



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 1, 2021

“Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back at you.”

–Friedrich Nietzsche

Kindly silence cell phones and other devices during worship. All hymns are included on pages 6-8.

Prelude *Songs Without Words, op. 19b* Felix Mendelssohn

Call to Worship Adapted from Psalm 78:23-29

Leader: God commanded the skies above, and opened the doors of heaven;

People: He rained down on them manna to eat, and gave them the grain of heaven.

Leader: Mortals ate of the bread of angels; the LORD sent them food in abundance.

People: God caused the east wind to blow in the heavens, and by his power he led out the south wind; he rained flesh upon them like dust, winged birds like the sand of the seas;

Leader: He let them fall within their camp, all around their dwellings.

People: And they ate and were well filled, for the LORD gave them what they craved.

Hymn 147 (p. 6) *All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine* Engelberg

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 this 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

Children's Moment

Today in the Hebrew Bible reading we learn of David being punished for having Uriah killed so he could marry the man's wife, Bathsheba. God is angry, and through Nathan, the prophet, he tells David that his punishment will be severe: his children will be set against one another.

Now, it doesn't seem right for God to punish children for their parent's actions, does it? But the truth in this lesson is that our actions have consequences, not only for us but for those around us. So, before you go and do something wrong—and we will all be tempted to at some point—God wants you to think about the fallout. Think before you act. Pray. Then act.

Hymn 101 (p. 7) *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*

In Babilone

Scripture Lessons

2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a. ²⁶When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. ²⁷When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son.

But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord, ¹and the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had very many flocks and herds; ³but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meager fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him." ⁵Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; ⁶he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

⁷Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; ⁸I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. ⁹Why have you despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. ¹¹Thus says the Lord: I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this very sun. ¹²For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."

¹³David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." [...]

John 6:24-35. [...] ²⁴So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

²⁵When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" ²⁶Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of

Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.” ²⁸Then they said to him, “What must we do to perform the works of God?” ²⁹Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” ³⁰So they said to him, “What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?” ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” ³²Then Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁴They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

³⁵Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. [...]”

Sermon

“J’Accuse!”

Stephen R. Silver

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

As we hold our community members in prayer, please exercise care and discretion when sharing. Help us keep our prayer list current by contacting the church office to add or remove names.

Today we offer our ongoing prayers for Pete, Lloyd, Arlene, Evelyn, Barbara, Greg, Larry, Edith, Jan, Eileen, James, Sandy, Jimmy, and Jean.

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

Today we also offer the following prayer:

God, whether our routines stay the same or are ever-changing, we know we can count on your steadfast presence. We give thanks for your constancy, which is an anchor amidst a tempestuous sea. Help us to embrace this security, not so that we might shy away from life’s challenges, but so that we remember that we are grounded by you—that with your presence guiding us, we will never be truly lost. Inspire us to follow the Way of Jesus, to be guided by your word, your Spirit, your Son.

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.

Doxology (Unison)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below,
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

Almighty, sustaining God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, we join with your Creation in singing your praise and glorifying your name. In this spirit, we offer these gifts, in the hope that the work and service they enable will witness to your love for all the world. In our Savior's name we pray, Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

For communion, you are invited to have some bread and juice on hand. We will share in the bread and cup at the appointed time. If you would like to receive a blessing, please let the officiant know.

Invitation and Communion Prayer

Sanctus

Ho - ly, Ho - ly Ho - ly, Lord God of Hosts:
Heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Glo - ry be to you, O Lord most
High. Bless-ed is the one that comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, Ho - san - na in the high - est, Ho -
san - na in the high - est.

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)

Because the broken bread has meant our healing, because the outpoured cup has meant our life, because our common sharing has meant the communion of our souls, and because we have here been graced by your presence, God, we give you thanks and pray that our lives may be renewed in the life and the love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hymn 649 (p. 8) *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound*

New Britain

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

Consolation (Songs Without Words, op. 30, no. 3) Felix Mendelssohn

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor
Ernie Drown, Pianist • Brian Clancy, Tenor • Valerie Nevel, Liturgist

If you wish to have a joy, concern, or prayer request lifted up in the service, or if you know of someone who may need special prayers, a card or phone call, or some other form of pastoral care, please email prayer@fccleeb.org or speak with Rev. Silver directly.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH—SPECIAL UCC OFFERING

Inspired this year by a simple theme—“**Renew!**”—the Strengthen the Church offering supports the growth of ministry and local congregations across the country. By renewing older faith communities, building new ones, and funding fellowships for young, emerging leaders in our church, this program is vital to the health of our denomination.

Please give as you are able to this nationwide effort to support church growth. We will accept contributions (payable to FCC, memo “Strengthen the Church”) until Labor Day. Thank you!

Do Your Part to Fill the Cart!

Greater Lebanon continues to struggle with poverty and food insecurity. Exacerbated by the challenges of the COVID-19 shutdown, local need remains high and will persist as pandemic benefits are phased out. We are resuming the monthly collection of items in our shopping cart in the Parish Hall, with a different beneficiary designated each month.

AUGUST—non-perishable food and personal-care items for LISTEN COMMUNITY SERVICES

Direct financial contributions to any Upper Valley service organization are always needed and appreciated. Thanks for fighting local poverty and hunger!



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Live Music Returns to FCC!

Classicopia: Broadway Violin—Sunday, August 15, 1:00

Pianist Dan Weiser brings live music back to our Sanctuary with violinist Timothy Schwarz and a selection of Broadway arrangements from the 1920s to the 1980s. Originally broadcast online last year, the program features favorite songs by Gershwin, Rodgers, Sondheim, Bernstein, Webber, and more. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; for tickets and more, visit classicopia.org.*

Elizabeth Borowsky, Piano, and Cecylia Barczyk, Cello—Saturday, September 18, 4:00

Join us for this concert by acclaimed local pianist and teacher Elizabeth Borowsky and her mother Cecylia Barczyk, a cellist who has performed internationally. Elizabeth has given several wonderful concerts here and is excited to return to our Sanctuary! *Full program details are forthcoming.*

All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine

F. Bland Tucker, 1895-

ENGELBERG 10.10.10. with Alleluia
Charles V. Stanford, 1852-1924

1 All praise to thee, for thou, O King di - vine, Didst yield the
 2 Thou cam'st to us in low - li - ness of thought; By thee the
 3 Let this mind be in us which was in thee, Who wast a
 4 Let ev - ery tongue con - fess with one ac - cord In heaven and

glo - ry that of right was thine, That in our dark-ened hearts thy
 out - cast and the poor were sought, And by thy death was God's sal -
 serv - ant that we might be free, Hum-bling thy - self to death on
 earth that Je - sus Christ is Lord; And God the Fa - ther be by

grace might shine.
 va - tion wrought. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 Cal - va - ry.
 all a - dored.

St. 1, 2, 3 St. 4 In harmony
 A-men.

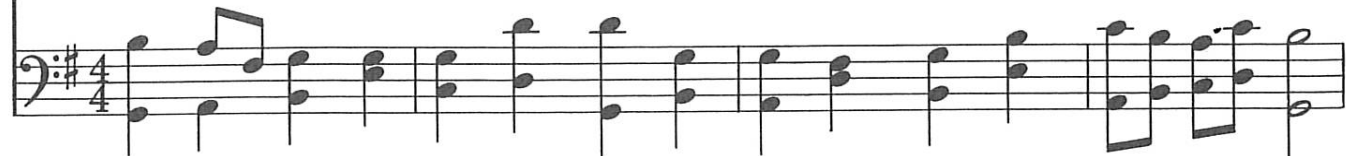
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

First Tune

Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863

IN BABILONE 8.7.8.7.D.
Traditional Dutch Melody

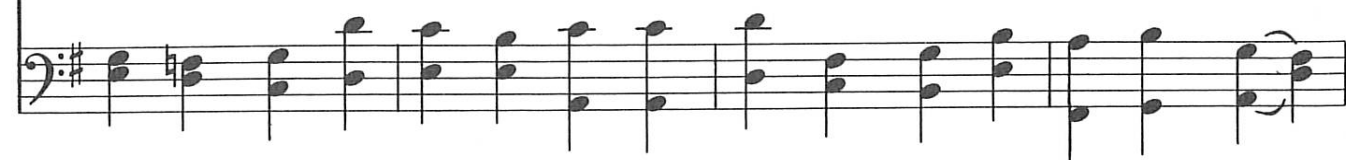
1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer-cy, Like the wide - ness of the sea;
 2 For the love of God is broad-er Than the meas - ure of man's mind;



There's a kind-ness in his jus - tice, Which is more than lib - er - ty.
 And the heart of the E - ter - nal Is most won - der - ful - ly kind.



There is no place where earth's sor-rows Are more felt than up in heaven;
 If our love were but more sim - ple, We should take him at his word;



There is no place where earth's fail-ings Have such kind-ly judg-ment given.
 And our lives would be all sun-shine In the sweet-ness of our Lord. A-men.



649 Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved. How pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come. 'Tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures. He will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

now am found, was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

As was his custom, the author wrote this hymn to accompany his sermon on 1 Chronicles 17:16–17, preached on January 1, 1773; he called it “Faith’s Review and Expectation.” Much of its current popularity comes from this now-familiar tune, an association that began in 1835.

TEXT: Stanzas 1–4, John Newton, 1772; stanza 5, *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790; Navaho, Albert Tsosie

AMAZING GRACE

MUSIC: *Columbian Harmony*, 1829; arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1910, alt.

Text Phonetic Transcr. Cherokee, Kiowa, Creek, and Choctaw © Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference;

Phonetic Transcr. Navaho © Albert Tsosie



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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

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@fccleb.org • prayer@fccleb.org • music@fccleb.org • www.fccleb.org