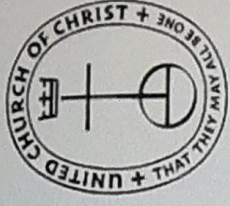


The Congregational Church of Laconia
United Church of Christ
18 Veterans Square
Laconia, NH 03246-3425

Rev. Neil H. Wilson, Senior Pastor
Rev. Paula B. Gile, Associate Pastor
K. Robert Bengtson, Director of Music
Church office: (603) 524-0668



Gathering for Worship

November 3, 2019

www.laconiaucc.org

9:30 a.m.

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

+ * + * + * + * + * +

The Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, is a welcoming Christian community with a scriptural foundation seeking Justice and peace for all.

Preparing

Organ Prelude

K. Robert Bengtson

Meditative Thought *"Following the footsteps of Saints is not easy. But the trial is always appreciated."* - The Brand Boy Website

Welcome & Announcements

Introit

"Together We Serve"

Chancel Choir

Praising

Call to Worship (Congregation responds with bold print.)

Patriarchs and matriarchs, prophets and psalmists, disciples and evangelists, martyrs and saints. We give thanks for their example. We give thanks for their lives of faith.

We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses.

Loved ones now resting in you, those who guided us, nurtured and cared for us; ancestors who worked and traveled, lived and died that we might be who we are today.

We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses.

Family members and members of this congregation; fellow believers in every country, every denomination; friends who help, guide and uplift us-- children of your family, sheep of your fold, saints of your redeeming.

Let us worship together remembering and celebrating that we are surrounded by an amazing cloud of witnesses.

* **Opening Hymn**

"I Sing a Song of the Saints of God"

295

Invocation (Unison)

God of all ages and of all people, we seek your presence and your blessing upon us as we gather to honor and celebrate all your servants who, having finished their earthly life now rest from their labors. Give us the courage and grace to follow the example of their steadfastness and faithfulness. Incline your ear to us as we pray in the manner of Jesus: *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.

Musical Offering *"I'm So Glad Trouble Don't Last Always"* Bell Choir
A Moment with Our Children Rev. Neil Wilson
***Passing of the Peace & the Gloria**
*Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Halle,
Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah*

Reflecting & Praying

Scripture Readings Luke 19: 1-10 Pew Bible
Sermon "The Gifts of the Past" Rev. Paula Gile
Meditative Moment

Prayer Preparation *"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"* Children Praying
*Lord, listen to your children praying; Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying; send us love, send us power, send us grace.*

Pastoral Prayer (Yellow prayer cards may be placed in the offering plate. Also you may go to the Church's website click on Prayer Wall and post your requests. www.laconiaucc.org)

Prayer Response *"Amen"* Chancel Choir

Offertory **Committing**
"Sine Nomie" Chancel Choir

Doxology
*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below:
Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen*

*** Prayer of Consecration/Dedication** (Unison)

Generous God, Bless and use these gifts, that we may continue the work of sharing God's love with others. Work that the saints who have gone before us began so long ago. Amen.

Going to Serve

*** Closing Hymn** *"For All the Saints"* # 299

Pastoral Benediction

Benediction Response *"Go in Peace"* Chancel Choir

Organ Postlude

***You may stand as able.**

In Remembrance ~ All Saints Day 2019

| | | | |
|----------|-------------------------|----------|------------------|
| 11/10/18 | Rev. Dr. Richard Stuart | 5/23/19 | Elizabeth Howard |
| 12/13/18 | Teresa Peters | 6/29/19 | Mary Harrington |
| 12/22/18 | Kenneth Kyle | 7/13/19 | Priscilla Puleo |
| 1/4/19 | Barbara Heald | 8/27/19 | Fred Smith |
| 1/13/19 | Frances Wentworth | 10/26/19 | Edward Warfield |
| 3/15/19 | Evelyn Millar | | |

This Week's Committee Meetings and Gatherings

| | | |
|---------------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| Today Nov 3- | 9:30 a.m. | Sunday Worship |
| | 11:00 a.m. | Deacon Devotion writing workshop |
| | 11:45 a.m. | Hand-Bell Practice |
| | 1:30 p.m. | Wreath Workshop |
| | 4:00 p.m. | Channel 25 Worship Broadcast |
| | 9:30 p.m. | Channel 25 Worship Broadcast |
| Monday Nov 4- | 4:00 p.m. | Channel 25 Worship Broadcast |
| Tuesday Nov 5- | 6:30 p.m. | Membership Mtg |
| | 7:00 p.m. | Stitches of Love |
| Wednesday Nov. 6- | 6:30 p.m. | Outreach Mtg |
| Thursday Nov. 7- | 5:30 p.m. | Stewardship Mtg |
| | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Practice |
| Next Sunday Nov 10- | 9:30 a.m. | Sunday Worship |

Some Announcements

Today Deacon Devotion Writing Workshop 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. /Church Library
The Deacons invite all help to create a Lenten Devotional with readings for each and every day of the 40 days of Lent. Join Rev. Carolyn Keilig as she guides us in the different ways and approaches to writing a devotion based on scripture.

Today at 1:30 p.m. Wreath Workshop

Come join the wreath workshop to spruce up our wreaths with bows and decorations.

Welcome & Information

Welcome to our service of worship! Please introduce yourself to those sitting near you & use a pew rack card to inform us of requests.

Wireless hearing assistance devices, back cushions, large print bulletins and children's activity bags are available; please ask an usher.

Nursery & Child Care: Children younger than 1st grade are welcome in the Nursery before the service begins or following the Moment with our Children. Please escort your child to the Nursery room across The Bridge and pick them up after the service. Visitors are always welcome!

Faith Formation The concept of "the beloved community" is seen throughout the Bible and in literature from around the world. The African term "Ubuntu" refers to this and is translated from a longer phrase to mean "I am because you are". As you consider this phrase, also consider donating your spare coins this year to the Faith Formation offering. It will be given to our local family homeless shelter, Belknap House. Take one of our small plastic containers (distributed at Coffee Hour) and be a part of our Faith Formation community!

Yellow prayer request cards are available in pews. Write your request(s) and place them in the offering plate. Our prayer disciples will pray during the week.

Our Service is video recorded and published. Please speak to one of our ushers if you have any concerns.

Today's Ushers are Martha and Warren Clement, Diane Lockwood, John Gill

The Altar Flowers today are *"In loving memory of our parents Nelson, Etta, Horace and Barbara"* given by Gail and Rod Dyer.

Join us for a time of fellowship downstairs following the service for refreshments served by Property and Finance. Fair Trade coffee is served in biodegradable cups. We are a *Just Peace Church* caring for our environment.

Did You Know? Your CL21 team wants you to know that analysis of the CAT will lead to better decisions in less time with more confidence.

Saturday November 23 Christmas Fair - 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. We need your help for the Fair! Please consider donating, making or baking something! Or hanging a flyer somewhere which are available in the Church or office.

November 3, 2019

Luke 19:1-10

Transforming Love

*Christ has no body now on earth but yours,
no hands but yours, no feet but yours,
yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion is to look out to the earth,
yours are the feet by which He is to go about doing good and
yours are the hands by which He is to bless us now. -Teresa of Avila*

Doesn't everyone belong in the arms of the Sacred? -Lady Gaga

If you study a scholarly interpretation of the story of Zacchaeus, the scholar might note drily that in first century Palestine, it would have caused a tremendous loss of face for a grown man to climb a tree. It's not just first century Palestinian society, however, that looks askance at grown men climbing trees. It does not take a tremendous stretch of the modern imagination to picture the ridiculousness of this scene.

Zacchaeus must have had very little left to lose in order to allow himself to be humiliated in this way. The branches of sycamore are welcoming and offer copious cover. So why did he come out of hiding? Why expose himself to more embarrassment and ridicule? When Jesus saw Zacchaeus and called him down out of the tree, why did Zacchaeus come down? He could have stayed up in the tree and hidden from Jesus and from the crowd. After all, it wasn't just the tree climbing that made him an object of scorn. The people hated him because he was a tax collector and they believed he had cheated them.

But Zacchaeus heard Jesus calling him and saying his name, and he made a risky but life-giving choice. It did not take too much persuading on the part of Jesus. In their short exchange, Jesus offered Zacchaeus three precious gifts – Jesus saw him, Jesus invited him, and Jesus loved him. These three gifts had the immediate effect of transforming Zacchaeus.

In a moment, it seems, Zacchaeus decided to change his ways. Because he was seen, and invited and loved, he was able to reconcile with this God and his community. This radical change did not take a miracle on the part of Jesus. It just took a compassionate moment of connection.

Teresa of Avila, the medieval mystic, reminds us that we are not just to follow Christ, but to be his hands and feet in the world. So, do this. Walk toward those on the margins and reach out your hand. Let those who feel unseen know they are seen. Extend an invitation to all. And radiate Christ's love wherever you go. We are Christ's hands and feet, and we can be the means by which even the most lost know that they are welcome "in the arms of the Sacred."

