



# First Congregational Church of Lebanon

*United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming*

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**The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost**

July 14, 2024

You are not what others think you are. You are what God knows you are.

–Shannon Alder

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

## **Prelude**

### **Call to Worship**

Psalm 24

One: The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it;

**All: For he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.**

One: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?

**All: Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully.**

One: They will receive blessing from the LORD, and vindication from the God of their salvation.

**All: Such is the company of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

One: Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in.

**All: Who is the King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle.**

One: Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in.

**All: Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.**

**Hymn 68** (p. 5)      *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*

Ellacombe

## **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

Have you ever noticed how many times God makes promises that are unmerited and unwarranted, that we have done nothing to earn? This is what it means for God to be gracious to us. The generosity of God is not because of anything we humans do. It is because God loves us and wants to help us. It's that simple. God *loves* us.

Hymn 416 (p. 6)      *Christian, Rise and Act Thy Creed* (vv. 1-4)

Innocents

### Scripture Lessons

*Amos 7:7-15.* <sup>7</sup>This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. <sup>8</sup>And the Lord said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by; <sup>9</sup>the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

<sup>10</sup>Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. <sup>11</sup>For thus Amos has said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.'" <sup>12</sup>And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; <sup>13</sup>but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

<sup>14</sup>Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, <sup>15</sup>and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'[...]"

*Mark 6:14-29.* <sup>14</sup>King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." <sup>15</sup>But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." <sup>16</sup>But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

<sup>17</sup>For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. <sup>18</sup>For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." <sup>19</sup>And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, <sup>20</sup>for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. <sup>21</sup>But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. <sup>22</sup>When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl,

“Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.”<sup>23</sup> And he solemnly swore to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.”<sup>24</sup> She went out and said to her mother, “What should I ask for?” She replied, “The head of John the baptizer.”<sup>25</sup> Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”<sup>26</sup> The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her.<sup>27</sup> Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John’s head. He went and beheaded him in the prison,<sup>28</sup> brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother.<sup>29</sup> When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

**Sermon**

*“Shoot the Messenger?”*

Stephen R. Silver

**Hymn 726 (p. 7)**

*Will You Come and Follow Me*

Kelvingrove

### **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 the church office to add or remove names.*

Today we offer our ongoing prayers for Pete, Marcia, Arlene, Evelyn, Greg, Jan, Edith, Eileen, Waneta, Terry, Juanita, Dan, Travis, Garrett, Sue, Rick, Edward, Duane, Priscilla, Ron, Lauren, Brian, Micah, Al, Steve, Denzil, and Lisa.

Faithful, fulfilling God: we give thanks to you for your promises, which you have kept steadfastly. What you say you will do, you do. And for that we are grateful. Help us to not take your words lightly, to remember that your promises are given freely, though we have not merited them. Strengthen us to set aside our compulsions, our sense of entitlement, and our confusion of our own desires with your commitments. Further, let us be bold and ask that our promises be modeled on yours, and on those of Jesus.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. 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**

## 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*)

We come before you, Triune God—our Creator, our Redeemer, our Comforter—thankful for all you have done for us, your people. With gratitude and devotion, we now offer our gifts, asking that they and those who present them be blessed to your service. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Hymn 342 (p. 8)      *Judge Eternal, Throned in Splendor*

Rhuddlan

## Benediction

## Postlude

\* \* \*

### *Leading Worship This Week*

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Sarah Hill, Guest Pianist • Sue Pratt, Liturgist

Corrine Erskine and Linda Jacobs, 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](mailto:prayer@fccleb.org) or speak with Rev. Silver directly.*

## STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH—SPECIAL UCC OFFERING

This offering supports the growth of ministry and local congregations across the country. This year's theme—**"On Holy Ground"**—suggests the program's goal of establishing new churches and supporting existing ones. By renewing faith communities and funding fellowships for young, emerging leaders in our church, this program is vital to the health of our denomination.

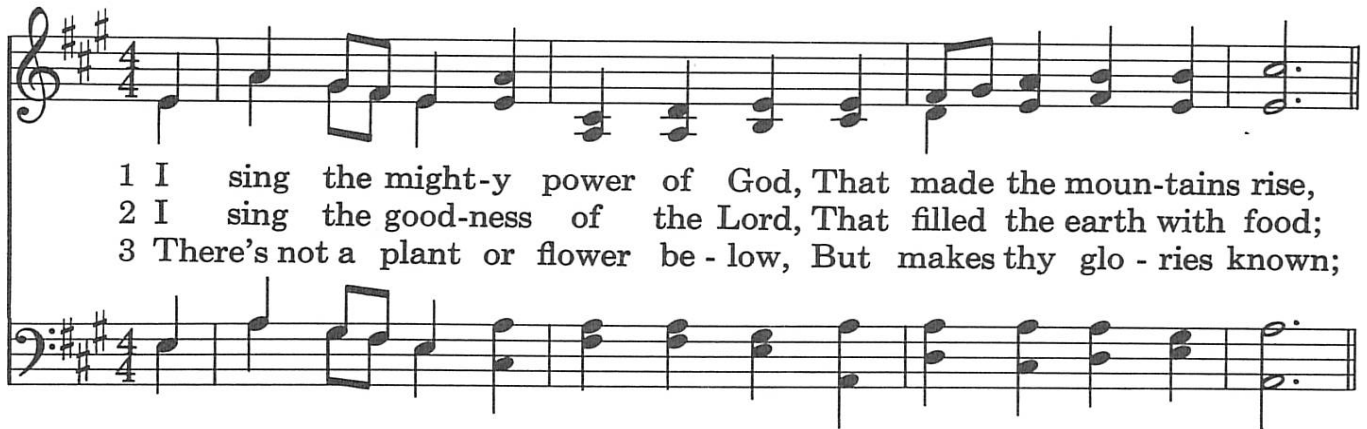
*Please give as you are able to this nationwide effort to support church growth. We will accept contributions (payable to FCC, memo "Strengthen the Church") until Labor Day. Thank you!*

# I Sing the Mighty Power of God

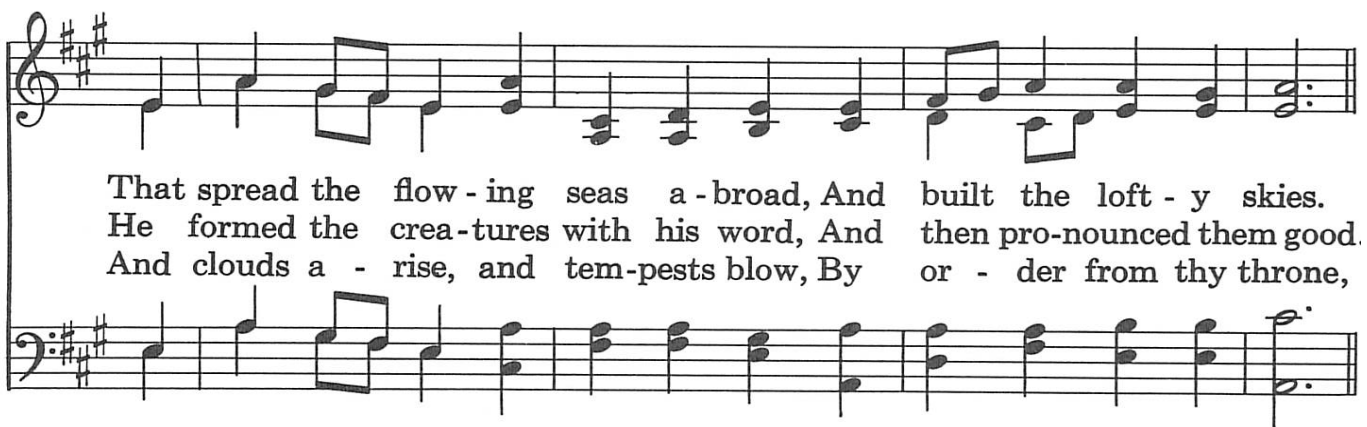
68

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, *all.*

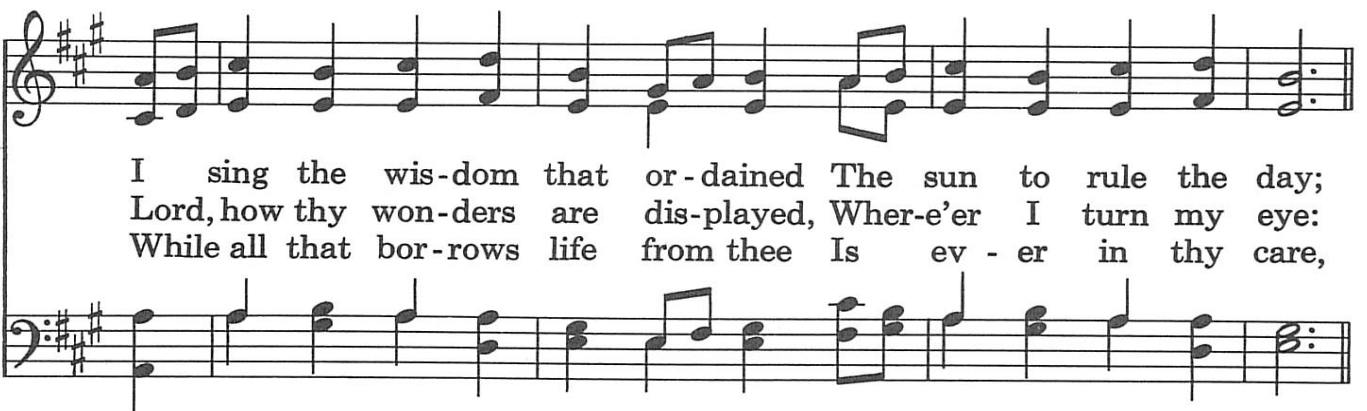
ELLACOMBE C.M.D.  
"Gesangbuch," Wirtemberg, 1784



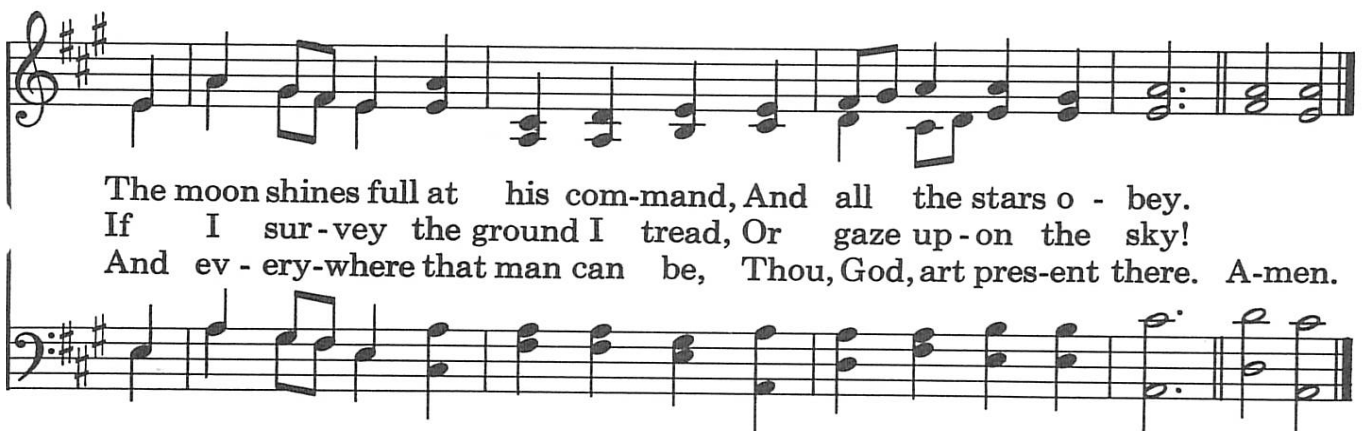
1 I sing the might-y power of God, That made the moun-tains rise,  
2 I sing the good-ness of the Lord, That filled the earth with food;  
3 There's not a plant or flower be - low, But makes thy glo - ries known;



That spread the flow - ing seas a - broad, And built the loft - y skies.  
He formed the crea-tures with his word, And then pro-nounced them good.  
And clouds a - rise, and tem-pests blow, By or - der from thy throne,



I sing the wis-dom that or-dained The sun to rule the day;  
Lord, how thy won-ders are dis-played, Wher-e'er I turn my eye:  
While all that bor-rows life from thee Is ev - er in thy care,



The moon shines full at his com-mand, And all the stars o - bey.  
If I sur-vey the ground I tread, Or gaze up-on the sky!  
And ev - ery-where that man can be, Thou, God, art pres-ent there. A-men.

# Christian, Rise and Act Thy Creed

416

F. A. Rollo Russell, 1849-1914

INNOCENTS 7.7.7.7.  
"The Parish Choir," 1850



1 Chris - tian, rise and act thy creed; Let thy prayer be in thy deed;  
2 Hearts a - round thee sink with care; Thou canst help their load to bear;  
3 Let thine alms be hope and joy, And thy wor - ship God's em - ploy;



Seek the right, per-form the true, Raise thy work and life a - new.  
Thou canst bring in - spir - ing light, Arm their fal-tering wills to fight.  
Give him thanks in hum-ble zeal, Learn-ing all his will to feel. A-men.



4 Come then, law divine, and reign;  
Frest faith assailed in vain,  
Perfect love bereft of fear,  
Born in heaven and radiant here.

## Do Your Part to Fill the Cart!

Join the fight against poverty and food insecurity in the Upper Valley by leaving contributions in our shopping cart in the Parish Hall, benefiting a variety of local service organizations.

This month, we're collecting non-perishable food and personal-care items on behalf of:

### LISTEN COMMUNITY SERVICES

For a list of current and ongoing needs, please visit [listencs.org/food-pantry#itemswneeditthemost](https://listencs.org/food-pantry#itemswneeditthemost) or see the list that is attached to the shopping cart itself.

*Direct financial contributions to any Upper Valley service organization are always needed and much appreciated. Thanks for fighting local poverty and hunger!*

# 726 Will You Come and Follow Me

## The Summons

Capo 3: (D) (A7) (Bm) (Em7) (Asus) (A)  
 F C7 Dm Gm7 Csus C

1 "Will you come and fol - low me if I but call your name?  
 2 "Will you leave your-self be-hind if I but call your name?  
 3 "Will you let the blind-ed see if I but call your name?  
 4 "Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?  
 5 Lord, your sum-mons ech - oes true when you but call my name.

(D) (A7) (Bm) (Em7) (G) (D)  
 F C7 Dm Gm7 B<sup>b</sup> F

Will you go where you don't know and nev - er be the same?  
 Will you care for cruel and kind and nev - er be the same?  
 Will you set the pris-oners free and nev - er be the same?  
 Will you quell the fear in - side and nev - er be the same?  
 Let me turn and fol - low you and nev - er be the same.

(Em7) (G) (F#m7) (G) (Asus)(A)  
 Gm7 B<sup>b</sup> Am7 B<sup>b</sup> Csus C

Will you let my love be shown; will you let my name be known;  
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare should your life at-tract or scare?  
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as this un - seen,  
 Will you use the faith you've found to re-shape the world a - round,  
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and foot-steps show.

(D) (A7) (Bm) (Em7) (G) (D)  
 F C7 Dm Gm7 B<sup>b</sup> F

will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?"  
 Will you let me an - swer prayer in you and you in me?"  
 and ad - mit to what I mean in you and you in me?"  
 through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?"  
 Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

The first four stanzas of this ballad-like hymn are understood to be in the voice of Christ, with the fifth reflecting the individual singer's response. Created for this traditional Scottish tune, the text was written to mark the conclusion of a youth volunteer's time of ministry.

# 342 Judge Eternal, Throned in Splendor

1 Judge E - ter - nal, throned in splen - dor, Lord of lords and  
 2 Still the wea - ry folk are pin - ing for the hour that  
 3 Crown, O God, your own en - deav - or; cleave our dark - ness

King of kings, with your liv - ing fire of judg - ment  
 brings re - lease, and the cit - y's crowd - ed clang - or  
 with your sword; feed the faith - less and the hun - gry

purge this land of bit - ter things; so - lace all its  
 cries a - loud for sin to cease, and the home - steads  
 with the rich - ness of your word; cleanse the bod - y

wide do - min - ion with the heal - ing of your wings.  
 and the wood - lands plead in si - lence for their peace.  
 of this na - tion through the glo - ry of the Lord.

More than a century after it was written, this plea for national purification has lost none of its power, nor has the need for social justice grown less acute. It is set to a traditional Welsh tune named for a long-inhabited town in north Wales overlooking the River Clywd.





### *Oak Hill Music Festival: Season Three!*—Friday, July 12, at 7:00 pm

Having launched this innovative festival in 2022, Hanover-born bassoonist Leah Kohn and her violinist husband Niv Ashkenazi have returned with a group of superb musicians. They'll play their second concert here ("The Romantic Virtuoso") and one in Norwich ("Landscapes") on Saturday, July 13. *Complete details, musician info, and ticket options at [www.oakhillmusicfestival.com](http://www.oakhillmusicfestival.com).*

### *Classicopia: Czech, Please!*—Sunday, July 14, at 2:00 pm

Dan Weiser welcomes violinist Andréa Picard Boecker and cellist Alicia Ward for a program of music that dances and moves the spirit, in piano trios by Bedrich Smetana and Antonín Dvorák.

*Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; more at [classicopia.org/concert/czech-please/](http://classicopia.org/concert/czech-please/).*

### *Classicopia Summer Music Camp*—Week of August 5-10, FCC/UVMC

**Faculty Concert—Friday, August 9, 7:30 pm / Student Concert—Saturday, August 10, 10:00 am**

Pianist Dan Weiser and a superb group of colleagues lead this week of immersive instruction in a range of instruments and voice for students aged 8-18. *More at [classicopia.org/summer-camp/](http://classicopia.org/summer-camp/).*

## Church Street to Be Partially Closed Starting August 13

Please note that the construction of the new Lebanon fire station (preceded by the demolition of the old one, which begins next month) requires the **closure of the northern end of Church Street, between Colburn Park and the entrance to FCC's parking lot**. Access to FCC's lot and lower Church St will be possible *only* via detour along Water and Valley Sts or from Spring St.

**Upon completion of the new station, the City of Lebanon intends to permanently convert that northern segment of Church St to one-way, northbound traffic.**



**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)**