



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY • The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

November 19, 2023

The operation of the Church is entirely set up for the sinner,
which creates much misunderstanding among the smug.

–Flannery O'Connor

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

Prelude *Nun danket alle Gott* Sigfrid Karg-Elert

Call to Worship Adapted from Psalm 90

One: Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

All: Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth
and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

One: You turn us back to dust, and say, "Turn back, you mortals."

All: For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a
watch in the night.

One: You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the
morning;

All: In the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.

One: For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed.

All: You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your
countenance.

One: For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh.

All: The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even
then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.
So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

Hymn 36 (p. 5) *For the Fruit of All Creation*

Ar Hyd y Nos

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

Children's Moment

Later this week, we will celebrate Thanksgiving. Hopefully, we'll be able to gather with loved ones and share a good meal. When we do that, I hope you will give thanks to God for all the good in your life. And perhaps you'll think of one thing in particular for which you are thankful: a family member, a pet, a beloved toy. What matters is that we say thank you, and not just on a national holiday, but on each and every day.

Hymn 404 (p. 6) *Take My Life and Let It Be*

Vienna

Scripture Lessons

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18. ⁷Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is at hand; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. [...]

¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, "The Lord will not do good, nor will he do harm." ¹³Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them.

¹⁴The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. ¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

¹⁷I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the Lord, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. ¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Matthew 25:14-30. [Jesus continued,] ¹⁴"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two

more talents.’ ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

Sermon “Don’t Bury Your Treasure” Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 612 (p. 7) *We Praise You, O God* Kremser

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 Stewardship Sunday we offer our thanks to you, knowing that we can sometimes lose sight of all that for which we have reason to be grateful: for this beautiful world, for our community, for our church, for our families and friends. While all may not be perfect for us, we still should look for the good in our lives and, having done so, offer gratitude to 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 *Give Alms of Thy Goods* Christopher Tye

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*)

Bountiful God, as we present our gifts and our stewardship pledges this morning, help us to remember the good that they will do, both now and in the future, for your church here in Lebanon, and for your people in the Upper Valley. With gratitude, we thank you for calling us all to do your work, and to follow the path of Jesus. Amen.

Hymn 757 (pp. 8-9) *Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples*

Kingsfold

Benediction

Postlude

Toccata in G (Douze Pièces, no. 3)

Théodore Dubois

* * *

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • The FCC Choir • Brian Clancy, Liturgist
Deb and Jon Scott, Ushers • Stacey Steele, 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.

Don't Bury Your Treasure It's Stewardship Sunday!

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

All are invited to prayerfully consider their commitment to FCC's mission and ministry in the coming year. Today we dedicate our 2024 pledges in worship, but we will gratefully continue to accept them 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. Box sets (#1-20) of offering envelopes for 2024 will be available by early December.

Advent Begins Sunday, December 3—Let's Decorate!

Yes, ADVENT! After worship in two weeks we're going to decorate FCC for the season, and all are warmly invited to stay and help. We'll hang wreaths, string lights, trim our tree, and have fun as we prepare the church for the festive season of Advent. *Let's celebrate the season!*

For the Fruit of All Creation

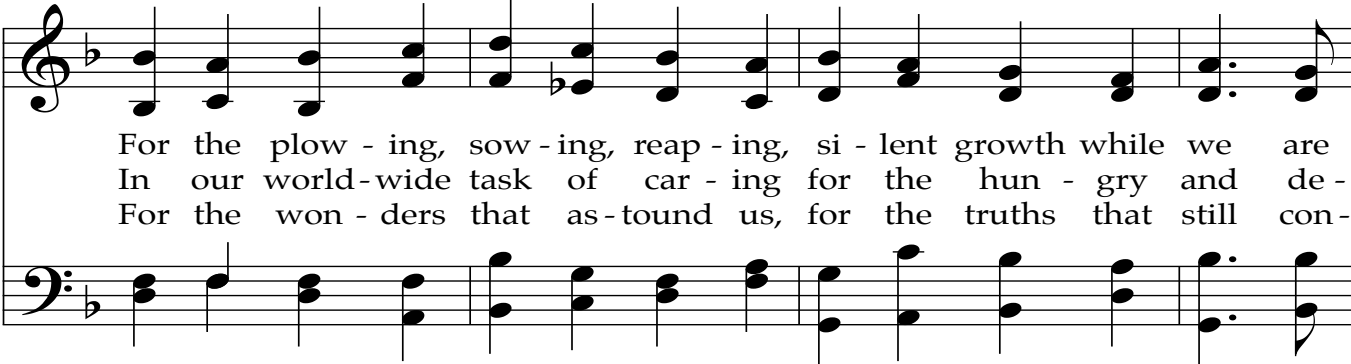
36



1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
 2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will be done.
 3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.



For the gifts to ev - ery na - tion, thanks be to God.
 In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will be done.
 For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are
 In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de -
 For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con -



sleep - ing, fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
 spair - ing, in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will be done.
 found us, most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Originally called "Harvest Hymn," this text is much more comprehensive than that title implies. It also deals with stewardship, thanksgiving, and God's endless gifts that continue to astound us. It is set to a familiar Welsh tune whose name means "throughout the night."

Take My Life and Let It Be

404

Frances R. Havergal, 1836-1879

VIENNA 7.7.7.7.

Melody by Justin H. Knecht, 1752-1817

1 Take my life, and let it be Con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee;
2 Take my hands, and let them move At the im - pulse of thy love;
3 Take my will, and make it thine; It shall be no long - er mine;
4 Take my love: my Lord I pour At thy feet its treas - ure store;

Take my mo - ments and my days, Let them flow in cease - less praise.
Take my feet, and let them be Swift and beau - ti - ful for thee.
Take my heart, it is thine own; It shall be thy roy - al throne.
Take my - self, and I will be Ev - er, on - ly, all for thee. A - men.

PLEASE NOTE — *Due to uncertain participation and scheduling among local clergy, we regret that we will NOT be offering an Ecumenical Thanksgiving service this year.*

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.

If you haven't yet volunteered to cover a gift but would like to, please contact the church office.

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!

We Praise You, O God

612



1 We praise you, O God, our Re - deem - er, Cre - a - tor;
 2 We wor - ship you, God of our fa - thers and moth - ers;
 3 With voic - es u - nit - ed our prais - es we of - fer

in grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
 through tri - al and tem - pest our guide you have been.
 and glad - ly our songs of thanks - giv - ing we raise.

We lay it be - fore you; we kneel and a - dore you;
 When per - ils o'er - take us, you will not for - sake us,
 With you, Lord, be - side us, your strong arm will guide us.

we bless your ho - ly name; glad prais - es we sing.
 and with your help, O Lord, our strug - gles we win.
 To you, our great Re - deem - er, for - ev - er be praise!

The author wrote this text when only nineteen years old in response to a request from the organist of the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York City, who wanted another Thanksgiving text to sing to this Dutch tune. He regarded the usual text (see no. 336) as too full of conflict.

TEXT: Julia C. Cory, 1902, alt.

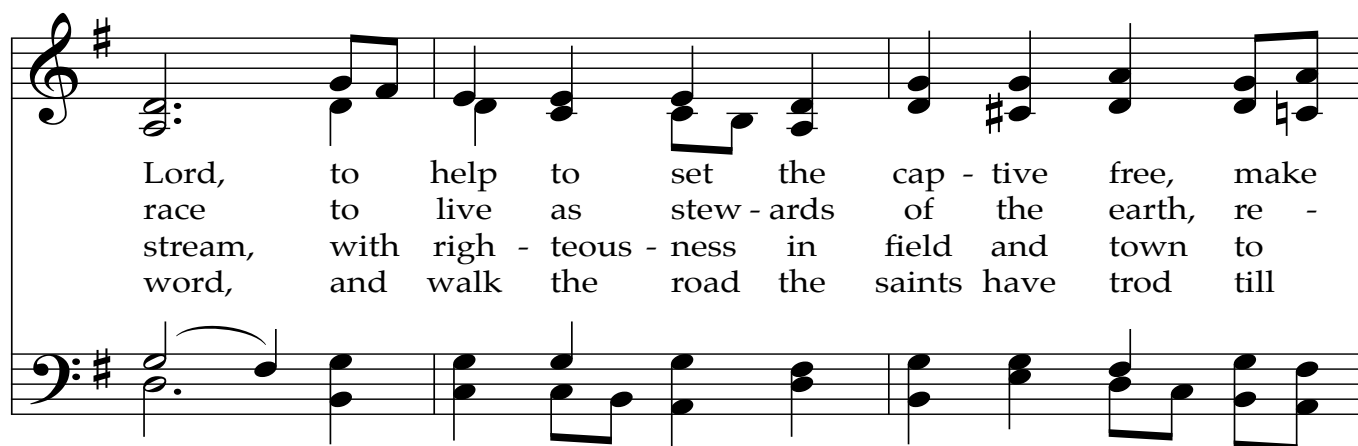
MUSIC: *Neder-landsch Gedenck-Clanck*, 1626; harm. Eduard Kremser, 1877

KREMSE
12.11.12.11

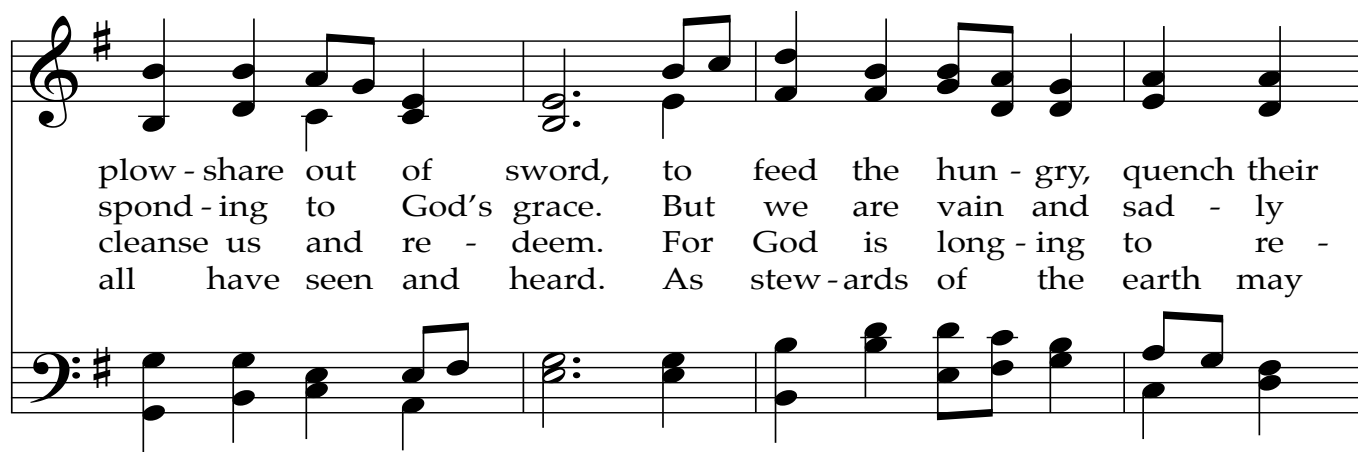
757 Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples



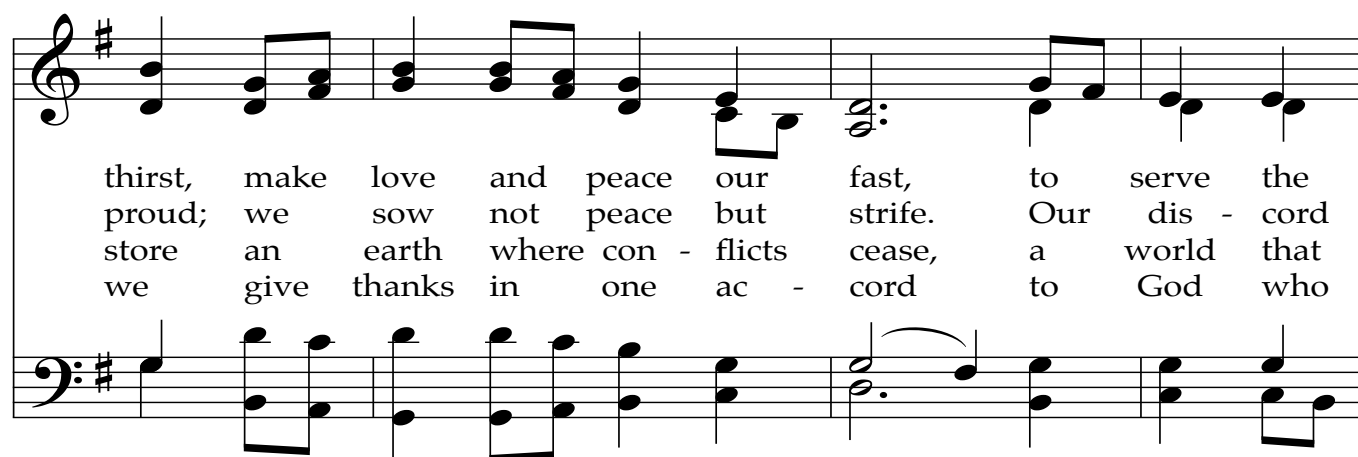
1 To - day we all are called to be dis - ci - ples of the
 2 God made the world and at its birth or - dained our hu - man
 3 Pray jus - tice may come roll - ing down as in a might - y
 4 May we in ser - vice to our God act out the liv - ing



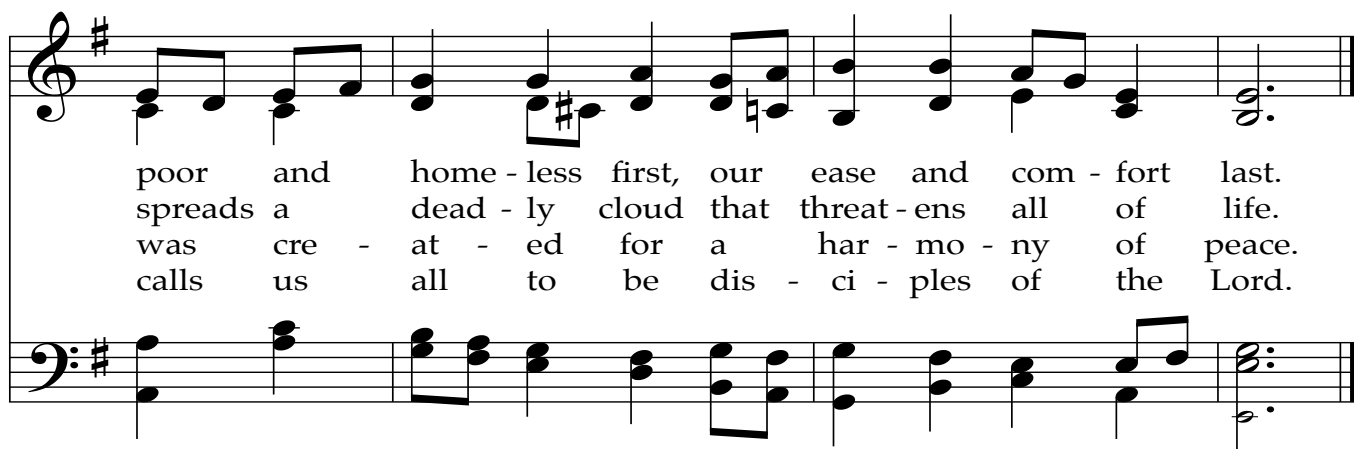
Lord, to help to set the cap - tive free, make
 race to live as stew - ards of the earth, re -
 stream, with righ - teous - ness in field and town to
 word, and walk the road the saints have trod till



plow - share out of sword, to feed the hun - gry, quench their
 spond - ing to God's grace. But we are vain and sad - ly
 cleanse us and re - deem. For God is long - ing to re -
 all have seen and heard. As stew - ards of the earth may



thirst, make love and peace our fast, to serve the
 proud; we sow not peace but strife. Our dis - cord
 store an earth where con - flicts cease, a world that
 we give thanks in one ac - cord to God who



poor and home-less first, our ease and com-fort last.
spreads a dead-ly cloud that threat-ens all of life.
was cre-at-ed for a har-mo-ny of peace.
calls us all to be dis-ci-ples of the Lord.

This text placing stewardship in the context of faithful witness was written by a retired Presbyterian minister to be part of the 1986 stewardship campaign titled "Called to Be Disciples." The tune name recalls the Sussex village where the arranger first heard the melody.

TEXT: H. Kenn Carmichael, 1985
MUSIC: *English County Songs*, 1893; harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906
Text © 1989 H. Kenn Carmichael

KINGSFOLD
CMD



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Holiday Events

All in the FCC Sanctuary

The Anonymous Coffeehouse—Fridays, Nov. 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.*



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@fcclleb.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@fcclleb.org • prayer@fcclleb.org • music@fcclleb.org • www.fcclleb.org