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



From the  
Heart

## Gathering for Worship

February 16, 2020

www.laconiaucc.org

9:30 a.m.

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

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*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 *"Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing themselves."* Leo Tolstoy, 19 century

Welcome & Announcements

Lighting the Christ Candle

Introit

*"Arise, Your Light Is Come"*

Chancel Choir

### Praising

Call to Worship

God, we gather here to worship you.

With open hearts, we give you our thanks and praise.

Guide us in all we do as we come seeking your ways.

Help us to grow as a community of faith who serves all in your name

With joyful hearts we give our thanks and praise.

Come, let us worship the living God, who makes all things possible.

\* Opening Hymn

*"Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers"*

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Invocation

Unifying, Loving God, Lead us in your ways to a full life of love, hope and peace.

Teach us your ways, illuminate our path that we may not stumble. Take away our fear and anxiety about the future. Speak to us your words of life, and feed us with your spiritual food, that we may grow strong in faith and deep in loving kindness.

Hear us as we pray as Jesus taught; 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 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

*"O Christ the Same"*

(Tune: Londonderry Air)

### Reflecting & Praying

A Scripture Story

Pastor Neil Wilson

**\* Passing of the Peace & Words of Praise**

*Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Halle,  
Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah*

**One Minute of Sharing  
Scripture Reading**

1 Corinthians 3: 1-9

(New International Reader's Version)  
Pastor Neil Wilson  
Pew Bible p. 1039

Muff Kruse Walker

**Sermon**

"Planting, Watering & Growing"

Rev. Paula Gile

**Meditative Moment**

**Preparation for Prayer** "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](http://www.laconiaucc.org))

**Prayer Response**

"Amen"

Chancel Choir

Committing

**Invitation to Stewardship**

**Offertory**

"Give Thanks"

(Henry Smith/Gary Hallquist)

**\* 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**

**Mother/Father God, May the gifts we share this day be signs of our commitment to follow in your ways and to grow united in Jesus' ways of love. Bless these gifts and all those who are touched by them. Amen.**

Going to Serve

"Together We Serve"

Insert

**\* Closing Hymn**

**\* Pastoral Benediction**

**Benediction Response** "Rejoice, Rejoice, Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing" Chancel Choir

**Organ Postlude**

**\*You may stand as able.**

## This Week's Committee Meetings and Gatherings

<p>Today Feb 16- 9:30 a.m.                            10:45 a.m.                            11:00 a.m.                            11:15 a.m.                            4:00 p.m.                            9:30 p.m.                            5:00 a.m.</p> <p>Tuesday Feb 18- 5:30 p.m.                            7:00 p.m.                            7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday Feb 19- 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday Feb 20- 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Saturday Feb 22- 9 to 3 p.m.</p> <p>Next Sunday Feb 23- 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Sunday Worship          Handbell Practice          Adult Faith Formation          Ledgeview Worship          Channel 25 Worship Broadcast          Channel 25 Worship Broadcast          Channel 25 Worship Broadcast          CL21 Mtg          Worship &amp; Music Mtg          Stitches of Love          Council Mtg          Choir Practice          Prepared to Serve          Sunday Worship</p>
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### Some Announcements

**Sunday February 16 at 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. Adult Faith Formation** Outreach will host Rev. Dr. Dawn C. Berry for a presentation and discussion about racial justice. Do you have questions about what racial justice is? Or what is meant by "white privilege". Come hear about the resolution the New Hampshire Conference unanimously adopted in 2018. Join us in the Library in the Parish House.

**Friday February 21 Hands Across the Table 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.** St. Andre Bessette Parish Hall on Gilford Ave is having a "SOUPATHON" to support feeding people in the community. Adults \$12 - Children \$3. All are welcome.

**Saturday February 22 Prepared to Serve: A training event for all of God's people** Pembroke Academy, Pembroke NH 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 Open to all. Cost is \$55, offering 60 workshops throughout the day. Contact Pastors Neil or Paula if interested in attending.

**Sunday February 23 Lenten Devotionals** Join the celebration! During Fellowship receive a copy of the Lenten Devotional created by members of this church. One copy per family.

**Ash Wednesday February 26 Service 7:00 p.m.**

Lent begins with a service in the sanctuary with the option to receive the mark of ashes.

## 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 A Scripture Story. Please escort your child to the Nursery room across The Bridge and pick them up after the service. Visitors are always welcome!

**Church Nursery Schedule Change** At its most recent meeting the Educational Ministries Committee discussed the nursery options available for our youngest members (ages 0 through kindergarten). Due to low attendance over the past several months, we have decided that all nursery children will begin the worship service in the sanctuary. They will proceed with their parents to the nursery (2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Parish House) following the "Passing of the Peace." Nursery volunteers will also proceed to the Parish House if there are children in attendance. The new schedule will begin on Sunday, March 1. If you have any questions, please see a member of the Educational Ministries Committee.

**Faith Formation Faith Formation-** All children and youth (elementary age -high school) are welcome to join us as we learn about our faith and faith community. During the Sharing of the Peace we walk across the Bridge to the classrooms for a time of faith, fun, and fellowship.

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

**Our Greeters today** are unknown at time of printing

**Today's Ushers** are Bill Gile, Diane Lockwood, Muff Kruse, John Walker

**The Altar Flowers today** are given by Diane and Dan Tinkham.

Join us for a time of fellowship downstairs following the service for refreshments served by Membership Committee. Fair Trade coffee is served in biodegradable cups.



February 16, 2020

Matthew 5:21-37

## From the Heart

Today's scripture contains some of the most challenging sayings of Jesus. Not only does Jesus implore us to take care with our behavior, we are even challenged to watch our thoughts. What if we were able to recognize Christ's forgiveness extends even to the violence of our thoughts?

Try this guided meditation as a place to start that radical forgiveness.

Imagine a beautiful hill and imagine yourself climbing it, never tired in your body, never tired of looking around at this gorgeous place....

Now imagine that you get to the top of the hill, and the view of the valleys and plains around you opens up. You can see a long way. Imagine that the place spread before you is the country of your inner life....

It is populated with all the people you have known and every place you have ever been and everything you have ever done. As you look over it, you can see it at a distance, yet you can see it all clearly....

Take a few moments to locate someone precious, or something that brings you joy, or someplace that brings you peace from sometime in your life. Enjoy your memories and feelings as you look upon that beloved person, object or place....

Now turn your gaze. Somewhere in the vast country of your inner life, there is something that still feels out of place. Somewhere is stored those thoughts that bring you regret.

From your safe place, high on the hill, you can look upon those thoughts with fresh eyes. You can see them for what they are – one part of the country of your inner life, not the whole of it...

Look at it from this distance and with this clarity. See again how the thing you thought, that once seemed so huge, is only one place in the country of your inner life, one part of all the vastness that you have seen and known....

Allow yourself to imagine how it would change the geography of the country of your life if you were to recognize that Christ forgives the thing that needs forgiving....

Would the thing change in shape or color? Would it reflect or absorb the light in a different way? Would it become smaller? Would it disappear altogether, leaving room for something new? ....

Allow yourself to know that it is already forgiven by a God whose love is more powerful than any human thought....

Notice if anything in you has changed. You might notice that you feel lighter now....

You might feel more satisfied about the future of the country of your life – ready for whatever lies ahead. Renewed, you return back down the hill. You might find yourself walking more quickly now – almost running, your feet almost flying off the ground...

You might want to journal about your experience of entering this meditation, or share it with friends or a spiritual guide like your pastor. Does imagining Christ's forgiveness help it seem closer to you?



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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