Worship Schedule*

8:15 AM Worship (Shaw Chapel)
10:00 AM Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream
Sunday School & Nursery Care
Radio Broadcast on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

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# NOTES FROM THE CHANCEL

On this Sunday, the **Second Sunday of Lent**, the traditional German chorale JESU, MEINE FREUDE (Prelude and opening hymn) sets the solemn tone for our continued worship during the Lenten season. One may notice that the 9 brief movements of the **Prelude** are arranged in a specific, dramatic order by composer **Johann Gottfried Walther**, who wrote this work in **1713**. Penned over three hundred years ago, **church music's symbolism** might sometimes reflect the "mystical" which was believed to be found in the numbers 3 and 7. Multiples of "3" symbolizing the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Ghost: as we sing each week

in the Doxology) and multiples of 7 (which were often used in measuring elements for the construction of the great cathedrals of Europe) were often found also within the music of the church. The Prelude's "three times three" structure is meant to emulate the perfection of the Triune God. **Johann Frank** *(1618-1677)* penned the original text (notice, six verses, again a multiple of "3") that is still used in German-speaking hymnals to this day. The text is enclosed here, with a translation to use as a reflection during the Prelude, and in preparation for singing **Catherine Winkworth's** *(1827-1878)* English adaptation in the opening hymn:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Jesu, meine Freude* | Jesus, my joy |
| *Meines Herzens Weide,* | pasture of my heart |
| *Jesu, meine Zier,* | Jesus, my adornment |
| *Ach, wie lang, ach lange* | ah how long, how long |
| *Ist dem Herzen bange* | is my heart filled with anxiety |
| *Und verlangt nach dir!* | And longing for you! |
| *Gottes Lamm, mein Braütigam* | Lamb of God, my Bridegroom |
| *Ausser dir soll mir auf Erden* | apart from you on the earth |
| *Nichts sonst liebers werden* | there is nothing dearer to me. |
| | |
| *Unter deinem Schirmen* | Under Your protection |
| *Bin ich vor den Stürmen* | Am I protected from the storms |
| *Aller Feinde frei.* | Of all my enemies |
| *Laß den Satan wittern,* | Let Satan detect me |
| *Laß den Feind erbittern,* | Let the enemy become bitter |
| *Mir steht Jesu bei.* | Jesus stays by me |
| *Ob es itzt gleich kracht und blitzt,* | Even if it now thunders and flashes |
| *Ob gleich Sünd und Hölle schrecken:* | Even if sin and hell now frighten |
| *Jesus will mich decken* | Jesus will protect me |
| | |
| *Trotz dem alten Drachen,* | Spite the old dragon, |
| *Trotz des Todes Rachen,* | Spite the jaws of death, |
| *Trotz der Furcht darzu!* | Spite all fear as well |
| *Tobe, Welt, und springe,* | Rage, world and spring up |
| *Ich steh hier und singe* | I will stand here and sing |
| *In gar sichrer Ruh.* | In even secure peace |
| *Gottes Macht hält mich in acht;* | God's power cares for me |
| *Erd und Abgrund muss verstummen,* | Earth and the abyss must fall silent |
| *Ob sie noch so brummen.* | Regardless how much they rumble |
| | |
| *Weg mit allen Schätzen!* | Away with all treasures! |
| *Du bist mein Ergötzen,* | You are my delight! |
| *Jesu, meine Lust!* | Jesus, my passion! |
| *Weg ihr eitlen Ehren,* | Away with their empty honors |
| *Ich mag euch nicht hören,* | I don't wish to listen to (them) |
| *Bleibt mir unbewusst!* | Remain unknown to me! |
| *Elend, Not, Kreuz, Schmach und Tod* | Misery, distress, cross, disgrace and death |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Soll mich, ob ich viel muss leiden,* | Should (if I must suffer greatly) |
| *Nicht von Jesu scheiden.* | Not separate (me) from Christ |
| | |
| *Gute Nacht, o Wesen,* | Good night, o beings |
| *Das die Welt erlesen,* | that are chosen the world, |
| *Mir gefällst du nicht.* | you do not please me |
| *Gute Nacht, ihr Sünden,* | Good night, you sins, |
| *Bleibet weit dahinten,* | stay far behind me! |
| *Kommt nicht mehr ans Licht!* | Do not come into the light! |
| *Gute Nacht, du Stolz und Pracht!* | Good night, you pride and splendor! |
| *Dir sei ganz, du Lasterleben,* | Once and for all, sinful existence, |
| *Gute Nacht gegeben.* | Is bid good night |
| | |
| *Weicht, ihr Trauergeister,* | Flee, ye mournful spirits, |
| *Denn mein Freudenmeister,* | for my joyful Master |
| *Jesus, tritt herein.* | Jesus, comes now in. |
| *Denen, die Gott lieben,* | Those who love God, |
| *Muß auch ihr Betrüben* | Must (allow) their affliction (to) |
| *Lauter Zucker sein.* | Become pure sweetness. (sugar) |
| *Duld ich schon hier Spott und Hohn,* | Even if I endure shame and disgrace, |
| *Dennoch bleibst du auch im Leide,* | Still you stay with me in my suffering |
| *Jesu, meine Freude.* | Jesus, my joy |

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# Christian Formation Corner

February 25, 2024 - Today is the second Sunday in Lent and the liturgical color is Purple.

**Nursery News -** The nursery school is open and staffed. Parents can check in at the welcome center and then proceed to the nursery. The Welcome Center staff can also assist in providing directions.

**Busy Bags -** remain available at the welcome center for when children choose to remain in worship.

**Heifer International:** The First Church youth are undertaking a Lenten project to support the Heifer Project. Along with Outreach they're inviting our entire First Church Family to participate. During Lent consider giving up a restaurant meal or two or your daily stop at Dunkin or Starbucks and keeping the savings for your Heifer donation. You'll be hearing more about this project throughout Lent. Please accept this invitation to support this very worthy charity.

**Save the date for Pretzels – March 10, 2024**

## *Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current*

**The Thrift Shop** is no longer accepting winter clothing. Think Spring!! We are accepting women and children's spring clothing. Especially needed items are ¾ sleeve tops, short sleeve tops, spring jackets, pocketbooks and shoes. SPRING ITEMS ONLY – thank you.

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**Online Directory-** If your information is not in the online directory, or if you would like more information about how to get started please contact the office (Tasha Drew) at tdrew@tfcucc.org.

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**Contemplative Supper (Soup and bread)** - Join Rev. Andy on Thursday, February 29th at 7 pm. During the meal you will listen to a selection of readings on Decision Making from the life and teachings of St. Ignatius. More information and sign-up located at the Welcome Center.

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**First Church Scholarship-** The 2024 First Church Scholarship application has been emailed directly to our High School Seniors and their parents . If you did not receive an email, please reach out. The 2024 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, 2024**. Late scholarship applications will not be accepted. First Church Scholarships are awarded on Children's Day in June.

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**The Connection Café with Monica Gallant-** What we learn and experience in church is as important as the relationships we build together in faith. Monica Gallant will share with us her insights and expertise in The Connection Café. This is an opportunity for us to grow in our capacity for self-reflection, practice positive communication skills, and build a foundation for healing and increased well-being. The Connection Café will be held between services (9 AM) **on March 3rd and 17th in Nauss Hall at 9 AM**. We look forward to seeing you there!

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**March Community Outreach Focus-** The Children's Resiliency Retreat (CRR) is a program of the Boys & Girls Club of Souhegan Valley (Milford, NH) that provides mentoring support to youth who have been impacted by a loved one's substance use

disorder, also known as the disease of addiction. The CRR is held on the second Saturday of each month and is a safe place where youth learn healthy coping strategies when confronted with adverse experiences, opportunities to build resiliency and develop healthy relationship skills. The CRR includes fun, experiential learning opportunities through adventure-based activities, connecting with nature, and engaging in creative art therapies. Research indicates that one trusted adult can change the life of a child and the CRR program provides that opportunity by connecting youth with trusted, caring adults. There are many opportunities to support this program by sharing a special skill or sharing the gift of time by joining the mentoring team during the monthly retreats. For more information about this unique program, please contact Monica Gallant at **mgallant@svbgc.org** or visit **https://svbgc.org/childrens-resiliency-retreat/.**

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**Choirs in Worship Next Week**

*Sunday, March 4, 2024*

8:15 Staff Singers

10:00 Chancel Choir

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| SUN FEB 25 | 8:15am | Worship (Chapel) |
| | 9:00am | First Folk |
| | 10:00am | Worship, Livestream |
| | | Radio Broadcast, Sunday School |
| MON FEB 26 | 9:30am | Bible, Friends & Coffee |
| TUE FEB 27 | 2:00pm | Huntington Service |
| | 4:00pm | Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter |
| WED FEB 28 | 8:00am | Men's Group |
| | 6:30pm | Decision Time Virtual Study |
| | 6:45pm | Chancel Choir |
| THU FEB 29 | 10:00am | Thrift Shop |
| | 7:00pm | Contemplative Supper (Dining Room) |
| SAT MAR 2 | 10:00am | Thrift Shop |
| | 10:00am | Chancel Choir |
| | 11:00am | Sisters in Sobriety (dining room) |

FIRST MUSIC
FM
CONCERT SERIES 2023–24 SEASON

# SEASON XVI
## SWEET SIXTEEN!

BRINGING the JOY of MUSIC to the GATE CITY

# ORGAN MASTERS V

**ISABELLE DEMERS, ORGAN**

## SUNDAY MAR 10

**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
Acting Associate Minister, *Rev. Nancy Haynes*, nhaynes@tfcucc.org
Minister of Music, *Joseph R. Olefirowicz MA,CAGO*, jolefirowicz@tfcucc.org
Church Business and Marketing Manager, *Dianne Smigliani*, dsmigliani@tfcucc.org
Office Manager, *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 4:00 PM on the second Monday of the month.

**All use of the building must be scheduled by the Office Manager.**

**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.*