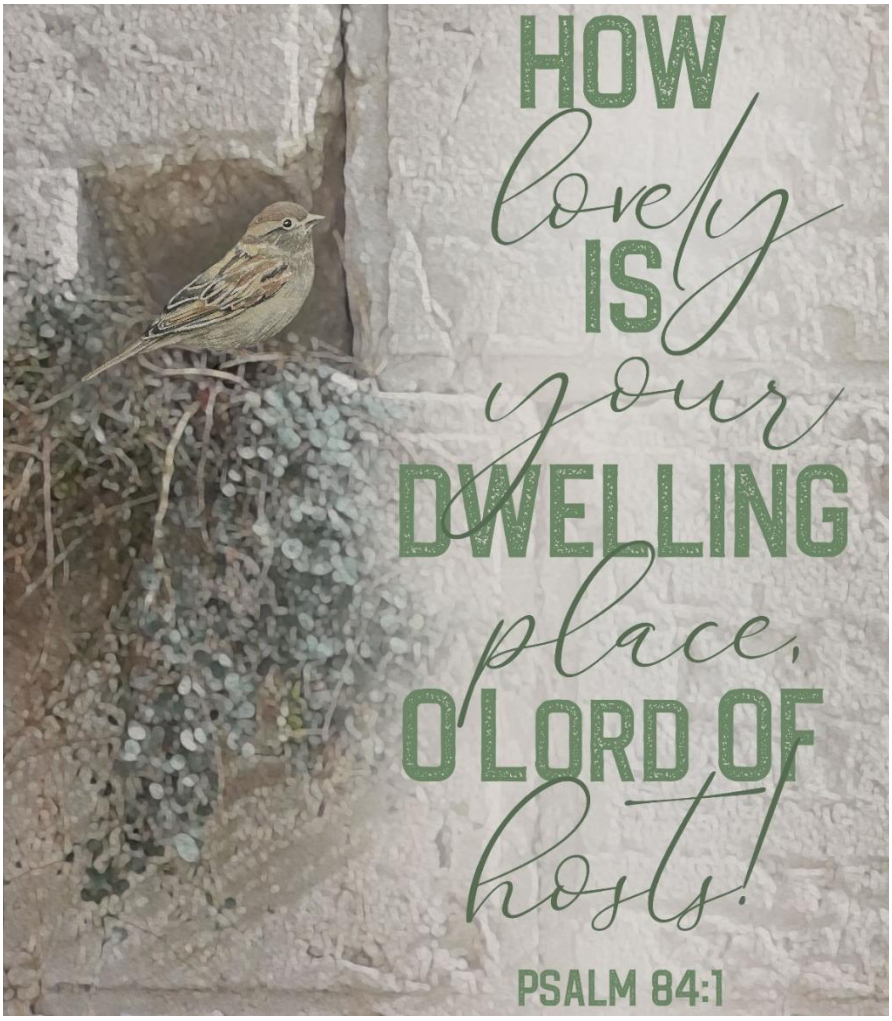

THE FIRST CHURCH

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

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 25, 2024 9:00 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 Dale Neth

MEDITATION "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." -Proverbs 4:23

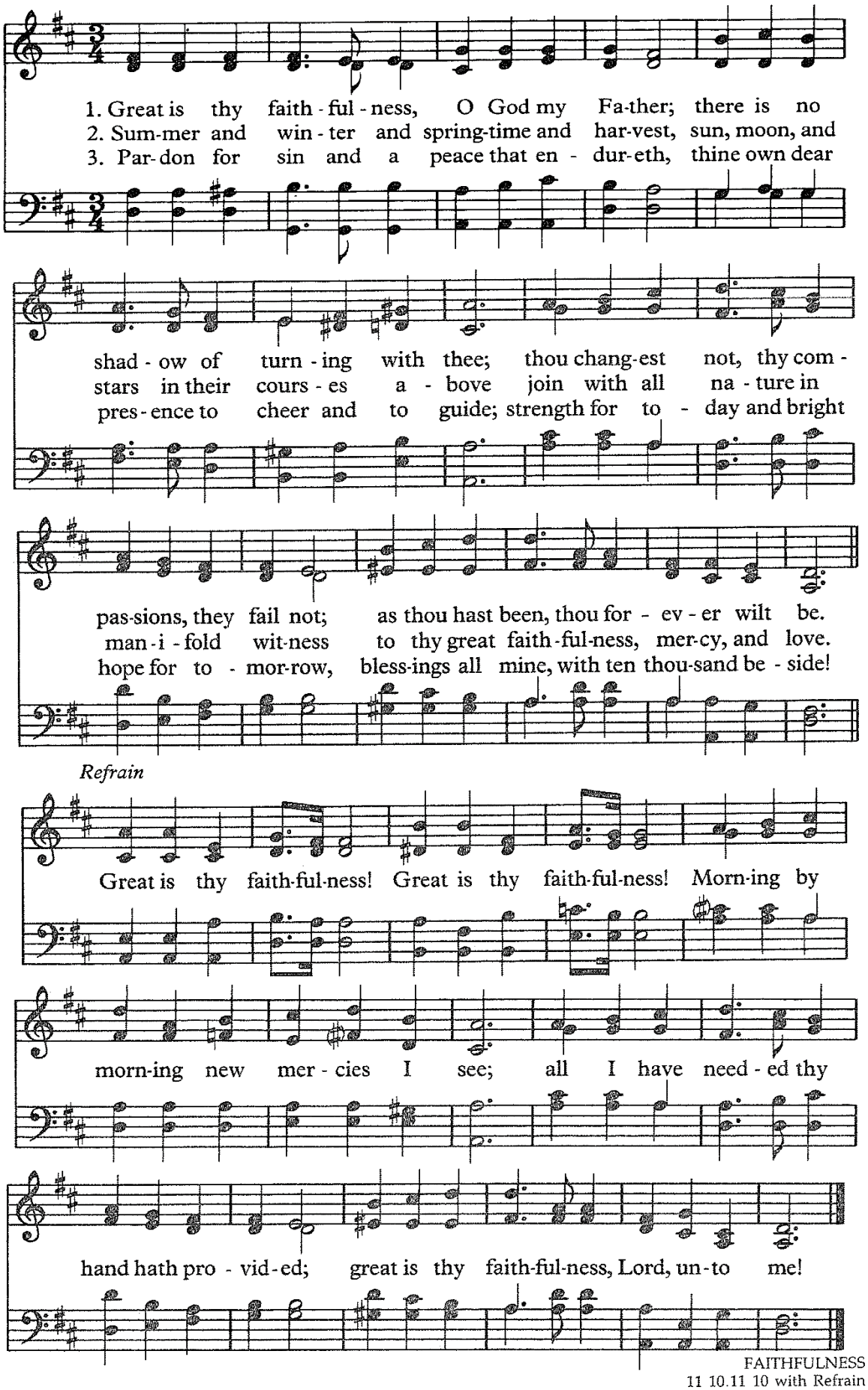
PRELUDE *Prière à Notre Dame* L. Boëllmann
from "Suite Gothique" *(1862 – 1897)*

CALL TO WORSHIP based on Psalm 84

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts!
People: My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.
Leader: Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, before You, O Lord of Hosts.
People: Happy are those who live in Your house, ever singing Your praise.
All: For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

***HYMN** *Great is Thy Faithfulness* FAITHFULNESS
(see next page)

Great is Thy Faithfulness



FAITHFULNESS
11 10.11 10 with Refrain

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CCLI#3034682

***CONFESSION** (Unison)

Merciful God, we confess that we have strayed from Your ways and relied on our own strength, neglecting the grace You offer in Christ. We have sought our own glory, forgetting that true character is formed in humility before You. Forgive us, and by Your presence, renew in us a spirit of gentleness and faithfulness. Build us up, O Lord, that we may reflect the image of Your Son, in whom we find our true source of love and power. Amen.

A time of silence for personal confession

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Jesus said, "The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life." (John 6:63). To whom else can we go for the promise of eternal life? Rejoice in the assurance that Jesus, our Lord and Savior, hears us and forgives us.

People: Thanks be to God!

GREETINGS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Ephesians 6:10-20**

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

John 6:56-69

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

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

ANTHEM *Litany to the Holy Spirit* P. Hurford
WOMEN'S CHOIR *(1930 – 2019)*

In the hour of my distress, when temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess, sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When I lie within my bed, sick in heart and in head
And with doubts discomfited, sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the house doth sigh and weep, and the world is drowned in sleep
And when I, my watch do keep, sweet Spirit, comfort me.

(Poem by Robert Herrick 1591-1674)

SERMON "Mixing Metaphors" Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong

***HYMN 319** *Just As I Am, Without One Plea* WOODWORTH

(see next page)

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

CENTERING PRAYER (Unison)

Almighty God, as we prepare to pray in Your presence, clothe us with the full armor of Your Spirit, that we may stand firm against all that seeks to harm and distract us. May Your truth, righteousness, and peace guide and protect us, as we walk faithfully in Your light. 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 *Like a Flowing River* R. T. Powell
*(*1932)*

Just As I Am, Without One Plea

Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871

WOODWORTH L.M.
William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868

CCLI # 3034682

***DOXOLOGY 515** OLD HUNDRETH LM

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Unison)

You have searched us and known us, loving God, and know better than us what we need. Receive our offerings with our gratitude for Your intimate knowledge of our lives and what is best for each of us through the grace of Your Risen Son. Amen.

***HYMN** *Christ Arose* CHRIST AROSE

(see next page)

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *Choral - Introduction* L. Boëllmann

from "Suite Gothique" *(1862 – 1897)*

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

AV TEAM:

LICENSING: CCLI (print) 3034682; CCLI (streaming) 20119862; CCS 12820; OneLicense A-736284

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

Have you remembered The First Church in your will?

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.

Christ Arose

CHRIST AROSE
Robert Lowry

Robert Lowry

CCLI # 3034682

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Summer Worship Schedule

June 16-September 8, 2024
One Service at 9:00 am
In-person Worship & Livestream
Radio Broadcast on WSMN FM 95.3 & AM 1590
Nursery Care on break through the summer

Summer Office Hours
Monday – Thursday 9:00 am– 3:00 pm
Friday 9:00 am– noon

***Rally Day – Sunday, Sept. 15th**
One service at 10:00 am
In-person Worship, Sunday School & Livestream

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

SUMMER WORSHIP BUSY BAGS- During the summer months, when the Sunday School is on hiatus, the children are welcomed to join their parents in worship. "Busy Bags" will be available to assist in keeping children engaged. Pick up a bag at the Welcome Center or seek out an usher and they will assist you.

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SPECIAL MEETING: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH –The Search Team presents Rev. Nancy Haynes for Associate Minister. On Sunday, Sept 8th, at 9am, we invite you to join us as we seek to fill our Associate Minister position. Rev. Nancy will preach, and immediately following the worship service, we will hold a special meeting with the purpose of voting Rev. Nancy into this full time, permanent position. More information will be following in an all-church mailing. We highly encourage all who can attend to come to this important service to vote Rev. Nancy in as our full time, permanent Associate Minister.

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FRIENDS OF FIRST MUSIC- Fundraising for The First Music Concert Series XVII is approaching! Please consider donating to this integral music outreach to our community and region. We thank our long-time donors for their continued support and could always use new donors to keep our programming alive! Support the vision which has brought already 16 seasons of fine music to the greater Nashua community. Want to become a ***"Friend of First Music?"*** – ask us how! Please contact jolefirowicz@tfcucc.org or call (603) 882-4861 X15 for more information.

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THE THANK YOU PROJECT (TYP) ANNUAL WATER WALK TAKES PLACE SAT. SEPT. 14 AT GREELEY PARK FROM 8:30AM TO 12 NOON. Help us bring clean water to those in need. **DID YOU KNOW?** - 63 million people (3 in 10) in Nigeria lack access to clean water. 115 people in Africa die every hour from diseases linked to contaminated water. The TYP is changing this reality. The TYP has built six water wells [at a cost of $35,000/well + $720 annually ($60/month) in maintenance costs FOR EACH WELL]. Please help us complete well #7!
Visit the TYP Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/TYPWaterWalk
or our website https://thankyouproject.org/ to learn more.

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Music in Worship Next Week
Sunday, September 1, 2024 – Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00 Mark Cleveland, bass-baritone

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

SUN AUG 25	9:00 am	Worship, Livestream, Radio Broadcast
TUE AUG 27	2:00 pm	Huntington
	4:00 pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter
SAT AUG 31	11:00 am	Sisters in Sobriety (dining room)

SUMMER MUSIC SCHEDULE 2024

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 16	**MEN'S CHOIR**
June 23	**SUSAN COBB, soprano**
June 30	**JOSEPH R. OLEFIROWICZ, piano**
July 7	**KATIE WEISS, soprano**
July 14	**STAFF PARTY QUARTET**
July 21	**SUMMER CHOIR**
July 28	**STEVE BLUNT, baritone & guitar**
August 4	**DEBBIE NORDYKE, mezzo soprano**
	HARRY NORDYKE, tenor & guitar
August 11	**RICHARD BENEFIELD, organ**
August 18	**JOSEPH R. OLEFIROWICZ, baritone**
August 25	**WOMEN'S CHOIR**
September 1	**MARK A. CLEVELAND, bass-baritone**
September 8	**CRAIG PLUMMER, tenor**

FIRST MUSIC

FM

CONCERT SERIES 2024 – 25 SEASON

SEASON XVII

Bach to Broadway and Beyond

BRINGING the JOY of MUSIC to the GATE CITY

LIZ CALLAWAY LIVE!

Broadway Legend, EMMY Winner,
TONY & GRAMMY® Nominee

Alex Rybeck, piano

SUNDAY
OCT
20

CANTATA 61

SUNDAY
DEC
22

CHRISTMAS at FIRST

Chancel Choir of The First Church
First Music Chamber Strings
Janet Poisson, soprano • Kyle Masterson, tenor
Joshua L. Gore, bass • Joseph R. Olefirowicz, conductor

4th Advent Worship Services

CELLO MASTERS II

Roric Cunningham, cello
Nadia Yamauchi Azzi, piano

SUNDAY
MAR
09

SUNDAY
APR
06

POPS FOR PIPES XIII

Marek Kudlicki, organ

AMERICAN SONGBOOK

Jazz Vocalist Michelle Mailhot
Mark Shilansky Quartet

SUNDAY
MAY
04

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
NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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
Christian Formation Coordinator, *Amanda Steere*, asteere@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 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 The First Church please seek out the individuals wearing colored nametags; they are members of the various boards and committees.

INFORMATION

The 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 The 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. The 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 a 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 Tuesday. All information for the monthly newsletter must be in the office by 4:00 PM on the second Monday of the month (August through May).

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

THE FIRST CHURCH

One Concord Street * Nashua, New Hampshire 03064 * 603-882-4861
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9:00am-noon and 1:00-3:00pm
Friday 9:00am-noon
www.tfcucc.org

Give online. Scan the QR code to view one of the giving options available.