



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost • KICK-OFF SUNDAY!

September 20, 2020

“We are supposed to be on the side of goodness
in the sense that we need it, not that we are it.”

–Francis Spufford

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 5-6.

Prelude

Le Cygne (The Swan)

C. Saint-Saëns

Call to Worship

Adapted from Psalm 105

Glory in the LORD’s holy name; let the hearts of those who seek him rejoice. Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually. Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he has uttered, O offspring of his servants Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones. Praise the LORD!

Hymn 38 (p. 5)

Morning Has Broken

Bunessan

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: Blessing of the Backpacks and Laptops

Today we bless your backpacks, your laptops, and whatever else you may use in school. These items are sacred, not because we bless them today, but because you use them to learn, to grow, to be the people God wants you to be. So let’s give thanks for these holy things, and for all the things in our lives with which we have been blessed.

Musical Offering

Canto primo, from *Cello Suite No. 1*, op. 72

B. Britten

Scripture Lessons

Exodus 16:2-15. ²The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

⁴Then the Lord said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.” ⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your complaining against the Lord. For what are we, that you complain against us?” ⁸And Moses said, “When the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the Lord has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the Lord.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.’” ¹⁰And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. ¹¹The Lord spoke to Moses and said, ¹²“I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.’”

¹³In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.”

Matthew 20:1-16. “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first. ⁹When those hired about five

o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?' ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Sermon "Lemons or Lemonade?" Stephen R. Silver

Musical Offering "If With All Your Hearts," from *Elijah*, op. 70 F. Mendelssohn

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, Arlene, Ruth, Evelyn, Jim, Barbara, Greg, Jon, Larry, Edith, Jan, and Claude.

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:

God of the seasons, we turn to you as a new school year begins, as summer turns to autumn, and we give thanks to you for being here, in this place, at this time. Though our lives are now marked by uncertainty, we confess that it has always been so. We have always been in need of your love, your strength, and your hope. Now, we are better able to see and confess this truth. And so we do. Be with each of us and with all of us, as we live our lives armed with the confidence that comes from knowing you are with us, always.

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

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

We will not be passing an offering plate this morning, but if you wish to make a contribution, you may either leave it with the ushers on your way out after the service or mail it during the week.

Doxology

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

God of the Exodus, like the children of Israel in the desert, we have been blessed not because of our actions but through your boundless love. Take these gifts as a sign of our gratitude for your generosity and a commitment to share with others as you so freely share with us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hymn 396 (p. 6) *Brethren, We Have Met to Worship* Holy Manna

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.

Postlude *Gigue, from Cello Suite No. 3, BWV 1009* J. S. Bach

Leading Worship This Morning

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor • Nan Parsons, Children's Community Corner
Susan Sorensen, Organist • Brian Clancy, Tenor • Benjamin Kulp, Cello
Dennis Brown, Linda Jacobs, and Stacey Steele, Liturgists
Members of the Diaconate, Greeters and Ushers

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 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.

Morning Has Broken

38

Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-

BUNESSAN 5.5.5.4.D.

Gaelic Melody

Harm. by David Evans, 1874-1948

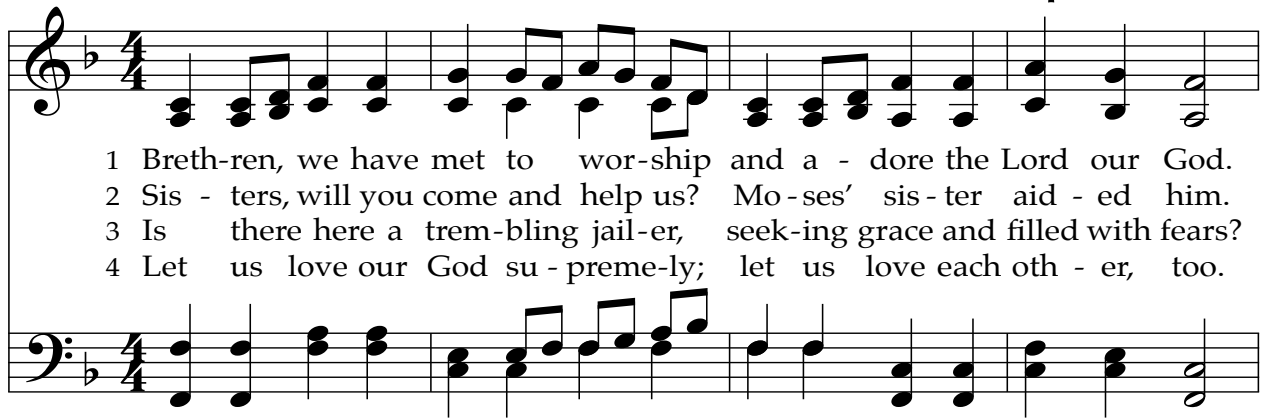
In unison

1 Morn-ing has bro - ken Like the first morn - ing, Black-bird has
2 Sweet the rain's new fall Sun - lit from heav - en, Like the first
3 Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing Born of the

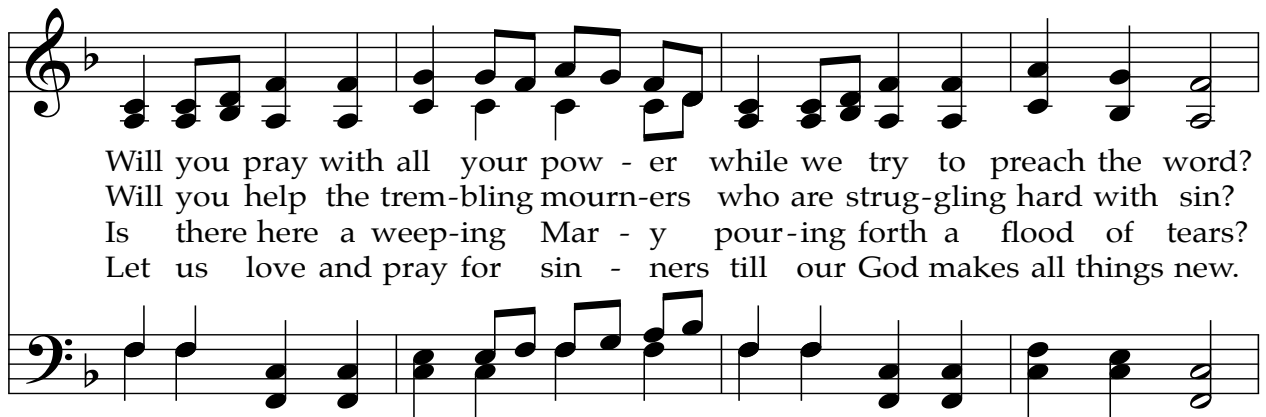
spo - ken Like the first bird. Praise for the sing - ing!
dew - fall On the first grass. Praise for the sweet - ness
one light E - den saw play! Praise with e - la - tion,

Praise for the morn - ing! Praise for them, spring - ing Fresh from the Word!
Of the wet gar - den, Sprung in com-plete - ness Where his feet pass.
Praise ev - ery morn - ing, God's re - cre - a - tion Of the new day!

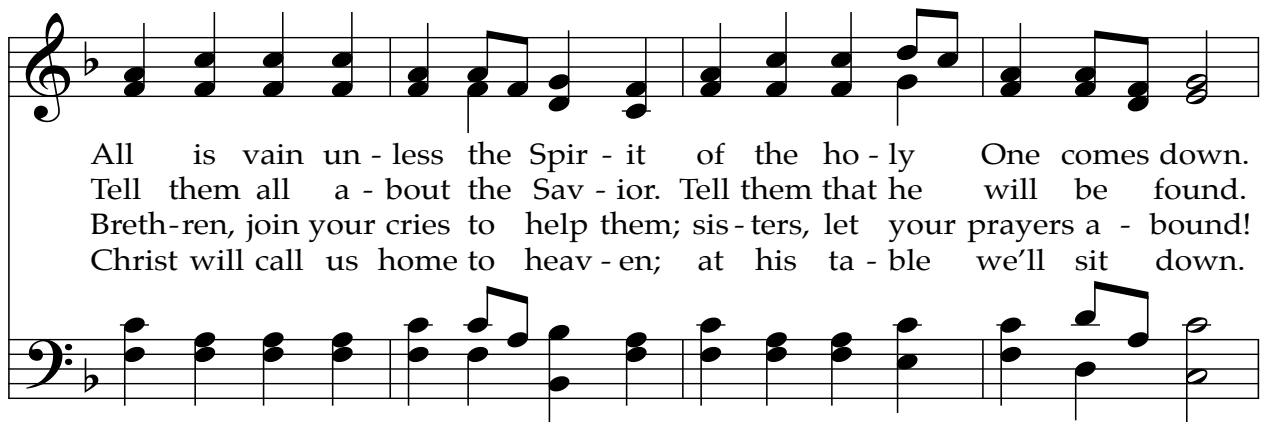
Brethren, We Have Met to Worship 396



1 Breth-ren, we have met to wor-ship and a - dore the Lord our God.
2 Sis - ters, will you come and help us? Mo-ses' sis - ter aid - ed him.
3 Is there here a trem-bling jail-er, seek-ing grace and filled with fears?
4 Let us love our God su - preme-ly; let us love each oth - er, too.



Will you pray with all your pow - er while we try to preach the word?
Will you help the trem-bling mourn-ers who are strug-gling hard with sin?
Is there here a weep-ing Mar - y pour-ing forth a flood of tears?
Let us love and pray for sin - ners till our God makes all things new.



All is vain un - less the Spir - it of the ho - ly One comes down.
Tell them all a - bout the Sav - ior. Tell them that he will be found.
Breth-ren, join your cries to help them; sis - ters, let your prayers a - bound!
Christ will call us home to heav - en; at his ta - ble we'll sit down.



Breth - ren, pray, and ho - ly man - na will be show-ered all a-round.
Sis - ters, pray, and ho - ly man - na will be show-ered all a-round.
Pray, O pray, that ho - ly man - na will be scat-tered all a-round.
Christ will gird him-self and serve us with sweet man-na all a-round.

This hymn comes out of the early 19th-century southern camp meeting experience, where believers were invited to pray for new converts, often likened to biblical characters such as Paul's jailer (Philippians 1:12-13). As its name shows, the five-note tune was created for this text.

The 2020 Lebanon CROP Walk Goes Virtual on October 4

Every year thousands of walkers across the country join the **CROP Hunger Walk**, organized by Church World Service to fight hunger, food insecurity, and poverty worldwide. First held in Bismarck, ND, in October 1969, the CROP Walk has become a community event in over 2000 towns, as churches and other local organizations collaborate to attract sponsors, advocate for hunger relief, and share the fellowship of a crisp fall afternoon outdoors.

Due to the pandemic, this year's walk will happen virtually—we will still walk, but we'll do so in small groups in our own neighborhoods. We won't have our usual hot lunch at FCC, but participants will gather for a celebration on Zoom. **All contributions should be made online, rather than by cash or check through FCC.**

Walk!—Walk on your own or form a small group with family and friends, and register online at www.crophungerwalk.org/lebanonnh/. Then, invite sponsors to donate in your name.

Donate!—Sponsor a walker, or give directly online at www.crophungerwalk.org/lebanonnh/.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH—INVEST IN THE VISION

The UCC's Strengthen the Church special offering supports the growth of ministry and local congregations across the country. Renewing older faith communities, building new ones, and funding fellowships for young, emerging leaders in our church, the program is vital to the health of our denomination—inspired this year by the vision and Holy Spirit of Pentecost.

Please consider giving to this effort to support church growth nationwide. You may either mail a check to FCC (memo "Strengthen the Church") or give online at www.ucc.org/stc. Thank you!

Neighbors in Need—Special Mission Offering

The UCC's Neighbors in Need program supports ministries of justice and compassion across the country. Two-thirds of the collection is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries for a range of local and national initiatives, advocacy efforts, direct service projects, and the fight against systemic injustice. The rest goes to the Council for American Indian Ministries, sustaining a proud tradition of aiding Native American populations. **This year, NIN is focused on serving our immigrant neighbors and their communities.**

Please contribute as you're able to this vital mission program. You may either mail a check to FCC (memo "Neighbors in Need") or give online at www.ucc.org/nin. Thank you!

Uncovering Racism—A Racial-Justice Reading Group (Wednesdays, 6:30)

We believe that as Christians, we are called to work for racial justice. The faith perspective of *Uncovering Racism*, by Kathryn Goering Reid and Stephen Breck Reid, helps us see how racism persists as an issue we must all confront. *All are invited to participate! Books provided free of charge, but advance reservation is required. Please email Rev. Steve Silver (silver@fccleb.org) with questions or to RSVP.*



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