



# First Congregational Church of Lebanon

*United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming*

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## The Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 26, 2023

“Why should we grope among the dry bones of the past,  
or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe?”

–*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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

**Prelude** Allegro, *Concerto for Oboe d'Amore*, BWV 1055 Johann Sebastian Bach

**Call to Worship** Adapted from Psalm 130

One: O LORD, hear our voices!

**All: Let your ears be attentive to the voices of our supplications!**

One: We wait for the LORD, our souls wait, and in God's word we hope.

**All: Our souls wait for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning.**

One: O Israel, hope in the LORD!

**All: For with the LORD there is steadfast love; with God is great power to redeem.**

**Hymn 224** (p. 5) *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* Rockingham

**Prayer of Invocation**

**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**

**Anthem** *The Last Journey* Brock Downward

**Children's Moment**

The Hebrew Bible has some remarkable stories, including today's lesson from Ezekiel. About this passage: there was no valley filled with bones, no miraculous reanimation. Instead, it recounts a vision Ezekiel had—a remarkable, vivid vision of the future, of

Israel restored. Reading this, you might think of something else, of something wild. That's the challenge with imagery: people have to know you're using it. They also have to know when you're not. As you get older, I hope and pray you will read Scripture with a discerning mind, an openness to God, a willingness to be challenged, and a readiness to receive the Truth.

Hymn 348 (p. 6)      *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

Olivet

### Scripture Lessons

*Ezekiel 37:1-14.* The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup>He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup>He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." <sup>4</sup>Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. <sup>5</sup>Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup>I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

<sup>7</sup>So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup>I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup>Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." <sup>10</sup>I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

<sup>11</sup>Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' <sup>12</sup>Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup>And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup>I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord."

*John 11:1-45.* Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. <sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." <sup>4</sup>But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." <sup>5</sup>Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, <sup>6</sup>after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

<sup>7</sup>Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." <sup>8</sup>The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" <sup>9</sup>Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. <sup>10</sup>But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." <sup>11</sup>After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." <sup>12</sup>The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." <sup>13</sup>Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. <sup>14</sup>Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus

is dead. <sup>15</sup>For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” <sup>16</sup>Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

<sup>17</sup>When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. <sup>18</sup>Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, <sup>19</sup>and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. <sup>20</sup>When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. <sup>21</sup>Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup>But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” <sup>23</sup>Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” <sup>24</sup>Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” <sup>25</sup>Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, <sup>26</sup>and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” <sup>27</sup>She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

<sup>28</sup>When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” <sup>29</sup>And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. <sup>30</sup>Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup>The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. <sup>32</sup>When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” <sup>33</sup>When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. <sup>34</sup>He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” <sup>35</sup>Jesus began to weep. <sup>36</sup>So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” <sup>37</sup>But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

<sup>38</sup>Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. <sup>39</sup>Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” <sup>40</sup>Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” <sup>41</sup>So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. <sup>42</sup>I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” <sup>43</sup>When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” <sup>44</sup>The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.” <sup>45</sup>Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

**Sermon** “A Fresh Start?” Stephen R. Silver

**Hymn 99** (p. 7) O Love of God, How Strong and True Eisenach

### 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, Arlene, Evelyn, Barbara, Greg, Edith, Jan, Eileen, Juanita, Terry, Dan, Ethan, Travis, Garrett, Sue, Rick, Terry, and Gordon.

O God of Deliverance: We pray to you, seeking guidance, desiring renewal, confessing that our world is broken. We grieve over senseless violence, persistent poverty, a sclerotic political system, a climate in crisis, and so many other things. We ask, “When

will it end? When will we be saved from evil, from ourselves?" And as we ask these questions, we admit that all too often we have turned from you, from the help you offer. And so we vow now to live into this Lent, to repent of our arrogance, to set aside our delusions, to stow our frustration, to turn to you—in everything.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in the name of your Son Jesus, 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**                      *Larghetto, Concerto for Oboe d'Amore*                      J. S. Bach

### **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 present this morning's offering with gratitude for all we have and all you do. We ask that our gifts be used to mend this broken world and help those who are without. May this offering serve as a sign of your renewing grace and saving power. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

**Hymn 366** (pp. 7-8)    *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*                      Hyfrydol

### **Benediction**

**Postlude**                      *Allegro, ma non tanto, Concerto for Oboe d'Amore*                      J. S. Bach

### *Leading Worship This Week*

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Piano • The FCC Choir • Jason Smoller, English Horn

Brian Clancy, Liturgist • Bob Gerlach and Deb Scott, Ushers • Amy Driscoll, 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](mailto:prayer@fccleb.org) or speak with Rev. Silver directly.*

\* \* \* **HOLY WEEK STARTS ON PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 2** \* \* \*

# 224 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the  
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the  
 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and  
 4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were a  
 Prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I  
 death of Christ my God; all the vain things that  
 love flow min - gled down; did e'er such love and  
 pres - ent far too small; love so a - maz - ing,  
 count but loss, and pour con - tempt on all my pride.  
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.  
 sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?  
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

This carefully crafted text from the beginning of the 18th century conveys much the same intensity and vividness as a miniature painting of Christ's crucifixion, and this lyrical and dignified tune reinforces the sense that time stands still while we share such meditation.

TEXT: Isaac Watts, 1707

MUSIC: *Second Supplement to Psalmody in Miniature*, 1783; harm. Edward Miller, 1790

ROCKINGHAM

LM

(alternate tune: HAMBURG, 223)

## Lenten Lunch Bag Offering—Collection Next Week on Palm Sunday

The Children's Community Corner is grateful for everyone's participation in this annual stewardship project! The total collected next Sunday will be split between **Epilogos Charities** and **WISE of the Upper Valley**. (*Decorated paper bags are available, but not required to participate.*)

# 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.

## One Great Hour of Sharing: "Time to Share"—Special UCC Mission Offering

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.)

## Mark Charles: American History, Christianity, and the Doctrine of Discovery

Sunday, March 26, at 3:00 pm—Church of Christ at Dartmouth, Hanover

The Anti-Racism Ministries Group of the NH Conference (UCC) presents Mark Charles, indigenous justice activist and co-author of *Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery*. All are welcome to attend! Free admission; reception following.

99

## O Love of God, How Strong and True

Horatius Bonar, 1808-1889

EISENACH L.M.

Melody by Johann H. Schein, 1586-1630

1 O love of God, how strong and true, E - ter - nal and yet ev - er new;  
 2 O love of God, how deep and great, Far deep - er than man's deep - est hate;  
 3 O wide-em-brac - ing, won - drous love, We read thee in the sky a - bove;  
 4 We read thee best in him who came To bear for us the cross of shame,  
 5 We read thy power to bless and save E'en in the dark - ness of the grave;

Un - com - pre - hend - ed and un - bought, Be - yond all knowl - edge and all thought!  
 Self - fed, self - kin - dled like the light, Change - less, e - ter - nal, in - fi - nite!  
 We read thee in the earth be - low, In seas that swell and streams that flow.  
 Sent by the Fa - ther from on high, Our life to live, our death to die.  
 Still more in res - ur - rec - tion light We read the full - ness of thy might. A - men.

## 366 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to  
 2 Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery  
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy  
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less

This text and this tune occur in almost all English-language hymnals (though not always together). The transforming power of love motivates the unending praise of the life to come, and this fine Welsh tune (whose name means "delightful") gives us a foretaste of endless song.

TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1747, alt.  
 MUSIC: Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831, alt.

HYFRYDOL  
 8.7.8.7.D

earth come down, fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing; all thy  
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us  
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -  
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion;  
 find the prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;  
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,  
 ly re - stored in thee: changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with  
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as  
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee  
 till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion; en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.  
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.  
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.  
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise.





*Classicopia: Black Brilliance (Celebrating Black Composers)*—Saturday, March 25, at 7:30 pm  
Pianist Dan Weiser and Borowsky siblings Emmanuel (violin) and Frances (cello) offer a superb program in celebration of Black History Month, from ragtime and spirituals to blues-inspired compositions. Music of Scott Joplin, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Undine Smith Moore, Florence Price, and William Grant Still. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; more at classicopia.org.*

*The Anonymous Coffeeshouse*—Fridays, March 31, April 14 and 28, May 12, all 7:30 pm  
Our popular community venue for live local music! Patrons come and go as they please; baked goods and beverages available. *Free admission. For performer info and more, visit anoncoffee.org.*

*UVMC Cello Festival*—Saturday, April 1, at 6:00 pm (rehearsals starting at 3:00)

*Acacia Chamber Music (Stroud, Donahue, and Odell)*—Friday, April 21, at 7:30 pm

*Classicopia: Virtuoso Violin*—Sunday, April 30, at 2:00 pm

*UVMC Faculty Recital: Jennifer Turbes, Viola*—Saturday, May 6, at 1:00 pm

*Bel Canto Chamber Singers: Journeys*—Sat., May 6, at 7:30 pm / Sun., May 7, at 4:00 pm

*UVMC Sing & Play Festival*—Saturday, May 20 (various times and locations)

*Classicopia: Musical Mothers*—Sunday, May 28, at 2:00 pm

*Cantabile Women's Chorus: We Sing Her Song*—Sunday, June 4, at 4:00 pm

**Register Now for Classicopia's Music Camp at FCC/UVMC!—August 14-19, 9a-3p Daily**

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/.*

**BIBLE STUDY: THE BOOK OF DANIEL—WEDNESDAYS AT 7:00 ON ZOOM**

The Book of Daniel offers political lessons for a people in exile and apocalyptic insights into the future for the Jewish people. The early Church understood this book as pointing to Jesus. Led by the Rev. Steve Silver, we'll explore this fascinating book to see what Daniel said to people in the past and what he has to say to us today. All are welcome to participate!

\* † \* **HOLY WEEK AT FCC** \* † \*

**Palm Sunday, April 2, 10:00 am**—Liturgy of the Palms Worship Service (*Sanctuary/Zoom*)

**Maundy Thursday, April 6, 7:00**—Communion, Tenebrae, Stripping of the Altar (*Sanctuary/Zoom*)

**Good Friday, April 7, 12:00-3:00 pm**—Quiet Meditation on the Seven Last Words (*Sanctuary*)  
7:00 pm—Service of the Word and Prayer (*Sanctuary/Zoom*)

**EASTER SUNDAY, April 9, 6:00 am**—Ecumenical Sunrise Service (*Outside in Colburn Park*)  
10:00 am—Festival Worship Service (*Sanctuary/Zoom*)



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

We will be back in our Sanctuary on Easter morning, with an array of fresh flowers on the altar. As in past years, we invite you to honor or remember beloved family and friends with a modest contribution to 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 in the offering plate or by mail, with a contribution (\$5 minimum, payable to FCC, memo "Open Door Lily Fund"). All dedications received by noon on **THURSDAY, APRIL 6**, will be listed in the worship bulletin on Easter Sunday, April 9. (Contributions payable after that date. Please note that we will **not** be purchasing flowers for each individual dedication.)

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

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

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

### *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