

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

**Holy Vessels**

**“Safe Keeping”**

**Second Sunday in Lent**



**March 1, 2026**

CCLI #292978, and #20547245

CHURCH ORGANIZED ON AUGUST 18, 1778

Present building erected in North Conway Village 188

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

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

## **GATHER**

*People gather around Jesus as his reputation becomes known from town to town. As we gather virtually or physically, we too are yearning for presence, for peace, for help.*

### **Prelude**

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

### **Welcome and Announcements**

### **Threshold to Worship**

*Leader:* We continue our Lenten “season of recovery” as we focus on health as essential to our spiritual lives.

### *CHOIR*

**Vessels, holy and whole  
Broken, needing the One  
Open, body and soul  
Healer, come.**

*Leader:* God gathers us as a Beachcomber gathers and marvels at every precious surviving piece of beach glass she finds. We are never alone, we are never lost to the One who seeks humanity’s wholeness. We affirm our commitment to be the Body of Christ that knows we cannot be personally healed until we see the interconnected community as part of the process of healing. Jesus has the power to re-vision the family of God in which false boundaries are overcome.

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## **APPROACH**

*People opened their lives to Jesus. We are drawn to the Healer—opening our hearts with honesty about our lives and finding assurance that offers peace.*

### **Opening Prayer of Confession**

Let us pray:

**God of All, You created us for each other. You set in us a yearning for companionship and an empathy that binds us together, protecting each other and delighting in one another. Yet too often we have broken down our relationships instead of building them up. We have been set against one another with the lie of scarcity. We have built systems and economies that widen the gap of resources rather than safeguarding equitable practices. Too many, and growing numbers, are suffering hardship, food insecurity, joblessness. We cannot fathom the proportions of loss and so we look away, sometimes even from the need in our own community. Help us, Healer. Show us our empathy. Forgive our complacency. Move us to move one step at a time toward greater care for one another.**

**In this silence, we sense and acknowledge our yearning for wholeness.**

*Silence*

**CHOIR AND CONGREGATION**

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Open, body and soul  
Healer, come.**

**Assurance**

**Peace**

I invite you to imagine the warmth that surrounds you extending to those who may be next to you in close proximity. Imagine it extending beyond these walls to the neighborhood...the wider community...the church...and seeing it spread like the rising sun, let it expand to all the world.

Let this be our peace. **Amen.**

**\*Sharing the Peace of Christ**

One: Peace be with you!

**All: And also with you!**

**\*Hymn** NCH #314

Community of Christ

**BELIEVE**

*People were fortified by Jesus' words and deeds that revealed care for all—especially those marginalized. We strengthen our belief in the possibility for renewed health and vigor for all.*

**Message for the Young at Heart**

## **A Contemporary Word**

"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."

— **Margaret J. Wheatley**

"I alone cannot change the world,  
but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

– **Mother Teresa**

### **Musical Proclamation**

My Savior and My God

Jay Althouse

My life, my love I give to Thee, Thou Lamb of God who died for me.  
O may I ever faithful be, my Savior and my God.

I'll live for Him who died for me, how richer then my life will be.  
I'll bow to Him on bended knee, my Savior and my God.

### **An Ancient Word**

Matthew 8:5-13

### **Message**

We Gather

Helen Goss

## **ASK**

*People who were healed by Jesus were not afraid to ask. And so we come before the Holy One, making our petitions and desires known, trusting the work of the Spirit.*

**Song of Preparation** Make Us Holy, Make Us Whole

**CHOIR**

**In your love, make us whole.  
May we rest in your compassion.  
Calm the lost, weary soul  
in the warmth of your love.  
May your peace fill our hearts.  
May we know the love of Jesus.  
By your grace, you console.  
Make us holy, make us whole.**

**Prayers of the People - Joys and Concerns**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Prayer of Jesus – The Lord’s Prayer**

One: Let us pray together

**All: 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.**

**CHOIR AND CONGREGATION**

**In your love, make us whole.  
May we rest in your compassion.  
Calm the lost, weary soul  
in the warmth of your love.  
May your peace fill our hearts.  
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By your grace, you console.  
Make us holy, make us whole.**

## Offering Invitation

### Doxology

Old Hundredth Tune

**Praise God throughout these 40 days,  
Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise,  
And praise the Spirit who imparts  
God's love in Christ to faithful hearts.**

### Prayer of Gratitude

#### **KNOW**

*The parting words Jesus' gave to those he healed were often as much balm as the healing act itself. We hear words of encouragement from the One who makes beauty from brokenness.*

### Ritual Action for the Week

#### **RESPOND**

*Scriptural accounts of healing often end with responses from the "crowd" of witnesses. How will we proceed into the brokenness of this world and respond as the Body of Christ?*

**\*Hymn** NCH #423

Great Is Your Faithfulness

## **Commission**

*Leader:* Jesus' healing actions often get "buzz" from onlookers. In this week's story we do not know how his followers reacted to his words, but we can assume that it was hard to hear for some. Jesus makes sure to point out that the belief of this "outsider" and his care for his servant was something he didn't always see from the "insiders"—from the ones who profess to be "faithful." His words no doubt affirmed some and offended others. That's what happens when we get "called out," as we say. Perhaps we are in need of being "called out." Not in a way that shames but in a way that energizes. How could our faith call us out more and more until we cannot stand by as some are suffering?

We are working on healing for ourselves in this season, but we are also working toward something communal. How can we as a church community become a "health hub" through our ministry and mission? The needs are so great, especially now. Throughout this time, I invite you to explore the possibilities for a new or renewed commitment to a contribution we can make to our larger community.

## **Blessing**

### **Threshold Into the World**

#### **CHOIR AND CONGREGATION**

**Vessels, holy and whole  
Broken, needing the One  
Open, body and soul  
Healer, come.**

## **Postlude**

Dreamland

by Alexis Ffrench

**Liturgist:** Chris Russian

**Ushers:** Fred Starkey and Jay Donabedian

**Faith Leader:** Helen Goss

**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.**

**The doors to the church are locked at 10:10am on Sundays for everyone's safety. One of the doors in the back of the sanctuary is kept open for the Ushers to keep an eye out for any latecomers. Please knock on the glass if you need to get their attention.**

*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](mailto:hambru35@yahoo.com).

**Mission Corner:**

- **The Noisy Offering for March/April** to be determined.
- **The 1st Quarter Mission Collection** is to support the Way Station Cold Weather Emergency Shelter Program.
- **The Food Pantry welcomes non-perishable food and monetary gifts are most appreciated as they can be stretched further.** 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.

## **Week of Activities:**

### **Today: Second Sunday of Lent**

Helen Goss, Faith Leader;  
Mission Meeting following Fellowship;  
Revolving Closet - Teens 2-5pm

### **Monday: AA Noon-1pm;**

Scouts of America Troop 150 and Pack 150 6:30-8:00pm

### **Tuesday: Food Pantry 11:30am-1:45**

### **Thursday: WIC Program 9:30am-2:30pm;**

Food Pantry Open 12:00-2:15pm;

Choir Rehearsal 3-4pm;

Bell Choir 4-5pm

### **Friday: AA Noon-1pm**

### **Sunday: Third Sunday of Lent-Communion Sunday**

**Pastor Sue Davidson, preaching**

**Our **March** 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/March2026.pdf>**

## *Church Address and Information*

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

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

Church Phone: 603-356-2324

Church Fax number: 603-356-2106

Vaughan Food Pantry: 603-602-1801

Vaughan Learning Center: 603-356-5213

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

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

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/firstchurchncnh](http://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!**