



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 9, 2020

“Education is what you give to children; training is what you do to plants.”

–Stephen Fry

We ask that everyone wear facial masks throughout the service. Please also refrain from singing and speaking in full voice. You may follow along with today’s hymns below on pages 5-7.

Prelude

Selections by G. F. Handel and J. S. Bach

Call to Worship

Psalm 105:1-6

O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually. Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered, O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

Hymn 411 (See below, p. 5) *Praise the Source of Faith and Learning*

Hyfrydol

Prayer of Invocation

God, we welcome your Spirit as it joins us together today as one people. Lift up our worship, inspire our prayers, infuse them with your grace, your love, your power. We pray these things in your Son’s name. Amen.

Gloria

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

Children’s Moment

This week, as we gather in front of the church for worship, Ms. Parsons will share a message. But for those of you unable to be with us, and, honestly, for all of us, I would like to give you an assignment: look for something, anything, that reminds you of God’s love. Then tell someone you care about or trust who or what this thing is!

Scripture Lessons

Genesis 37:1-4,12-28. Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. ²This is the story of the family of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. ³Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves. ⁴But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him. [...]

¹²Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. ¹³And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." He answered, "Here I am." ¹⁴So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

He came to Shechem, ¹⁵and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" ¹⁶"I am seeking my brothers," he said; "tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." ¹⁷The man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. ¹⁹They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams." ²¹But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." ²²Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. ²³So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; ²⁴and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

²⁵Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers agreed.

²⁸When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

Matthew 14:22-33. ²²Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake. ²⁶But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

²⁸Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

²⁹He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. ³⁰But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Sermon "Back to School"

Stephen R. Silver

Musical Offering "Bright is the Ring of Words" (*Songs of Travel*)

R. Vaughan Williams

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

Note: As we hold our community members in prayer, please help us maintain our weekly prayer list by contacting Rev. Silver or the church office to confirm names on the list or remove them.

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, Jon, Larry, Bryan, Pat, Edith, Jon, and Jan.

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, Wondrous God, you have created the universe and everything in it. For this beautiful world, we give you thanks. Give us the will and the strength to care for what you have entrusted to us, to be stewards and not exploiters, to leave things at least as good as we found them. We remember the example of Jesus, who always put others before himself, who sacrificed everything for the good of the world. Let us remember, let us follow, his example.

Praise the source of faith and learning that has sparked and stoked the mind
with a passion for discerning how the world has been designed.

Let the sense of wonder flowing from the wonders we survey
keep our faith forever growing and renew our need to pray.

God of wisdom we acknowledge that our science and our art
and the breadth of human knowledge only partial truth impart.
Far beyond our calculation lies a depth we cannot sound
where your purpose for creation and the pulse of life are found.

May our faith redeem the blunder of believing that our thought
has displaced the grounds for wonder which the ancient prophets taught.
May our learning curb the error which unthinking faith can breed
lest we justify some terror with an antiquated creed.

As two currents in a river fight each other's undertow,
till converging they deliver one coherent steady flow,
blend, O God, our faith and learning till they carve a single course,
till they join as one, returning praise and thanks to you, the Source.

Please note that on-site, indoor worship services and other events remain suspended at FCC through at least Sunday, September 6, as we maintain caution amid COVID-19 concerns.

Uncovering Racism—A Racial-Justice Reading Group (Dates/Times 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@fccleb.org) with questions or to RSVP.*

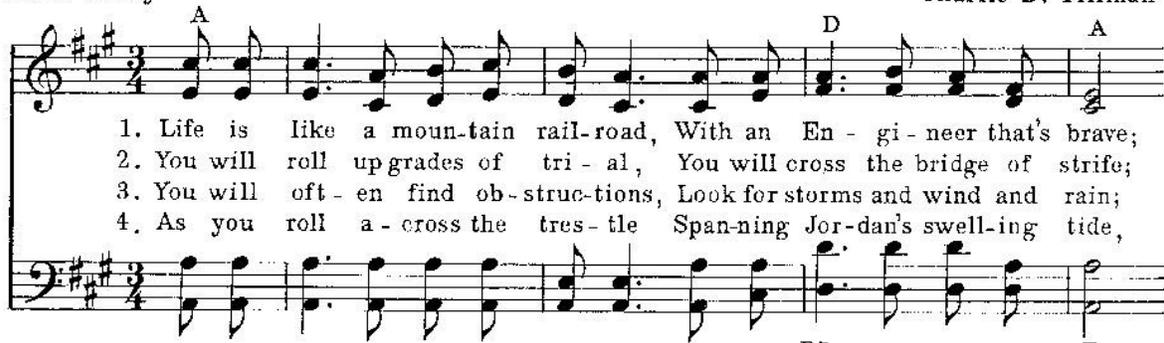
PLYMOUTH'S PILGRIMS: THEIR CHURCH, THEIR WORLD, AND OURS

Christian Education on Zoom—Tuesdays Through August 18 at 7:00 pm (RSVP)

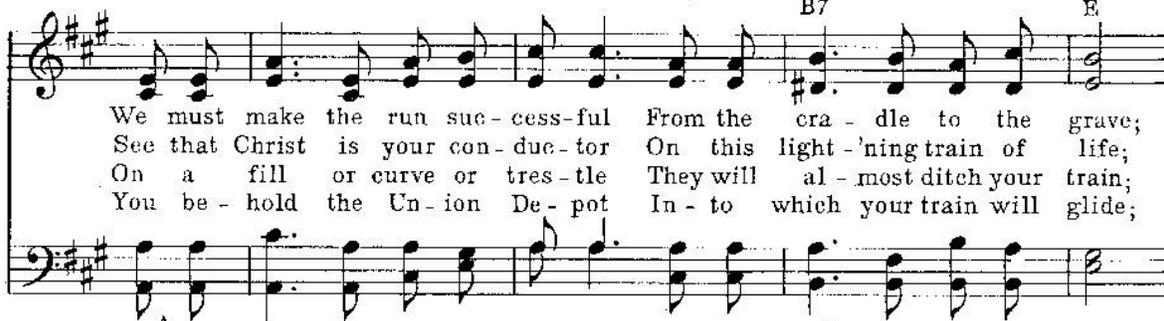
Join us for an exploration of the Pilgrims on the 400th anniversary of their arrival in America, using a Congregational Library curriculum created for the occasion. This is a great opportunity to learn about our forebears in faith, what they actually believed and did, whom they met upon arriving in the 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 to Rev. Steve Silver at silver@fccleb.org.*

M. E. Abbey

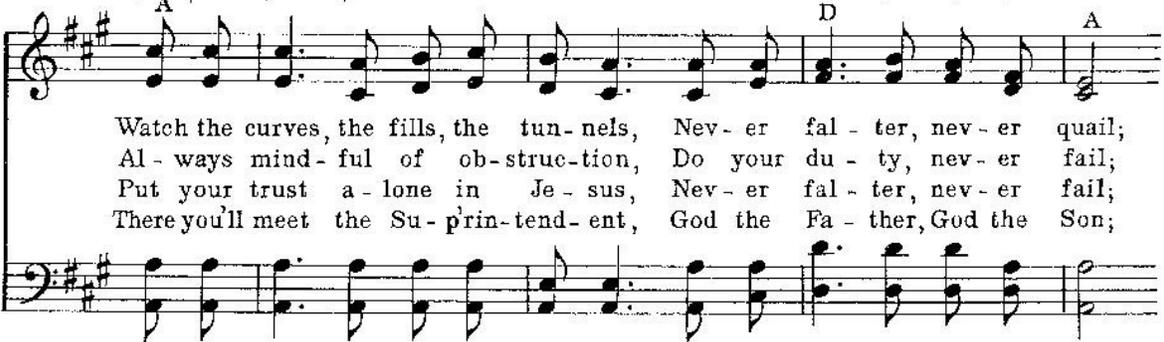
Charlie D. Tillman



1. Life is like a moun-tain rail-road, With an En - gi - neer that's brave;
 2. You will roll upgrades of tri - al, You will cross the bridge of strife;
 3. You will oft - en find ob - struc-tions, Look for storms and wind and rain;
 4. As you roll a - cross the tres - tle Span-ning Jor-dan's swell-ing tide,



We must make the run suc - cess-ful From the cra - dle to the grave;
 See that Christ is your con - duc - tor On this light - 'ning train of life;
 On a fill or curve or tres - tle They will al - most ditch your train;
 You be - hold the Un - ion De - pot In - to which your train will glide;



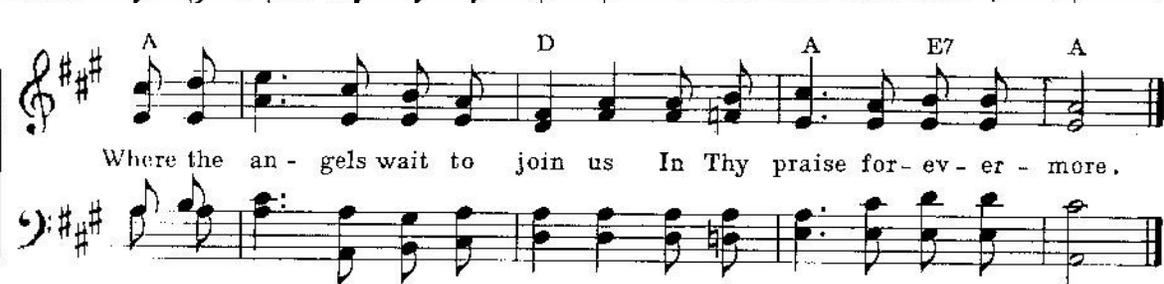
Watch the curves, the fills, the tun - nels, Nev - er fal - ter, nev - er quail;
 Al - ways mind - ful of ob - struc-tion, Do your du - ty, nev - er fail;
 Put your trust a - lone in Je - sus, Nev - er fal - ter, nev - er fail;
 There you'll meet the Su - p'rin - tend - ent, God the Fa - ther, God the Son;



Keep your hand up - on the throt-tle And your eye up - on the rail.
 Keep your hand up - on the throt-tle And your eye up - on the rail.
 Keep your hand up - on the throt-tle And your eye up - on the rail.
 With the heart - y, joy - ous plaud - it, "We - ry pil - grim, wel - come home!"



CHORUS
 Bless - ed Sav - ior, Thou wilt guide us, Till we reach that bliss - ful shore,



Where the an - gels wait to join us In Thy praise for - ev - er - more.

834 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand; lead me on, help me
 2 When my way grows drear, pre - cious Lord, lin - ger

stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
 near; when my life is al - most gone,

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the
 hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I

light; take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.
 fall; take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.

This black gospel song, like much hymnody, sprang out of the author's deep personal loss (the death of his wife and newborn son), yet it has brought solace to many. He thought his fingers were playing new music, but they unlocked a deep memory of a tune almost a century old.

TEXT: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1938

MUSIC: George N. Allen, 1844; arr. Thomas A. Dorsey, 1938

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PRECIOUS LORD

6.6.9.D



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

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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)

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