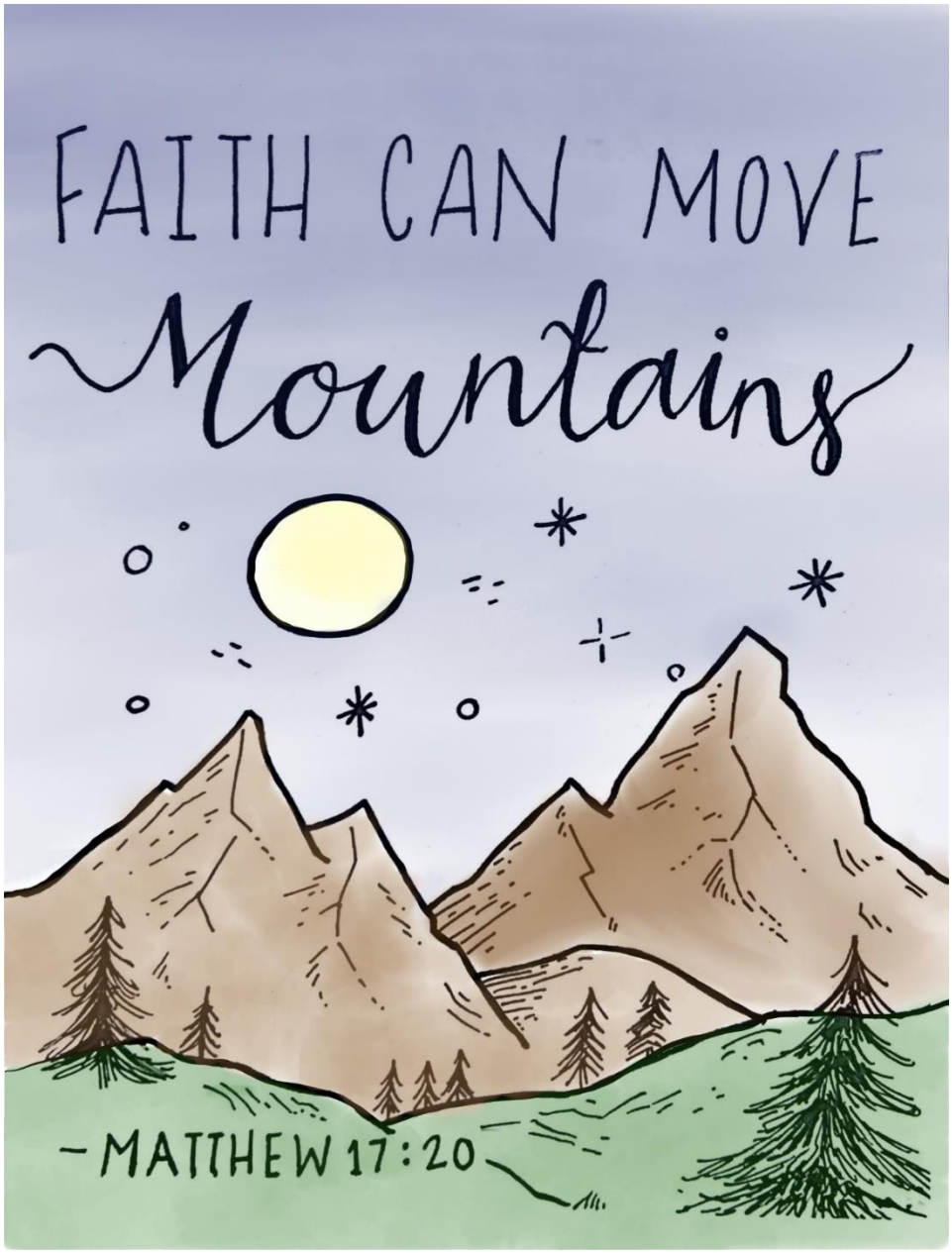


THE FIRST CHURCH

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

Fifth Sunday of Easter
Children and Youth Sunday

May 18, 2025 10:00 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 Norma MacKinley-Smith

MEDITATION "There is nothing in life so difficult that it cannot be overcome. This faith can move mountains. It can change people. It can change the world." -Norman Vincent Peale

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

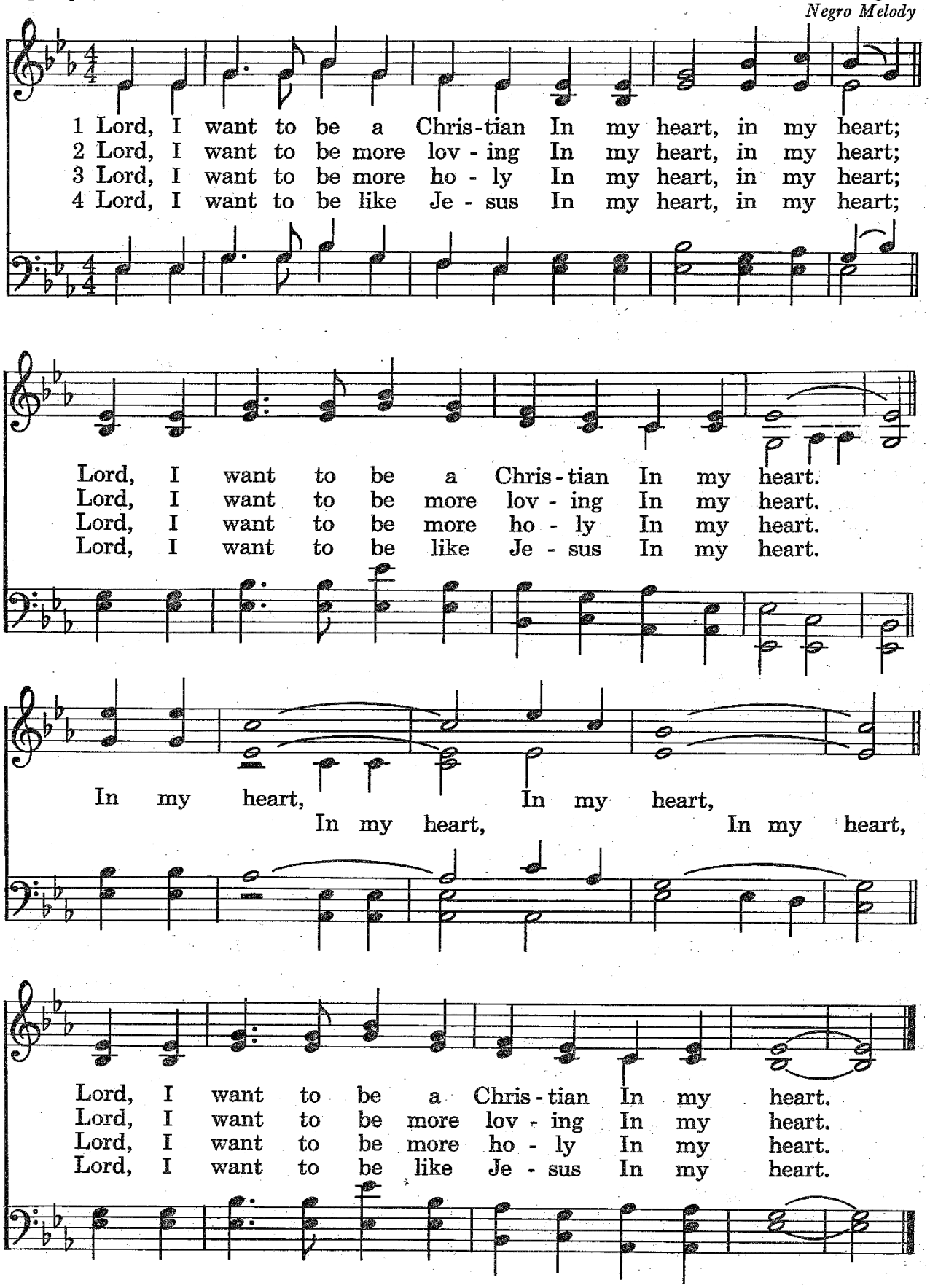
Leader: Good Morning! Welcome to a celebration of God's love for us!
People: We are glad to be here and worship together.
Leader: Some have come seeking; some have come for strength.
People: Lord, be with each one of us today. Feed our hearts and souls with Your transforming love.
Leader: God is truly with us all today, guiding, lifting, feeding, restoring our souls.
People: Praise be to God, Who continually abides with us. Amen.

***HYMN 353** *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian* I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN

(see next page)

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

Negro Spiritual

I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN *Irregular*
Negro Melody

***OPENING PRAYER** (Unison)

Almighty God, we thank You for the faith You've sown in our hearts, even if it's just a tiny mustard seed. Help us to nurture this seed with Your love, so that it may grow and bear fruit in our lives. Strengthen us to believe in Your ways, not in our own success or failures, and to act with faith and love in all that we do. May our lives, like the mustard seed, become a source of shelter and sustenance for others, reflecting Your love and grace. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS Stacey Plummer

HORTON CENTER PRESENTATION Tivvi Pare

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING **Matthew 17:14-20**

When they came to the crowd, a man came to him, knelt before him, and said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; he often falls into the fire and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him." Jesus answered, "You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."

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

GRATIA TIBI *Thanks Be to Thee* T. Tallis
CHANCEL CHOIR *(1505 – 1585)*

ANTHEM *Faith as Small as a Mustard Seed* D. Horley
CHRISTIAN FORMATION *(20th Century)*
YOUTH & CHILDREN

MESSAGE Holly Columbus
Christian Formation teachers and students

***HYMN** *Jesus, Lead Me Up the Mountain* HYMN TO JOY
(see next page)

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

CENTERING PRAYER

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 *O Thou Who Hearest Prayer* Welsh Melody
(1704)

Jesus, Lead Me Up the Mountain

1. **Jesus, Lead Me Up the Mountain**
   Where the whitest robes are seen
   Where the saints can see the fountain,
   Where the pure are keeping clean
   Lead me higher up the mountain
   Give me fellowship with Thee;
   In Thy light I see a fountain,
   And the blood is cleansing me.

2. **Higher up, where light increases,**
   Rich above all earthly good,
   Where the life of sinning ceases,
   Where the Spirit comes in floods
   Lead me higher up the mountain
   Give me fellowship with Thee;
   In Thy light I see a fountain,
   And the blood is cleansing me.

3. **Lead me higher, nothing dreading,**
   In the race to never stop
   In Thy footsteps keep me treading,
   Give me grace to reach the top.
   Lead me higher up the mountain
   Give me fellowship with Thee;
   In Thy light I see a fountain,
   And the blood is cleansing me.

4. **Save me better, make me surer,**
   Put me where the fire refines,
   Where the breath of hope is purer
   Where the brightest glory shines
   Lead me higher up the mountain
   Give me fellowship with Thee;
   In Thy light I see a fountain,
   And the blood is cleansing me.

Hymn Text: William J. Pearson *(1832 – 1892)*
This hymn was penned in 1884 .**CCLI#3034682**

OFFERTORY *Easter Alleluya* A. Carter
*(*1939)*

***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)

With great joy, we present these tithes and gifts for the ministry of this church. Be with each of us as we, too, commit ourselves to lives of joyful, and faithful service. In Jesus' name, Amen.

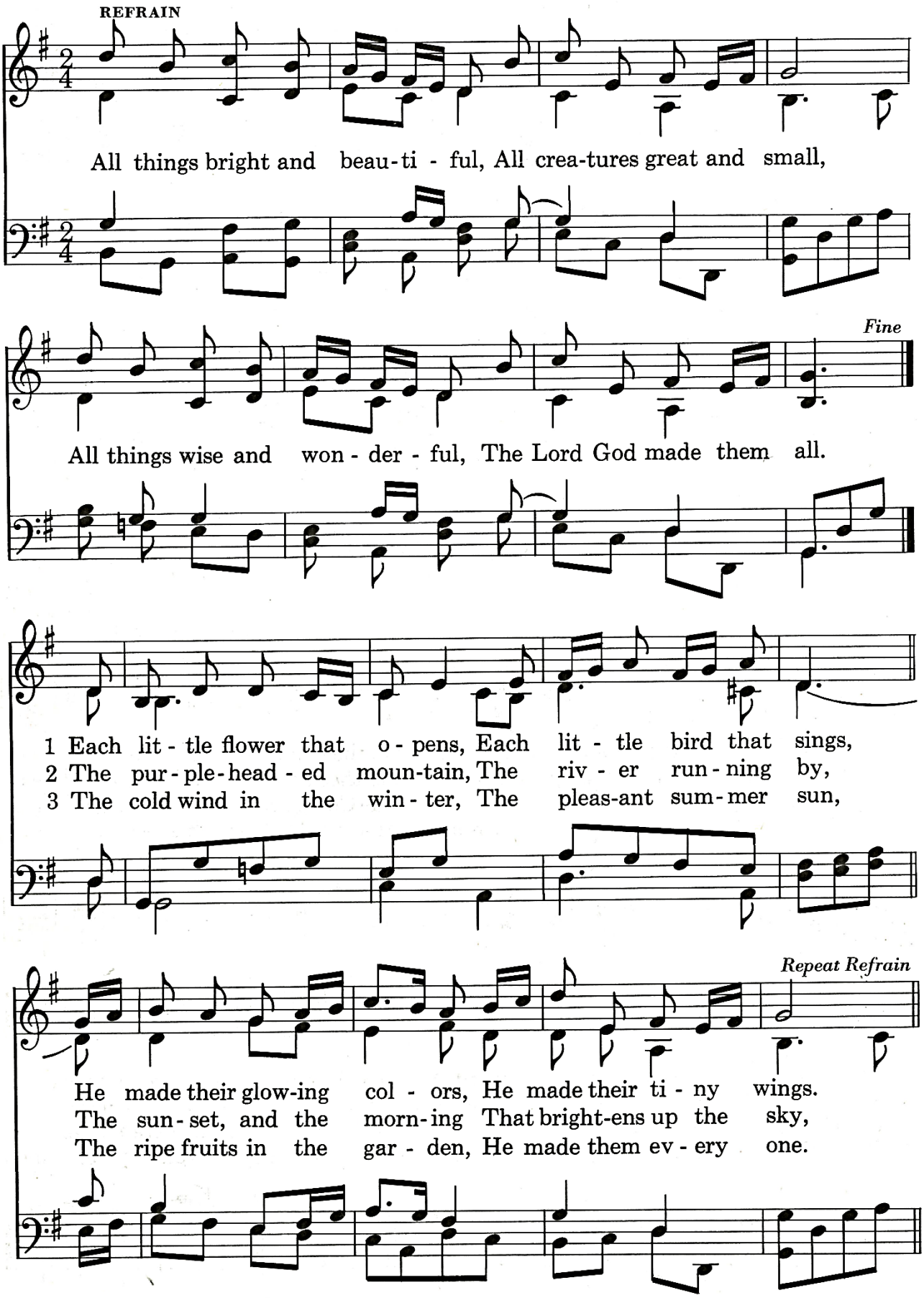
***HYMN 478** *All Things Bright and Beautiful* ROYAL OAK
(see next page)

"All Things Bright and Beautiful (Royal Oak)" adapted by Martin Shaw. © 1915 J. Curwen & Sons Ltd CCLI Streaming License #20119862

***BENEDICTION**

BENEDICTUS *To Thee Before the Close of Day* JAM LUCIS

POSTLUDE *Toccata* L. Boëllmann
from *"Suite Gothique"*

All Things Bright and Beautiful

CCLI #3034682

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

Flowers in the pulpit are given in celebration of Children and Youth Sunday from Amanda Steere.

AV TEAM: Dale and Craig Neth

CHRISTIAN FORMATION: Natalie James, music leader
Alex Haydn, accompanist

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.

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

If you have faith
as small as a mustard seed,
you can say to this mountain,
"Move from here to there"
and it will move.

Matthew 17:20

NOTES FROM THE CHANCEL

Léon Boëllmann was a French composer born in the French Alsace region during the mid 19th century. He died young but still left 68 published works, (of which the *Suite Gothique* Op. 25, 1895, arguably, is his most popular). The first two movements were presented in worship two weeks ago. This morning, the latter two of the *Suite* are offered. The 'prayer' of the **Prelude** utilizes the organ's strings and features the beautiful "Doppelflute" of the Solo Division.

This unique stop is called a *double flute* as its wood pipes have two mouths each, from which air emerges to provide the distinct sound. This 1925 pipework is among select other stops which were added to our organ during the 2015 renovation. The once magnificent organ of the **Saint Patrick Church in Troy, New York** lives on in part, in select pipework finding a new home in Nashua. We concentrated on restoring and expanding our 1926 Austin instrument with select period pipework, found in symphonic organs of the period. We brought back our own organ to its original specification and added to it with an eye towards its original tonal history.

The **Offertory** this morning, is a rousing song of praise penned by **Andrew Carter.** *Oxford University Press* established his reputation as a composer. A particular honor in the field of church music was the invitation to write *Missa Sancti Pauli* for the 1997 tercentenary celebrations of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Over the years several of his carols have been included in the renowned Christmas Eve broadcast from King's College Chapel, Cambridge. Andrew's lifelong love of the organ is reflected in his writing. Born in Leicester in the English Midlands, Carter studied music at Leeds University before settling in York. During his time as a bass staff singer at York Minster, he founded the *Chapter House Choir*, the award winning mixed-voice concert group which he conducted for seventeen years. (Source: www.andrewcarter.org; Accessed 12 May 2025).

The *call-and-answer* of the organ and choir, in this **Anthem**, allow for a rousing song of praise for the "Eastertide" season. The *a cappella* (without accompaniment) section in the middle of the work, is answered by the mighty *Tuba Mirabilis* of the Solo division of the organ, also added in the 2015 restoration and expansion. (This is the tower to the far right of the organ case, nearest to the large glass walls into Fellowship Hall).

Closing worship during the **Postlude**, is the closing movement of the **Suite Gothique**. The minor-key toccata is a favorite of both congregations and concert audiences, adding to the festival feel of celebrating our children and youth. From the 'buzzing bees' of the opening theme in the hands (*behind the closed louvres of the Swell box*) to the ominous main theme played in the feet: the work unleashes the power of full organ at the end, to close our morning worship to God's glory.

Worship Schedule

SUNDAY, MAY 18th

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

Christian Formation Corner

May 18th, 2025 - Today is the Fifth Sunday of Easter, and the liturgical color is white.

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 - are available at the Welcome Center for when children choose to remain in worship.

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION- The last event until the Fall for the Women's Association will be our Spring potluck and Yankee Swap on **Monday, June 9th at 6 PM in the dining room**. This is such a fun evening and we hope to see many new faces. It's such a terrific way to get to know other women in the church. We will have a true potluck where you can bring your favorite dish to share....main dish, salad, dessert and you don't have to sign up for what you will bring. The Yankee Swap gifts should be kept to the $10-$15 range. Sign up at the Welcome Center will begin on Sunday, May 18th through Sunday June 1st.

MEN'S CHOIR- Men of The First Church, we are starting our Summer worship early this year and invite you to sing in worship on **Sunday, June 8th at 9:00 am.** Rehearsal will take place on **Thursday, May 22nd and 29th at 6:30 pm.** June rehearsals on **Tuesday, June 3rd and Thursday, June 5th at 6:30 pm**. Contact Joseph Olefirowicz with any questions: jolefirowicz@tfcucc.org

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Music in Worship Next Week
Sunday, May 25, 2025 – Fifth Sunday of Easter
10:00 – Zoë Harper, tenor

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

SUN MAY 18		Children and Youth Sunday
	8:15 am	Worship (Chapel) – Final until October
	10:00 am	Worship, Livestream
		Radio Broadcast, Sunday School
	11:15 am	Picnic sponsored by Christian Formation
MON MAY 19	9:30 am	Bible, Friends & Coffee (Ladies Parlor, LAST until Fall)
TUE MAY 20	4:00 pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter
WED MAY 21	10:30 am	NAIC (room 10)
	6:45 pm	Chancel Choir
THU MAY 22	10:00 am	Thrift Shop
	6:30 pm	Men's Choir
SAT MAY 24	11:00 am	Sisters in Sobriety (Dining Room)

UPCOMING WORSHIP SCHEDULES

***Sunday, May 25th one service at 10:00 am**
In-person Worship & Livestream

***Summer Worship Schedule**
June 1st – September 7th, 2025
One Service at 9:00 am
In-person Worship & Livestream

***Rally Day – Sunday, September 14th**
One Service at 10:00 am
In-person Worship & Livestream
Sunday School, Nursery care

THE FIRST CHURCH

NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

STAFF

Senior Minister, *Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong*, aarmstrong@tfcucc.org
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
Interim Sexton, *Bruce Lund,* blund@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 are 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 1:00-4:00pm, Friday 9:00am-noon

www.tfcucc.org