



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

Ascension Day (Observed)

May 29, 2022

“Even amid tragedy, even when manifestations of evil threaten to overwhelm,
let us hold fast to the good. It is the only way that leads to life.”

—Michael B. Curry

Kindly silence cell phones and other devices during worship. All hymns are included on pages 5-8.

Prelude *Andante Religioso*, op. 114 Gustav Merkel

Call to Worship Psalm 93

Leader: The LORD is king, he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed, he is girded with strength. He has established the world; it shall never be moved.

People: **Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.**

Leader: The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their roaring.

People: **More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the LORD!**

All: **Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O LORD, forevermore.**

Hymn 14 (p. 5) *The God of Abraham Praise* Leoni

Prayer of Invocation

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

Anthem *Nunc Dimittis* Thomas Attwood Walmisley

Children's Moment

Today, I am going to read you a short book. It's called *The Friend Who Forgives*, and it's about friendship and forgiving, specifically that between Jesus and Peter.

Hymn 391 (p. 6) *Be Thou My Vision* Slane

Scripture Lessons

Acts 1:1-11. In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning ²until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Luke 24:44-53. ⁴⁴Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them.

⁵¹While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.

⁵²And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Sermon

“Where’s God?”

Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 388 (p. 7)

Help Us Accept Each Other

Aurelia

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, Edith, Jan, Eileen, Michelle, Stephanie, Paulette, Carolin, Juanita, Terry, and Ethan.

We pray for the people of Ukraine, that they may know peace. We pray, too, for the Russian leadership, that their hearts may be renewed and turned to you, and for the Russian people, that they may be freed from tyranny and corruption.

We offer our prayers for the community of Uvalde, Texas, as they recover from the trauma of last Tuesday's school shooting.

O Holy God, when will it all end? The senseless violence, the hate, the idolatry of guns? When, O God? When?

We are tired of the sense of helplessness, of the empty prayers, of the way that calls for peace and fellowship are ignored by those who tell us there is no other way. And we wonder: Really? We know there are other ways. We know that we as a national community can address the problems in our midst, that if we turn to you, we might discern a way forward, one that follows the path of Jesus.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in the name of your Son, our Savior. 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.

Offertory *Tone Piece No. 1, from op. 92* Theodor Fürchtegott Kirchner

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)

Holy God, we pray that these gifts, and the ministries they make possible, draw us closer to you and our sisters and brothers in our community and throughout the world. We pray, too, that this offering, through the work it enables and the hope it embodies, hastens the day when, in the words of John, we may indeed all be one. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hymn 390 (p. 8) *Eternal Christ, Who, Kneeling*

Nyland

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

Resignation, op. 8

Wilhelm Fitzenhagen

* * *

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • Margaret Gilmore, Cello • Brian Clancy, Liturgist
Gloria and Phil Hammond, Ushers • Dominic Watson, Zoom Greeter

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@fccleb.org or speak with Rev. Silver directly.

FCC Outing Club—Lower Shaker Trails, Enfield

Next Sunday, June 5—Meet at Trailhead off Route 4A at 1:00 pm (Rain Date June 12)

Ron Bailey leads a spring foray of our Outing Club—a chance for our congregation and friends to explore the beauty of God’s creation together. We’ll enjoy a network of trails in Enfield rich with Shaker history, which was once used to manage an impressive canal system and dam.

Meet at trailhead lot off Route 4A, just beyond the Shaker Museum (opposite Landing Rd). Bring water, sunscreen, bug/tick spray, and snack if desired. (Optional ice cream at the Baited Hook!)

Celebrate the Children’s Community Corner—Children’s Sunday, June 12

After another “remote” year, the **Children’s Community Corner** is excited to lead worship and mark the end of the school year. Please join us for this special moment in our communal life!

If you and/or your children are interested in participating or have questions, please contact Nan Parsons (nlp3721@yahoo.com/603-863-8354) or the church office.

* * * **Upstanders for the Children of Ukraine—A 3C’s Fundraiser!** * * *

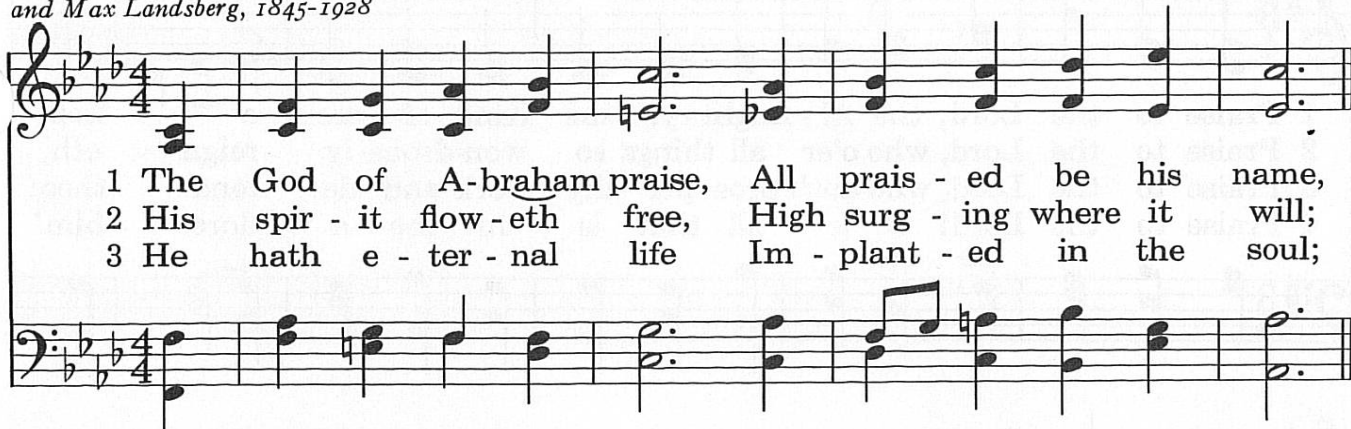
Concerned about the children caught in the tragedies of war in Ukraine, FCC’s kids want to help! They’re making Ukrainian-style eggs, cross necklaces, and baked goods to offer for a donation on Children’s Sunday. (*Delivery can be arranged for those who’d like something but can’t attend that day.*) **All donations will be sent to a reputable charity providing resources for Ukraine’s children. For questions or delivery requests, please contact Nan Parsons.**

The God of Abraham Praise

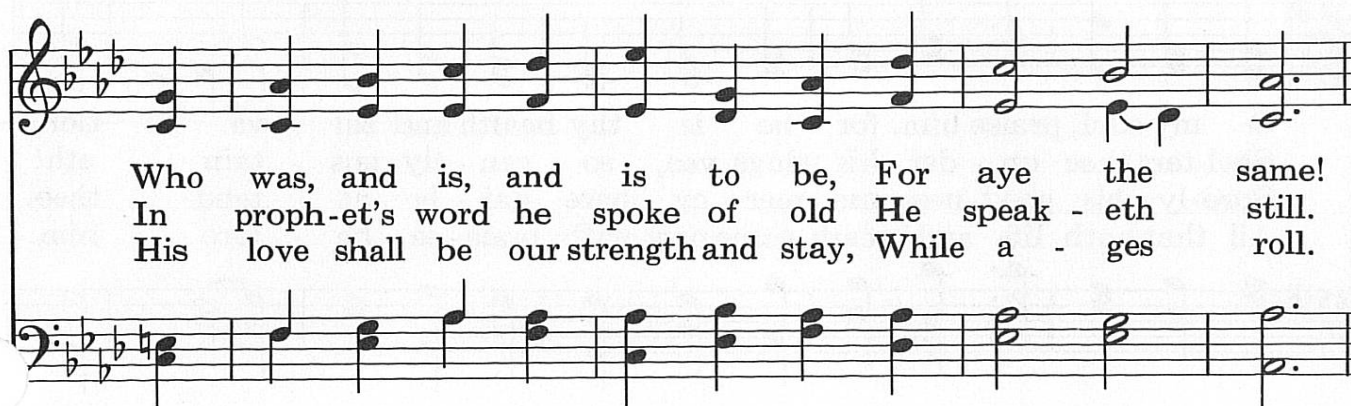
14

Revised Version of the "Yigdal"
Daniel ben Judah, c.1400
Tr. Newton Mann, 1836-1926,
and Max Landsberg, 1845-1928

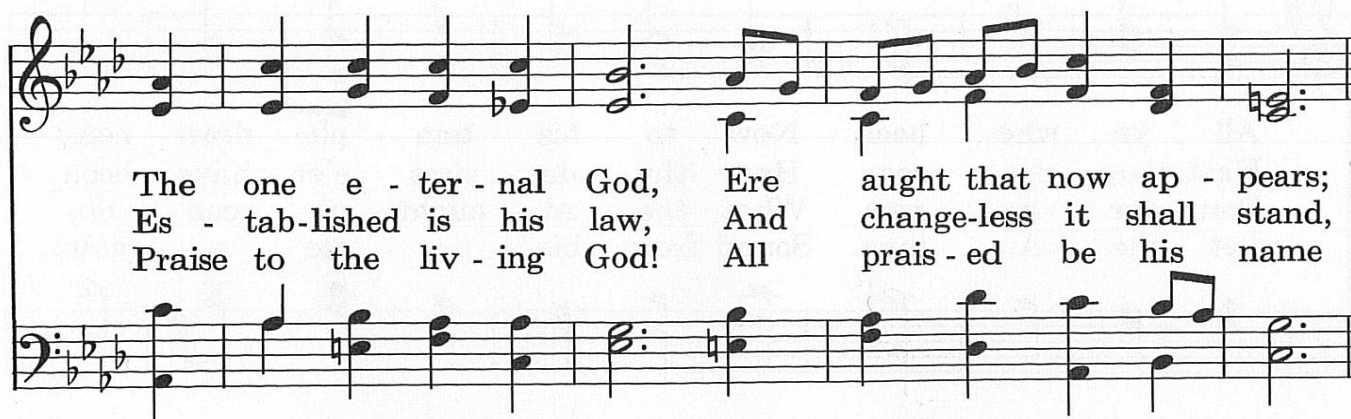
LEONI 6.6.8.4.D.
Traditional Hebrew Melody
Adapted by Meyer Lyon, 1751-1797



1 The God of A-bra-ham praise, All prais - ed be his name,
 2 His spir - it flow - eth free, High surg - ing where it will;
 3 He hath e - ter - nal life Im - plant - ed in the soul;



Who was, and is, and is to be, For aye the same!
 In proph-et's word he spoke of old He speak - eth still.
 His love shall be our strength and stay, While a - ges roll.



The one e - ter - nal God, Ere aught that now ap - pears;
 Es - tab - lished is his law, And change-less it shall stand,
 Praise to the liv - ing God! All prais - ed be his name



The First, the Last: be - yond all thought His time - less years!
 Deep writ up - on the hu - man heart, On sea, or land.
 Who was, and is, and is to be, For aye the same! A-men.

Be Thou My Vision

Ancient Irish

Tr. by Mary E. Byrne, 1880-1931

Versified by Eleanor H. Hull, 1860-1935

SLANE 10.10.9.10.

Traditional Irish Melody

Harm. by David Evans, 1874-1948

In unison

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor man's emp - ty praise,
 4 High King of heav - en, my vic - to - ry won,

Nought be all else to me save that thou art.
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord;
 Thou mine in - her - it - ance, now and al - ways;
 May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heav - en's Sun!

Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
 Thou my great Fa - ther, I thy true son;
 Thou and thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

Wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 Thou in me dwell - ing, and I with thee one.
 High King of heav - en, my treas - ure thou art.
 Still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all. A - men.

Help Us Accept Each Other

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Fred Kaan, 1974; alt.

John 15:12; 17:20–23; Eph. 4:1–6, 11–16

- 1 Help us ac-cept each oth-er
as Christ ac-cept-ed us;
teach us as sis-ter, broth-er,
each per-son to em-brace.
Be pres-ent, God, a-mong us,
and bring us to be-lieve
we are our-selves ac-cept-ed
and meant to love and live.
- 2 Teach us, O God, your les-sons,
as in our dai-ly life
we strug-gle to be hu-man
and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for peo-ple,
for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them,
or as they may be-come.
- 3 Let your ac-cep-tance change us,
so that we may be moved
in liv-ing sit-u-a-tions
to do the truth in love;
To prac-tice your ac-cep-tance,
un-til we know by heart
the ta-ble of for-give-ness
and laugh-ter's heal-ing art.
- 4 God, for to-day's en-coun-ters
with all who are in need,
who hun-ger for ac-cep-tance,
for righ-teous-ness and bread,
Bring us new eyes for see-ing,
new hands for hold-ing on;
re-new us with your Spir-it;
God! Free us, make us one!

Dutch theologian Fred Kaan was ordained in the United Reformed Church in England and Wales and has served as an international church administrator. Author of more than 200 hymns, Kaan frequently has addressed contemporary issues in his texts.

Tune: AURELIA 7.6.7.6.D.
Samuel S. Wesley, 1864

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Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Upcoming Concerts

Masks, distanced seating, and proof of vaccination required.

UVMC Sing & Play Festival!—Next Saturday, June 4 (various times)

Now a beloved annual event, this year's Sing & Play Festival will span three days in downtown Lebanon from Friday to Sunday, June 3-5. Saturday's events at FCC will feature a variety of year-end student recitals, including several by musicians from or connected to our congregation!

All Sing & Play events are free and open to the public; see the full schedule at uvmusic.org.

Cantabile Women's Chorus: Gloria!—Next Sunday, June 5, at 4:00

We are delighted to welcome back Cantabile for a concert originally planned for January but canceled due to COVID. The program includes music of Antonio Vivaldi, Johannes Brahms, and a new commission from Philip Silvey to commemorate Cantabile's 20th anniversary last year.

Adults \$15, students/seniors \$10, under 13 free; more at www.cantabilewomen.org.

Counterpoint: The Woods and the Waters—Friday, July 15, at 7:30

Director Nathaniel Lew brings VT's professional choral ensemble back to Lebanon for the first time in four years to celebrate landscapes near and far, with guest pianist Alison Cerutti. Music by Jude Navari, Benjamin Britten, and NH's own Amy Beach, along with the premiere of a piece by composer Travis Ramsey and poet Jim Schley—who both live in the Upper Valley. *Adults \$20, seniors \$15, students and limited means \$5; more at counterpointchorus.org/upcoming/.*

Register Now for Classicopia's Summer Music Camp!—Two Sessions: August 8-13 and 15-20

This immersive program offers instrumental and vocal instruction to students aged 8-18, with outstanding faculty and guest artists. *More details and registration at classicopia.org/summer-camp/.*

1 E - ter - nal Christ, who, kneel - ing when earth - ly tasks were done,
 2 But we have of - ten slight - ed the ties de - signed to hold
 3 Ac - cept our deep con - tri - tion for all our sun - dering ways

turned un - to God ap - peal - ing, "That they may all be one,"
 your fol - low - ers u - nit - ed with - in one com - mon fold.
 which still dis - rupt your mis - sion, which mock our words of praise.

We thank you for your vi - sion of u - ni - ty un - torn,
 On his - tory's tat - tered pa - ges we see, O Christ, with shame,
 Christ, may your Spir - it guide us that we may find, be - yond

of faith with - out di - vi - sion with which your church was born.
 the strife which through the a - ges has marred your church's name.
 the things which still di - vide us, love's all - em - brac - ing bond.

William Watkins Reid, Jr., is a pastor, author, hymnwriter, and past member of the executive committee of The Hymn Society. He takes an active part in politics at all levels, and his hymns are often written as responses to current events.

Tune: NYLAND 7.6.7.6.D.
 Finnish hymn melody
 Harm. David Evans, 1927

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 Harmonization Copyright ©, Oxford University Press. From the REVISED CHURCH
 HYMNARY, 1927.

SHELTER SUNDAY

The Excitement Is Building...

If you'd like to honor or remember the father(s) in your life with a contribution for Shelter Sunday, please complete and return this form to the church office (PO Box 230, Lebanon, NH 03766). You may also contact the office directly (603-448-4281/church@fccleb.org) with your information.

Any amount is gratefully welcome!

Dedications received by 12:00 pm on Thursday, June 16, will be listed in the bulletin on FATHER'S DAY, JUNE 19.

Given by _____

In honor of _____

☐ Please send a card (include addresses)

In memory of _____

Contribution: _____ (payable to FCC, memo "Shelter Sunday")

Sponsored by the Mission & Social Action Committee

Remember Bike & Build? They're Coming Back!—June 14-16

For almost 20 years, this program has raised funds, participated in construction projects, and advocated for affordable housing in a series of cross-country biking trips. FCC has hosted B&B's Northern Route since 2008, and after two years off we will once again open our building to these enterprising, dedicated young adults for two nights, en route from Portsmouth to Bellingham, WA. While in town, they'll work on projects with UV Habitat and COVER Home Repair.

Look for an email this week to volunteer food contributions, but if you are interested in helping out or attending dinner either Tuesday or Wednesday, please contact the church office. For more about this incredible program and its cross-country routes, visit bikeandbuild.org/routes/.

* * * FATHER'S DAY IS SHELTER SUNDAY * * *

UPPER VALLEY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY is the local affiliate of an international, ecumenical ministry providing decent, affordable home ownership for deserving families who could not otherwise afford to buy a home. If you'd like to honor the father(s) in your life with a Shelter Sunday contribution to UV Habitat, please complete and return the form below. Any amount is welcome and directly supports building projects. **THANKS!**

All dedications must be received (on paper or by email) by noon on THURSDAY, JUNE 16, to be listed in the bulletin on FATHER'S DAY, JUNE 19. (Contributions accepted beyond that date.)



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

Ernie Drown, Organist and Choir Director • Nancy Parsons, Children's Community Corner
Jon Scott, Chair of Church Council • Linda Gerlach, Chair of Deacons • 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