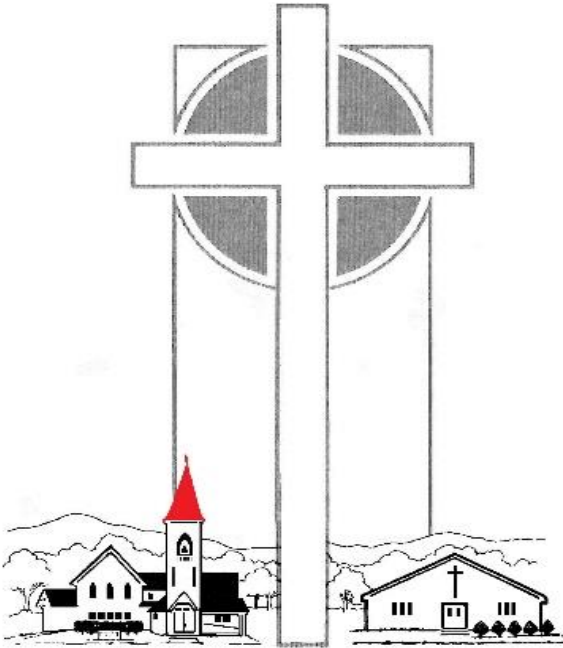


# First Church of Christ, Congregational United Church of Christ

## Heroes of the Faith Esther

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost



**September 24, 2023**

CCLI #292978, and #20547245

CHURCH ORGANIZED ON AUGUST 18, 1778

Present building erected in North Conway Village 1884

**"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are  
welcome here!"**

# Gathering

**PRELUDE** Invention No. VII in D Major (From 24 Inventions, Op. 50, Book I)

M Dupré  
(1886-1971)

Lighting of the Community and Christ Candle  
We invite you to use this time for silent prayer  
and reflection as we prepare for worship.

**Welcome and Greetings** – Helen Goss

## Introit

### Call to Worship

One: Doers of Justice,

**All: Come and be encouraged.**

One: Lovers of kindness,

**All: Be still and let God renew your hearts.**

One: Humble God-walkers,

**All: Rest and refreshment awaits. Come and lift your voice in praise to the One who encourages, renews, and refreshes!**

### Unison Prayer

**God of us all, we give thanks that you are ever present with us. In times of joy and in times of difficulty, your Spirit leads us, guides us, and shows us the way. For this we are filled with gratitude. We humbly ask that you open our eyes to see the places in our world where your people are hurting and in need. Give us such courage as to speak out on their behalf that we might use our position, voice, and skill set to bring about your justice. Raise us up to be your faithful leaders in such a time as this. We pray all of this in the powerful name of Christ. Amen.**

**\*Hymn** NCH #25    O God, Our Help in Ages Past    Tune: S T. ANNE

## Sharing the Peace of Christ

One: As Christ Jesus has shared his peace with each of us, let us now share that peace with each other. Peace be with you.

**All: And peace be with you.**

## Proclamation

**Scripture** Esther 3:13; 4:12-17 Old Testament pages 446-447

## Children's Message

**The Word In Music** Sing Cantate Domino! J. Estes

From the mountain to the valley below, sing Cantate Domino!  
Like a fountain, let the music flow. Sing Cantate Domino!  
Let the earth be filled with sounds of music ev'rywhere.  
Lift it up, let all creation know. Ev'rybody rejoice;  
Ev'rybody sing it with one voice: "Cantate Domino!"  
From the mountain to the valley below, sing Cantate Domino!  
Like a fountain, let the music flow. Sing Cantate Domino!

**Message** Positioned by God Pastor Sue Davidson

**Affirmation of Faith** NCH #881 The Apostles' Creed

**\*Hymn** NCH #405 Yes, God Is Real Tune: YES, GOD IS REAL

## Response

### Prayers with Joys and Concerns

**Prayer Hymn #769** Hear Our Prayer, O God (remain seated)

### Morning Prayer

## The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which 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

## Offering

## Invitation

## Doxology

Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God above ye Heavenly Host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## Prayer of Gratitude

## Sending Out

\***Hymn** NCH #436 vs 1, 4, and 5 God of Grace and God of Glory

Tune: CWM RHONDDA

## Benediction

**Benediction Response** **Red Hymnal** #277 God Be With You

Tune: GOD BE WITH YOU

## Postlude

Fantasie

H. F. Micheelsen

(1902-1973)

**\*Please stand if you are able.**

*Happy Birthday to all who were born in September. May God continue to bless us each and every day and may we in turn give back to those in need. All to the glory of God.*

**Welcome:** Helen Goss

**Greeter:** Lee Coffield

**Ushers:** Karen and Jim Umberger

**Liturgist:** Julie James

*Please join us for Fellowship in the vestry after worship so we can get to know you better!*

*Pastor Sue will be away starting Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup> to October 14<sup>th</sup>.*

**Week of Activities:**

**Monday: Fair Baking begins 9am;**

AA Noon-1pm;

Vaughan Board meeting 4pm

**Tuesday: Fair Booth moved to fairgrounds 9am;**

Food Pantry: Noon – 1:45pm;

Music Team meeting 3:15pm;

Diaconate meeting 5pm

**Wednesday: Faith Sharing in Pastor's office 9:30am**

**Thursday: Food Pantry 1-2:45pm;**

Chancel Choir Rehearsal 4-5pm;

Bell Choir Rehearsal 4:45pm

**Friday: AA Noon-1pm**

**Sunday: Revolving Closet-Teens 2-5pm**

## Mission Corner

- **September Noisy Offering will go to Starting Point Group Men's Program.**
- **3rd Quarter Mission collection is for the Starting Point.**
- **The Food Pantry is in need of non-perishable food or monetary gifts.** Checks can be made payable to: *Vaughan Community Services, Inc.* and placed in the collection plate.

## ***Church Address and Information***

2521 White Mountain Highway  
PO Box 401  
North Conway, NH 03860

Church Phone: 603-356-2324

Church Fax number: 603-356-2106

Church Website: [www.firstchurchnc.com](http://www.firstchurchnc.com)

Church Office email: [churchoffice@firstchurchnc.com](mailto:churchoffice@firstchurchnc.com)

Pastor: Sue Davidson

Organist: Floyd Corson

Choir/Handbell Director: Anne Polak

Associate Organist: Muriel Magg

Church Administrator: Denise Leighton

Church Sexton: Mark Schiller

## THE BLESSING PRAYER

“May this Sanctuary be a shelter in your life. When you come here, may all the weight of the world fall from your shoulders. May your heart be tranquil here, blessed by peace the world cannot give. May this Sanctuary be a place where the graces your life desires always find the pathway to your heart. May this be a safe place full of understanding and acceptance, where you can be as you are, without the need of any mask of pretense or image. May this be a place of spiritual discovery, where the possibilities that sleep in the clay of your soul can emerge to deepen and refine your vision for all that is yet to come to birth. May this sacred place be a home of courage, where healing and growth are loved, where dignity and forgiveness prevail; a place where patience is revered, and the sight of the destination is never lost, though the journey be difficult and slow. May this be a place of welcome and may you have the eyes to see that no guest arrives without a gift and no guest leaves without a blessing.”

*Adapted from John O'Donohue's Poem – For A New Home*