

*First Congregational Church*  
*Our Church in Worship*

April 21, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Easter

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PRELUDE *Melody - S. Coleridge-Taylor* Adam Peithmann

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Christopher Stevens

\*OPENING HYMN NO. 27 *Come, Thou Almighty King*

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive) Adapted from Psalm 118  
Leader: For God so loved the world; the sparrows, the mountain lion  
**People: The fish and the people.**  
Leader: For God so loved the world, in success and failure,  
**People: In sickness and health, in mediocrity and extraordinary.**  
Leader: For God so loved the world; enough to become one of us.  
**People: Enough to offer new life for us.**  
**All: For God so love the world; let us worship God.**

OPENING PRAYER (Unison) Rev. Barbara Papagian  
**Thank you, loving God, for bringing us to this time of worship. Refresh us and heal us. Remind us of the many ways in which you have blessed our lives with your abundant love and your presence. Guide our hearts and our spirits that we may hear your words and our souls may be stirred into active service to your people. In the name of your son Jesus who leads us to life. Amen.**

MUSICAL OFFERING *Go Not Far From Me, O God -- N. Zingarelli* Chancel Choir  
Go not far from me, O God; cast me not away in the time of age; forsake me not when my strength faileth me. O let my mouth be filled with Thy praise, that I may sing Thy glory and honour all the day long.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

INVITATION Rev. Barbara Papagian

SCRIPTURE SENTENCES

QUESTIONS FOR THE NEW MEMBERS

QUESTIONS FOR THE CONGREGATION

READING OF THE COVENANT

*Please see the bulletin insert for the Church Covenant*

WELCOME AND RECEPTION

**Reaffirming our own faith in Jesus our Christ, we gladly welcome you into this community of faith, enfolding you with our love and committing ourselves to your care. In the power of God's Spirit, let us mutually encourage each other to trust God, and strengthen one another to serve the world, that Christ's church may in all things stand faithful.**

DECLARATION OF MEMBERSHIP

PRAYER AND BENEDICTION

PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Christopher Stevens

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

SILENT MEDITATION

OUR 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.**

\*HYMN NO. 102 *Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee*

OUR MORNING OFFERING Rev. Christopher Stevens

OFFERTORY MUSIC

\*DOXOLOGY (Hymn No. 46)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

**As we offer our treasure and hearts to you, O God, may they be used to pass on the promise of hope, of peace, of life, of community to all in need of your gifts and presence in our lives. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING 1 John 3:16-24 Liz Verity

SERMON *Can you define love?* Rev. Barbara Papagian

\*CLOSING HYMN NO. 494 *They'll Know We Are Christians*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Fantasia "The Resurrection" - E. V. Osterman

\*You are invited to stand if you wish.

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SCRIPTURE READING

**1 John 3:16-24**

<sup>16</sup> We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup> How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

<sup>18</sup> Little children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth. <sup>19</sup> And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him <sup>20</sup> whenever our hearts condemn us, for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. <sup>21</sup> Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God, <sup>22</sup> and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

<sup>23</sup> And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. <sup>24</sup> All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

# First Congregational Church



**April 21, 2024**

**Manchester, New Hampshire  
United Church of Christ**

508 Union Street · Manchester, NH · 603-625-5093

Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

*You are welcome here! An Open & Affirming Congregation*