

**First Congregational Church
Our Church in Worship**

January 5, 2025 10:00 AM
Second Sunday after Christmas

PRELUDE Prelude on "Olivet" - J. Southbridge Adam Peithmann

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Barbara Papagian

*OPENING HYMN NO. 72 *To God Be the Glory*

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

Leader: It's a new year of God's spiritual blessings to all peoples!

People: God lavishes spiritual blessings upon us.

Leader: What are these spiritual blessings?

People: The Lord chose us for his own even before the world came into being.

Leader: Through Jesus Christ, we are adopted into God's family.

People: Because of Christ's sacrifice, we are redeemed and forgiven people!

Leader: God's grace sets us free to live abundant, whole lives.

People: God even opens to us the mysteries of his will.

Leader: We are heirs of Christ and will receive an inheritance with him.

People: We are part of God's eternal plan and purposes.

Leader: Our hope is in the saving work and person of Christ.

People: The Holy Spirit is the seal of our salvation.

Leader: Glory to God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All: Our God is blessed and is a blessing to all peoples!

CALL TO CONFESSION Rev. Christopher Stevens

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Holy God,

Author of life and Source of all hope,

Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier: hear our prayer.

We know that the blank slate of a new year seems so promising –

But we know that the blank slate is also an illusion;

Time continues, and our lives flow from one day to the next, from one year to the next.

In this time, we know we are sometimes remarkable and generous, bearing light to the shadows, and we know we are sometimes full of despair and selfishness,

hoarding light and goodness for ourselves.

We invite you on our journeys, O God.

We seek your presence with us in the darkness and the light,

In our remarkable moments and our awful ones.

We seek your presence, and bask in your love, through Christ. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, hear this Good News: the love of God is beyond measure, and you are included in that love. Know that you are forgiven and thus freed to love and serve in this new year. Alleluia! Amen.

Those involved with Sunday Friends may leave for their activity.

MUSICAL OFFERING *Come to the Table* – Allen Pote Chancel Choir

Refrain: Come to the table and bring your joy, bring all your gladness and come to the table. Eat the bread, drink the wine, come rejoice in the Lord.

Bring all your sorrow, bring all your pain, bring all your heartaches you bear. Bring who you are and hope to become, come to the table to share. (Refrain) Share in the bread, share in the wine, share in the risen Lord. Share as a family, one in community, one in the name of the Lord. (Refrain)

PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Barbara Papagian

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.

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)

God of light and guidance, just as the wise men brought their gifts to honor the Christ child, we now present our offerings to you. May these gifts, like theirs, reflect our devotion and desire to seek your presence in all that we do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING Philippians 3:7-14 Selma Naccach-Hoff

SERMON *Look Both Ways as You Cross* Rev. Christopher Stevens

*COMMUNION HYMN NO. 386 *We Come as Guests Invited*

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Everyone who sincerely desires a closer relationship with God through Jesus Christ is welcome to join in this Sacrament celebrated with juice and bread (rice cakes for those with wheat sensitivity). We hold the bread and the cup and commune in unity.

CALL TO COMMUNION AND COMMUNION PRAYER

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (Unison)

Keeper of our days, we are grateful for the ways you have been revealed to us in the past. Confident of your love, we bring our whole selves into your presence now and for the year ahead. As you are with us in this meal, we also know that you will be with us through our achievements and our failures, our proud moments and our hidden shame, our undying dreams and our detached resolve. In all things and through all things, let us live for you. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 5 *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

BENEDICTION

May the God who gave us this past year
and the Savior who walked at our side each day
and the Spirit who filled us with life abundant,
grace the coming year with peace and hope and joy, Amen.

POSTLUDE Toccata on "Duke Street" - Gilbert M. Martin

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

First Congregational Church



January 5, 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