

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

**Holy Vessels**

**“Restoration”**

**Fifth Sunday in Lent**



**March 22, 2026**

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!”**

**\*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.

*(To be sung by all.)*

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

*Leader:* The demands of following Jesus are great. He shows us that sometimes we must make extraordinary efforts to move in a new direction. As we consider the health of humanity, we cannot ignore the need to heal the very planet that sustains us. We live in increasing chaos of a beleaguered environment and the hoarding of resources. We want to be "saved" by something or someone else, but we discover this week that we are in the boat with the One who shows us our power to turn it around, to calm the storm. We protect the jewel that is our home, restoring something beautiful from scars of the past.

*(To be sung by all.)*

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

## **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**

*Leader:* Let us acknowledge our need to restore, repair, renew our Holy Vessels, especially this holy container of life on which we live—this very planet.

One: Let us pray:

**Life-giving God, In the beginning, you created this universe with a phrase, “Let it be...” and the waters and dry land, the sky and the creatures were formed. You set humanity among these wonders and invited us to care and honor all things. We have not successfully answered that call. Seeing the abundance as a feast that would never end, we gorged ourselves, taking more than we could replenish at a rate that could not be sustained. We are beginning to comprehend the magnitude, beginning to see that things cannot just keep going “as usual” and not have dire consequences.**

**We are frightened, which is partly why we are slow to accept it. But we now are witnesses to the forces of a world more broken than when we inherited it: water, wind, and wave, fire, drought, and earthquake that signal it is time to pay attention and to make real change. Too often we think there is nothing we can do—that the change required is too great. It all feels overwhelming and so we look away, sometimes even from the small things that could make a difference for our own community.**

**Help us, Healer. Show us our ability to chart a different course. Forgive our inaction. Move us to move one step at a time toward greater care for one another.**

*Silence*

*(To be sung by all.)*

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

## **Assurance**

### **\*Sharing the Peace of Christ**

One: Peace be with you!

**All: And also with you.**

**\*Hymn NCH #569**

Touch the Earth Lightly

## **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**

Pastor Sue

## **A Contemporary Word**

Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.

**– John Muir**

We don't inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.

– **David Brower**

**Musical Proclamation**

A Prayer for Peace

Text: Henry Baker Music: Karissa Dennis

O God of Love, true source of peace, make wars throughout the world to cease.  
The wrath of sinful hearts restrain; give peace, O God, give peace again,  
give peace again.

Remember, Lord, Your works of old, the wonders that our fathers told.  
Remember not our sin's deep stain; give peace, O God, give peace again.  
Give peace again, give peace again.

Whom shall we trust but You, O God?  
Where rest but on Your faithful Word?  
None ever called on You in vain.  
Give peace, O God, give peace again.

O God of love, true source of peace, make wars throughout the world to cease.  
The wrath of sinful hearts restrain; give peace, O God, give peace again.  
Give peace again, give peace again. Give peace.

**An Ancient Word**

Matthew 8:18-27

**Message**

The Three R's—Revisit, Revise, Restore

Pastor Sue

**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

*(To be sung by all.)*

**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.**

*(To be sung by all.)*

**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.**

**Offering Invitation**

## Offertory

## 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. Amen.**

## Prayer of Gratitude

*To be sung by all*

**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.**

## 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**

For the Wholeness of the Earth

(see back page)

## **Commission**

*Leader:* This week the reaction of the crowd in the story is amazement at Jesus' connection to the cosmic forces of wind and wave. As scientists now try to teach us, all things are connected. We are part and parcel of all creation. Rather than dominion, we are to be a-tuned to all around us. We see the cry of creation in awakened natural disasters and we must heed the call not to hide in fear, but to work for healing.

And so in our communal discerning about how this church community could become a "hub" through our ministry and mission, let us put our minds to imagining how we can learn about contributing to the beauty and healing of our environment. I invite you to explore with us the possibilities for a new or renewed commitment to a contribution we can make at First Church to our larger community.

## **Blessing**

### **Threshold Into the World**

*(To be sung by all.)*

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

## **Postlude**

I Need Thee Every Hour

Justin K. Reeve

**Greeter:** Jackie Howe

**Liturgist:** Muriel Magg

**Ushers:** Steve Woodcock and Jay Donabedian

**Pastor:** Sue Davidson

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 [hambro35@yahoo.com](mailto:hambro35@yahoo.com).

### **Mission Corner:**

- **The Noisy Offering for March/April** will go to **Friends of Conway Recreation** to help with the dog park planned in Conway.
- **The 1st Quarter Mission Collection** is to support the **Gibson Center for Senior Services**. (This changed from going to the Way Station for their Cold Weather Emergency Shelter Program as a large donation of \$10K was made by Mission to this program in January.)
- **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.

Our **April** Newsletter is full of good stuff and important dates! You'll find it by going online to our website at:

<https://firstchurchnc.com/Newsletters/April2026.pdf>

**Week of Activities:**

**Today:** Fifth Sunday in Lent

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

**Tuesday:** Food Pantry 11:30am-1:45;  
Diaconate meeting 5:00pm

**Wednesday:** Music Team meeting 1:45pm

**Thursday:** Food Pantry Open 12:00-2:15pm;  
Choir Rehearsal 3-4pm;  
Bell Choir 4-5pm

**Friday:** AA Noon-1pm

**Sunday:** Sixth Sunday in Lent - Palm Sunday



***Easter Lilies!***

If you would like to purchase one in memory or in honor of someone, please provide the following information along with payment of \$10.00 (checks payable to First Church) and the lily is yours! These can be taken home after the Easter Service on April 5th for your enjoyment or for delivery to a loved one.

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory or Honor of (circle one): \_\_\_\_\_

(If given in "Memory" the person has passed. If given in "Honor" the person is living.)

Your request and payment can be placed in the Collection Plate on Sunday, dropped off at the church office, or mailed to the church at PO Box 401, North Conway, NH 03860.

**DEADLINE TO ORDER IS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1ST.**

## *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!**

# For the Wholeness of the Earth

Bret Hesla



1. We lift this prayer for the whole-ness of the earth. We lift this  
 2. We tune our ears to the whole-ness of the earth. We tune our  
 3. We turn our lives to the whole-ness of the earth. We turn our  
 4. Give thanks to God for the whole-ness of the earth. Give thanks to



prayer for the whole-ness of the earth. We lift this prayer for the  
 ears to the whole-ness of the earth. We tune our ears to the  
 lives to the whole-ness of the earth. We turn our lives to the  
 God for the whole-ness of the earth. Give thanks to God for the



whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it ris - ing in you?  
 whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it ring - ing in you?  
 whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it spin - ning in you?  
 whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it ris - ing in you?