

**First Church of Christ, Congregational
United Church of Christ**

Fifth Sunday of Easter



May 18, 2025

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!"**

"The ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world that it leaves to its children." — Dietrich Bonhoeffer

***Please stand if you are able**

Prelude

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

Centering Song

Gathering

Call to Worship

One: In a world that draws dividing lines, we gather to remember the One who crossed every boundary.

All: We come to follow Jesus, who loved without condition and welcomed without fear.

One: In an age when division is easy and othering is expected, we gather to choose a different path.

All: We are here to practice the love that reaches across lines of fear, prejudice, and pride.

One: Jesus washed the feet of friend and betrayer alike, revealing love that does not discriminate.

All: We are called to love one another with courage, humility, and grace in all that we do.

One: This love is not abstract or sentimental; it is real, embodied, and costly.

All: It breaks down walls, heals wounds, and reorients the world toward compassion.

One: In this place, we do not gather as insiders or outsiders, but as one human family.

All: We belong to each other because we belong to God.

One: Come, let us worship the One who gave us a new commandment: love as I have loved you.

All: We will worship with open hearts, ready to be transformed by the power of love.

Unison Prayer

One: Let us pray.

All: Loving God, you have shown us what it means to love by crossing every line the world has drawn - lines of power and pride, fear and exclusion, betrayal, and pain. In Jesus, we see a love that serves without shame, that forgives without limit, that welcomes without exception. Still, we confess how easily we fall back into judgment, how quickly we retreat into the safety of our own. Open our hearts today to the depth of your commandment and the breadth of your mercy. Teach us to love not only those who are easy to love, but those we struggle to understand. Help us to build bridges where the world has built walls, and to live each day as people known not by our words, but by our love. Amen.

***Hymn NCH #498 Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love**

Sharing The Peace of Christ

Proclamation

Scripture Leviticus 19:1–2, 9–18 (Hebrew Bible p. 106)
Romans 12:9–18 (NT p. 162)
John 13:31–35

At the end of the readings, the reader will say, "The word of God for the people of God." We invite your response to be, "Thanks be to God."

Children's Message When It's Hard to Love

Pastor Walt

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**The Politics of Love****Pastor Walt**

Response

Prayers with Joys and Concerns

Morning Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (From the Aramaic by Dr. Jana Rentzel)

One: Now as our Savior Jesus taught us, let us pray together:

All: Our ever-present Divine Light and Creator, who lives deep within and among our hearts, let Your holy Light and Love radiate through us into our lives. Help us realize who we truly are, in and with You. May our actions reflect Your will for us, as we live in peace and harmony with all. Grant what we need today in nourishment and insight. Release us from our mistakes that bind us, as we release our judgments and resentments against others. Help us avoid the things of this world that eclipse our spiritual focus, and free us from our worldly mistakes. For Yours is the glorious Heart of the universe that abundantly sustains us forever and ever. May You be the ground from which all our actions grow. Sealed in trust and faith and truth. Amen.

Offertory

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 Dedication

Sending Out

*Hymn **RED** #87

Blest Be the Tie

Benediction

Closing Song

Paul Burtis

May God's blessings twine around you,
Perfect love, and healing calm;
May God's radiance shine upon you; may it guide you,
Stay beside you; watch and keep you safe from harm.

Postlude

(Stay and enjoy OR head to the Fellowship Hall for coffee and treats!)

The altar flowers are given by Scott & Natalie Taylor in loving memory of Charles E. and Mildred S. (Bebe) Taylor. Two dedicated souls who were such an important part of the life and music of this church.

Greeter: Helen Goss

Ushers: Mike James and Jay Donabedian

Liturgist: Muriel Magg

Welcome to First Church of Christ! If you are visiting with us today, please note that there are two fire exits at the rear of the sanctuary and one at the back of the church through the kitchen. There are two unisex bathrooms; one downstairs off the front entrance and one off the kitchen at the rear of the building.

Mission Corner:

- **The Noisy Offering for May/June will go to a local non-profit in need.** The Mission Board is restructuring their list of recipients at this time.
- The 2nd Quarter **Mission collection is for the Vaughan Learning Center.** This will help with supplies for the classrooms.
- **The Food Pantry welcomes non-perishable food and monetary gifts are most appreciated as they can be stretched further.** The pantry hours are shown in our *Week of Activities*. Checks can be made payable to: *Vaughan Community Service, Inc.* and placed in the collection plate.

Evelyn Porter is designated as The Coordinator of the Diaconates' Ministry of Greeting. If you would like her to send a card from the church to someone who is ill, grieving, celebrating or who just needs a "pick-me-up" note. Please call her at (603) 356-2881 or send her an email at hambru35@yahoo.com.

Week of Activities:

Today: **Worship Service 10am;**

Mission Committee meeting in back of church 11:30am;
Revolving Closet 2-5pm

Monday: **June *Congregate Tidings* Articles are Due;**

AA Noon-1pm;
Scouts of America Troop 150 and Pack 150 6:30-8:00pm

Tuesday: Food Pantry 11:30am-1:45pm;

Trustees meeting 4pm

Thursday: Food Pantry Open 12:30-2:45pm;

Chancel Choir rehearsal 3-4pm;

Bell Choir Rehearsal 4-5pm;

Friday: AA Noon-1pm

Sunday: **Worship Service 10am, Pastor Sue Davidson, preaching**

Our **May** Newsletter is chock full of good stuff and important dates! You'll find it in your mail and by going online to our website at: **<https://firstchurchnc.com/Newsletters/May2025.pdf>**

Church Address and Information

First Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC
2521 White Mountain Highway
PO Box 401
North Conway, NH 03860

Pastor: Reverend Walt Hampton, J.D., CFC

Pianist/Organist: Patrick Speckamp

Associate Organist: Muriel Magg

Chancel Choir/Handbell Director: Anne Polak

Church Administrator/Bookkeeper: Denise Leighton

Vaughan Administrator: Jennifer Perkins

Vaughan Learning Center Director: Heather Ouellette

Vaughan Bookkeeper: Denise Leighton

Church Sexton: Mark Schiller

Pastor Walt's Phone: 603-356-2324 (Press 2)

Church Phone: 603-356-2324

Church Fax number: 603-356-2106

Vaughan Food Pantry: 603-602-1801

Vaughan Learning Center: 603-356-5213

Pastor Walt's Email: pastor@firstchurchnc.com

Church Office Email: churchoffice@firstchurchnc.com

Church Website: www.firstchurchnc.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/firstchurchncnh

Thank you for worshipping with us today!



To make giving even easier for those who don't carry cash or use checks, we've started using QR Code, in the bulletin. Just scan the code with your phone like you would in a restaurant!