



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

The First Sunday of Lent

February 21, 2021

“No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great.”

–St. John Chrysostom

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

Prelude *Voluntary in C Minor/Major* Thomas A. Walmisley

Call to Worship (Unison) Adapted from Psalm 25

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

Hymn 148 (p. 5) *Forty Days and Forty Nights* Heinlein

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.

Lenten Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. Open our hearts to you, that we may receive your forgiveness and be redeemed by your reconciling love. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

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@fycleb.org), and he'll get you set up and ready to go.

Children's Moment

It's hard to believe, but in a few weeks Easter will be here! A lot has to happen between now and then: we need to complete Lent, spring has to arrive, and the Red Sox will most likely disappoint us in spring training. But believe you me: Easter *is* coming. The snow and ice *will* melt, temperatures *will* go up, flowers *will* bloom, and trees *will* bud. But we'll have to wait for all this. It takes time. We need to be patient. But waiting with us are God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. We are never left alone by the Trinity. Ever. While we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus in early April, we remember that it took place 2,000 years ago. And that's why Jesus can always be with us.

Hymn 418 (p. 6)

O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee

Maryton

Scripture Lessons

Genesis 9:8-17. ⁸Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹²God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

Mark 1:9-15. ⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

Sermon

“Into the Wilderness”

Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 348 (p. 7)

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

Olivet

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

As we hold our community members in prayer, please exercise care and discretion when sharing, as what seems public for you may be private for others. Help us keep our weekly prayer list current by contacting Rev. Silver or the church office to confirm or remove names on the list.

On this day we offer our ongoing prayers for Pete, Lloyd, Arlene, Ruth, Evelyn, Jon, Barbara, Greg, Larry, Edith, Jan, Eileen, and James.

We pray for all those fighting the coronavirus or other illnesses, whether of mind, body, or spirit.

We pray for the healthcare workers and first responders who are on the front line dealing with this pandemic.

We pray for all those struggling with financial challenges, reduced hours and unemployment, and fears about the future.

And finally, we offer the following prayer:

Holy God, we ask that you help us to feel your Spirit during this Lenten season. Though it may feel as if we are lost in the wilderness, help us to see your Garden. Inspire our prayers, strengthen our hearts, focus our minds on you. We ask that you make this a truly blessed Lent, one in which we will repent and turn to you with renewed enthusiasm, gratitude, and vision—all of which we will need as we look toward your new Creation.

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

Remembering those who are without, who are in need, who are often ignored, we invite your support of our ongoing ministry in and for the community. Please mail in your offering as you are able.

Offertory *My Faith Looks Up to Thee* arr. Herbert Colvin

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 City and Wilderness, as we journey together into Lent, we know we are not alone. We give thanks that your church, your love, and your Spirit are ever present, always with us. In gratitude, we present this offering, a sign of our intent to share with others what you have shared with us. Amen.

Hymn 231 (p. 8) *Christ Has Risen While Earth Slumbers* Suo Gan

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 *Concluding Voluntary* Thomas A. Walmisley

Thomas Attwood Walmisley (1814-56), a noted English church composer, was the organist at both Trinity and St. John's Colleges, Cambridge, where he also taught as a professor of music.

* * *

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organist • Brian Clancy, Tenor • Phil Hammond, Liturgist

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.

* * * **HOLY WEEK IS MARCH 28-APRIL 4, 2021** * * *

Forty Days and Forty Nights

148

George H. Smytlan, 1822-1870

Alt. by Francis Pott, 1832-1909, and others

HEINLEIN 7.7.7.7.

Attr. to Martin Herbst, 1654-1681

1 For - ty days and for - ty nights Thou wast fast - ing in the wild;
2 Shall not we thy sor - row share, And from earth - ly joys ab - stain,
3 And if Sa - tan, vex - ing sore, Flesh or spir - it should as - sail,
4 Keep, O keep us, Sav - ior dear, Ev - er con - stant by thy side;

For - ty days and for - ty nights Temp - ted, and yet un - de - filed.
Fast - ing with un - ceas - ing prayer, Glad with thee to suf - fer pain?
Thou, his van - quish - er be - fore, Grant we may not faint nor fail.
That with thee we may ap - pear At the e - ter - nal East - er - tide. A - men.

One Great Hour of Sharing: “Let Love Flow” – Special UCC Mission Offering

This annual, nationwide UCC offering funds mission initiatives around the world. It supports healthcare, education, agriculture, refugee assistance, and emergency relief in over 130 countries. OGHS funds are leveraged with local, national, and global partners to maximize their impact.

Please consider a contribution as you are able, and thank you for sharing!

(Payable to FCC, with “OGHS” in the memo line. Contributions gratefully accepted until Easter.)

It’s Time for the Lenten Lunch Bag Offering

The arrival of Lent brings the Children’s Community Corner Lunch Bag Offering! We once again ask for your participation in this annual collection of savings from a regular sacrifice during Lent. The total collection on Palm Sunday will be split between Epilogos Charities and WISE of the Upper Valley. (Decorated paper bags are available at church, but not required to participate.)

Many thanks for helping FCC’s children help other children near and far!

O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee

418

Washington Gladden, 1836-1918

MARYTON L.M.
H. Percy Smith, 1825-1898

1 O Mas - ter, let me walk with thee In low - ly
2 Help me the slow of heart to move By some clear,
3 Teach me thy pa - tience; still with thee In clos - er,
4 In hope that sends a shin - ing ray Far down the

paths of serv - ice free; Tell me thy se - cret, help me
win - ning word of love; Teach me the way - ward feet to
dear - er com - pa - ny, In work that keeps faith sweet and
fu - ture's broad - ening way, In peace that on - ly thou canst

bear The strain of toil, the fret of care.
stay, And guide them in the home - ward way.
strong, In trust that tri - umphs o - ver wrong.
give, With thee, O Mas - ter, let me live. A - men.

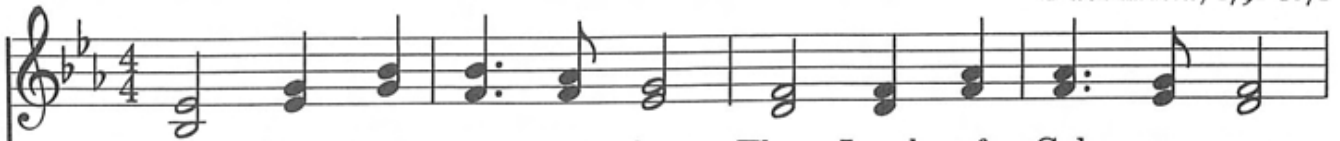
My Faith Looks Up to Thee

348

Ray Palmer, 1808-1887, alt.

OLIVET 6.6.4.6.6.6.4.

Lowell Mason, 1792-1872



1 My faith looks up to thee, Thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
 2 May thy rich grace im - part Strength to my faint - ing heart,
 3 While life's dark maze I tread, And griefs a - round me spread,
 4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, When death's cold; sul - len stream



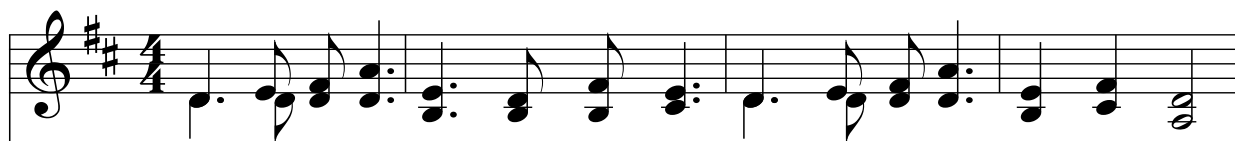
Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray; Take all my
 My zeal in - spire; As thou hast died for me, Oh, may my
 Be thou my guide; Bid dark - ness turn to day; Wipe sor - row's
 Shall o'er me roll, Blest Sav - ior, then, in love, Fear and dis -



guilt a - way; Oh, let me from this day Be whol - ly thine.
 love to thee Pure, warm, and changeless be, A liv - ing fire.
 tears a - way; Nor let me ev - er stray From thee a - side.
 trust re - move; Oh, bear me safe a - bove, A ran - somed soul. A - men.



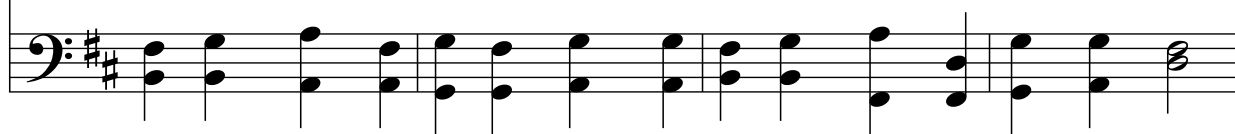
Christ Has Risen While Earth Slumbers 231



1 Christ has ris-en while earth slum-bers; Christ has ris-en where hope died,
2 Christ has ris-en for the peo - ple whom he died to love and save;
3 Christ has ris-en and for ev - er lives to chal-enge and to change



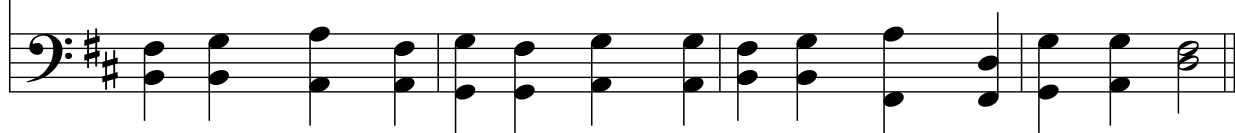
as he said and as he prom-ised, as we doubt-ed and de - nied.
Christ has ris-en for the wom-en bring-ing flowers to grace his grave.
all whose lives are messed or man-gled, all who find re - li - gion strange.



Let the moon em-brace the bless-ing; let the sun sus-tain the cheer;
Christ has ris - en for dis - ci - ples hud - dled in an up - stairs room.
Christ is ris - en, Christ is pres - ent mak - ing us what he has been:



let the world con-firm the ru-mor: Christ is ris - en, God is here!
He whose word in-spired cre-a-tion can't be si-lenced by the tomb.
ev - i - dence of trans-for-mation in which God is known and seen.



Beginning with rather conventional Easter imagery, this text moves into unexpected territory by declaring that Christ's Resurrection is for "all whose lives are messed or mangled, all who find religion strange." The name of this traditional Welsh melody simply means "lullaby."

TEXT: John L. Bell and Graham Maule, 1988
MUSIC: Welsh melody; arr. Alfred V. Fedak, 2011
Text © 1988 WGRG, Iona Community (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)
Music Arr. © 2011 Alfred V. Fedak

SUO GAN
8.7.8.7.D

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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@fcclb.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

Ernie Drown, 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@fcclb.org • prayer@fcclb.org • music@fcclb.org • www.fcclb.org