



# First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

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## The Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 21, 2021

“The important thing is not to stop questioning.  
Curiosity has its own reason for existing.”

–Albert Einstein

All hymns are included after the order of worship, on pages 5-7.

### Prelude

*Rhosymedre (“Lovely”)*

Ralph Vaughan Williams

### Call to Worship (*Unison*)

Psalm 51:1, 8-12

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

### Hymn 259 (p. 5)

*We Limit Not the Truth of God*

Old 22nd

### 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 meeting, please contact the church office.*

## Children's Moment

Are you getting excited about Easter? I am. Now, I know things will be different this year, thanks to the pandemic. Coronavirus means we need to be careful and distanced. That's a bummer. Singing and worship will be different. So will our community Easter egg hunts. But here's the good news, the amazing news: Easter will come. Easter will be here. Jesus will triumph over death, and we, God's people, will be redeemed. I promise that. And God will back up that promise to you and to me. That's guaranteed, something we can count on.

Hymn 411 (p. 6)      *Praise the Source of Faith and Learning*

Hyfrydol

## Scripture Lessons

**Jeremiah 31:31-34.** <sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. <sup>33</sup>But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

**John 12:20-33.** <sup>20</sup>Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. <sup>21</sup>They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” <sup>22</sup>Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup>Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup>Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup>Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

<sup>27</sup>“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup>Father, glorify your name.” <sup>29</sup>Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” <sup>29</sup>The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” <sup>30</sup>Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.

<sup>31</sup>Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.

<sup>32</sup>And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup>He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

**Sermon**                      “Sightseeing”                      Stephen R. Silver

**Musical Offering**        *My Song Is Love Unknown*                      Malcolm Archer

### **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, 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:

O God of all the nations, we come to you seeking guidance and wisdom, wanting to know how we may live with people unlike us. You created all humans in your image, yet we struggle with the different colors, languages, abilities, and other things that separate us. Help us to overcome our boundaries—not to homogenize everyone, to make them be like us, but to see the wonder of your creation in the diversity of humanity. Help us to see one another as brothers and sisters, no matter where or who we are.

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

*Lord Jesus, Think on Me*

Gwyneth Walker

**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)**

Holy God, you have come to us in hope, showing us a new way; with grace, offering us another chance; and in love, endowing us with true life. In response, we present these gifts, a sign of our thanks and commitment to share our blessings with others. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Hymn 432 (p. 7)

*How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord*

Repton

**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

*Variations on "Jesu, meine Freude"*

Christian Heinrich Rinck

*Leading Worship This Week*

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organist • Beth Hilgartner, Soprano • Linda Radtke, Contralto

Brian Clancy, Tenor • Walter Scott, 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](mailto:prayer@fccleb.org), or contact the church office or the Rev. Steve Silver directly.*

**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 through Easter.)

## 259

## We Limit Not the Truth of God

George Rawson, 1807-1889

OLD 22nd C.M.D.  
"Anglo-Genevan Psalter," 1556

1 We lim - it not the truth of God To our poor reach of mind,  
2 Dark - ling our great fore - fa - thers went The first steps of the way;  
3 The val - leys passed, as - cend - ing still, Our souls would high - er climb,  
4 O Fa - ther, Son, and Spir - it, send Us in - crease from a - bove;

By no - tions of our day and sect, Crude, par - tial, and con - fined.  
'Twas but the dawn - ing yet to grow In - to the per - fect day.  
And look down from su - per - nal heights On all the by - gone time.  
En - large, ex - pand all Chris - tian souls To com - pre - hend thy love,

No, let a new and bet - ter hope With - in our hearts be stirred:  
And grow it shall, our glo - rious sun More fer - vid rays af - ford:  
Up - ward we press, the air is clear, And the sphere - mu - sic heard:  
And make us to go on, to know With no - bler powers con - ferred:

The Lord hath yet more light and truth To break forth from his Word. A - men

Based on parting words of Pastor John Robinson to the Pilgrim Fathers, 1620.

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.

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

Please join us Easter morning at 6:00 for an ecumenical sunrise service in Colburn Park; then  
at 10:00 we hope to worship outdoors on FCC's front lawn. *Stay tuned for details.*



## *The Easter Lily Fund to Benefit the Open Door Ministry*

As we are still unable to worship in the FCC Sanctuary, we will  
sadly not be offering our usual array of flowers on Easter morning.  
However, as we did at Christmas, we still invite you to make a small  
contribution in honor or memory of family and friends. This one-time  
"Easter Lily Fund" will support our Open Door Ministry for community assistance.

**If you'd like to offer a dedication in honor or memory of loved ones, please return this form to the church office with a contribution (\$5 minimum, payable to FCC, memo "Open Door Lily Fund"). All dedications received by THURSDAY, APRIL 1, will be listed in the worship bulletin on Easter Sunday, April 4. (Contributions payable after that date.)**

Given by \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

# How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord 432

Capo 1: (D) (A) (Bm) (G) (D) (A)(D)  
 Eb Bb Cm Ab Eb Bb Eb



1 How clear is our vo - ca - tion, Lord, when once we heed your call  
 2 But if, for - get - ful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear;  
 3 We mar - vel how your saints be - came in hin - dranc - es more sure:  
 4 In what you give us, Lord, to do, to - geth - er or a - lone,

(G) (Em) (A) (F#m) (Bm) (G) (Em)  
 Ab Fm Bb Gm Cm Ab Fm



to live ac - cord - ing to your word and dai - ly learn, re - freshed, re -  
 if world - ly pres - sures fray the mind and love it - self can - not un -  
 whose joy - ful vir - tues put to shame the ca - sual way we wear your  
 in old rou - tines or ven - tures new, may we not cease to look to

(A7) (D) (A7)(B) (Em) (G)(A7) (D)  
 Bb7 Eb Bb7 C Fm Ab Bb7 Eb



stored, that you are Lord of all and will not let us fall.  
 wind its tan - gled skein of care: our in - ward life re - pair.  
 name, and by our faults ob - scure your power to cleanse and cure.  
 you: the cross you hung up - on, all you en - deav - ored, done.

This reflection on Christian vocation was written to provide a new text for a pre-existing tune, and the poet has crafted his words so well that the two parts mesh smoothly. The tune is named for a noted British boarding school, whose music director was a friend of the composer.

TEXT: Fred Pratt Green, 1981

MUSIC: C. Hubert H. Parry, 1888

Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company

REPTON

8.6.8.8.6.6

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## It's Time for the Lenten Lunch Bag Offering

Lent again brings the Children's Community Corner Lunch Bag Offering! Please consider participating in this annual collection of savings from a regular sacrifice during Lent. The total collection on Easter will be split between Epilogos Charities and WISE of the Upper Valley.

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



**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@fcclb.org](mailto: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, Children's Community Corner  
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](mailto:church@fcclb.org) • [prayer@fcclb.org](mailto:prayer@fcclb.org) • [music@fcclb.org](mailto:music@fcclb.org) • [www.fcclb.org](http://www.fcclb.org)**