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

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Communion Sunday

June 1, 2025 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 Jim Stone

MEDITATION "I do not at all understand the mystery of grace – only that it meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us." -Anne Lamott

PRELUDE *Nine Hymn Preludes* G. Young

ii. Toccata on LEONI *(1919 – 1998)*

INTROITUS *The Lord Is In His Holy Temple* F. R. Lund

CHANCEL CHOIR *(*1938)*

Composer-In-Residence

CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 97)

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

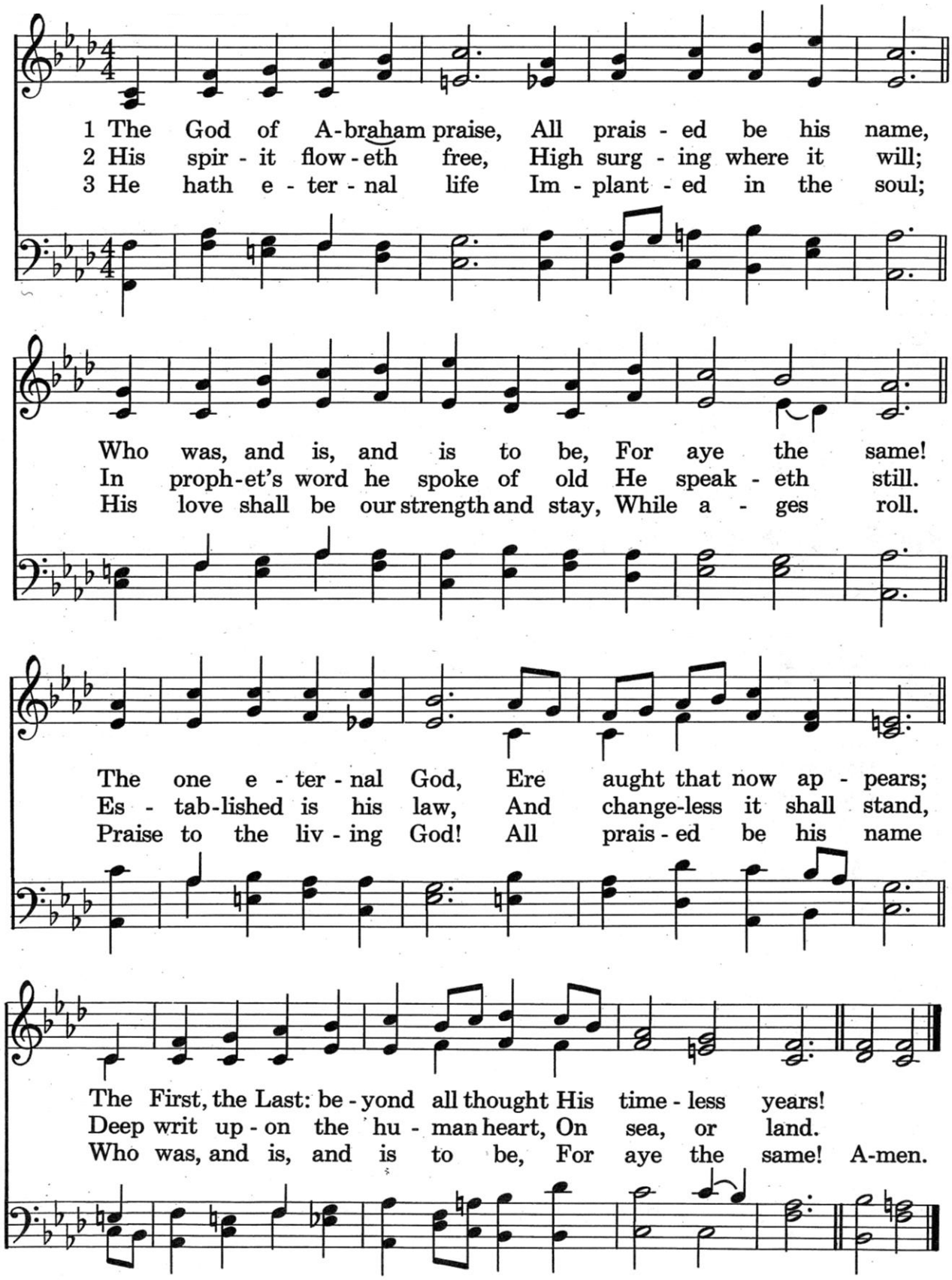
People: And also with you.

Leader: The Lord is king! Let the earth rejoice!

People: The heavens declare His righteousness; every nations sees His glory.

All: For You, O Lord, are most high over all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods!

***HYMN 14** *The God of Abraham Praise* LEONI



CCLI # 3034682

***OPENING PRAYER** (Unison)

Almighty God, by Your Holy Spirit You have made us one with Your saints in heaven and on earth. Help us to see Your presence burning in the hearts of others. Unite us in a fellowship of love and prayer; give us the courage to pick up our cross and respond to the needs of the world, give us the stamina to follow You, serve our neighbor and witness to Your grace and mercy. We pray all this through the love of Your son, Jesus Christ. 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 & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Acts 16:16-34**

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods.

After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

John 17:20-26

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. "Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GRATIA TIBI *Thanks Be to Thee* T. Tallis

(1505 – 1585)

SERMON "When the Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong

RESPONSIVE PSALM 68 **JOSEPH R. OLEFIROWICZ, psalmist**

The Psalm will be intoned once: The Congregation sings the same Response, and then again at the "***℟***" indication.

(see next page)

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

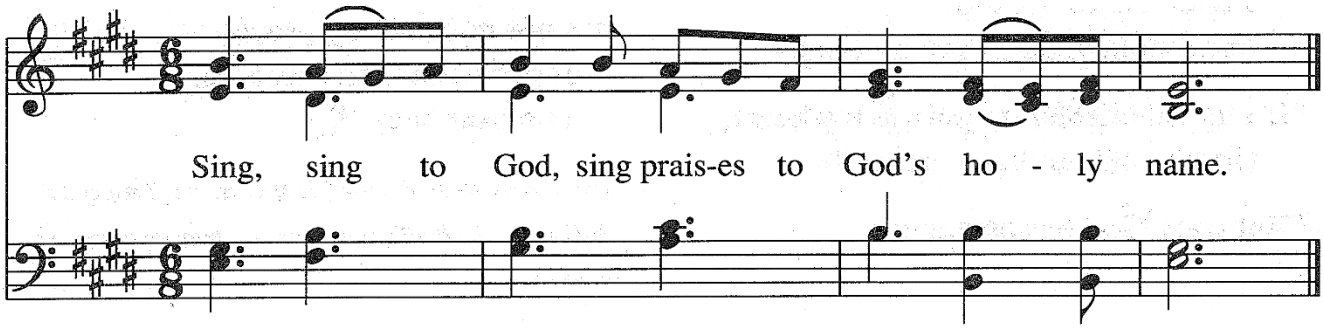
PRAYER CONCERNS

SILENT PRAYERS and PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Almighty God, we confess that we have taken Your commandments and turned them into rules. We have criticized those who have fallen short and selfishly proclaimed ourselves righteous. We have failed to understand the spirit of the commandments and the way that was shown by You to live, loving God and loving our neighbors. Forgive us for turning Your law into burdens for others and ourselves, instead of a way to love and find freedom in You. In the name of Christ, who has given us the way and leads us on, we pray. Amen.

A time of silence for personal confession



℟

[1]Let God rise up, let God's enemíes
be scattered;
let those who hate God
flee bé́fore God.

[2]As smoke is driven away,
so drive t́hem away;
as wax melts before the fire,
let the wicked perish bé́fore God.

[3]But let the rightéous be joyful;
let them exult before God;
let them be jubílant with joy. ℟

[4]Sing to God, sing praises
t́o God's name;
lift up a song to the one who rides
upón the clouds;

be exultant bé́fore God
whose name ís the Sovereign.

[5]Father-Mother of orphans and
protectór of widows
is God in God's holy h́abitation.

[6]God gives the desolate a home to
live in; God leads out the prisoners
t́o prosperity,
but the rebellious live in
a deśolate land. ℟

[7]O God, when you went out bé́fore
your people,
when you marched through the
wilderńess, [8]the earth quaked,

the heavens poured down rain at the
presence of God, the Gó́d of Sinai,
at the presence of God,
the Gó́d of Israel.

[9]Rain in abundance, O God, you
showéred abroad;
you restored your heritage
wh́en it languished;

[10]your flock found a dwelĺing in it;
in your goodness, O God, you
provided f́or the needy. ℟

[32]Sing to God, O nations ó́f the earth;
sing praiśes to God,

[33]O rider in the heavens,
the á́ncient heavens;
listen, God sends out a voice,
a míghty voice.

[34]Ascribe power to God, whose
majesty is ó́ver Israel;
and whose power is ín the skies.

[35]Awesome is God in God's śanctuary;
the God of Israel gives power
and strength to God's people.
Blesśed be God! ℟

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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: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are loved and are forgiven. May God grant you time to amend your lives. You are loved. Love is the Way.

People: Thanks be to God.

OFFERTORY *Esto Les Digo* K. Lange

I tell you this… *(*1950)*

BRIANNE BIASTOFF, guest conductor
JANET POISSON, soprano

Esto les digo - (2x)	I tell you this:
si dos de ustedes se ponen - (2x)	if two of you are placed…
se ponen de acuerdo aquí en la tierra,	are placed in accord on the earth
para pedir, (3x)	to ask,
pedir algo en oración,	to ask anything in prayer,
mi padre que está en el cielo,	my Father which art in heaven,
en el cielo – (2x)	(art in heaven)
se lo dará – (3x)	shall give it to you
Porque donde dos o tres (3x)	Because where two or three
se reúnen en mi nombre,	are gathered in My name
allí estoy yo, (2x)	There am I,
en medio de ellos. (2x)	in the midst of them.
Esto les digo / estoy allí- (2x)	This I say to you / There am I
En medio de ellos / Esto les digo	in the midst of them / This I say to you
(*San Mateo 18:19-20*)	(*Matthew 18:19-20*)

***DOXOLOGY 515** OLD HUNDRETH LM

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Unison)

Almighty and Mysterious God, You revealed Yourself in Jesus, Your Beloved Child who gives us a glimpse Your glory and invites us to share in the joy of all that is Holy. We offer these gifts as the fruit of the holiness that has touched our lives. We are blessed and holy as we share Your blessings. Thank You for our part in living out the Gospel according to Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE COMMUNION

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

CHORAL SANCTUS *Sanctus* G. Oldroyd
from *The Mass of the Quiet Hour* *(1887 – 1956)*

INSTITUTION AND SHARING OF THE BREAD

Kyrie Eleison G. Oldroyd
from *The Mass of the Quiet Hour*

Kyrie eleison Lord, have mercy
Christe eleison Christ, have mercy

INSTITUTION AND SHARING OF THE CUP

Benedictus & Agnus Dei G. Oldroyd

from *The Mass of the Quiet Hour*

JOSHUA L. GORE, baritone

JANET POISSON, soprano

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 250** *We All Believe in One True God* WIR GLAUBEN ALL IN EINEN GOTT

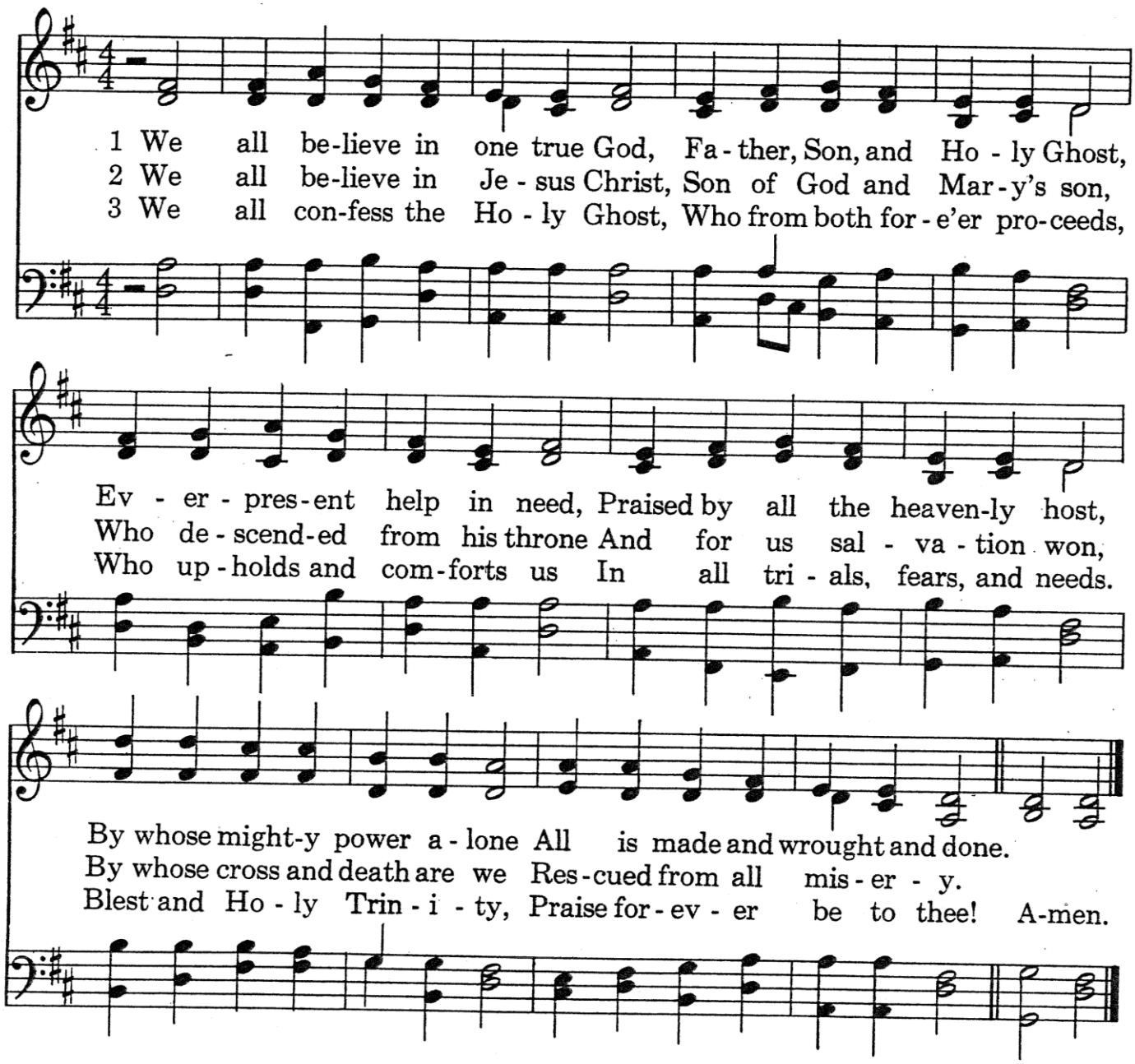
(see next page)

***BENEDICTION**

BENEDICTUS *On Us Bestow Thy Blessing* F. R. Lund

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

We All Believe in One True God



THE TRINITY

CCLI # 3034682

AV TEAM: Sandra and Roy Rumbaugh

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

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

The flowers in the pulpit are given in loving memory of Carolyn Mulrooney, by Maribeth and Jim Stone.

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.

Worship Schedule

SUNDAY, JUNE 1ST
9:00 am Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream
Radio Broadcast on WSMN FM 95.3 & AM 1590

***Summer Worship Schedule**
June 1st – September 7th, 2025
One Service at 9:00 am
In-person Worship & Livestream
Sunday School and Nursery Care on break through the summer

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

NOTES FROM THE CHANCEL

This Sunday, marks our final **COMMUNION SUNDAY with choirs** before the summer break. The **CHANCEL CHOIR** offers in worship today: a time of praise and reflection through music. We close a fantastic season in the music ministry this year, both in the **MUSIC AT FIRST** ministry and through our **FIRST MUSIC** outreach. As our adult vocal and bell choirs remain in recess until after Labor Day: we thank all volunteers, and all music staff for the diligent hours offered to God's praise through their service.

Our **PRELUDE** rouses the Spirit this morning, giving a foretaste of the opening hymn for corporate worship. The full forces of the Anderson Memorial Organ proclaim praise to God and center our hearts and minds on worship of our Great God. Composer **Gordon Ellsworth YOUNG** studied at the *Southwestern College* in Winfield, Kansas, and at the *Curtis Institute* in Philadelphia. He served the *First Presbyterian Church* in Detroit, Michigan for 20 years. He published 500 works for organ during his lifetime, ranging from simple service music to more technically challenging recital repertoire.

Our **OFFERTORY** this morning is aptly led by our *Alto Staff Singer* **Brianne BIASTOFF**, who is the head of choral activities at *Nashua High School North*. Her B.M. and M.M. are from the *University of Massachusetts - Lowell*. She is the Nashua District Coordinator for Secondary Music, *Tri-M* (music honor society) Advisor for the high school, President of the New Hampshire Chapter of the *American Choral Director's Association* (ACDA), and music director of *The Common Voice* choral ensemble at *UMass Lowell*. This unique choral offering in Spanish adds to the Latin, German, Hebrew and even French repertory of the Chancel Choir. It has been an enriching experience!

Choral offerings during the **SANCTUS** and **COMMUNION** support the liturgy through four (out of five) movements from the cherished *"Mass of the Quiet Hour"* by English composer **George OLDROYD**. May the meditative and introspective quality of these choral offerings- including our **INTROITUS** and **BENEDICTUS** by our *Composer-in-Residence* **Floice LUND,** reverently underscore the commemoration of Christ's banquet with his apostles, in this final choral Communion service until October!

Be sure to be with us during worship next week, as our **Summer Music Schedule** begins with our **Men's Choir** on **Pentecost Sunday**, June 8 at 9AM in the Sanctuary. (Plainchant and Works by Bach, Helvey, Schubert and Tallis, *Soli Deo Gloria*…)

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

HOLIDAY FAIR COMMITTEE- The Holiday Fair is well underway. If you would like to participate in planning, volunteering, or preparations, the next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, June 10th at 10 am in room 15.** The Holiday Fair will take place November 7th-9th. We look forward to seeing you!

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.

STORIES FROM THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO- Join us **Sunday, June 29th at 10:15 AM** in the Dining Room for a special presentation following worship. Rev. Andy will be sharing reflections, stories, and photos from his recent walk along the Camino de Santiago—a centuries-old pilgrimage route in Spain. Whether you're curious about the spiritual journey, the physical challenge, or just enjoy a good story well told, you won't want to miss it. **Beverages and pastries will be provided**—come for the fellowship, stay for the inspiration!

Choir in Worship Next Week

Sunday, June 8th – Pentecost

9:00 Men's Choir

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

SUN JUN 1	9:00 am	Worship, Livestream, Radio Broadcast
MON JUN 2	7:00 pm	All Boards
TUE JUN 3	OFFICE CLOSED, STAFF PLANNING MEETING	
	4:00 pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter
	6:30 pm	Men's Choir
WED JUN 4	11:45 am	BNI (dining room)
THU JUN 5	10:00 am	Thrift Shop
	6:30 pm	Men's Choir
SAT JUN 7	11:00am	Sisters in Sobriety (dining room)

SUMMER MUSIC SCHEDULE 2025

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 8	**MEN'S CHOIR (TTBB)**
June 15	**JOSEPH R. OLEFIROWICZ, baritone**
June 22	**NICOLE PLUMMER, mezzo soprano**
June 29	**WOMEN'S CHOIR (SA)**
July 6	**KATIE WEISS, soprano**
July 13	**TIMOTHY SKINNER, clarinet**
July 20	**JOHNATHAN STERLING, piano**
July 27	**SUMMER CHOIR (SATB)**
August 3	**DEBBIE NORDYKE, mezzo soprano**
	HARRY NORDYKE, tenor & guitar
August 10	**RICHARD BENEFIELD, organ**
August 17	**SUSAN COBB, soprano**
August 24	**CRAIG PLUMMER, tenor**
August 31	**JOSEPH R. OLEFIROWICZ, piano**
September 7	**MARK A. CLEVELAND, bass-baritone**

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 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 1:00-4:00pm,Friday 9:00am-noon

www.tfcucc.org