



## The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

[The church] is for the lost and the loveless,  
the place for the unplaced, the home for the homeless.

*Kindly silence cell phones and other devices during worship. All hymns are included on pages 6-9.*

Prelude      *An Wasserflüssen Babylon*, BWV 653      Johann Sebastian Bach

Call to Worship Adapted from Psalm 147

One: The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel.

**All:** He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.

One: Great is our LORD, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.

**All:** The LORD lifts up the downtrodden; he casts the wicked to the ground.

One: Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make melody to our God on the lyre.

**All:** The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.

**Hymn 366** (pp. 6-7)    *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*    Hyfrydol

## 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, the Very Thought of Thee*      Edward Bairstow

## Children's Moment

Do you belong to any clubs or teams? If so, do they have any requirements that you need to meet? Our church doesn't. You don't have to run a certain speed, give a certain amount of money, have good grades, or know anybody. As long as you wish to follow the way of Jesus, you may join. It's that easy.

And you can still be part of our church family, even if you don't want to take this one step, simply by showing up for worship. Weird rules, right? Well, those rules are ultimately set forth by our God, who loves us, no matter what.

## **Reception of New Members**

*MIRIAM MAGUIRE and ROBERT ROSS*

### **The Invitation and Lesson from Scripture**

Ephesians 2:19-22

### **The Statement of Faith (Unison)**

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**

**Scripture Lessons**

*Isaiah 40:21-31.* <sup>21</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? <sup>22</sup>It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; <sup>23</sup>who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing. <sup>24</sup>Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

<sup>25</sup>To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. <sup>26</sup>Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing.

<sup>27</sup>Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God”? <sup>28</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. <sup>29</sup>He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. <sup>30</sup>Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; <sup>31</sup>but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

*Mark 1:29-39.* <sup>29</sup>As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup>Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup>He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup>That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. <sup>33</sup>And the whole city was gathered around the door. <sup>34</sup>And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

<sup>35</sup>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup>And Simon and his companions hunted for him. <sup>37</sup>When they found him, they said to him, “Everyone is searching for you.” <sup>38</sup>He answered, “Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.” <sup>39</sup>And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

**Sermon**                      “Unexpected Visitors”

Stephen R. Silver

**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, Gordon, Greg, Jan, Edith, Eileen, Waneta, Terry, Juanita, Dan, Travis, Garrett, Sue, Rick, Edward, Duane, Priscilla, Ron, Lauren, Brian, Micah, Al, and Steve.

O Holy God, we believe we know where we are going, but in truth we are lost. We seek meaning in the ephemeral, purpose in the prosaic, transcendence in passing flights of fancy. In truth, our destination is you, but all too often we get lost or choose to head in a different direction. We ignore the signs you have put along the road for us, and for that we are sorry. Help us to see and hear the arrival of your Son, your Spirit of love, in our lives.

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**

*There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*

Maurice Bevan

### **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*)

Lord of Creation, we come to you with hearts grateful that you treasure your people, valuing and loving each of us. In thanks, we present this morning's offering as a sign that we will work to care for all of your children, our brothers and sisters, wherever they may be. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

### **The Sacrament of Holy Communion**

*For communion, you are invited to have some bread and juice on hand. We will share in the bread and cup at the appointed time. If you would like to receive a blessing, please let the officiant know.*

### **Invitation and Communion Prayer**

**Sanctus**

Ho - ly, Ho - ly Ho - ly, Lord God of Hosts:  
 Heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Glo - ry be to you, O Lord most  
 High. Bless-ed is the one that comes in the name of the  
 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, Ho - san - na in the high - est, Ho -  
 san - na in the high - est.

## Sharing of the Bread and Cup

### Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving (*Unison*)

Because the broken bread has meant our healing, because the outpoured cup has meant our life, because our common sharing has meant the communion of our souls, and because we have here been graced by your presence, God, we give you thanks and pray that our lives may be renewed in the life and the love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Hymn 273** (p. 9)      *Praise with Joy the World's Creator*      *Lauda Anima*

## Benediction

**Postlude**      *Rigaudon*      *André Campra*

\* \* \*

### *Leading Worship This Week*

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • The FCC Choir • Betsy Alexander, Liturgist

Chris Chase and Linda Gerlach, Ushers • Bob Gerlach, Zoom



**Music  
at the  
Meetinghouse**

## **Upcoming Concerts**

*All in the FCC Sanctuary*

*The Anonymous Coffeehouse*—Fridays, Feb. 9 and 23, Mar. 8 and 22, all at 7:30 pm

Our comfy community venue for live folk music is thriving in its fourth season! Come and go as you please; food and drink available. *Free admission. For performers and more, visit [anoncoffee.org](http://anoncoffee.org).*

*Benjamin Kulp, Cello, and Chenyu Wang, Piano*—Sunday, February 11, at 3:00 pm

UVMC's longtime cellist Ben Kulp and new faculty member Chenyu Wang offer an eclectic, thoughtful program ranging from Samuel Barber, Arvo Pärt, and Olivier Messiaen to Ed Sheeran and Charlie Chaplin. *Adults \$20, under-18 free; visit [uvmusic.org/event/ben-kulp-cello-and-chenyu-wang-piano](http://uvmusic.org/event/ben-kulp-cello-and-chenyu-wang-piano).*

***FCC's 2024 Annual Meeting is Sunday, February 11, at 11:30 (Sanctuary/Zoom)***

Please see the meeting warrant on Page 7; the **2023 Annual Report** is available in the Parish Hall.

# 366 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Alto parts, with the Tenor and Bass parts providing harmonic support. The lyrics are arranged in four systems, each corresponding to a line of the hymn. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn, the second system contains the next four lines, the third system contains the next four lines, and the fourth system contains the final four lines. The music is written on a grand staff with four staves, two for the Soprano and Alto parts and two for the Tenor and Bass parts. The lyrics are written below the staves, with each line of lyrics corresponding to a line of music. The lyrics are: 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 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



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

## NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING – Sunday, February 11, 11:30 am

The Annual Meeting of First Congregational Church of Lebanon, NH, will be held in the Sanctuary (and remotely on Zoom) on on **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2024, AT 11:30 AM**, after that morning’s worship service, for the following purposes:

1. To hear the reports of all officers, committees, and organizations, as required under the CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of the church.
2. The election of all officers provided for under the CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of the church.
3. To consider and act upon any other matters relating to the general church welfare that may properly come before this meeting.

## THE SOUPER BOWL IS HERE... BUT NOT FOR LONG!

One week left to set a new SOUPER BOWL record! Bring in your donations of soup and other non-perishable items anytime (collection boxes in the Parish Hall), for our neighbors at HEADREST, the UPPER VALLEY HAVEN, and LISTEN COMMUNITY SERVICES.

*Donations may be left in the boxes in the Parish Hall until February 11. You may also bring them directly to any of the three beneficiaries (please let us know if you do so). THANK YOU!!*

## CREATING NEW TABLES: PREPARED TO SERVE 2024

**Saturday, February 24, 8:00 to 4:00—Pembroke Academy, Pembroke, NH**

**Prepared to Serve** is a training event open to all congregations of the NH Conference (UCC), offering workshops on topics ranging from stewardship, lay leadership, and church finances to service, mission, and Christian education. **All are invited to participate in this enriching day!**

*FCC will pay for anyone interested to attend! Online registration deadline is February 14; fee includes meals and meeting resources. A complete conference booklet is available for review in the Parish Hall. For more information, please visit [www.nhcucc.org](http://www.nhcucc.org).*

# 834 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand; lead me on, help me  
 2 When my way grows drear, pre - cious Lord, lin - ger

stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.  
 near; when my life is al - most gone,

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the  
 hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I

light; take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.  
 fall; take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.

This black gospel song, like much hymnody, sprang out of the author's deep personal loss (the death of his wife and newborn son), yet it has brought solace to many. He thought his fingers were playing new music, but they unlocked a deep memory of a tune almost a century old.

TEXT: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1938

MUSIC: George N. Allen, 1844; arr. Thomas A. Dorsey, 1938

Text and Music Arr. © 1938, ren. Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp. (admin. Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.)

PRECIOUS LORD

6.6.9.D



# Praise with Joy the World's Creator

273

*The Iona Community, 1985; alt.*



1 Praise with joy the world's Cre - a - tor, God of jus - tice,  
 2 Praise to Christ who feeds the hun - gry, frees the cap - tive,  
 3 Praise the Spir - it sent a - mong us, lib - er - a - ting  
 4 Praise the Mak - er, Christ, and Spir - it, one God in Com -

love, and peace, Source and end of hu - man knowl - edge,  
 finds the lost, Heals the sick, up - sets re - li - gion,  
 truth from pride, Forg - ing bonds where race or gen - der,  
 mu - ni - ty, Call - ing Christ - ians to em - bod - y

grace be - stow - ing with - out cease. Cel - e - brate the  
 fear - less both of fate and cost. Cel - e - brate Christ's  
 age or na - tion dare di - vide. Cel - e - brate the  
 one - ness and di - ver - si - ty. Thus the world shall

Ma - ker's glo - ry, power to res - cue and re - lease.  
 con - stant pres - ence— Friend and Strang - er, Guest and Host.  
 Spir - it's trea - sure— fool - ish - ness none dare de - ride.  
 yet be - lieve when shown Christ's vi - brant un - i - ty.

*The Iona Community works and worships in a tenth-century abbey on the remote island of Iona, Scotland. Their output of hymns and songs includes this one written for the anniversary gathering of the World Student Christian Federation in Edinburgh in 1985.*

Tune: LAUDA ANIMA (PRAISE MY SOUL)

8.7.8.7.8.7.

John Goss, 1869

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**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](mailto: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](mailto:church@fcclleb.org) • [prayer@fcclleb.org](mailto:prayer@fcclleb.org) • [music@fcclleb.org](mailto:music@fcclleb.org) • [www.fcclleb.org](http://www.fcclleb.org)**