

Congregational Church of Laconia United Church of Christ

**Fifth Sunday
in
Lent
March 21, 2021
9:30 a.m.**



Live Stream Worship

Meditation Thought *“God’s vision for his people is not for the elimination of ethnicity to form a colorblind uniformity of sanctified blandness. Instead God sees the creation of a community of different cultures united by faith in his Son as a manifestation of the expansive nature of his grace. This expansiveness is unfulfilled unless the differences are seen and celebrated, not as ends unto themselves, but as particular manifestations of the power of the Spirit to bring forth the same holiness among different peoples and cultures for the glory of God.”*

— Esau McCaulley, *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation*

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements and Lighting of the Christ Candle

Call to Worship (Responsively)

We look to the rulers of this earth for leadership, wisdom, and strength.

We look to these bodies of ours for stability, fulfillment, and joy.

We look to families and friends for love, compassion, and hope.

When rulers betray, when bodies fail, and when families disappoint,

God offers another look.

God will guide us. God’s Spirit will sustain us.

Christ will welcome us home.

Come, my sisters and brothers, we are all God’s family now.

Hymn *"Gather Us In"* See insert for music

Here in this place, the new light is streaming, shadows of doubt are vanished away.
See in this space our fears and our dreamings, brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken; gather us in, our spirits in-flame,
Call to us now and we shall awaken; we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young, our lives are a mystery; we are the old who yearn for your face.
We have been sung throughout all of history, called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty; gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart so meek and so lowly; give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we receive new life in the waters; here we receive the bread of new birth;
here you shall call your sons and your daughters, call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion; give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well and teach us to fashion lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not just in buildings, small and confining, not in some heaven light years away,
here in this place the new light is shining; now is God present, and now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever; gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together, fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Invocation and Lord's Prayer (Unison)

O God, you are the gathering one who calls us into community
with each other to love and work, to support and heal.

You are the gathering one who calls us into community with all people;
to bring justice and hope, freedom and truth.

You are the gathering one who calls us into community with the whole creation;
to live in harmony, to cherish and renew.

We are here to worship you, O God, who through Jesus has called us together,
and who in the Spirit makes us one. Hear us as we pray in the example of Jesus:
Abba, Father, whose dwelling is heaven, holy is your name.

Your kingdom come, your 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.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Musical Offering *"Jesus, The Very Thought Of Thee"* (John Carter) Nancy Narducci, Soprano

Scripture Reading Mark 3:13-35

Message *"Friends for the Road"*

Musical Reflection *“O rest in the Lord”* (Felix Mendelssohn) Nancy Narducci, Soprano

Pastoral Prayer with Shared Joys and Concerns

Hear us as we speak the prayers of and for others...
(Shared concerns)

Incline Your heart, O gracious God, and teach us to love
O Christ, our rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Hymn *“Called as Partners in Christ’s Service”* # 495 NCH

**Called as partners in Christ’s service, called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God’s chosen end.**

**Christ’s example, Christ’s inspiring, Christ’s clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.
Men and women, richer, poorer, all God’s people, young and old,
Blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.**

**Thus new patterns for Christ’s mission, in a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other’s burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,
Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.**

**So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life
That surround each person’s sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.**

Benediction

God Be with You

**God be with you ‘til we meet again
By God’s counsels guide uphold you
With God’s sheep securely fold you.
God be with you ‘til we meet again.**

Postlude



Our altar flowers this week are shared with us by Annie Lund in loving memory of Stanley Lund.

Announcements

Church office hours *Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9 AM – 3 PM*

Welcome to our Live Stream Worship! If you are worshipping with us online for the first time or started worshipping with us recently, introduce yourself to us by leaving a little note in the YouTube chat function! Also Let the Church Office know if we can help you in any way! 603-524-0668. Seeking to be the church God desires for us to be!



March Devotionals Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. on Zoom.

Use the link here.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89836723958> Meeting ID: 898 3672 3958

Prayer Requests: *Please post prayers as early as possible in the comment area of the YouTube page.* In order for Pastor Neil to share them, they need to be received **before the end of the sermon.** Also, you may post your prayers on the Prayer Wall on the website and throughout the week, please remember to contact Pastor Neil if you have needs to share. While we may not be able to be together and pray by your side physically, we do want to be in prayer with you.

One Great Hour of Sharing

One of the UCC 4 Special Mission Offerings, One Great Hour of Sharing focuses on disaster, refugee, and development ministries around the world. It funds disaster preparedness and response and many volunteer initiatives in the US and works to create opportunity and empower communities targeting Food Security, Health and Wellness, Education and Vocational Training and Access to clean, safe water around the world. This year's theme is based on Isaiah 49:8-12 (try reading in several versions).

Our church will be receiving the OGHS offering throughout the month of March. Please send or drop off your gift to Laconia Congregational Church, 18 Veterans Square, Laconia, NH 03246.

Please mark with OGHS.

Thank you. The Outreach Committee

Standing with Jesus for Justice

The next gathering will be today 10:45 a.m.

You will find the Zoom link below

The topic: Local Justice Issues: What are we doing in our community and where do we go from here?

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82930442598>

Meeting ID: 829 3044 2598



Palm Sunday Music and Meditation

Palm Sunday March 28 at 3:00 p.m. we will be hosting an hour of Music and Meditation in the Sanctuary. We invite any who would like to sit for a time in the sanctuary, to absorb the music and the comfort on this sacred space to email Pastor Neil neil@laconiaucc.org to let us know you would like to be there. There will be readings, music and some time for silence

Holy Week Services

This year we will be marking *Maundy Thursday* and *Good Friday* in a combined Live Stream service held *Thursday April 1st at 7:00 p.m.* We will begin with a commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples. Like our monthly communion services we invite you to have your “bread” and “cup” readied. This will be followed by a Tenebrae Service. Tenebrae comes from the Latin word “Shadows” and it is a service of scripture readings the gradually extinguishing of lights. If you like you may have 9 lighted candles at home for this service.

Horton Center is happening for 2021!



The pandemic will affect how camp will be organized this summer and all the appropriate health and safety steps will be taken. One of the many wonderful things that makes Horton Center so special is that it's small and personal. Being in the middle of the White Mountains gives campers plenty of space to spread out and to breathe the clean air. Please take a look at the brochure online at hortoncenter.org and discover that there are camps for campers of all ages- that means YOU can go to camp this summer!

GOT LUNCH! Laconia has been selected by the Meredith Hannaford store leadership as the

benefiting non-profit in the Fight Hunger Bag Program!

For the month of March 2021, GOT LUNCH! Laconia will receive a \$1 donation from each purchase of the \$2.50 reusable Fight Hunger Bag at the Hannaford store located at 38 NH Route 25, Unit 5, Meredith NH.



Gather Us In

Unison D A/C# C G Dm Gm/Bb

1 Here in this place, the new light is stream-
ing,
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-
tery;
3 Here we re-ceive new life in the wa-
ters;
4 Not just in build-ings, small and con-
fin-ing,

van-ish-ed a - way.
We have been sung through-out all of his -
tory,
here you shall call your sons and your daugh-
ters,
here in this place the new light is shin-
ing;

Gm/Bb Dm C Am7 D C/G

brought here to you in the light of this
called to be light to the whole hu-
man race.
call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
now is God pres-ent, and now is the
day.

A C/G D/F# G A C/G

Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en;
Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty;
Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion;
Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er;

our
the
the
the
in;
us
us
us
to eat
in
in
in
in
and

D/F# G A D A/C# C G

spir - its in - flame. Call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en;
proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so low - ly;
broad that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ple's to - geth - er,

we shall a - rise at the sound of our
give us the cour-age to en - ter the
lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are
fire of love in our flesh and our
true.
bone.

Rejoice in the Lord Always 650

Gm/Bb Dm C Am7 D C/D Bb/D D

Re - joice in the Lord al - ways, a - gain I say, re - joice! Re -

joice in the Lord al - ways, a - gain I say, re - joice! Re - joice! A -

I II III IV

gain I say, re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice! A - gain I say, re - joice!