

**Second Congregational
Church in Newcastle,
United Church of Christ
Newcastle, Maine**

**Sunday, March 20, 2022:
Third Sunday in Lent**

INVITATION: Welcome to Hybrid/In-Person and on-line Worship with Second Congregational Church! Whether you are joining us in our sanctuary or from your devices, we enter this sacred time together. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. Second Church is an Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation. We are devoted to hospitality, generosity, and care of all our neighbors and each other!



JOIN US IN PERSON! We are gathering in our beautiful sanctuary on Sundays with worship beginning at 10:00AM. We highly recommend, faithfully encourage and deeply appreciate wearing masks in our building as an expression of our care for our neighbors and one another. Social distancing is also encouraged. We will be passing offering and Communion plates.

JOIN US FROM YOUR DEVICES – TWO OPTIONS:

Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/secondcongo>. Please note that currently the chat/comment functions are not always monitored regularly during the live service, so we encourage you to submit your prayer requests prior to Sunday mornings by email at pastor@secondcongo.org.

YouTube Channel: Follow our YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC80LjlpCDqFawmDOuk7XX0w>.

LENT IS HERE! The liturgical season of Lent developed over the centuries as a time of deepened reflection. Originally a period of preparation for baptisms on Easter Eve, it later became a time for all Christians to take stock of their lives and examine how the connection to their faith was progressing—or not—and to recommit to a life of goodness. This year we will indeed open up and take stock. But rather than feel guilty (a popular Lenten pastime) about what we haven't accomplished in our lives and faith, we will spend some time questioning how our culture's obsession with achievement and perfection actually keeps us from the true depths of life and faith. This Lent, we'll take some time to turn ladder-climbing into garden-tending, nurturing our souls and embracing our holy, "good enough," lives.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY! Pastor Char continues to offer a Lenten Bible study, focused on the lectionary readings for the upcoming Sunday during the season of Lent. Join her on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-7:30PM. This offering is by Zoom *invitation* only. Simply email Pastor Char and she will share the link! Invite family and friends, everyone is welcome!

Thank you for your preparation.

Let us now be present to the Spirit, which brings us together and loves us wherever we are!

+ + + + +

PRELUDE “Christus, der ist mein Leben” (*Christ, Thou Art My Life*) Johann Gottfried Walther

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CENTERING MOMENT

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Based on Psalm 63*):

Holy One, Our Balm, Our Feast, we lift our hands and call your name, in need of healing—thirsting and hungry. Your steadfast love is better than life. Open us this day to your nourishment in the songs of the land, in the beauty of the sky – in the simple and good enough moments that fill our days. Amen.

OPENING HYMN:

“The Gifts of God Are Free”

St. Thomas

The Gifts of God Are Free



1. The gifts of God are free - the wa - ter, milk, and wine;
2. O God, we tend to see a world of lim - its here;
3. And yet you give your grace like food from heaven a - bove;
4. There's joy, and joy to spare; there's bread that sat - is - fies;



The feast of God's com - mun - i - ty is set for all to dine.
we share your gifts re - luc - tant - ly and hoard them out of fear.
your church be - comes a wel - come place, a ban - quet of your love.
You call us now to seek and share your love that chang - es lives.

TEXT: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2019
MUSIC: Aaron Williams, 1770

TEXT : Copyright©2019 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.

ST. THOMAS
SM

A LENTEN CONFESSIONAL TIME

Questions

In our Gospel scripture today, we will hear about the unproductive fig tree. Oh, the shame of being unproductive! Cut it down! Make room for a more dedicated and hard-working fig tree! Who among us is living up to our fullest potential? The productivity experts these days can diagnose what's wrong and sell us the antidote in 3 amazing sessions for a low-low price that is guaranteed to turn our lives around. But the gardener offers an alternative medicine—nurture it slowly, letting it soak in the manure all around until it can get the good stuff out of it. Lying fallow and getting fertilized with laughter and tears at the crappy stuff of life can help heal what ails us. Is this not sometimes productive enough? What productivity expectations are holding you captive? Let us take a moment of silent reflection...

Silent Reflection

Words of Assurance:

Hear this compassionate word from Isaiah: "Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Know that already, God is offering us love enough no matter how much we attain or achieve. We are invited to release oppressive expectations of ourselves and others so that we might recognize true worth afforded to all. And know, that despite our sometimes faltering steps, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are being forgiven, even now.

Response: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Glory to God! Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: *(Second Church follows the version of the Lord's Prayer that is offered below. However, you are invited to say this prayer aloud in the tradition that brings you the most comfort).*

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.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 13:1-9 Bill Bausch, Reader

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did." Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

A MESSAGE FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

SERMON:

"With God's Help"

Rev. Char Corbett

ANTHEM:

“God of the Sparrow”

Text: Jonathan Cook; Music: Craig Courtney

*God of the sparrow, sing through us songs of deliverance, songs of peace.
Helpless we seek You, God our joy, quiet our troubles, bid them cease.*

*God of the sparrow, God of hope, tenderly guide us, be our song,
God of affliction, pain and hurt, comfort Your children, make strong, Alleluia.*

*God of the sparrow, care for us, speak in our sorrow, Lord of grief.
Sing us Your music, lift our hearts, pour out Your mercy, send relief.*

*God, like the sparrow, we abide in Your protection, love and grace.
Just as the sparrow in Your care, may Your love keep us all our days. Amen.*

Text and Music Copyright©2019 Beckenhorst Press, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.Net A-725951.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**REMEMBERING, GIVING THANKS AND COMMITTING TO SHARE**

We are blessed with all that we have received. All comes from God. We have enough and we are called to share what we can: our gifts, our talents, our love, our mercy, our treasure. Let us remember all these things that have been shared with us this week, give thanks to God and commit to passing these blessings on to others.

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 THANKSGIVING

All things come from you, God of all Creation. Please receive these gifts as signs of our desire to be faithful and nourishing parts of your created world. May we use our resources to not cut others down, but by your grace, to create opportunities to proclaim life through Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go”

St. Margaret (Next Page)

BENEDICTION

And now, may the God who loves all of creation, and you—without price, and Jesus, our companion along this crooked path called life, and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways, go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy. Amen.

POSTLUDE:

“Sortie”

Cesar Franck

* * * * *

O Love That Will Not Let Me Go

1. O Love that will not let me go, — I rest my
 2. O Light that fol - lows all my way, — I yield my
 3. O Joy that seeks me through my pain, — I can - not
 4. O Cross that rais - es up my head, — I dare not

wea - ry soul in thee; I give thee back the life I owe, that
 flick-ering torch to thee; my heart re-stores its bor-rowed ray, — that
 close my heart to thee; I trace the rain-bow through the rain, and
 ask to fly from thee; I lay in dust life's glo - ry dead, and

in thine o - cean depths its flow may rich - er, full - er be.
 in thy sun - shine's blaze its day may bright - er, fair - er be.
 feel the prom - ise is not vain that morn shall tear - less be.
 from the ground there blos-soms red life that shall end - less be.

WORDS: George Matheson, 1882
 MUSIC: Albert L. Peace, 1884

ST. MARGARET
 88.886

Today's worship has been prayerfully prepared, sent out, offered and led by:

- **Bill Bausch, Communications & Technology Support; Snippets Meister**
- **Rev. Char Corbett, Pastor**
- **Jim Corbett, Videographer and Technology Support**
- **John Pfahler, Tech Support Volunteer**
- **Jane Wilmot, Minister of Music**
- **Chancel Choir, Music Leaders**
- **Bill Bausch, Scripture Reader**
- **Chuck Farrell, Elevator Greeter**
- **Cindy and Stewart Rhine, Greeters & Ushers**

Permission to reprint, podcast and/or stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #A-725951. All rights reserved. Today's liturgy is adapted from the "Good Enough" Lenten resource written by Dr. Marcia McFee and published by Worship Design Studio. Permission granted for use with 2022 purchase agreement. All rights reserved.

Have a question about today's service? A concern or joy to share? A prayer request? Contact Pastor Char, the Deacons, our Moderator or a member of the Pastoral Relations Committee:

- **Lonnie Andersen, Deacon:** lonnieba@gmail.com
- **Bill Bausch, Pastoral Relations Committee:** wbausch@gmail.com
- **Linda Blomquist, Deacon:** pab@tidewater.net
- **Kristin Brown, Deacon:** kristinbrown222@gmail.com
- **Rev. Char Corbett, Pastor:** pastor@secondcongo.org
- **Rick Hagen, Deacon & Pastoral Relations Committee:** richkagenmaine@gmail.com
- **Judy Jones, Deacon:** judy.t.r.jones@gmail.com
- **David Lawrence, Pastoral Relations Committee:** lawrence@tidewater.net
- **Carl Nord, Moderator:** chnord@twc.com
- **Rev. Ann Roundy, Pastoral Relations Committee:** revaroundy@gmail.com

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER FOR UNITY AND PEACE
From the Book of Common Prayer, Page 818

This prayer is often recited for the unity of the Church, but as we look out on the world through the lens of our Christian faith, may the appeal for peace and unity for all people be known, felt and prayed for through the power of communal prayer which emanates beyond the Church and out into the world.

May God, who hears all prayers in every language and faith, hear our pleas and respond.

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

