



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 24, 2020

“Fear and joy, the two poles, the two extremes of our human response to the awesome intimacy of God. Fear and joy run with us throughout our lives together, as constant reminders of the cost and promise of following Jesus. Fear and joy, at the centre of our longings, at the heart of our desires.

But there’s a secret. It is a secret that we only glimpse at in this life. It is a secret that was first revealed to those two early risers on the first day of the week, while all creation breathed in the aroma of anticipation. It is the secret of Easter. It is a secret that is the climax of our gospel, a secret of the mystery of fear and joy. And the secret is this: joy wins.”

–Sam Wells

All hymns are included after the order of worship, on pages 5-8.

Call to Worship (*Unison*; adapted from Psalm 68)

Let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy. Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds—his name is the LORD—be exultant before him. Father of orphans and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God gives the desolate a home to live in; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious live in a parched land. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; sing praises to the Lord. Awesome is God in his sanctuary, the God of Israel; he gives power and strength to his people. Blessed be God!

Hymn 246 (*See below, p. 5*) *Christ Is Alive!*

Truro

Prayer of Invocation

God, though we are in different places this morning, we are still united in your Spirit. Lift up our worship, inspire our prayers, and infuse all we do and offer with your grace, your love, and your power. We pray all these things in the name of your Son. Amen.

Gloria (*Unison*)

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. Amen.

Words of Welcome; Our Ministry and Mission

During this time, we are not meeting in person. All are encouraged to stay in touch with one another by phone, email, or written cards. If you would like to organize a Zoom teleconference or telephone meeting, please be in touch with the Rev. Steve Silver (603-448-4281/silver@fccleb.org), and he’ll get you set up and ready to go.

Children's Moment

Have you ever noticed that a really good story never ends? Let me explain. There may be a last scene in the movie, a final page of the book. But when a story really grips me, I want more. I want to know what happens next. So, I might imagine how the story continues. What about you? Have you had this experience? I hope that the Bible is one of those stories you'd like to see continue. And in a way it does, both in books like Acts and in the letters from Paul. The story continues after Jesus is resurrected. It's even continuing this morning, with us, right here. Which is not surprising: the Bible tells the best story ever, after all.

Hymn 43 (See below, p. 6) *Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies* (vv. 1-3) Ratisbon

Scripture Lessons

Acts 1:6-14. ⁶So when [the apostles] had come together, they asked [Jesus], "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. ¹³When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

John 17:1-11. After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶"I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I

have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Sermon *“The Joy of Waiting” (See separate document)* Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 239 (See below, p. 7) *Come Down, O Love Divine* Down Ampney

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

On this day we offer our ongoing prayers for Pete, Lloyd, Jessica, Martha, Micah, Joanne, Max, Kelee, Tammy, Arlene, Ruth, Ryle, Emily, John, Shirley, Dan, Roger, Jim, Beth, Evelyn, Susan, Barbara, Max, Greg, Larry, and Terry.

We pray for all those struggling with financial challenges, reduced hours and unemployment, and fears about the future.

We pray for the healthcare workers and first responders who are on the front line dealing with this pandemic.

We pray for wisdom and humility from all our leaders.

Today we offer the following prayer:

God of the Resurrection, we stand in awe of what you have done and continue to do. Through the Resurrection you offered humanity an invitation to be involved with your reconciling work, to share with one another the story of new life, to immerse ourselves in saving grace. We confess that at times we respond with less enthusiasm than your transformative gift warrants. Inspire in us a desire to see and embrace the wondrous thing you have done in and through our Risen Lord.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer (Unison)

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.

Offering of Gifts

In times like this, it is especially fitting that we remember those who are without, those who are often ignored, those who are in need. In this spirit, we invite your

support of this church, its mission, and its ministry. Please mail in your offering as you are able, in support of this church's continuing work in and for the community.

Doxology (*Unison*)

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*)

Generous God, as we present this day's offering, we share not just our skills, but our hearts; not just our time, but our souls; not just our money, but our love. In the name of the one who showed us how to do these things, we pray. Amen.

Hymn 415 (*See below, p. 8*) *In Christ There Is No East or West*

McKee

Benediction

My friends, life is short. We do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So, be swift to love, and make haste to be kind.

Now go forth with the love of God, the grace of our lord Jesus Christ, and the companionship of the Holy Spirit, this day and forevermore. Amen.

Joys, Concerns, and Prayer Requests

If you wish to have a **joy, concern, or prayer request** lifted up in the service, or if you know of anyone who may need special prayers, a card or phone call, or some other form of pastoral care, please email prayer@fccleb.org, or contact the church office or the Rev. Steve Silver directly.

Please note that we have suspended on-site worship services and other events through at least Sunday, June 28, following community guidelines. Contact the church office for information about particular events or assistance using the Zoom teleconferencing application.

MSA Needs Your Input for Its Upcoming Congregational Survey

It has been over four years since we last surveyed the congregation about the mission partners that FCC supports. The Mission and Social Action Committee seeks everyone's input now in order to update our mission priorities. A new survey will be distributed in the coming weeks.

To help us prepare the survey, we invite your suggestions of local, national, and global organizations that you feel FCC seems most naturally suited to support. Please submit your suggestions to the church office. Thanks!

Christ Is Alive!

246

1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. The cross stands
2 Christ is a - live! No lon - ger bound to dis - tant
3 In ev - ery in - sult, rift, and war where col - or,
4 Wom - en and men, in age and youth, can feel the
5 Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to

emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with
years in Pal - es - tine, but sav - ing, heal - ing,
scorn, or wealth di - vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet
Spir - it, hear the call, and find the way, the
this and ev - ery age, till earth and sky and

prais - es ring. Love, drowned in death, shall nev - er die.
here and now, and touch - ing ev - ery place and time.
loves the more, and lives, where e - ven hope has died.
life, the truth, re - vealed in Je - sus, freed for all.
o - cean ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.

In 1968 Easter fell ten days after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and this text was written to express an Easter hope while mindful of that terrible event. Buoyed by a triple-arched tune, it affirms the presence of a wounded, risen Christ with all who suffer.

TEXT: Brian Wren, 1968, rev. 1995

MUSIC: *Musica Sacra*, c. 1778

Text © 1975, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company

TRURO
LM

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Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

RATISBON 7.7.7.7.7.
Johann Werner's "Choralbuch," 1815

1 Christ, whose glo - ry fills the skies, Christ, the true, the on - ly Light,
2 Dark and cheer-less is the morn Un - ac - com - pa - nied by thee;



Sun of right-eous-ness, a - rise, Tri-umph o'er the shades of night;
Joy - less is the day's re - turn, Till thy mer - cy's beams I see,



Day-spring from on high, be near; Day-star, in my heart ap - pear.
Till they in-ward light im - part, Glad my eyes, and warm my heart. A-men.



3 Visit, then, this soul of mine;
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
Fill me, Radiancy divine,
Scatter all my unbelief;
More and more thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day.

Fellowship Through Food—Sharing Meals in Tough Times

Would you enjoy having a meal provided by a friend? If you're weary of adding dinner to your to-do list, are overwhelmed with your child's home-schooling, or are experiencing a loss of income, we'd like to help by dropping off a meal. If any of these scenarios speaks to you—or if you enjoy cooking and would like to provide a meal—the Deacons invite you to email Steve Silver (silver@fcclcb.org) or call the church office (603-448-4281). **Let's help each other!**

Come Down, O Love Divine

Bianco da Siena, c. 1367
Tr. Richard F. Littledale, 1833-1890

DOWN AMPNEY 6.6.11.D.
R. Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958

1 Come down, O Love di - vine, Seek thou this soul of
2 O let it free - ly burn, Till earth - ly pas - sions
3 And so the yearn - ing strong With which the soul will

mine, And vis - it it with thine own ar - dor glow - ing;
turn To dust and ash - es in its heat con - sum - ing;
long, Shall far out - pass the power of hu - man tell - ing;

O Com - fort - er, draw near, With - in my heart ap - pear,
And let thy glo - rious light Shine ev - er on my sight,
For none can guess its grace, Till he be - come the place

And kin - dle it, thy ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.
And clothe me round, the while my path il - lum - ing.
Where - in the Ho - ly Spir - it makes his dwell - ing. A - men.

In Christ There Is No East or West

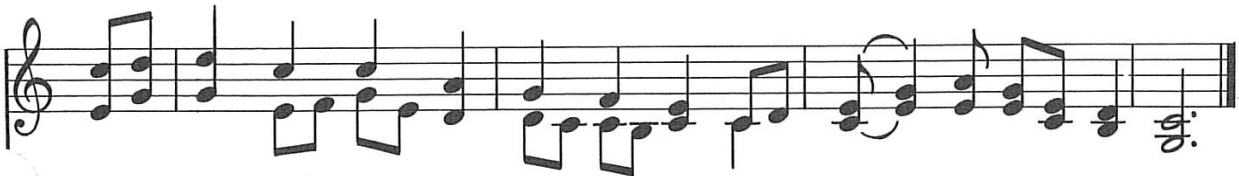
Second Tune

John Oxenham, 1852-1941

McKee C.M.

*Negro Melody**Adapted by Harry T. Burleigh, 1866-1949*

1 In Christ there is no East or West, In him no South or North;
 2 In him shall true hearts ev-ery-where Their high com-mun-ion find;
 3 Join hands, then, broth-ers of the faith, What-e'er your race may be!
 4 In Christ now meet both East and West, In him meet South and North;



But one great fel-low-ship of love Through-out the whole wide earth.
 His serv-ice is the gold-en cord Close-bind-ing all man-kind.
 Who serves my Fa-ther as a son Is sure-ly kin to me.
 All Christ-ly souls are one in him Through-out the whole wide earth.



Coming in June—Celebrating Children and Fathers!

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY IS JUNE 14. We are still determining how we'll mark this important milestone in our congregational year amidst current circumstances, but mark it we will! Plan to celebrate the **Children's Community Corner** and a great year for our kids. Please contact Nan Parsons (nlp3721@yahoo.com) to ask how your children can get involved.

SHELTER SUNDAY IS JUNE 21. Every year on Father's Day FCC makes a commitment to support the work of **Upper Valley Habitat for Humanity**, the local affiliate of an international, ecumenical ministry (uvhabitat.org). You can help fulfill the home-ownership dreams of local families with a contribution of any amount in honor or memory of the father(s) in your life.

More information coming soon; please consider a contribution, and thanks!



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

PO Box 230
10 South Park St
Lebanon NH 03766

Weekly Worship Resources Enclosed!

DATED MATERIAL—Please Deliver Promptly

Do you use email? Contact church@fccleb.org to receive this and other communication by email.

Welcome!

We are a Christ-centered community that celebrates the love of God. Although we are of varied minds, with varying measures of belief and unbelief, we are one body, bound together in Christ. We recognize the uniqueness of every individual as God's beloved child. We seek to respond faithfully to God's call for justice for all creation. We strive in word and deed to be faithful to Jesus' model of loving acceptance. We seek to create a sanctuary where all will know they are welcome and included.

No matter your age, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, race or ethnicity, physical or mental ability, or economic circumstance, you are invited into the full life and ministry of First Congregational Church of Lebanon, including its worship, sacraments, and rites.

Join us as we grow together in God's love.

First Congregational Church of Lebanon

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Susan Sorensen, Interim Organist and Choir Director • Nancy Parsons, Church School Superintendent

Barbara Teeter, Chair of Deacons • Linda Jacobs, Chair of Church Council • Barbara Jones, Moderator

Brian Clancy, Church Administrator

Church Office Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9:00-12:00 (or by appointment as needed)

603-448-4281 • church@fccleb.org • prayer@fccleb.org • music@fccleb.org • www.fccleb.org