



# First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

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## The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 30, 2020

“To enjoy worship for its own sake, or simply out of a cultural appreciation of the ‘performance’ (whether of Byrd or heavy rock), would be like Moses coming upon the burning bush and deciding to cook his lunch on it.”

–N. T. Wright

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

### Call to Worship (*Unison*; Psalm 105:1-4)

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.

**Hymn 331** (*See below, p. 5*)    *God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand*    National Hymn

### Prayer of Invocation

God, though we worship in places near and far today, we welcome your Spirit as it joins us together 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 (*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

*While we are not meeting in person, all are encouraged to stay in touch with one another by phone, email, or written cards. If you wish to organize a Zoom conference or phone meeting, please contact the Rev. Steve Silver (603-448-4281/silver@fcclcb.org), and he’ll get you set up and ready to go.*

### Children’s Moment

Can you imagine anything as incredible as a burning bush, one that’s not consumed by the flames? Sure you can—you’ve seen movies with all sorts of special effects. But if you look closely at the films, you’ll probably notice that while the movie magic is good and getting better all the time, it’s not real. What happened on Mt. Horeb all those

years ago was incredible—not because of the visuals, but because God came to talk with a man, Moses. And while we remember Moses as a great leader, he was flawed, just like us. That’s the miracle: The creator of the universe cares about us, loves us, and calls us to do his work. You don’t need a burning bush for proof of this—just look into your heart.

Hymn 49 (See below, p. 6)      *The God of Abraham Praise*

Leoni

### Scripture Lessons

**Exodus 3:1-15.** Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup>There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. <sup>3</sup>Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.” <sup>4</sup>When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” <sup>5</sup>Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” <sup>6</sup>He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

<sup>7</sup>Then the LORD said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, <sup>8</sup>and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. <sup>9</sup>The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. <sup>10</sup>So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.” <sup>11</sup>But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” <sup>12</sup>He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”

<sup>13</sup>But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” <sup>14</sup>God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” <sup>15</sup>God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’: This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.”

**Matthew 16:21-28.** <sup>21</sup>From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief

priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. <sup>22</sup>And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” <sup>23</sup>But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

<sup>24</sup>Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. <sup>26</sup>For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

<sup>27</sup>“For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. <sup>28</sup>Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

**Sermon**      *“The Hard Truth” (See separate document)*      Stephen R. Silver

**Hymn 833 (See below, p. 7)**      *O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go*      St. Margaret

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

*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, Arlene, Ruth, Ryle, Emily, John, Shirley, Dan, Roger, Evelyn, Jim, Beth, Susan, Barbara, Max, Greg, Jon, Larry, 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 and healing in this time of racial tension.

We pray for wisdom and humility from all our leaders.

Today we offer the following prayer:

Holy One, though you are known by many names, you showed us in your Son that you are indeed the purest love, comforting us, animating us, nurturing us, wishing us to make amends when we fall short, joining us together in your Creation. The words we use to describe you are limited and cannot fully describe your nature, but they are all we have—and we take solace from the knowledge that though we are but finite creatures, you share your boundless power and grace with us all.

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's mission, ministry, and ongoing work in and for the community. Please mail in your offering as you are able.*

## 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 Abraham and Sarah, Deliverer of Moses and the children of Israel: We present these gifts to you in gratitude for the mighty works you have done for us, in us, and through us. Let that which we offer this morning serve to glorify your name and reflect your love. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Hymn 826 (*See below, p. 8*)    *Lift High the Cross*

Crucifer

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

*Please note that on-site, indoor worship and other events at FCC remain suspended through at least Sunday, October 18, at which point Church Council will reassess COVID-19 concerns.*

# 331 God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand

(optional)

1 God of the a - ges, whose al-might - y  
 2 Thy love di - vine hath led us in the  
 3 From war's a - larms, from dead - ly pes - ti -  
 4 Re - fresh thy peo - ple on their toil - some

hand leads forth in beau - ty all the star - ry band  
 past. In this free land by thee our lot is cast.  
 lence, be thy strong arm our ev - er sure de - fense.  
 way. Lead us from night to nev - er - end - ing day.

of shin - ing worlds in splen - dor through the skies,  
 Be thou our rul - er, guard - ian, guide, and stay:  
 Thy true re - li - gion in our hearts in - crease.  
 Fill all our lives with love and grace di - vine,

our grate - ful songs be - fore thy throne a - rise.  
 thy word our law, thy paths our cho - sen way.  
 Thy boun - teous good - ness nour - ish us in peace.  
 and glo - ry, laud, and praise be ev - er thine.

This hymn was generated by 19th-century centennial celebrations: the words by the Declaration of Independence and the music by the adoption of the United States Constitution. Despite these origins, no specific nation is mentioned in this hymn of praise and prayer for peace.

# 49 The God of Abraham Praise

1 The God of A-braham praise, who reigns en-throned a-bove,  
 2 Your spir-it still flows free, high surg-ing where it will.  
 3 Your good-ly land we seek, with peace and plen-ty blest,  
 4 You have e-ter-nal life im-plant-ed in the soul;

the An-cient of E-ter-nal Days, the God of love!  
 In proph-et's word you spoke of old and you speak still.  
 a land of sa-cred lib-er-ty and Sab-bath rest.  
 your love shall be our strength and stay, while a-ges roll.

The Lord, the great I AM, by earth and heaven con-fessed,  
 Es-tab-lished is your law, and change-less it shall stand,  
 There milk and hon-ey flow, and oil and wine a-bound,  
 We praise you, liv-ing God! We praise your ho-ly name:

we bow be-fore your ho-ly name, for-ev-er blest.  
 deep writ up-on the hu-man heart by your strong hand.  
 and trees of life for-ev-er grow with mer-cy crowned.  
 the first, the last, be-yond all thought, and still the same!

Shaped by its traditional Jewish tune, this selection of English stanzas conveys the essence of the *Yigdal*, a canticle based on a medieval Hebrew statement of faith about the nature of God and often used in synagogue worship, alternately chanted by cantor and congregation.

# O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go 833

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

wea - ry soul in thee; I give thee back the life I owe, that  
flick - ering torch to thee; my heart re - stores its bor - rowed ray, that  
close my heart to thee; I trace the rain - bow through the rain, and  
ask to fly from thee; I lay in dust life's glo - ry dead, and

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

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go'. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are provided below the vocal line of each system.

This intense hymn of commitment to God (addressed as Love, Light, and Joy) closes with an invocation of the ultimate testimony to those attributes (the Cross). The composer, a Scotsman, named this specially-composed tune for the 11th-century patroness of Scotland.

TEXT: George Matheson, 1881, alt.  
MUSIC: Albert Lister Peace, 1884, alt.

ST. MARGARET  
8.8.8.8.6

## **Uncovering Racism—A Racial-Justice Reading Group (Dates/Times TBD)**

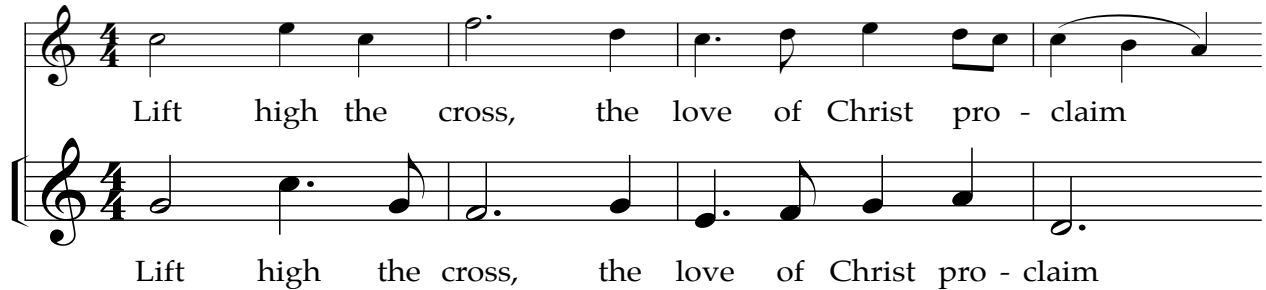
We believe that as Christians, we are called to work for racial justice. To help us better do this work, we will read *Uncovering Racism*, by Kathryn Goering Reid and Stephen Breck Reid. This short but powerful book, written from a faith perspective, will help us see how racism persists as an issue we 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@fclub.org) with questions or to RSVP.*

# Lift High the Cross

826

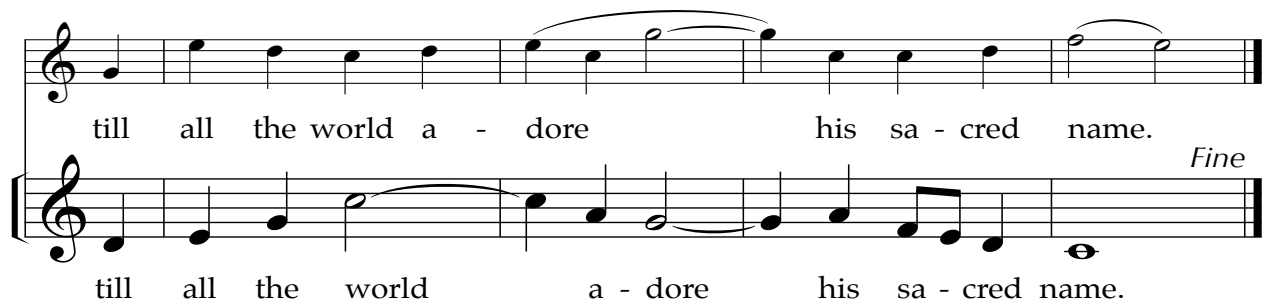
Refrain

Descant



Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim

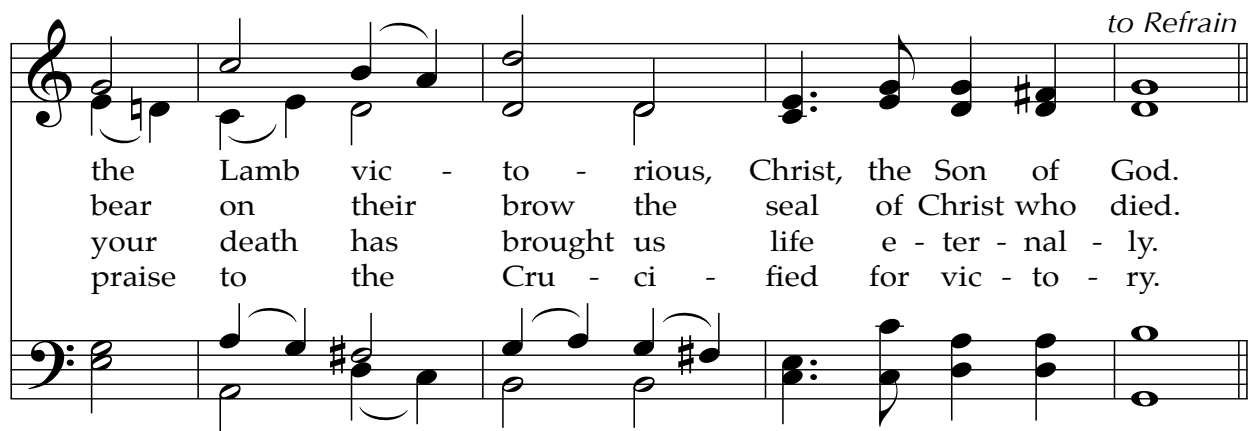


till all the world a - dore his sa - cred name. *Fine*

till all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.



1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our Sav - ior trod,  
2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied  
3 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,  
4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:



to Refrain

the Lamb vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.  
bear on their brow the seal of Christ who died.  
your death has brought us life e - ter - nal - ly.  
praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry.

This majestic hymn celebrates the paradox that for Christians a means of painful death has been transformed into a symbol of renewed life; a sign of defeat has become an emblem of victory. With the cross traced on our foreheads at Baptism we are marked as Christ's own forever.

TEXT: George William Kitchin, 1887; rev. Michael Robert Newbolt, 1916, alt.  
MUSIC: Sydney Hugo Nicholson, 1916; desc. Richard Proulx, 1985  
Text and Music © 1974 Hope Publishing Company  
Music Desc. © 1985 Hope Publishing Company

CRUCIFER  
10.10 with refrain

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**First Congregational Church of Lebanon**

PO Box 230  
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**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)

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