THE LITURGY FOR MORNING WORSHIP

Prelude: “Quartal Courante” by Jason Shelton (Used with permission. All rights reserved)
Performed by Abby Charbeneau, South Congregational Church, Concord

Greeting and Welcome
The Rev. Gordon Rankin, Conference Minister, New Hampshire Conference, UCC

Good Morning Friends and welcome to our New Hampshire Conference Annual Meeting weekend worship. As many things have happened in 2020 this is happening differently than our Annual Meeting worship often does. Normally its included as part of our full day Annual Meeting activities at the Grappone Center. This year, however, as we move to a virtual format we decided that we would handle our Annual Meeting worship differently and make it available to you on Sunday morning. Perhaps you are watching this on social media or perhaps it is what your church is using for worship this morning. We welcome you however you are encountering this worship. As we have all weekend long we are listening to the words of Isaiah that invite us to restore, repair, and re-new in our communities, and in the world around us. Preaching this morning will be our Annual Meeting keynote speaker, the Rev. Michael Caine, Pastor of Old First Reformed United Church of Christ in Philadelphia. I want to make sure also to thank all the members of our Annual Meeting Worship Team, who have spent a year developing this worship service in multiple formats. And I want to thank all the voices participating in our worship this morning. As we move through our worship this morning, I want to let you know in advance that we will be celebrating the sacrament of Holy Communion. So I invite you to take a moment and find the elements that you would like to use for communion. This may be bread and juice, this may be a cinnamon roll and coffee. God’s grace is available through all such things. Please take a moment and retrieve the items you would like to use. Friends, as we come to our worship this morning may we prepare our mouths to praise and our hearts to welcome the in dwelling of the Spirit. Let us worship together.

Call to Worship
Annual Meeting Worship Planning Team

All: You, living God, have always meant to crown us with your steadfast love. It is this love that does not forget us; but forgives, satisfies and renews our strength. Without your love, the wind passes over us and leaves us unknown. Today we humbly ask you for transformation and renewal through this love.
Voice 1: We receive from you what is good and acceptable
Voice 2: We remember that although we are many, we are one body.
Voice 3: We strive to let go of our temptation for legalism and let our love be genuine.
Voice 4: Though we see struggle ahead, we will not lag in zeal, but will be ardent in spirit, holding fast to what is good.
Voice 5: We trust that you will make our body strong.

All: We trust that you shall make us like watered gardens – springs that shall never fail. Thanks be to you, O God!

Prayers of Lament

Spiritual Care Chaplains Concord VNA:
Tavo L'fanécha (English Translation)
Our God and God of our mothers and fathers, grant that our prayers may reach You. Do not be deaf to our pleas, for we are not so arrogant and stiff-necked as to say before You, Lord our God and God of all ages, we are perfect and have not sinned; rather do we confess: we have gone astray, we have sinned, we have transgressed.

For being a chaplain in the time of Covid, I lament. For all the people in nursing homes, who are separated from their loved ones, I lament. For people with dementia, who don’t even know why their loved ones have suddenly disappeared, I lament. For all of their family members waiting outside, for a window visit, or a glimpse, I lament. For trying to do a ministry of presence, while wearing all of this, I lament. For trying to do a ministry of presence, without being present, I lament.

I lament. The grief that patients and their families experience due to separation and isolation is palpable, I lament.

I lament, as a chaplain, families who have been separated from loved ones who have to live in nursing homes. I lament increased anxiety I see in households in souls that seek peace, and as I lament the Lord asks me what did you see my green eyed son, what did you see my darling young ones. And I had to tell the Lord I saw a newborn baby with wild wolves all around it. I saw a highway of diamonds with nobody on it. I saw a black branch with blood that kept the dripping. I saw a room full of men with their hammers bleeding. I saw a white ladder all covered with water. I saw ten thousand talkers whose tongues were all broken. I saw guns and sharp swords in the hands of young children. I lament.
Isolation; loneliness; grief upon grief; hunger of body, mind and spirit. I see the pain and suffering as I feel my own pain and suffering. Without the unspoken comfort of physical touch, showing how I care changes. Somehow I think this is where hope arises.

I lament that I have to hold my own phone because my colleagues have to keep their social distance. My lament is for the chaplains, the social workers, the nurses, the LNAs, the physicians, the physicians’ assistants, the first responders, the ambulance drivers who transport our patients. My lament is for all who feel the moral distress of being called to serve, and not being able to serve fully. Being called to witness but not being able to see behind masks and goggles. Of being called to love, and fortunately being creative enough to love in the midst of this pandemic, this crisis, and this chaos. Love is stronger than death. So be it.

_Spiritual Care Chaplain Concord Hospital:_
I lift to God those who are sick, and those who are injured, and those who are also lonely and scared while lying in a hospital bed and also for the medical staff caring for them.

_Spiritual Care Chaplains Havenwood Heritage Heights:_
Why, oh Lord, are we losing our elders at every turn? Why oh Lord.
I am so rage full at the loss?
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

Why, oh Lord, in the loneliness and isolation do you feel far away too when we need to feel you close?
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

Why, oh Lord, is there so much pain, in my joints, in my bones, why is there so much collective pain?
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

All things are supposed to work together for good for those of us who trust and love the Divine, but we didn’t ask for this chaos. Nobody asked for this.
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

Why does the silence of the trees not work anymore?
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.
Why do all our loved ones be so separate from us during this time when we need hugs, when we need comfort, when we need care? Why do we have to have such separation?
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

How long, oh Lord, will we wait before we can sing together again? Before we can be together, freely, to hold each other?
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

Why, oh Lord, do I have to wear this mask? I can’t hear others. Others can’t hear me. I can’t see. Please, oh Lord, let this pass.
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

Dear God, how come in the middle of all this pain and anguish and angst, are there still so many people who do not care?
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

Praying into the Breach / Prayers of the People
Rev. Dr. Lynn Wickberg, Westmoreland United Church, UCC

Let us pray.
God, you have promised to answer when we call for help to loose the bonds of discrimination built into our society – so that the color of one’s skin, whom one loves, where we are born, by what name we call you no longer divide and impoverish.
   Help us repair societal structures.

God, you have promised to be near as we seek to build community on foundations of your justice - such that all have what is needed for life and well-being, including breath, food, water, shelter, and love.
   Help us restore your kin-dom on earth.

God you have promised to guide us to newness of being where there is no more hunger for food and hope, where there is no more thirsting for water and belonging.
   Help us re-new ourselves – your children; our churches – your body of Christ; our communities – your people; our nation and our world – which are your nations and your world.

God you have promised more than we can imagine and you in mercy give more than we know. Receive our thanksgiving, our hopes, and our very beings.
And in the quiet of this moment, we offer prayers of hope for repairing, restoring, and renewal as expressed through these images.

Merciful God, our hope and our lives are in your hands. Amen.

Scripture: Isaiah 58:9-12 (NRSV)
Horton Center Campers: Breanne Peters, Chris Mcbride, Isabelle Benson, and Tucker Magrauth

9Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, 10 if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. 11 The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. 12 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

Scripture: Luke 13:10-17 (NRSV)
Cora Shaklee, Brookline Community Church

10 Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. 12 When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, “Woman, you are set free from your ailment.” 13 When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. 14 But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, “There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the Sabbath day.” 15 But the Lord answered him and said, “You hypocrites! Does
not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? 16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?” 17 When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

**Hymn: “Savior God Above” New Century Hymnal #602**  
(Tune: “Come Sunday” from BLACK, BROWN, AND BEIGE by Duke Ellington. © 1946 (renewed) by G. Schirmer Inc. (ASCAP). Used with permission. All rights reserved.)  
Performed by Ashley Morse, Musician, Westmoreland United Church, UCC

- **Refrain:**  
  Savior God above, God almighty, God of love, please look down and see my people through.

- **Verse 1:**  
  I believe that God put sun and moon up in the sky,  
  I don’t mind the gray skies, ‘cause they’re just clouds passing by.

- **Verse 2:**  
  Heaven is a goodness time, a brighter light on high.  
  Love your neighbor as yourself, and have a brighter by and by.

- **Verse 3:**  
  I believe God is now, was then, and always will be.  
  With God’s blessing we can make it through eternity.

**Sermon “Sunday Delight”**  
The Rev. Michael W. Caine, Old First Reformed United Church of Christ in Philadelphia

**Introduction, Thank you and Prayer**  
Good Sunday morning, New Hampshire Conference. “Good shabbos,” our observant Jewish neighbors might say. I mean it -- what a delightful Sunday morning…When in the midst of EVERYTHING that, understandably, could have kept you apart, you have come together, despite it all. Well done, church. Well done.

I have enjoyed being with you…. to get to know you a bit this weekend.  
I thank your Conference Minister, Gordon Rankin, and the Annual Meeting Planning Committee for the opportunity.
My knowledge of New Hampshire and the UCC here is admittedly limited. I have parishioners in Philadelphia who summer in Temple, NH. When I told them I was claiming that, they worried it’s such a small town many of you might not even know where it is.

Their daughter, Meg, in 2016 flew down with your conference’s youth, to the National Youth Event that was happening at Disney World. I was with the rest of the youth on an endless chartered bus ride from Philly, for about the same price as Meg’s plane ticket. So, I already think the New Hampshire Conference is smarter than the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.

Otherwise, I only knew a few of you before this.

Carlos, from the planning committee, brought a group to Old First last winter. And Maren Tirabassi and I worked together on a congregational revitalization program some years ago. In those same years, I rode my bicycle from Syracuse to Grand Rapids for General Synod with Martha Paulsen Clement from the Congregational Church of Laconia being one of them. Oh, and of course, David Felton, my dear friend and former colleague from NY Conference. He is serving as an interim at First Church Jaffrey right now (which I believe is right next to the not so unknown town of Temple!) And this fall David is also your Conference’s Bridge ACM

Those few and… Oh, and an inter-term course I took when at Union Seminary in the 80s with Bill and Suzie Briggs about their ministry in Franconia.

I think that is about all the NH cred. I’ve got.

But you’ve given me an incredible text in Isaiah to work with. The Gospel lesson of a Sabbath healing is awfully good news too. Hopefully, with those two and with the help of the Holy Spirit and the openness of God’s people to hear the Spirit’s message to the church I will have everything I need.

Will you pray with me?

May the words of my lips,  
And the meditations of our hearts  
Be acceptable to you, O Lord,  
Our strength and our redeemer.
And all God’s children say, Amen.

The Sermon
Isaiah 58 thrusts us into a difficult time (as if our times aren’t hard enough!)
… a difficult time when the Israelites, returning home from the Babylonian exile, found that the restoration of their capital city and nation was not as easy as they had hoped or expected.

This is the context for those lines about repairing, restoring, renewing that are our focus. People of good faith long to see what’s broken get fixed, because we understand how much damage and hurt that brokenness brings. We want the mess cleaned up, we want what’s wrong made right, every valley raised up, the mountains and hills made low...especially when there seems to be so much mess, so much wrong and so much brokenness... Shattered people, Split families, Corruption, Racial divides, Political polarization and paralysis. The opioid crisis. Climate change and all the environmental chaos it is churning up. Our government’s inability to mount an effective, comprehensive response to the pandemic. Skyrocketing unemployment. Horribly large prison populations. Repair. Restore. Renew. So that all that is wrong can be made right. To be the repairers of the breach. To rebuild the nation. To restore the church.

But our passage, church, isn’t just a hopeful promise. It’s God telling the people, us, what to do. Actually it is God telling us what we are doing wrong, and what we should be doing instead.

There is more in these verses, church, than those three heroic phrases. Actually, if we read the text carefully, (I hope we will) and follow God’s reasoning closely, those 3 vaunted REs -- repairing, rebuilding, restoring -- are not the means to an end. They are the result. A reward. That comes of undertaking the correction God has offered the people. And what is that? What is God asking of us?

First, God warns of being too sure of ourselves. Right before where we began reading this morning, the people have shifted the blame for their troubles --not just to some scapegoat, or some favorite enemy, but to God, complaining, “We have done everything you have asked, but you aren’t paying attention, your caring for us.”

Their immediate goals were:
1) to get the Temple rebuilt for worship,
2) To get a wall built around the city for protection.

3) And to get right religion back into people’s daily lives.

From Babylon, second Isaiah, the prophet, had promised a triumphant return and a fabulous restoration of the community. And the exiles had taken that prophecy to heart: the imaginings of those longing to get back home had heard, and maybe even magnified, a remaking of Jerusalem and the nation to their former glories.

And now they are back and the prophesy is not turning out as expected. The rebuilding of the temple and the city was stalled completely. The roads weren’t even getting repaired. Leadership within the community was contested. Political divisions and violent disagreements were holding any progress back. Restoration -- both physically and socially -- was at a standstill. Drought and food shortages exacerbated the social strife and made rebuilding even more difficult. Economic and social inequities -- homelessness, hunger, lack of clothing -- threatened the stability and identity of the Judean community.

Groups outside of the community regarded the returnees with suspicion. And the returnees themselves disagreed about how welcoming to outsiders they should be. Texts composed around this time are rife with this tension. Ezra-Nehemiah offer the exclusivist position. Third Isaiah and Ruth promote an inclusive viewpoint. There was turning out to be nothing particularly glorious about the situation, their circumstances or the prospects for Jerusalem and the nation.

Before we go any further, let’s stop for minute and step back from the 6th century BCE. Or step forward 2500 years. If you are listening carefully, some of their troubles probably sound familiar. Echo’s, not perfect parallels, the similarities: This hunger for making the nation great again that wasn’t panning out. Some desperation to get back into their sacred space so they could be faithful. Leadership is at each other’s throats, locked in a fight, such that nothing gets done. Physical infrastructure and cultural identity both desperately need to be rebuilt, but no progress. Economic inequality has become so great, it’s undercutting general social well-being, and making peaceful co-existence difficult. There’s a housing shortage. Minimum wage isn’t a living wage. There are disagreements about diversity and assimilation. There is even this business about a wall that wasn’t yet finished.

Similarities enough. We might want to listen to what God says to the returned exiles in order to understand what God is asking of us.
What’s this Scripture telling us?

I believe that what God says is that what we do today and any time in worship needs to be more than rote ritual, self-justification, and making ourselves comfortable. If church is going to be authentic, it has to be less self-referential. I mean “real church” is about the real world. So it includes reflections, references, implications for what’s actually going on around us. Real worship doesn’t just challenge us; it has to change us.

You might not like my parallels, but if you argue with the connection I am trying to make, you might be arguing with God and not the preacher, because God says church is only really church if it changes how we handle everything else.

Duke Ellington’s “Come Sunday” is in our New Century Hymnal… # 602. We call it, “Savior, God Above.” Thank you, Ashley, for leading us in it so beautifully! It’s one of Ellington’s most amazing compositions. He originally wrote it for “Black, Brown and Beige,” his musical reflection on the lives of Black people in the Americas. “Come Sunday” is about the plight of overworked and underpaid African Americans in the South, who on Sunday… On Sunday, at church, in worship, among their other everyday saints, these people oppressed and hard pressed all week, on Sunday found a freedom, they could really come together, that could sing and shout, they could worship their hearts out, and find the courage and the hope to face so much that was wrong in their world. An experience of faith so strong, it changed how they lived the rest of the week. For me, “Come, Sunday” has always felt like an anthem for the kind of church God delights in: the kind of worship Luke captures in the story of the woman healed on the Sabbath.

God’s answer, New Hampshire Conference, in essence God’s answer is: “If we do everything right, if we do everything right, if we do everything right in worship, if we do everything right in church but our heart doesn’t turn inside out and grow… If we observed every holy & feast & fasting day just right, but If we aren’t healed and sent to heal others, if we don’t become apostles, if our worshiping selves don’t translate into witnessing, serving lives, if we don’t emerge in mercy and justice on the other days of the week. If church doesn’t make you big enough to take on the world, then “really,” God says, shaking God’s head in sorrow, “it’s not really church at all.”

But God’s talking about so much more than the one or two hours we spend at church when we can gather, or the hours of our attention when we are apart. “Delight in worship” turns out to be like the fast God chooses. In this same passage. God says,
“Is not this the fast that I choose, to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free? Is not the fast I choose to share your bread with the hungry?

Likewise, God says, ‘the “worship” that delights me’ Isn’t really about what we think of as worship at all. Not about right words, or right clothes, or even about the right congregation. Rather, the worship that delights me,’ God says, ‘is when you live faithfulness”

The returnees thought they needed the Temple rebuilt in order to get religion back into people’s lives,

But God says, it’s not so much about the buildings or any place set aside as sacred. It’s about my teachings that can go with you everywhere. It’s not so much about one day a week either. It’s about my teachings that can be your way always.

So what’s this mean for us, church? What does this mean for repair, restore, renew? It means we need to think, see, dream, and act bigger. We too often make the church too small. We need to get beyond the four walls of our sanctuaries. We need to get past the needs of our individual lives. We need to get outside the sacred confines of our Sabbath. And include realities that our church life would sometimes rather ignore. True church, like God’s love, is a calling about the redemption of the whole world.

Keeping Sabbath, healing Sabbath is about recognizing that every day and every person is holy and sacred. Faithfulness is not something we hide away at church about. It’s found out in the world where we are tested, Witnessing and doing God’s work. Church might be good practice, but the test comes out in the world. God says, “I delight in more than Sunday faith. My delight is when you are outside or far from the church building, when no one sees, when you’d rather do something else, but you still do right and love the good for my sake.”

What’s this look like in our day? To make church bigger? To make church about the world around us? Protecting the environment. Caring for the poor. Forgiving often. Rejecting racism. Fighting for the powerless. Sharing earthly and spiritual resources. Embracing diversity. Loving God. Enjoying Life. Does that litany sound familiar? It’s what in the United Church of Christ, we call “Being the church.” In all seasons, in all circumstances, in all places, New Hampshire Conference, let us every day keep Sabbath delight and be the church. Amen.
Prayer of Confession  
Rev. Gail Doktor, Jackson Community Church  
All: Bearer of Kindness and Justice,

We see firsthand the damage that disease, racism, and violence can cause. We know the anger and grief that is their wake. We acknowledge broken lives, torn families, towns and cities bent under systems of injustice. If we are being honest, we wonder if anything beautiful or good can come from such sorrow. Today, we ask for your bread in our lives and pray for your restoration blessing that, alone, can release the hold of sin. Open our mouths with words that denounce cruelty. Loose our tongues so they may savor the poured out forgiveness of your blood. Set the deadwood of our souls on fire with the baptism of your Holy Spirit. Then, the breaches can be repaired and the violence of our streets be rebuilt as pathways of peace. In Christ’s name, Amen.

OFFERINGS OF THE PEOPLE
The Rev. Tanya Stormo Rasmussen, Pastor, Congregational Church of Hollis, UCC

We ask that you consider accessing our online donation portal to make a contribution to support the mission and ministries of the New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ. You may also mail your contributions to NHCUCC, 140 Sheep Davis Road, Pembroke, NH 03275, with a memo noting this is your Annual Meeting offering.

The Call to Give
Friends, from the beginning, God has made us partners in accomplishing divine work. Accordingly, we have been entrusted with ample resources with which to undertake the sacred tasks of repairing, restoring, renewing the world we are given to—the world given to us. May the generosity of our gifts of treasure, talent, and time reflect the abundance entrusted to us and express our glad gratitude. Please take this moment to find the “Giving” link embedded (above) in your program, use the QR code displayed here, or mail in your gift and play your part in the joy of divine work on behalf of the mission and ministry of the New Hampshire Conference, U.C.C.
The Gathering of the Offerings: “They’ll Know We Are Christians”
(Words and Music - Contributors: Peter Scholtes, Text: © 1991, Lorenz Publications. Used with permission under ONE LICENSE # S-921025. All rights reserved.)
Performed by the Horton Summer 2020 Staff

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
And we pray that our unity will one day be restored
And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
Yes they’ll know we are Christians by our love

Prayer of Dedication
Generous God, may the gifts that we have offered express our gratitude and reflect the abundance you have entrusted to us as partners in your work of repairing, restoring, and renewing your beloved creation. Bless these offerings, we pray; we dedicate them to the efforts of pursuing your vision, and fulfilling your purposes after the example of Jesus Christ, our brother and Savior, in whose name we pray. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION
The Rev. Gordon M. Rankin, Conference Minister, New Hampshire Conference, UCC, and The Rev. Paige Besse-Rankin, Pastor, First Parish Church, Congregational, United Church of Christ, Dover, NH.

Invitation to the Table
You invite us this day to be changed, Holy Spirit. Bringer of hope and courage, you will not open an unexpected storyline for us as long as our intentions are to live only in familiar, expected ways. Bring us to this table to be born again. Open us to being remade; provoke and nourish us. We are ready for our lives to be re-bound to you.

Voice 1: Beloved, God’s word of righteousness comes to us in a time of great affliction. The fear of this pandemic season grips God’s word as if to choke its power off. The fear has driven us into our prayer closets; invited us to smear our faces with ash and spread sackcloth and ashes beneath our bent over bodies.

Voice 2: What makes us think God is asking for fasting that invites quarreling when God stands ready to open the gates before us and is leveling the mountains and calling us by name?

Voice 1: God cries, “Up. Share your bread with the hungry and let your fast mean something. Loose the bonds, the thongs, the yokes. Cover those who are vulnerable. Do not hide from one another.”
Voice 2:  God’s light is going before us. Do you not see it? There, at the edge of morning it breaks forth. Glory springs up. It is the balm for our wounds, the way in our darkness. It is the wedding garment that God has prepared for us, because the Bridegroom is at hand.

Voice 1:  God’s promises are true. If we who love the community God has given us will make manifest the compassion of our hearts, like springs of water, we can pour our lives out for our neighbors and feed them at the table where God’s powerful word is never silent.

Prayer of Consecration

Let us pray:

Voice 1:  Creator God, you have made the bread; Christ the Redeemer you changed it and you, Holy Spirit will bind our lives as we eat it.

Voice 2:  Creator God, you have made the vine; Christ the Redeemer, you have changed it and you, Holy Spirit, will bind our hearts as we drink of it.

ALL  (masked or virtually) How grateful we are! We are ready to be renewed. In the presence of our friends whom we used to stand by in church and the many whom we stand by virtually, we say, “As we eat and drink together, let us imagine God’s body and blood restoring us.” Amen

Words of Institution

One:  We remember Jesus letting the old rules fall to the ground. We remember the scandal of his healing; the strength of his compassion. We remember how he took bread, blessed and broke it – and gave it to them. He gave it even to the calculators and to those who ruin and wreck the unity of the body. He said, “This is my body. Eat of it and become a re-builder of God’s kin-dom.” Take eat and be strengthened.”

Those gathered take and eat.

One:  We remember Jesus turning the water into wine so the wonder and laughter of love could go on. We remember how the sky darkened as he bled upon the cross. We believed all had failed. But he had already shed his blood in that upper room as he worked to forge a new covenant rooted in the law of love. He said, “Drink of this, all of you. It is a new blood covenant of forgiveness. Love has swallowed all sin – remember this.”

Those gathered take and drink.
Prayer of Thanksgiving
Thank you for feeding us again, O Spirit of Wisdom. You called us from the streets and invited us, simple as we are, to come in and feast. Now you have filled us and made us strong enough to cease treading the Sabbath and all that is holy underfoot. We are ready to share the food of our homes and the clothes from our backs. We are ready to be light to the wayward and wear the armor of your righteous love as we attend to every task you place before us. We believe we will find in rebuilding relationships of justice, your truest joy. Here, as heaven and earth become one, we pray together, O Most Compassionate Life-giver may we honor and praise you. May we work with you to establish your new order of justice and peace. You have fed us love unto repentance and now we can accept forgiveness and rise to forgive others. Strengthen us for the time of testing, that we may resist all evil. We go out to proclaim that all the tenderness, strength and love are yours, now and forever. Amen

The Lord’s Prayer
*Horton Center Campers: Ryder Hicks, Jacqueline Young, Evie Mcbride, Tucker Magrath, Elena Maccini, Oliver Swenson, Breanne Peters, Emma Swenson, Abby Adasczik, Chris Mcbride, Leif Magrath, Tatyanna Wunschel, Katharine Moseley, and Andrew Nielsen*

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 trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

Anthem: “All Are Welcome” by Marty Haugen
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*Performed by the New Hampshire Conference Statewide Virtual Choir, under the direction of Billy Carleton Jr, Choir Director, Jackson Community Church and with accompaniment from Alan Labrie, Music Director, Jackson Community Church.*

Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live.
A place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace,  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak,  
and words are strong and true.  
Where all God's children dare to seek  
to dream God's reign anew.  
Here the cross shall stand as witness  
and a symbol of God's grace.  
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus;  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where love is found  
In water, wine and wheat;  
A banquet hall on holy ground,  
where peace and justice meet.  
Here the love of God, through Jesus,  
is revealed in time and space,  
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us;  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house  
where hands will reach  
beyond the wood and stone,  
to heal and strengthen,  
serve and teach,  
and live the Word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger  
bear the image of God’s face;  
let us bring an end to fear and danger:  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house  
where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
And loved and treasured,
taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace.
Let this house proclaim
from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Benediction
The Rev. Gordon Rankin and The Rev. Michael W. Caine

Michael:  May God guide you continually. May God satisfy your needs in parched places. May God raise you up like springs of water with waters that never fail.

Gordon:  And when the Prophets voice calls you into the streets to repair, restore and renew, may you say...

All:  “And then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And I said, “Here I am, send me!”

Postlude: “Gavotte from Suite for Piano” by Clif Hardin
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Performed by Abby Charbeneau. South Congregational Church, Concord
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Annual Meeting Statewide Virtual Choir
Jennifer A. Adams, United Church of Christ, Keene; Steve Allbee, Jackson Community Church; Ben Allen, First Parish Congregational Church, UCC, East Derry; Debbie Gline Allen, First Parish Congregational Church, UCC, East Derry; Anne Ballam, First Congregational Church, Haverhill; Judith Botsford, Jackson Community Church; Beverly Caldon, United Church of Christ, Keene; Billy Carleton, Jr., Choir Director, Jackson Community Church; Dave Chase, Federated Church of Marlborough; Jayne Chase, Federated Church of Marlborough; Deb Degan, Deering Community Church; Judy Dobson, Hampstead Congregational Church; Indulis Gleske, Madbury United Church of Christ; Dorothy Graaskamp, Congregational Church, Atkinson; Darlene Graczyk, Congregational Church, Atkinson; Rev. Emilia Halstead, First Congregational Church, Concord; Jeanette Heidmann, Jackson Community Church; Betsy Kelly, Congregational Church of Laconia; Alan Labrie, Accompaniment, Music Director, Jackson Community Church; Clare Long, Jackson Community Church; Ted Matthews, Church of Christ at Dartmouth College, Hanover; Cindy Mower, Union Congregational Church, Peterborough; Sandra Nkenchor, Madbury United Church of Christ; Nancy Pierpont, Madbury United Church of Christ; Meg Phillips, Jackson Community Church; Jean Prior, United Church of Christ, Keene; Kim Ridley, Congregational Church, Atkinson; Lynn Rockwell, Chester Congregational – Baptist Church; Debra Sawyer, Hampstead Congregational Church; Paul Scott, Chester Congregational – Baptist Church; Beth Spaulding, First Congregational Church, UCC, Hopkinton; Sandi Straus, Madbury United Church of Christ; Rev. Nancy Talbott, Congregational Church of North Barnstead; John Torrey, Church of Christ at Dartmouth College, Hanover; Joan Virga, St. Anne Church, Hampstead; Bart Wetherbee, Congregational Church, Atkinson; Rev. Dr. Lynn Wickberg, Westmoreland United Church, UCC; Anne Williams, Congregational Church, Atkinson; Robert Owen Williams, Community Church of Christ, Franconia; Kate Wishard, Jackson Community Church; Cindy Woolley, United Church of Christ, Keene.

The Annual Meeting Worship Planning Committee
The Annual Meeting Planning Committee
Rev. Carlos Jauhola-Straight (Chair), Rev. Gail Doktor, Rev, Carolyn Keilig, Mr. Bruce Kinney, Rev. Deborah Knowlton, Rev. Gordon Rankin, Rev. Tanya Stormo Rasmussen, and Rev. Dr. Lynn Wickberg. Cindy Bradley and Ann Desrochers (Support Staff).

Credits
Special thanks to Mr. James Allan, Mr. Timothy Griffin, and Mr. Timothy Hughes for sharing their technology expertise in the editing and production of our first ever virtual Annual Meeting Worship Service.

Liturgy
Many thanks to Rev. Maren Tirabassi, Gifts from Many Cultures, and the Iona Wee Worship Book for inspiring the Call to Worship and Sacrament of Communion liturgies and to Alan Labrie, Music Director, Jackson Community Church for providing the "Music Freewrite in C" background music tracks