



# First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

---

## The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

July 12, 2020

“The reason why God’s servants love creatures so much  
is that they see how much Christ loves them.”

–St. Catherine of Siena

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

### Call to Worship (*Unison*; Psalm 119:105-112)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to observe your righteous ordinances. I am severely afflicted; give me life, O LORD, according to your word. Accept my offerings of praise, O LORD, and teach me your ordinances. I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget your law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from your precepts. Your decrees are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. I incline my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the end.

**Hymn 32** (*See below, p. 5*)      *Awake, My Soul, and With the Sun*      Morning Hymn

### Prayer of Invocation

God, who joins us together in and through your Spirit, lift up our worship, inspire our prayers, and infuse all we do and offer with your grace, your love, and your power. Be with us during this service, we pray, 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

Today's lesson from Matthew is rightly famous, telling us the Parable of the Sower. We see that someone plants seeds. Some are wasted, just falling on the ground; others are overwhelmed by weeds; some take root but don't grow; and others, well, they grow! Jesus is the sower, and the Holy Spirit is the way he spreads the faith—and he does this through you and me. We can do our part by telling the stories and living our lives in ways that will make other people want to learn more about being Christians. If you have a garden or know somebody else who does, you know that planting and maintaining a vegetable patch or bed of flowers is not always easy. But when things work as you hope they will, the results are magnificent. When you see a ripe tomato on the vine, or flowers in bloom, think of today's parable, and what it would be like to know you've spread and shared the love of God with someone else.

Hymn 461 (See below, p. 6)    *Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*    St. George's Windsor

## Scripture Lessons

**Romans 8:1-11.** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup>For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup>For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, <sup>8</sup>and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup>But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

**Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23.** That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. <sup>2</sup>Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup>And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no

depth of soil. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>Let anyone with ears listen!" [...]

<sup>18</sup>"Hear then the parable of the sower. <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. <sup>20</sup>As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup>yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. <sup>22</sup>As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>23</sup>But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

**Sermon**      *"Some Pitfalls of Gardening" (See separate document)*      Stephen R. Silver

**Hymn 415 (See below, p. 7)**      *In Christ There Is No East or West*      McKee

### **Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer**

*Note: As we hold our community members in prayer, please help us ensure that our weekly prayer list is current by contacting Rev. Silver or the church office with any changes.*

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

We remember Amelia and Guy Lewis, who both passed away in Mississippi at age 97 from COVID-19. Guy Lewis was Barbara Sargent's cousin.

We pray for Lee Ann Marsh, as she prepares for knee-replacement surgery on Tuesday.

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 reconciliation in this time of racial tension.

We pray for wisdom and humility from all our leaders.

Today we offer the following prayer:

Holy Gardener, Sower of Life: We marvel at your world around us, at the life it sustains, at the cycle of being that brings new things to blossom. We know that this is because of your love, made known through all Creation, and because of

your desire to see things grow and prosper in health and love. We confess that our gardens are but pale imitations of yours, but we lift them up as homage to what you have done for us. We pray and hope that we will tend to the fields in which we live our lives with the grace and power with which you care for us.

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**

### **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*)**

God of nature, God of nurture: Plant in us this day a spirit of faithful generosity and bold discipleship, and cause it to grow and blossom in ways that serve your people, your world, your Gospel. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

**Hymn 93 (See below, p. 8)**      *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*      Cwm Rhondda

### **Benediction**

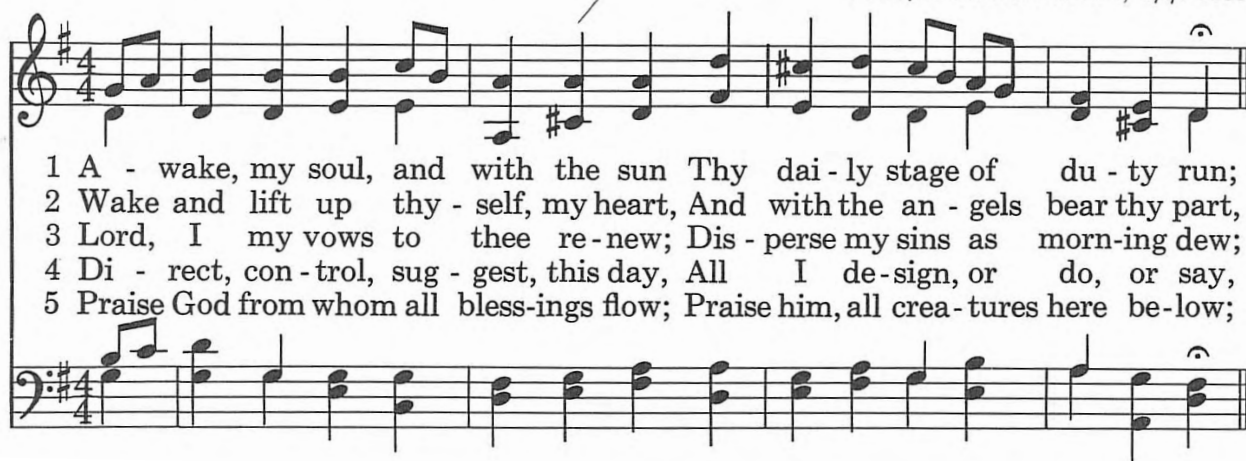
My friends, life is short. We do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So, be swift to love, and make haste to be kind.

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.

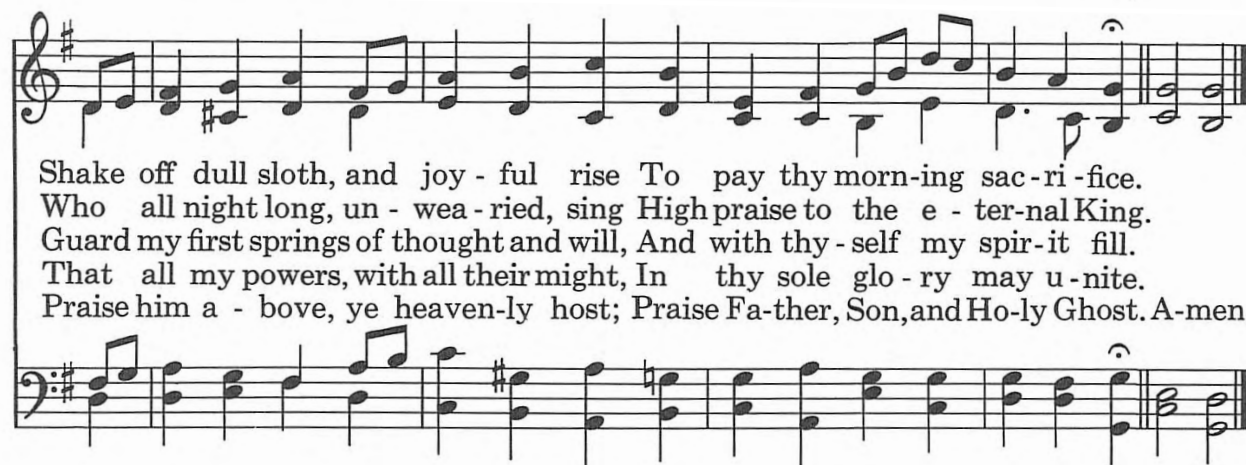
### ***Joys, Concerns, and Prayer Requests***

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@fcclb.org](mailto:prayer@fcclb.org), or contact the church office or the Rev. Steve Silver directly.

Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

MORNING HYMN L.M.  
François H. Barthélémon, 1741-1808


1 A - wake, my soul, and with the sun Thy dai - ly stage of du - ty run;  
2 Wake and lift up thy - self, my heart, And with the an - gels bear thy part,  
3 Lord, I my vows to thee re - new; Dis - perse my sins as morn - ing dew;  
4 Di - rect, con - trol, sug - gest, this day, All I de - sign, or do, or say,  
5 Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise him, all crea - tures here be - low;



Shake off dull sloth, and joy - ful rise To pay thy morn - ing sac - ri - fice.  
Who all night long, un - wea - ried, sing High praise to the e - ter - nal King.  
Guard my first springs of thought and will, And with thy - self my spir - it fill.  
That all my powers, with all their might, In thy sole glo - ry may u - nite.  
Praise him a - bove, ye heaven - ly host; Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

### PLYMOUTH'S PILGRIMS: THEIR CHURCH, THEIR WORLD, AND OURS

Four-week Class on Zoom—Tuesdays, July 28–August 18, at 7:00 (RSVP by 7/17)

Join us for an exploration of the Pilgrims on the 400th anniversary of their arrival in America, using a Congregational Library curriculum created for the occasion. This is a great opportunity to learn about our forebears in faith, what they actually believed and did, whom they met upon arriving in the New World, and how their experience impacts us today. Readings and other materials will be provided, and each session will offer a lively discussion. *There is no cost to participate and all materials are free. Questions/RSVP by July 17 to Rev. Steve Silver at [silver@fccle.org](mailto:silver@fccle.org).*

### Uncovering Racism—A Racial-Justice Reading Group in August (TBD)

We believe that as Christians, we are called to work for racial justice. To help us better do this work, we will read *Uncovering Racism*, by Kathryn Goering Reid and Stephen Breck Reid. This short but powerful book, written from a faith perspective, will help us see how racism persists as an issue we must grapple with. *All are invited to participate! Books provided free of charge, but reservations are required in advance. Please email Rev. Steve Silver ([silver@fccle.org](mailto:silver@fccle.org)) with questions or to RSVP.*

## Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

Henry Alford, 1810-1871

ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR 7.7.7.D.

George J. Elvey, 1816-1893

1 Come, ye thank-ful peo-ple, come, Raise the song of har-vest home;  
 2 All the world is God's own field, Fruit un-to his praise to yield;  
 3 For the Lord our God shall come, And shall take his har-vest home;  
 4 E - ven so, Lord, quick-ly come To thy fi - nal har-vest home;

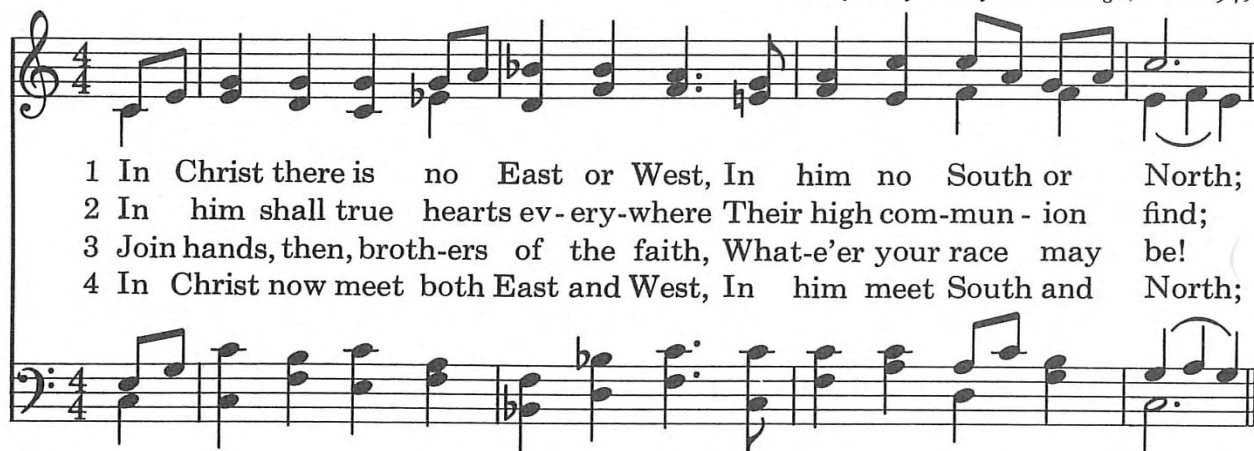
All is safe - ly gath - ered in, Ere the win - ter storms be - gin;  
 Wheat and tares to - geth - er sown, Un - to joy or sor - row grown;  
 From his field shall in that day All of - fens - es purge a - way,  
 Gath - er thou thy peo - ple in, Free from sor - row, free from sin;

God, our Mak - er, doth pro - vide For our wants to be sup - plied;  
 First the blade, and then the ear, Then the full corn shall ap - pear;  
 Give his an - gels charge at last In the fire the tares to cast,  
 There for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, In thy pres - ence to a - bid;

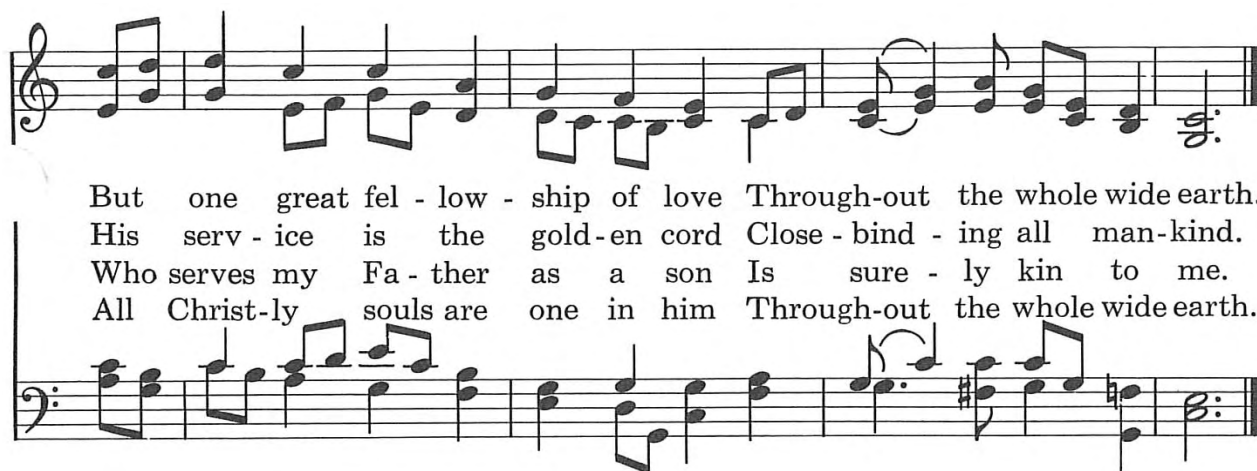
Come to God's own tem - ple, come, Raise the song of har-vest home.  
 Lord of har-vest, grant that we Whole-some grain and pure may be.  
 But the fruit-ful ears to store In his gar - ner ev - er - more.  
 Come, with all thine an - gels, come, Raise the glo - rious har-vest home. A-men.

*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.

### HEARTS YOU HOLD—Helping Our Immigrant Neighbors

A non-profit based in Thetford, **Hearts You Hold** empowers immigrants, migrants, and refugees to determine items they may need or want—from diapers to bikes, clothing to appliances—and how to obtain them. Donors then fund these purchases on HYH's website. The program affirms that these vulnerable groups should feel valued, respected, and appreciated.

If you're interested in learning more or donating to Hearts You Hold, please visit HYH at [heartsyouhold.org/individual-requests/](http://heartsyouhold.org/individual-requests/). Current requests include several from essential migrant farm workers in VT and NH.

*Please note that we've extended our suspension of on-site worship services and other events through at least Sunday, August 30, maintaining caution amid COVID-19 concerns.*

However, as we consider what it would mean to resume worship in person—safety precautions, changes in liturgical practice, singing and communal prayer, childcare, etc.—we welcome your thoughts and concerns. Please contact the church office or Rev. Steve Silver ([silver@fcclb.org](mailto:silver@fcclb.org)).

## Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

William Williams, 1717-1791  
Tr. Peter Williams, 1727-1796, and others

CWM RHONDDA 8.7.8.7.8.7.7.  
John Hughes, 1873-1932

1 Guide me, O thou great Je - ho - vah, Pil - grim through this  
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain, Whence the heal - ing  
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, Bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land; I am weak, but thou art might-y; Hold me with thy  
stream doth flow; Let the fire and cloud-y pil - lar Lead me all my  
fears sub - side; Death of death, and hell's de - struc - tion, Land me safe on

power - ful hand; Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
jour - ney through; Strong De - liv - erer, strong De - liv - erer,  
Ca - naan's side; Songs of prais - es, songs of prais - es,

Feed me till I want no more, Feed me till I want no more.  
Be thou still my strength and shield, Be thou still my strength and shield.  
I will ev - er give to thee, I will ev - er give to thee. A - men.





**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](mailto: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](mailto:church@fccleb.org) • [prayer@fccleb.org](mailto:prayer@fccleb.org) • [music@fccleb.org](mailto:music@fccleb.org) • [www.fccleb.org](http://www.fccleb.org)**