



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

The Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

November 12, 2023

Saints cannot exist without a community, as they require, like all of us, nurturance by a people who, while often unfaithful, preserve the habits necessary to learn the story of God.

–Stanley Hauerwas

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

Prelude *Ave Maria von Arcadelt* Franz Liszt

Call to Worship Psalm 70

One: Be pleased, O God, to deliver me. O LORD, make haste to help me!

All: Let those be put to shame and confusion who seek my life. Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire to hurt me.

One: Let those who say, “Aha, Aha!” turn back because of their shame.

All: Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you. Let those who love your salvation say evermore, “God is great!”

One: But I am poor and needy; hasten to me, O God!

All: You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay!

Hymn 297 (p. 5) *O God, Above the Drifting Years* Duke Street

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 *Jesu, Dulcis Memoria* Tomás Luis de Victoria

“The sweet memory of Jesus gives true joy to the heart. His presence is sweeter even than honey, and greater than all things.”

Children’s Moment

Today we welcome new covenant members to our congregation. Now, that doesn’t mean that someone who *doesn’t* stand up here and participate in this liturgy cannot be a member of our church family. Nope. As far as I am concerned, anybody can belong to our

church family just by being here. Joining the church isn't like joining a club or a sports team—there's no need to show a special skill or run at a certain pace, and there are no special qualifications, other than a love of God and a desire to follow the path of Jesus. That's it. Anybody can join.

Reception of New Members

James Raymond (Jim) Hughes and Robert Crockett

The Invitation and Lesson from Scripture

Ephesians 2:19-22

The Statement of Faith

Minister: Let us join together in the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith:

All: We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will, declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

The Covenant of Membership

The Congregation's Promise of Support

Deacon: Let us, the members of First Congregational Church, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

Congregation: We welcome you with joy as partners in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. God grant that together we may continue to grow in God's knowledge and love.

The Greeting of Christian Love

A Prayer for This New Relationship

Hymn 83 (p. 6) *If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee*

Neumark

Scripture Lessons

Amos 5:18-24. ¹⁸Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord! Why do you want the day of the Lord? It is darkness, not light; ¹⁹as if someone fled from a lion, and was met by a bear; or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall, and was bitten by a snake. ²⁰Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light, and gloom with no brightness in it?

²¹I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. ²²Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. ²³Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. ²⁴But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream.

Matthew 25:1-13. [Jesus said,] "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' ¹⁰And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' ¹²But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' ¹³Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Sermon "Rolling Justice"

Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 355 (p. 7) *Who Trusts in God, A Strong Abode*

Bishopgarth

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

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

Today we offer ongoing prayers for Pete, Arlene, Evelyn, Barbara, Gordon, Greg, Jan, Edith, Eileen, Waneta, Terry, Juanita, Dan, Travis, Garrett, Sue, Rick, Edward, Duane, Priscilla, Ron, and Lauren.

O Holy God, on this Veteran's Day weekend, we remember Jesus' words from the Gospel of John, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." On this

day we recall service rooted in sacrifice and dedication. We celebrate those who have been willing to give their all for others, and we ask that we might be inspired by their selflessness. And we pray that we, too, will heed the call to serve others with our whole hearts and minds, all while we serve you.

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

Locus Iste

Anton Bruckner

"This place was made by God, inestimably holy. It is without reproach."

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*)

O God, on this holiday weekend we focus not on parades, and not on sales, but on you. We now respond to your call to service, to assist those who are hungry and naked, those who are on the outside, to remember what Jesus did for us. We offer our thanks to you for what you have made possible in us and for us. Amen.

Hymn 408 (p. 8)

All My Hope on God Is Founded

Michael

Benediction

Postlude

The Priest's Hymn

Franz Liszt

* * *

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ • The FCC Choir • Denise Moriearty, Liturgist

Linda and Bob Gerlach, Ushers • Linda Jacobs, Zoom Greeter

O God, Above the Drifting Years

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John W. Buckham, 1864-1945

DUKE STREET L.M.
John Hatton, d.1793

1 O God, a - bove the drift - ing years, The shrines our
2 From out their tire - less prayer and toil E - merge the
3 The torch of their de - vo - tion lent, Light - ens the
4 Fill thou our hearts with faith like theirs, Who served the

fa - thers found - ed stand, And where the high - er
gifts that time has proved, And seed laid deep in
dark that round us lies; Help us to pass it
days they could not see, And give us grace, through

gain ap - pears, We trace the work - ing of thy hand.
sa - cred soil Yields har - vests rich in last - ing good.
on un - spent, Un - til the dawn lights up the skies.
am - pler years, To build the king - dom yet to be. A-men.

Don't Bury Your Treasure: Stewardship Sunday is November 19

"For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance." —Matthew 25:29

Our annual stewardship appeal—inspired this year by the parable of the talents—is in the mail! You are invited to prayerfully consider your commitment to FCC's mission and ministry in the coming year, and we will gratefully dedicate our 2024 pledges together in worship next Sunday.

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.

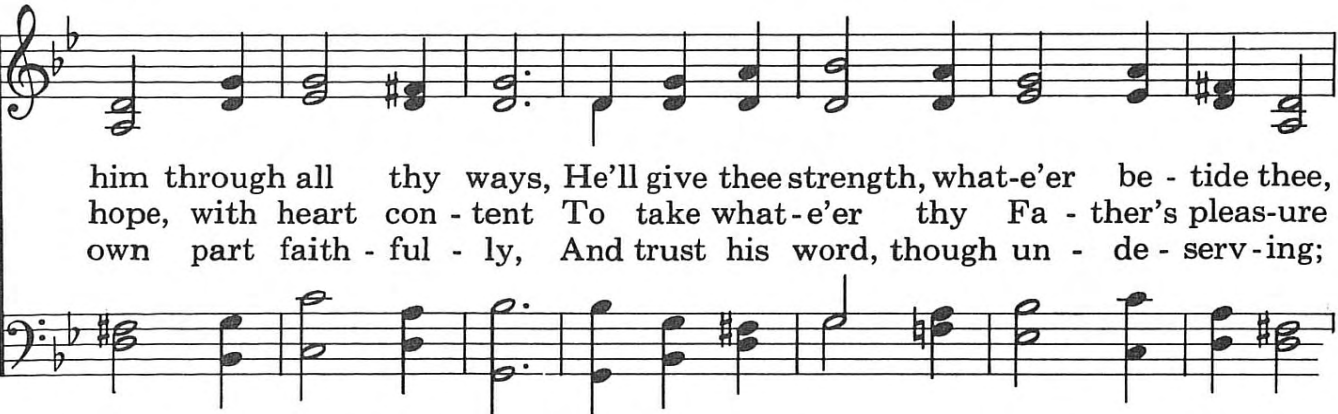
If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee

Georg Neumark, 1621-1681
Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878


NEUMARK 9.8.9.8.8.8.
Melody by Georg Neumark, 1621-1681



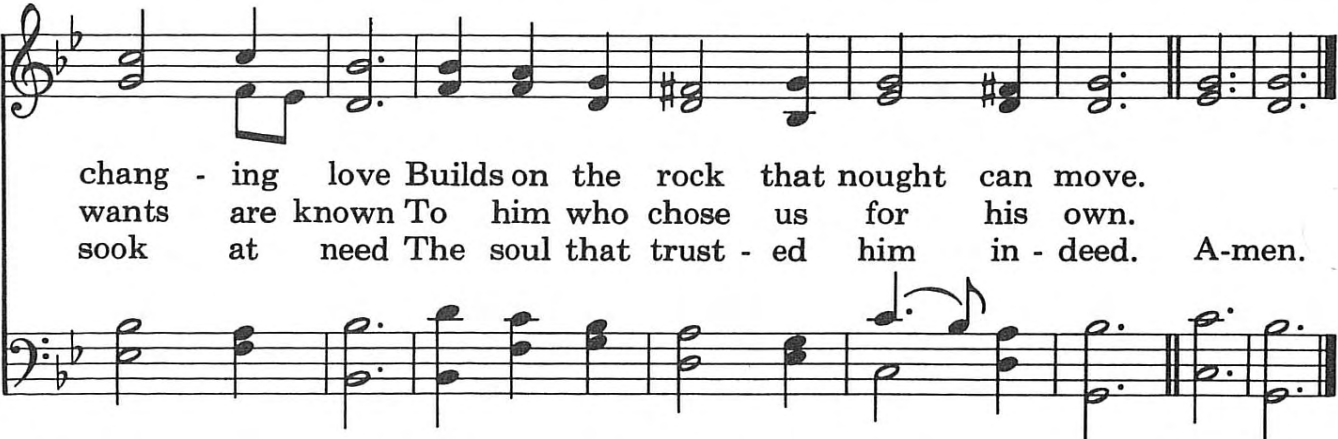
1 If thou but suf - fer God to guide thee, And hope in
2 On - ly be still, and wait his lei - sure In cheer - ful
3 Sing, pray, and keep his ways un - swerv - ing; So do thine



him through all thy ways, He'll give thee strength, what-e'er be - tide thee,
hope, with heart con - tent To take what-e'er thy Fa - ther's pleas-ure
own part faith - ful - ly, And trust his word, though un - de - serv-ing;



And bear thee through the e - vil days; Who trusts in God's un -
And all - de - serv - ing love have sent; Nor doubt our in - most
Thou yet shalt find it true for thee; God nev - er yet for -



chang - ing love Builds on the rock that nought can move.
wants are known To him who chose us for his own.
sook at need The soul that trust - ed him in - deed. A-men.

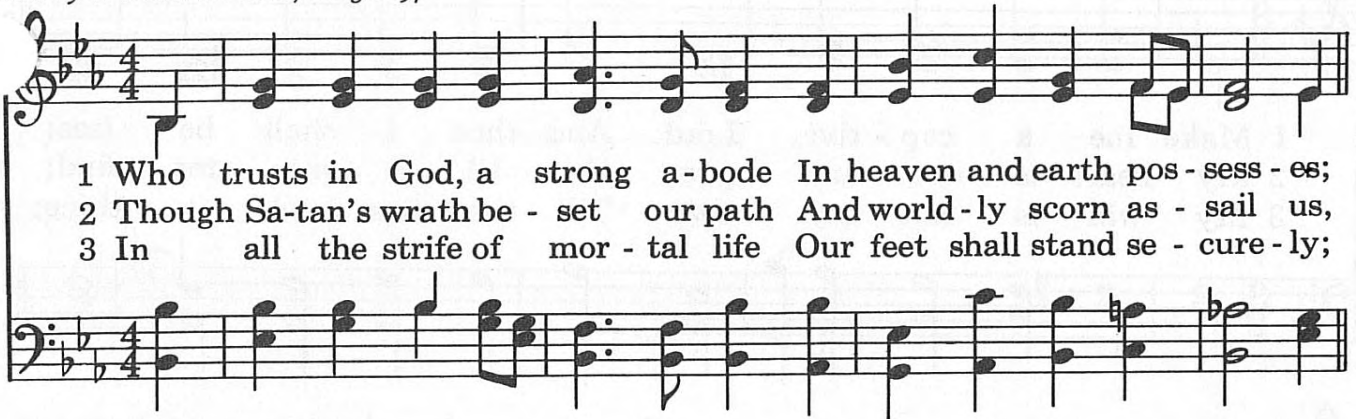
Who Trusts in God, a Strong Abode

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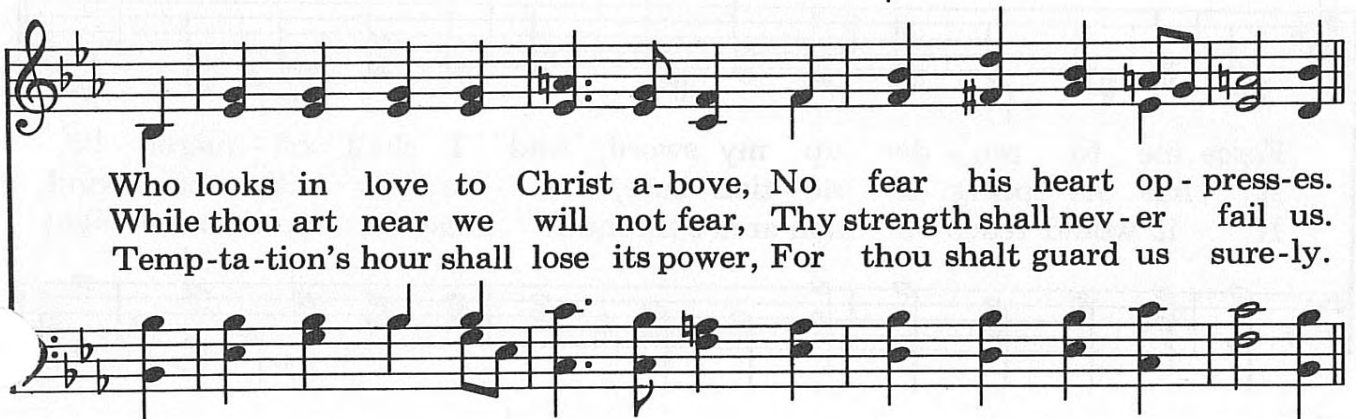
Second Tune

Joachim Magdeburg, c.1525-?
Tr. B. H. Kennedy, 1804-1889
Alt. by William W. How, 1823-1897

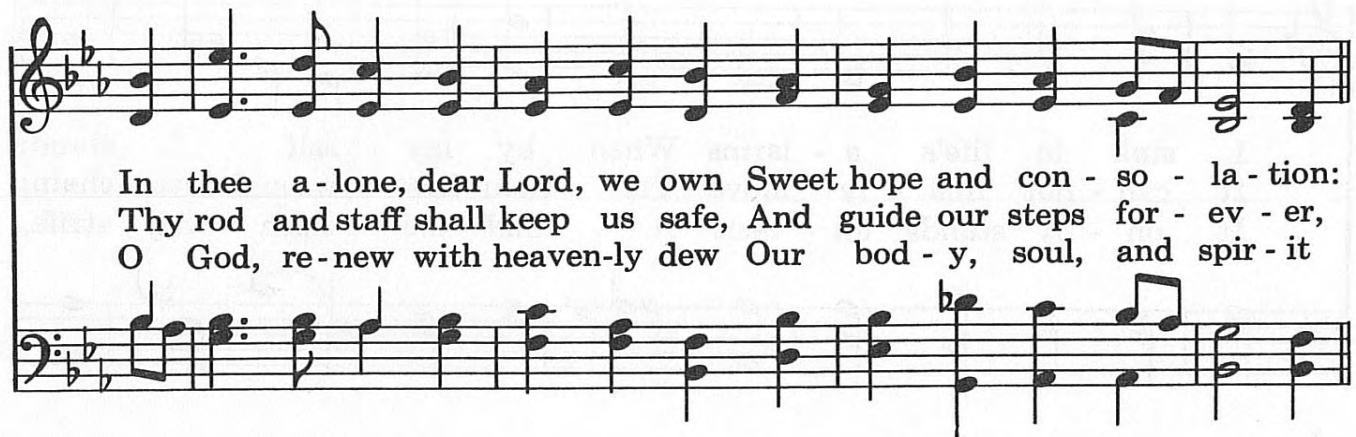
BISHOPGARTH 8.7.8.7.D.
Arthur S. Sullivan, 1842-1900



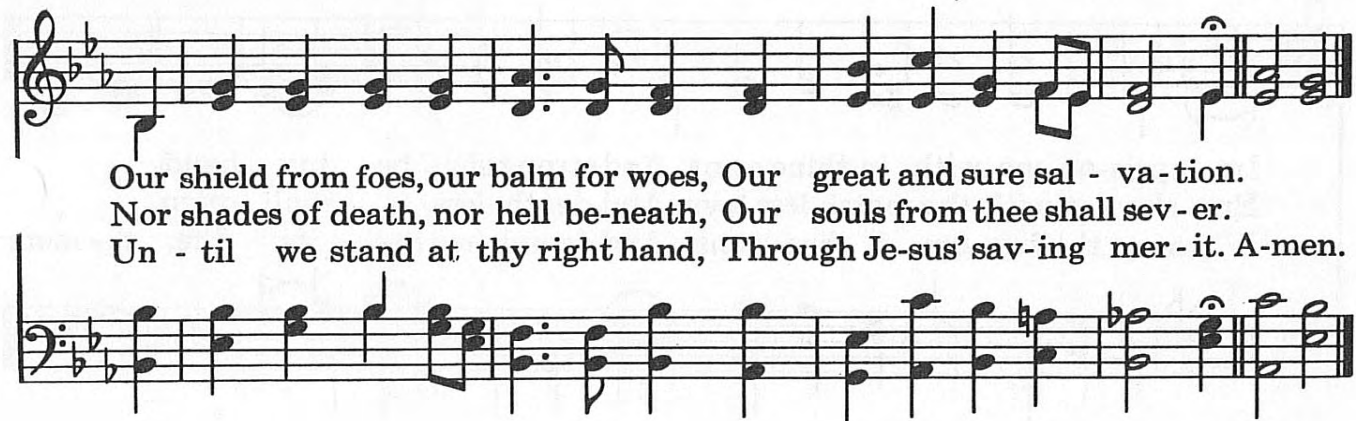
1 Who trusts in God, a strong a-bode In heaven and earth pos-sess-es;
2 Though Sa-tan's wrath be-set our path And world-ly scorn as-sail us,
3 In all the strife of mor-tal life Our feet shall stand se-cure-ly;



Who looks in love to Christ a-bove, No fear his heart op-press-es.
While thou art near we will not fear, Thy strength shall nev-er fail us.
Temp-ta-tion's hour shall lose its power, For thou shalt guard us sure-ly.



In thee a-lone, dear Lord, we own Sweet hope and con-so-la-tion:
Thy rod and staff shall keep us safe, And guide our steps for-ev-er,
O God, re-new with heaven-ly dew Our bod-y, soul, and spir-it



Our shield from foes, our balm for woes, Our great and sure sal-va-tion.
Nor shades of death, nor hell be-neath, Our souls from thee shall sev-er.
Un-til we stand at thy right hand, Through Je-sus' sav-ing mer-it. A-men.

All My Hope on God Is Founded

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Joachim Neander, c. 1680

Ps. 62:5-8; 1 Tim. 6:17

Paraphr. by Robert Bridges, 1899; alt.

1 All my hope on God is found - ed: who else can my hope re-new?
2 Well does the al - might-y Giv - er boun-teous gifts on us be-stow!
3 In glad hymns to God e - ter - nal sac - ri - fice of praise be done,

Still through change and chance God guides me, on - ly good and on - ly true.
With de - light our souls are nour-ished; plea-sure leads us where we go.
high a - bove all prais - es prais - ing for the love in Christ made known.

God un - known, grace a - lone, calls my heart to be God's own.
At God's hand does love stand; joy a - waits each new com - mand.
Hear Christ's call, one and all; those who fol - low shall not fall.

British composer Herbert Howells studied with Charles V. Stanford at the Royal College of Music in London and later taught there. The tune was composed for an English school and was named for Howells' son who died in childhood.

Tune: MICHAEL 8.7.8.7.3.3.7.
Herbert Howells, 1930, 1977

Music Copyright © 1930, renewed 1977 by Novello Music

The Anonymous Coffeehouse—Fridays, Nov. 10 and 24, Dec. 1 and 15, all 7:30 pm

Our comfy community venue for live folk music is thriving in its fourth season! An informal “listening room” for emerging musicians, each show features several acoustic acts. Come and go as you please; food and drink available. *Free admission. For performers and more, visit anoncoffee.org.*

Cameo Baroque: Benefit Concert for 19 Days—Sunday, November 26, at 4:00 pm

This superb ensemble (Ernie Drown, Beth Hilgartner, Leslie Stroud, and Laurie Rabut) offers their annual benefit for the Upper Valley Haven’s **19 Days of the Valley** campaign. They’ll share an autumnal selection of G. F. Handel, G. P. Telemann, William Boyce, and more. *Free-will donation to benefit the Haven; more at cameoarts.org or uppervalleyhaven.org.*

Classicopia: Four-Hand Holiday—Sunday, December 3, at 2:00 pm

Longtime friends Daniel Weiser and Philip Liston-Kraft renew this festive tradition of favorite classics in fun, four-hand-piano arrangements, from “Jingle Bells” and “White Christmas” to the Blue Danube Waltz and the Nutcracker. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15; more at classicopia.org.*

Bel Canto Chamber Singers: Wintertide—Saturday, Dec. 9, at 7:00 / Sunday, Dec. 10, at 4:00

Jane Woods leads Bel Canto in a seasonal selection of choral music with strings, flute, and piano. They’ll sing Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s *Messe de Minuit*, as well as Ola Gjeilo, John Rutter, French carols, and traditional spirituals. *Adults \$15, students \$10, under 13 free; for more, visit belcantosingers.org.*

Upper Valley Music Center Messiah Sing!—Sunday, December 17, at 3:30 pm

Our annual performance of G. F. Handel’s beloved oratorio, with student soloists. All welcome to join the chorus (scores available!) or just listen. *Suggested \$20 donation; more at uvmusic.org.*

A Borowsky Family Christmas—Saturday, December 23, at 7:00 pm

Pianist Elizabeth Borowsky gathers her musically accomplished family—mother Cecylia Barczyk (cello) and siblings Frances (cello) and Emmanuel (violin)—along with a few friends and colleagues for this special program of a variety of Christmas favorites. All are welcome! *Free-will donation.*

CHRISTMAS COMES TO ALL—LISTEN’S HOLIDAY BASKETS

For years FCC has participated in the Holiday Basket Program organized by LISTEN Community Services. Requests for baskets are always high, as families struggle to provide warm clothing for children and food for holiday meals. LISTEN gathers donations of new items and gift cards for these families, and FCC joins many other partners to support this vital project with donations.

Please help us fill our baskets by covering a gift for one of our families! Gift wish lists are available in the Parish Hall (and will also be updated by email in the coming weeks).



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 • Brian Clancy, Church Administrator

Jon Scott, Chair of Church Council • Linda Gerlach, Chair of Deacons • Barbara Jones, Moderator

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