

Children’s Moment

Do you like to be outdoors? I hope so, because nature is something that God made. The trees, the grass, the clouds, the birds, the rocks—well, all of it. The natural world is God’s doing. We should be thankful for it, and care for it, and enjoy it. Later today we’ll be taking an easy hike on one of our area’s many trails, led by Ron Bailey. I hope you’ll join us. We’ll have fun. And, I hope, be grateful to God for all God does for us.

Hymn 397 (p. 6) *Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak*

Canonbury

Scripture Lessons

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22. So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. ²On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, “What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.” ³Then Queen Esther answered, “If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. ⁴For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king.” ⁵Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, “Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?” ⁶Esther said, “A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!” Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. [...] ⁹Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, “Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman’s house, fifty cubits high.” And the king said, “Hang him on that.” ¹⁰So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated. [...] ^{9:20}Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, ²¹enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, ²²as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

Mark 9:38-50. ³⁸John said to [Jesus], “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” ³⁹But Jesus said, “Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. ⁴⁰Whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

⁴²“If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were

thrown into the sea. ⁴³If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁵And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

⁴⁹“For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Sermon “Should We Laugh or Cry?” Stephen R. Silver

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

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 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 Jacobe.

God, who spoke to us from the whirlwind, who preached to us in Jesus, who whispers to us through the Holy Spirit: we are listening. We seek a word on how to speak our minds, without stepping on others. We wish for a political arena in which calm prevails, but we all too often favor the loudest voices. Help us to be salty, as Jesus calls us to be in the Gospel, but to do so in a way that enables growth and is not based in flames. Help us to be at peace with one another. Though this may seem hard, we know you will not give up on us, your people, whom you invited to follow the way of Jesus, to walk his path of service and reconciliation.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ, 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 “Tune Your Harps” (from *Esther*) G. F. Handel

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 all Creation, we thank you for your gifts: our skills, our talents, this world. Indeed, we thank you for everything. In doing so, we confess that giving thanks involves helping our neighbors, your people, this day and in the future. In Jesus' name we pray, with gratitude. Amen.

Hymn 432 (p. 8) *How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord* Repton

Benediction

Postlude Hornpipe (from *Water Music*) G. F. Handel

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Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • Beth Hilgartner, Soprano • Brian Clancy, Tenor
Barb Jones and Bob Ross, Ushers • Dawn Troutman, 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.

The 2024 Lebanon CROP Walk—Sunday, October 13

Every year thousands across the country join the **CROP Hunger Walk**, organized by Church World Service to fight hunger, food insecurity, and poverty worldwide. First held in Bismarck, ND, in October 1969, the walk has become a community event in over 2000 towns, as local organizations advocate for hunger relief and share fellowship on a crisp fall afternoon.

All are welcome to participate in this year's walk—in any or all of these ways:

WALK!—Whether on your own or as a group of family and friends, register online at events.crophungerwalk.org/cropwalks/event/hanovernh. Then, invite donations in your name.

SERVE!—FCC will offer light food and refreshments on the front lawn, renewing a long tradition of post-walk hospitality. Volunteers may contribute food and/or help with set-up (*details TBD*).

DONATE!—Sponsor a walker or give at events.crophungerwalk.org/cropwalks/event/hanovernh.

Please note that all contributions should be made online (not through FCC).

667 When Morning Gilds the Skies

1 When morn - ing gilds the skies, my heart a - wak - ing
 2 Does sad - ness fill my mind? A so - lace here I
 3 Let earth's wide cir - cle round in joy - ful notes re -
 4 Be this, while life is mine, my can - ti - cle di -

cries: may Je - sus Christ be praised! A -
 find: may Je - sus Christ be praised! Or
 sound: may Je - sus Christ be praised! Let
 vine: may Je - sus Christ be praised! Be

like at work and prayer to Je - sus I re -
 fades my earth - ly bliss? My com - fort still is
 air and sea and sky from depth to height re -
 this the e - ter - nal song through all the a - ges

pair: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
 this: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
 ply: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
 long: may Je - sus Christ be praised!

This is not just a morning hymn, though this excerpt from an English translation of an early 19th-century German text may not convey how thoroughly the original deals with different kinds of time throughout the day. The tune was composed as a setting for this English text.

Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak

397

Frances R. Havergal, 1836-1879

CANONBURY L.M.

Arr. from Robert A. Schumann, 1810-1856

1 Lord, speak to me, that I may speak In
 2 O strength - en me, that while I stand Firm
 3 O teach me, Lord, that I may teach The
 4 O fill me with thy full - ness, Lord, Un -

liv - ing ech - oes of thy tone; As thou hast sought, so
 on the rock, and strong in thee, I may stretch out a
 pre - cious things thou dost im - part; And wing my words, that
 til my ver - y heart o'er - flow In kin - dling thought and

let me seek Thy err - ing chil - dren lost and lone.
 lov - ing hand To wres - tlers with the trou - bled sea!
 they may reach The hid - den depths of man - y a heart!
 glow - ing word, Thy love to tell, thy praise to show! A - men.

Neighbors in Need Special UCC Offering—Mental-Health Justice for All!

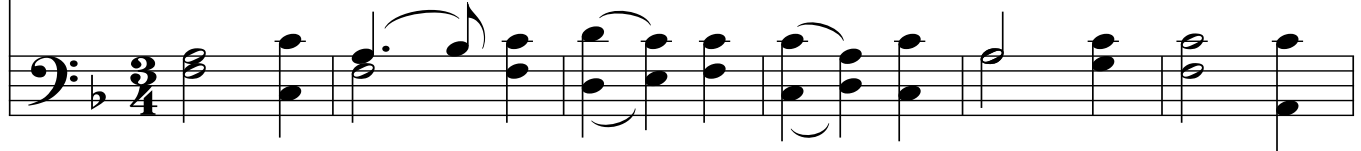
The UCC's Neighbors in Need program supports ministries of justice and compassion across the country. Two-thirds of the collection funds the UCC's **Justice and Witness Ministries** in local and national initiatives, advocacy efforts, and the fight against systemic injustice. The rest goes to the **Council for American Indian Ministry**, a voice for Native Americans in the UCC, sustaining a proud denominational tradition of support. **This year, NIN focuses on mental-health justice, treating mental health as a God-given right and dismantling the shame and stigma around it.**

Please contribute as you're able to this vital mission program, by cash or check (payable to FCC, memo "Neighbors in Need") or online at www.ucc.org/nin. Thank you!

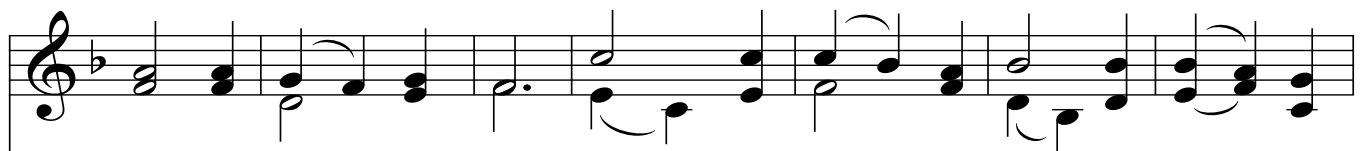
366 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling



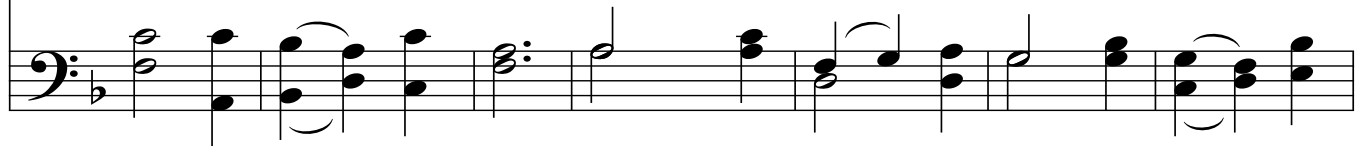
1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to
2 Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery
3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less



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.

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

How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord 432

- 1 How clear is our vo - ca - tion, Lord, when once we heed your call
- 2 But if, for - get - ful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear;
- 3 We mar - vel how your saints be - came in hin - dranc - es more sure:
- 4 In what you give us, Lord, to do, to - geth - er or a - lone,

to live ac - cord - ing to your word and dai - ly learn, re - freshed, re -
 if world - ly pres - sures fray the mind and love it - self can - not un -
 whose joy - ful vir - tues put to shame the ca - sual way we wear your
 in old rou - tines or ven - tures new, may we not cease to look to

stored, that you are Lord of all and will not let us fall.
 wind its tan - gled skein of care: our in - ward life re - pair.
 name, and by our faults ob - scure your power to cleanse and cure.
 you: the cross you hung up - on, all you en - deav - ored, done.

This reflection on Christian vocation was written to provide a new text for a pre-existing tune, and the poet has crafted his words so well that the two parts mesh smoothly. The tune is named for a noted British boarding school, whose music director was a friend of the composer.

TEXT: Fred Pratt Green, 1981
 MUSIC: C. Hubert H. Parry, 1888
 Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company

REPTON
 8.6.8.8.6.6



The Anonymous Coffeeshouse—Saturday, Sept. 28, and Fridays, Oct. 11 and 25, 7:30 pm
Our comfy community venue for live folk music continues its fifth season! Come and go as you please; food and drink available. *Free admission. For performers and more, visit anoncoffee.org.*

Jacqueline Schwab, Piano: Tunes for Troubled Times—Sunday, October 6, at 4:30 pm
Known for playing exquisitely on over a dozen of Ken Burns' acclaimed documentaries, Jacqueline Schwab offers a program to soothe souls, inspire reflection, and encourage agency and action in a challenging world. She'll share vintage music from American, Celtic, Ukrainian, and Latin traditions. *Adults \$20 suggested donation; more on Jacqueline Schwab at www.jacquelineschwab.com.*

Classicopia: Fabulous Four-Hand Frolic—Saturday, October 12, at 7:30 pm
Pianists Dan Weiser and Elizabeth Borowsky share the keyboard for this thrilling four-hand program of French and American composers. Music of Georges Bizet, Gabriel Fauré, and NH's own Amy Beach, along with George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, which celebrates its centennial this year. *Adults \$20, FCC members \$15, children free; more at classicopia.org.*

FCC Outing Club—Fall Foliage on Farnum Hill, Lebanon

This Sunday, September 29—Meet at Trailhead on Rolling Ridge Rd at 12:30 pm

All are welcome—regardless of ability!—to enjoy this low-impact hike, led as always by ranger-extraordinaire **Ron Bailey**. We'll follow a route we've not taken before, walking the Farnum Hill ridge to Middle and North Peaks, which afford great views for foliage season. Ron may offer a brief geology lecture, at no extra charge! *To reach trailhead, take Poverty Lane to Foliage View Rd, then left on Rolling Ridge Rd; trailhead is about 100 yards up on the right. Park along road, off pavement. Bring water, lunch or snacks, bug/tick repellent, and appropriate clothing.*

Bring your friends, family, and/or dogs, and share this experience of God's creation!

“Into the Potter’s Hands” NHC-UCC Annual Meeting, October 26

All are invited—lay or ordained leaders, congregation members, friends, and visitors—to participate in the **223rd Annual Meeting** of the NH Conference of the UCC, at Geneva Point Center in Moultonborough. This year's theme, “**Into the Potter’s Hands: Regeneration and Renewal,**” draws inspiration from Jeremiah 18:6, and the keynote speaker is Rev. Darrell Goodwin, who has served the UCC in various roles in conferences across the country.

In addition to worship, the business meeting, and other plenary events on October 26, several optional connecting sessions are available online October 15-29.

FCC will pay for up to four delegates to attend (in person or online); contact the church office if you're interested. Online registration open through Tuesday, October 8. For full schedule and more details, please visit www.nhcucc.org/events/am-2024.



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