

First Congregational Church
Our Church in Worship

February 2, 2025 10:00 AM
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Those involved with Sunday Friends may leave for their activity.

PRELUDE *Be Thou My Vision* – arr. Zsolt Gardonyi Adam Peithmann

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Christopher Stevens

*OPENING HYMN NO. 23 *Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven*

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive) (Inspired by Psalm 71) Rev. Barbara Papagian

Leader: In the Holy One, we take refuge; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

People: In your righteousness deliver us and hear our cries for justice and peace.

Leader: In the Holy One, we draw strength; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

People: Be a rock of refuge for the vulnerable, a strong fortress to save creation, for you are our rock and fortress.

Leader: In the Holy One, we receive courage; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

All: Rescue us, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel, for you, Holy One, are our hope and trust.

OPENING PRAYER (Unison) Rev. Christopher Stevens

God Who Knows Us, we pray that you form and shape us anew. Remind us who we are and draw us back to you. Transform us in love, correct us with compassion, and lead us with clarity into the paths of righteousness, truth, and peace. Forgive us for the ways that we reject your presence, your guidance, and your will. Redeem and restore us as your beloved creation and active citizens of your kingdom. In Jesus, we pray. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING *Let the River Run* – C. Simon/arr. Mac Huff Chancel Choir

Let the river run, let all the dreamers wake the nation. Come, the new Jerusalem. Silver cities rise, the morning lights, the streets that lead them, and sirens call them on with a song. It's asking for the taking. Trembling, shaking. Oh, my heart is aching. We're coming to the edge, running on the water, coming through the fog, your sons and daughters. We, the great and small, stand on a star and blaze a trail of desire through the darkling dawn.

PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Barbara Papagian

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS Response... "Hear Our Prayer"

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. 506 *Healer of Our Ev'ry Ill* Sipra Kolar, soloist
(soloist sings the verses, choir and congregation sing the Refrain)

OUR MORNING OFFERING Rev. Barbara Papagian

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)

Giver of Good Gifts, may the gifts we give reflect your abundance and generosity. Use our time, talent, and treasure to serve our faith community and the world. May each offering be a seed that will grow and spread our faith, hope, and love. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 4:21-30 Justin May

SERMON "How 'Bout Them Apples?" Rev. Christopher Stevens

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 633 *Lead On, O Cloud of Presence*

BENEDICTION

The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day! You have been found by God. Now go and seek out the lost and tell them that the Lord's favor has come to them too. Go in peace. Amen.

POSTLUDE *The Strong Tower Postlude (A Mighty Fortress)* – arr. Matthias Nagel

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 4:21-30 (New Living Translation)

²¹ Then he began to speak to them. “The Scripture you’ve just heard has been fulfilled this very day!”

²² Everyone spoke well of him and was amazed by the gracious words that came from his lips. “How can this be?” they asked. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?”

²³ Then he said, “You will undoubtedly quote me this proverb: ‘Physician, heal yourself’— meaning, ‘Do miracles here in your hometown like those you did in Capernaum.’” ²⁴ But I tell you the truth, no prophet is accepted in his own hometown.

²⁵ “Certainly there were many needy widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the heavens were closed for three and a half years, and a severe famine devastated the land. ²⁶ Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them. He was sent instead to a foreigner—a widow of Zarephath in the land of Sidon. ²⁷ And many in Israel had leprosy in the time of the prophet Elisha, but the only one healed was Naaman, a Syrian.”

²⁸ When they heard this, the people in the synagogue were furious. ²⁹ Jumping up, they mobbed him and forced him to the edge of the hill on which the town was built. They intended to push him over the cliff, ³⁰ but he passed right through the crowd and went on his way.

Luke 15:3-5 (New Living Translation) ³ So Jesus told them this story: ⁴ “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders.

Isaiah 61:1-2 (New International Version)

¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. ² He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the Lord’s favor has come.

First Congregational Church



February 2, 2025

**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