



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 19, 2020

“The pilgrimage provided a sense of purpose. As well as the long march towards Jerusalem, it also knitted my life into the landscape. The months were replaced by the shifting seasons, while the weeks were measured out in rounds of worship. Staying in monasteries and convents, presbyteries and churches, calmed what was restless within me, and during the regular services I noticed how the minutes slowed and the silence assembled, until the days were worth more than they had been before.”

–Guy Stagg, *The Crossway*

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

Call to Worship (*Unison*; Psalm 139:7-12,23-24)

O God, where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,” even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you. Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Hymn 15 (*See below, p. 5*) *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* Lobe den Herren

Prayer of Invocation

Holy God, as you bring us together in and through your Holy Spirit, we lift up our worship, asking that you 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

everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ [...]

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

Sermon “Climbing the Ladder” (See separate document) Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 495 (See below, p. 7) *We Are Climbing Jacob’s Ladder* Bethany

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 pray for Jon Stearns, a longtime member of our men’s breakfast group, and for his wife Marion and his family, as he fights both liver and pancreatic cancer.

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:

15

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Joachim Neander, 1650-1680
Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

LOBE DEN HERREN 14.14.4.7.8.
"Stralsund Gesangbuch," 1665

1 Praise to the Lord, the Al-might-y, the King of cre-a-tion!
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous-ly reign-eth,
3 Praise to the Lord, who doth pros-per thy work and de-fend thee;
4 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me a-dore him!

O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and sal-va-tion!
Shel-ters thee un-der his wings, yea, so gen-tly sus-tain-eth!
Sure-ly his good-ness and mer-cy here dai-ly at-tend thee.
All that hath life and breath, come now with prais-es be-fore him.

All ye who hear, Now to his tem-ple draw near;
Hast thou not seen How thy de-sires e'er have been
Pon-der a-new What the Al-might-y can do,
Let the A-men Sound from his peo-ple a-gain:

Join me in glad ad-o-ra-tion!
Grant-ed in what he or-dain-eth?
If with his love he be-friend thee.
Glad-ly for aye we a-dore him. A-men.

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

399

George Matheson, 1842-1906

ST. MARGARET 8.8.8.6.

Albert L. Peace, 1844-1912

1 O Love that wilt not let me go,
2 O Light that fol - lowest all my way,
3 O Joy that seek - est me through pain,
4 O Cross that lift - est up my head,

I rest my wea - ry soul in thee;
I yield my flick - ering torch to thee;
I can - not close my heart to thee;
I dare not ask to fly from thee;

I give thee back the life I owe,
My heart re - stores its bor - rowed ray,
I trace the rain - bow through the rain,
I lay in dust life's glo - ry dead,

That in thine o - cean depths its flow May rich - er, full - er be.
That in thy sun - shine's blaze its day May bright - er, fair - er be.
And feel the prom - ise is not vain That morn shall tear - less be.
And from the ground there blos - soms red Life that shall end - less be. A - men.

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder

495

Negro Spiritual

JACOB'S LADDER 8.8.8.5.
Negro Melody

1 We are climb-ing Ja-cob's lad-der, We are climb-ing Ja-cob's
2 Ev - ery round goes high - er, high - er, Ev - ery round goes high - er,
3 Broth-er, do you love my Je - sus? Broth-er, do you love my

lad - der, We are climb-ing Ja-cob's lad-der, Sol-diers of the cross.
high - er, Ev - ery round goes high-er, high-er, Sol-diers of the cross.
Je - sus? Broth-er, do you love my Je - sus? Sol-diers of the cross.

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

Four-week Class on Zoom—Tuesdays, July 28–August 18, at 7:00 pm (RSVP by 7/20)

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 20 to Rev. Steve Silver at silver@fcclcb.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@fcclcb.org) with questions or to RSVP.*

Nearer, My God, to Thee

351

Sarah F. Adams, 1805-1848

BETHANY 6.4.6.4.6.6.6.4.

Lowell Mason, 1792-1872



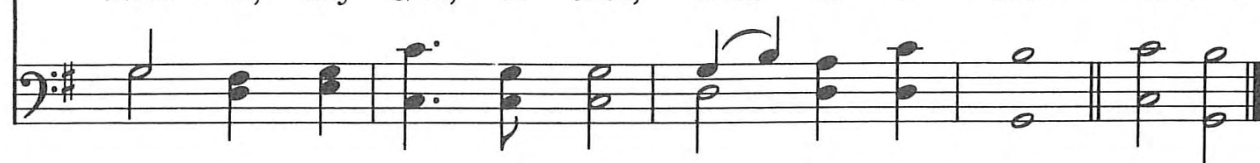
1 Near - er, my God, to thee, Near - er to thee, E'en though it be a cross
2 Though like the wan - der - er, The sun gone down, Dark-ness be o - ver me,
3 There let the way ap - pear Steps un - to heaven; All that thou send - est me
4 Then, with my wak - ing thoughts Bright with thy praise, Out of my ston - y griefs
Or if on joy - ful wing Cleav - ing the sky, Sun, moon, and stars for - got,



That rais - eth me; Still all my song would be, Near - er, my God, to thee,
My rest a stone, Yet in my dreams I'd be, Near - er, my God, to thee,
In mer - cy given; An - gels to beck - on me Near - er, my God, to thee,
Beth - el I'll raise; So by my woes to be Near - er, my God, to thee,
Up - ward I fly, Still all my song shall be, Near - er, my God, to thee,



Near - er, my God, to thee, Near - er to thee. A - men.



Outdoor Service Planned for Sunday, August 9 (Rain Date 8/16)

In three weeks we hope to worship together on FCC's front lawn, while keeping everyone's health and safety our primary concern. We ask for patient understanding as we consider what it means to resume worship in person—safety precautions, changes in liturgical practice, singing and communal prayer, etc. Those attending will have to RSVP in advance and follow a set of requirements, including health and symptom screening, physical distancing, and mask use. We will not have coffee hour following the service. Full details will be forthcoming, but please contact the church office or Rev. Steve Silver (silver@fccleb.org) with any questions.

Please note that on-site, indoor worship services and other events remain suspended through at least Sunday, August 30, maintaining caution amid COVID-19 concerns.



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