



The Fourth Sunday of Advent

“The idea of waiting for something makes it more exciting.”

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

Fugue on the Magnificat, BWV 733

Johann Sebastian Bach

Adapted from Romans 1:1-7

All: This is the gospel concerning his son Jesus, who was descended from David according to the flesh.

One: Jesus was declared to be Son of God, with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead.

All: Through Jesus Christ our Lord, we have received grace and apostleship to share the faith among all the world.

One: With all people, we are called to belong to the one who is coming, Immanuel.

All: We proclaim, with the apostles: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hymn 104 (p. 5)

Comfort Ye, Comfort Ye My People

Psalm 42

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.

A Liturgy for Advent

Presentation of the Advent Banner

An Advent Reading

Isaiah 7:10-16. ¹⁰Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹²But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. ¹³Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David!

Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

An Advent Litany

One: It is time to open our ears and open our eyes:

All: For God is giving us a sign!

One: It is time to open our hearts and open our minds:

All: For God is giving us a sign!

One: It matters not whether we are rich or poor:

All: For God is giving us a sign!

One: It matters not whether we are male or female:

All: For God is giving us a sign! Let us ready ourselves to see the sign that the Lord has given us!

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

An Advent Prayer (*Unison*)

Holy God, in this season of anticipation, help us to be patient.

Loving God, in this time of watching, help us to see clearly.

Healing God, in these weeks of preparation, make ready our hearts for the arrival of the Light of the World.

Words of Welcome; Our Ministry and Mission

Anthem *The Song of Mary* Richard Shephard

Children's Moment

Just six days until Christmas Eve. Are you excited?

You should be! And not only you, but your family, your friends... indeed, everybody everywhere should be excited, because this is really, really big.

Hymn 108 (p. 6) *Of the Father's Love Begotten* Divinum Mysterium

Scripture Lessons

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19. ¹Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth ²before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us! ³Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

⁴O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers? ⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure. ⁶You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves. ⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.[...]

¹⁷But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself. ¹⁸Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name. ¹⁹Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Matthew 1:18-25. ¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Sermon

"Spare"

Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 100 (p. 7)

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Star of the County Down

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

As we hold our community members in prayer, please exercise care and discretion when sharing.

Today we offer our ongoing prayers for Pete, Lloyd, Arlene, Evelyn, Barbara, Greg, Edith, Jan, Eileen, Juanita, Terry, Dan, Ethan, Travis, Garrett, Penny, Sue, and Rick.

O God of Advent: Bless this time of anticipation and remembrance, this time of being on the edge, as we make ready for the birth of our Lord, who has lived, died, and risen for us and all the world. As we inhabit this time on the cusp of the arrival of your kingdom, we are nervous about how our lives will be changed, we are curious about what will happen, and we are hopeful that we will focus on what you have in store for us and your creation.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in Jesus' name. 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

There Is No Rose of Such Virtue

Trad., arr. John Joubert

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*)

God of wonder, God of love: You have shared with us in Jesus news that changes our lives. In gratitude, we present these gifts as a sign of our commitment to share with others what you have shared with us. In the name of the one whose advent we await, Amen.

Hymn 130 (p. 8)

Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come

Antioch

Benediction

Postlude

À minuit fut fait un réveil

Jean-François Dandrieu

* * *

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organist • The FCC Choir • Laurel Stavis, Liturgist

Corrine Erskine and Linda Gerlach, Ushers • Bob Gerlach, Zoom Greeter

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

We invite you to consider a donation to the UCC's Christmas Fund, also known as the Fund for the Veterans of the Cross or Emergency Fund. This program offers compassionate, grateful support for retired clergy and their families with pension, healthcare, and emergency assistance.

Please contribute as you're able to this vital denominational offering, either by check to FCC (memo "Christmas Fund") or online at www.pbucc.org/index.php/christmas-fund-home. Thanks!



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES AT FCC

In the Sanctuary and on Zoom

Family Service with Pageant, 5:00 PM—Our beloved service for families and the young-at-heart! All are welcome to attend; if you or your children are interested in participating in the pageant, please contact Nan Parsons at nlp3721@yahoo.com.

Service of Lessons and Carols, 8:00 PM—The story of Christ's birth in Scripture and traditional carols. Steve Silver will preach and our choir will sing, as we gather at the manger together.

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

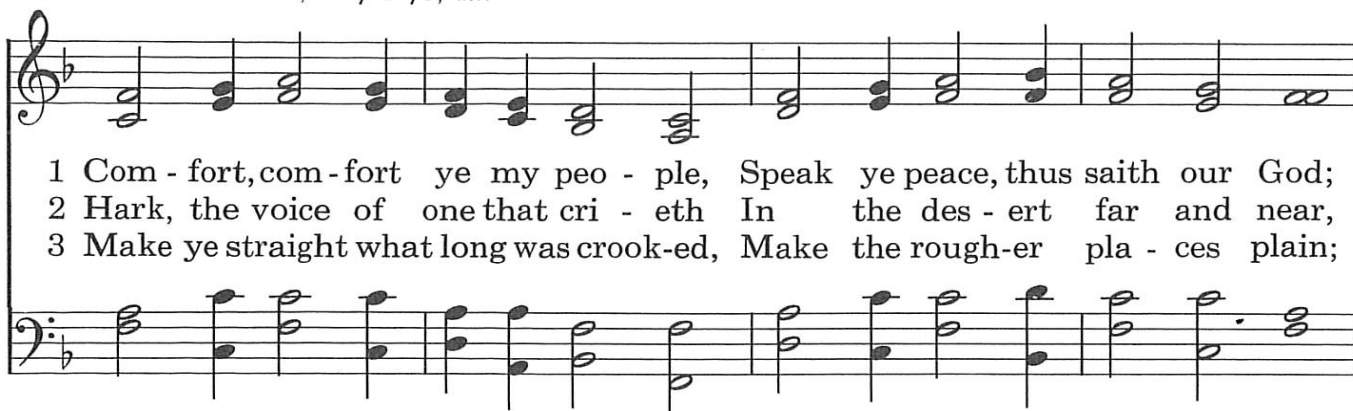
Based on Isaiah 40:1-8

Johann Olearius, 1611-1684

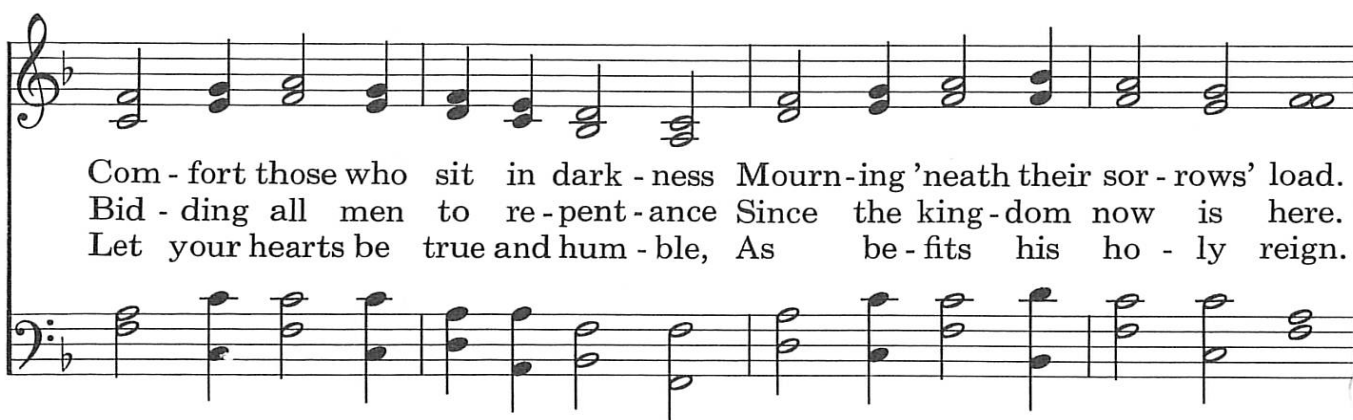
Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

PSALM 42 8.7.8.7.7.8.8.


"Genevan Psalter," 1551



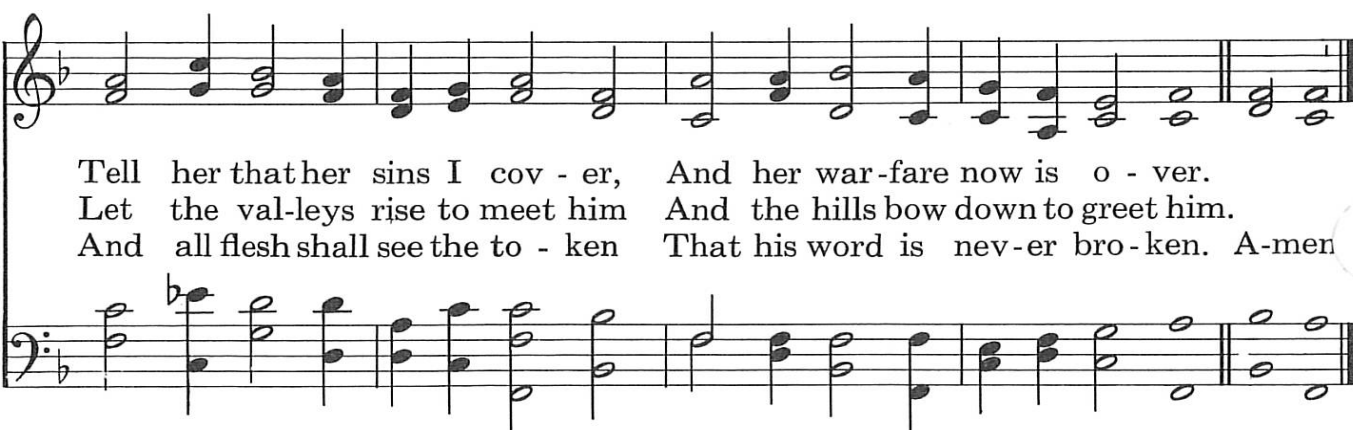
1 Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, Speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
 2 Hark, the voice of one that cri - eth In the des - ert far and near,
 3 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed, Make the rough - er pla - ces plain;



Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness Mourn - ing 'neath their sor - rows' load.
 Bid - ding all men to re - pent - ance Since the king - dom now is here.
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, As be - fits his ho - ly reign.



Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem Of the peace that waits for them;
 Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;
 For the glo - ry of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed a - broad;



Tell her that her sins I cov - er, And her war - fare now is o - ver.
 Let the val - leys rise to meet him And the hills bow down to greet him.
 And all flesh shall see the to - ken That his word is nev - er bro - ken. A - men

Of the Father's Love Begotten 108



1 Of the Fa-ther's love be - got - ten, ere the worlds be - gan
 2 By his Word was all cre - at - ed; he com-mand-ed; it
 3 O, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed when the Vir - gin, full
 4 This is he whom seers in old time chant-ed of with one
 5 O ye heights of heaven, a - dore him. An - gel hosts, his prais -
 6 Christ, to thee with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly Ghost,



to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga; he the
 was done: heaven and earth and depths of o - cean, u - ni -
 of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, bore the
 ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets prom-ised
 es sing. Powers, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him, and ex -
 to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks-giv - ing and un -



source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that
 verse of three in one, all that sees the moon's soft
 Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's Re -
 in their faith - ful word. Now he shines, the long - ex -
 tol our God and King. Let no tongue on earth be
 wea - ried prais - es be. Hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,
 shin - ing, all that breathes be - neath the sun,
 deem - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,
 pect - ed. Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord,
 si - lent; ev - ery voice in con - cert ring,
 min - ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry,

(after stanza 6)



ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men.

Seldom has the wonder of the Incarnation been expressed so beautifully as in this text, created in the era when the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds were being codified and mindful of similar theological affirmations. It is set here to a plainchant melody from the late Middle Ages.

TEXT: Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 5th cent.;
 trans. John Mason Neale, 1854, alt., and Henry Williams Baker, 1859, alt.
 MUSIC: Plainsong, Mode V; harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1940
 Music Harm. © 1943, 1961, 1985 Church Pension Fund

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM
 8.7.8.7.8.7.7

100 My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

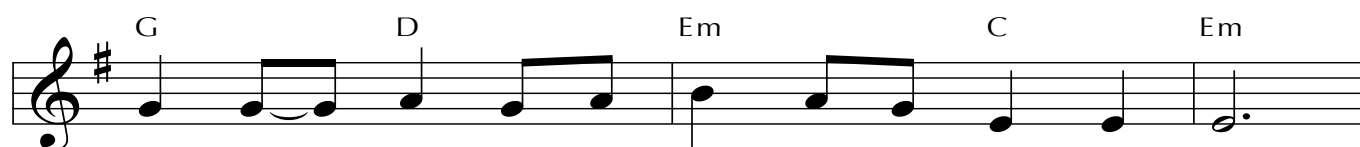
Canticle of the Turning



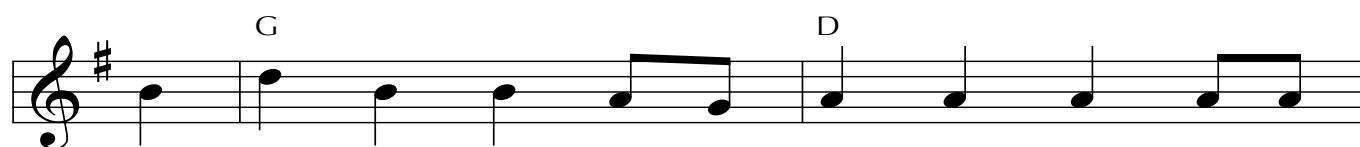
1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - ery ty - rant from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.

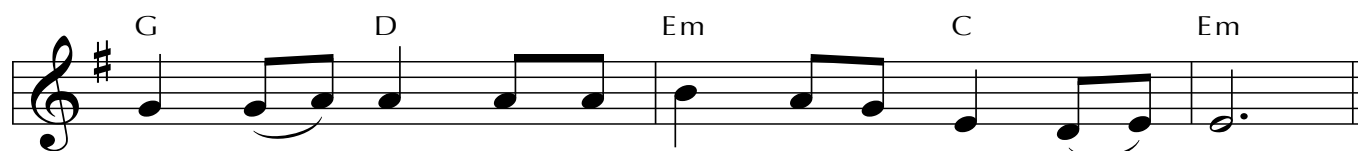


You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread; ev - ery
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be

By employing an energetic Irish folk song for its melody, this ballad-like paraphrase of the *Magnificat*, Mary's song at her meeting with her relative Elizabeth (Luke 1:46–55), recaptures both the wonder and the faith of the young woman who first recognized what God was doing.

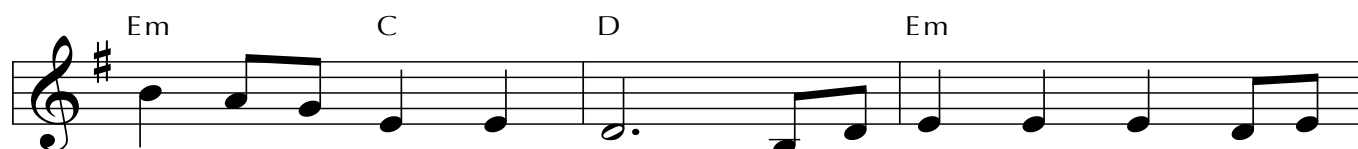


name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

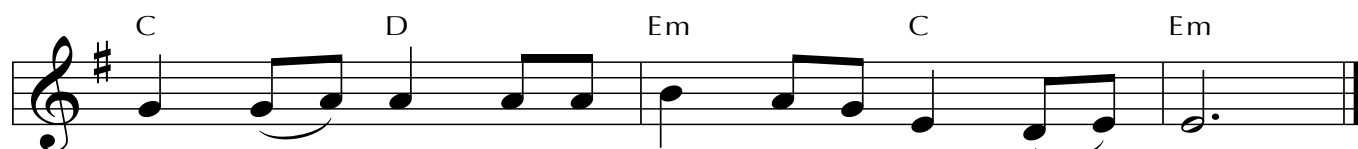
Refrain



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the



fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the



dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.



**Music
at the
Meetinghouse**

Upcoming Concerts

Masks, distanced seating, and proof of vaccination required.

Upper Valley Music Center Messiah Sing!—This Sunday, December 18, at 3:30 pm

UVMC brings back its annual performance of G. F. Handel's beloved oratorio, with student soloists and chamber orchestra. All are welcome to join the chorus (scores available!) or just listen.

Suggested \$20 donation. More at uvmusic.org/event/messiah-sing.

The Anonymous Coffeehouse—Fridays, January 6 and 20, February 3 and 17, all 7:30 pm

The Becker Sisters: Northern Legend—Saturday, January 21, at 7:00 pm

Cantabile Women's Chorus: All Shall Be Well—Sunday, January 22, at 3:00 pm

Upper Valley Baroque: The Italian Concerto—Saturday, Jan. 28, 7:00 / Sunday, Jan. 29, 3:00

Dream Big *Many Thanks for Your 2023 Stewardship Pledges*

Many thanks for the 27 pledges we have already received for 2023! We will gratefully continue to accept pledges anytime in the coming weeks. Thank you for your support of our church!

Please either place your pledge form in the offering plate or return it to the church office by mail.

Offering envelopes for 2023 (in boxed sets #1-20) are available in the Parish Hall.

Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

ANTIOCH C.M.

Attr. to Georg F. Handel, 1685-1759

Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns: Let men their
 3 He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,

And heaven and na - ture sing, And heaven and na - ture
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 And won - ders of his love, And won - ders of his

And heaven and na - ture sing, And
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re -
 And won - ders of his love, And

sing, And heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of his love. A - men.
 heaven and na - ture sing.
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 won - ders of his love,



Merry Christmas!

Many, many thanks to all those who generously offered contributions to our **OPEN DOOR MINISTRY** for community assistance, in honor or memory of their loved ones listed below.

IN HONOR OF...

DeAnn/Mom/Mema—*Brian, Amy, Katie, and Grace*

Linda Jean—*Isaac, Loving Husband*

Ike's mom, Betty Adams; Ike's aunt, Terri Reese; Carey Jacobs; and Craig Jacobs—*Linda and Ike Jacobs*

The good, hard-working members of this church family—*Barb Jones*

Our mothers, Phyllis and Kathy, and stepdad Ron—*Deb and Jon Scott*

Our families and loved ones—*The Silver Family*

Kenneth W. Smith; and Linda and Ike Jacobs, for the many wonderful things they do that make a difference in this little corner of the world and beyond—*Rachel Smith-Jones, Travis Jones, Thad, and Elias*

Juliet Marion, mother and grandmother extraordinaire—*Dominic and Stacey*

My parents, Lanny and Jack Natcher; and Corgette and John Troutman—*Dawn Troutman*

IN MEMORY OF...

My son Dan—*Ron Bailey*

Family and friends who have passed on—*Kathy and Warren Belding*

Our parents, Dorothy and Roy Ford and Lula and Royal Bennett—*Ginny and Lloyd Bennett*

Sandy Driscoll, Bill Driscoll, and Maury Clancy—*Brian, DeAnn, Amy, Katie, and Grace*

Laura and Gordon "Doc" Place—*Sue and Ken Gould and Family*

Linda's family: Barbara and Maurice Sumner, Ruby Sumner, Betty Sumner King, Donna Lee King Castle, and Alicia Ann King; and Ike's dad, Raymond Adams—*Linda and Ike Jacobs*

My parents, the Rev. A. Bertram Miller and Mary Margaret Robarts Miller—*Elizabeth Nestler*

Larry Kirkpatrick (Grandpap)—*Kailyn Rappaport and Nan Parsons*

Aunt Jeanie and our grandparents—*Deb and Jon Scott*

Ginger—*Wendell Smith*

My Nana, Helen Elizabeth Kelley Smith—*Rachel Smith-Jones*

Beloved friends Lynn Anderson, Laura and Gordon Place, and Betty and Ellis Howard—*Rachel Smith-Jones and Travis Jones*

Great-grandma Gladys; Great-grandpa Hezekiah; Grandpa Keith; Aunts Dor, Heather, Sonia, Dulcey; and Uncle Noel—*Dominic and Stacey*



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 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@fcclb.org • prayer@fcclb.org • music@fcclb.org • www.fcclb.org