



Sunday, May 5, 2024

**Rev. Kathleen Alger
Rev. Debb-Ellen Brown**

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

**First Congregational Church
Wilmot, New Hampshire**

An Open & Affirming and Racial Justice United Church of Christ Congregation
Gathered in 1829

ORDER of WORSHIP – May 5, 2024

PRELUDE MUSIC

WORDS OF WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

“If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” II Corinthians 5:17

BRINGING FORTH THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

A TIME OF SILENCE TO CENTER OURSELVES

CALL TO WORSHIP

As the day dawns anew,

So do our Spirits.

As our community gathers,

So does our joy.

As our songs float to the heavens,

So do our prayers.

As God’s love awakens us,

Our hearts strengthen as One—

And so it is and so it will be.

OPENING HYMN “Called as Partners in Christ’s Service” Chalice #495

**1 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.**

**2 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.**

**3 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.**

**4 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.**

OPENING PRAYER

LITANY OF GOD'S CHOSEN

First I saw the strong and mighty one, and I said to myself

Surely this is God's chosen,

But God passed by. Then I saw the wise and ancient one and I said to
myself,

Surely this is God's chosen!

But God passed by. Then I saw the beautiful and the clever one, and I said
to myself,

Surely this is God's chosen!

But God passed by. Then I saw a wee little baby, so pure, so precious, so
newly made.

Surely this is God's chosen. "Perhaps", I heard, "Perhaps."

But God passed by ~ albeit a bit more slowly. Then I happened to be
walking by our mirror and I thought, surely, this isn't God's chosen ~ all I
could see was my own reflection ~ someone so ordinary, unimpressive,
insignificant, easily broken.

And God said "YES!" Without hesitation.

For while we see what's on the outside, God sees through to our souls.

We see with our eyes, God always sees with the heart.

SCRIPTURE

John 15: 9-17

Today's NIV

REFLECTION

"Pruning, Prayer and Practice"

Rev. Debb-Ellen

HYMN

"Jesu, Jesu"

vs 1-4 NCH #498

[Refrain:]

Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,

**show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.**

**1 Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
Master who acts as a slave to them. [Refrain]**

**2 Neighbors are rich and poor,
varied in color and race,
neighbors are near and far away. [Refrain]**

**3 These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love;
all these are neighbors to us and you. [Refrain]**

**4 Loving puts us on our knees,
serving as though we are slaves,
this is the way we should live with you. [Refrain]**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

INVITATION TO SHARE JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our * 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
forever. Amen**

**We have come to know God by many different names and images. Please use
the one which speaks from your heart today. (e.g. Father, Mother, Creator,
God...)*

**PRAYER RESPONSE “Restless Weaver” vs 4 Chalice #658
Restless Weaver, still conceiving new life now and yet to be.**

**Binding all your vast creation in one living tapestry:
You have called us to be weavers. Let your love Guide all we do.
With your Reign of Peace our pattern, we will weave your world
anew.**

THE GIVING OF OUR GIFTS

INVITATION AND OFFERTORY

Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Generous God, may the gifts we return to you, cause your name
to be celebrated among the nations. May the lives that we live,
cause your name to be celebrated in all generations. May our
offerings be signs of our praise to you, forever and ever. Amen.**

PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION

HYMN “Break Now the Bread of Life” vs 1 (seated) NCH #321

**1 Break now the bread of life, Savior, to me,
as you once broke the loaves beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page I seek you, Lord;
my spirit yearns for you, O Living Word.**

Through Christ’s patient love and unfailing grace, we are once again invited
into your abiding love and rescued from the fears and sins that would
separate us from your nurturing presence.

**With Christ’s love in our lives, we are invited to live in your love
and to reveal your love to the world.**

With joy and gratitude, we break this bread of life and remember the many
times when Jesus’ love was shared in the breaking of the bread. In

remembrance, we will take and eat this bread. With awe and wonder, we fill this cup and remember the many times when Jesus poured out his love as an everlasting spring of grace.

In remembrance, we will drink from this cup and partake of the love that overflows in our lives.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on all of us gathered here, that we may be the branches of Christ, the fruit of love, your true vine.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine that we may be filled with your abiding love.

Sharing of the bread and cup.

The life of Christ, living in you. (as we share the bread)

The love of Christ, loving through you. (as we share the cup)

Closing Communion Prayer

Strengthen us in the power of your Holy Spirit, that we may be one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at the heavenly banquet. Through Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forevermore. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN “Take My Life, God, Let It Be” NCH #448

**1 Take my life, God, let it be
consecrated faithfully.
Take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

**2 Take my spirit, let it move
at the impulse of your love.
Take my intellect and use
all its powers as you choose.**

**3 Take my will; your will be done!
Make your will and mine be one.**

**Take my heart, and by your grace
make of it your dwelling place.**

**4 Take my love and help it grow;
let my loving overflow.**

**Take me now, and help me be
part of Christ's community.**

CLOSING CIRCLE & COMMISSIONING ONE ANOTHER

**Go into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good
courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil
for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help
the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in
the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE “Spirit of The Living God”

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

BENEDICTION

Welcome! Our worship service takes place on N’dakinna, the traditional ancestral homeland of the Abenaki, Penacook and Wabanaki Peoples past and present. We acknowledge and honor with gratitude the land and waterways and the people who have stewarded N’dakinna throughout the generations.

Upcoming Events and Meetings This Week*

Tuesday, May 7 2-6 pm - Pastoral Hours

Wednesday May 8 3 pm - Choir Rehearsal

Thursday May 9 2-6 pm – Pastoral Hours
6 pm – AA meeting in Fellowship Hall

Sunday May 12 10:00 am –Worship in person & on zoom

For additional calendar events check the Google Calendar at Wilmotucc.org

Staff and Leadership

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Clerk	Bob Evans	
Religious Education Director	Nancy Allenby	
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Music Attributions

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