

Welcome to First Congregational Church



TANNERY BROOK BRIDGE

MAY 5, 2024

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Question for reflection for Sunday, May 5th: "How do we forge an emotional bond between ourselves and nature?"

EMERGENCY BUCKET Items for May - It's all about the liquid SOAP:

One 32-64 oz (or two 25 oz. bottles) of liquid laundry detergent;

One 16-34 oz. bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap;

and One 12-40 oz. bottle of liquid concentrate household cleaner that can be mixed with water

(No spray bottles, please.)



"Who Will Remain - A Holocaust Reflection" is happening at Temple Beth Jacob on Monday, May 6 from 7:00-8:00 pm.

Join the Greater Concord Interfaith Council and other partners from across the state of NH for a special program in recognition of Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day). This program is open to the public and free thanks to the generous support of The Lantos Foundation, The Jewish Federation of NH, Temple Beth Jacob, The Cohen Center for Genocide and Holocaust Studies and Greater Concord Interfaith Council. To register for this event call (603) 228-8581 or email office@tbjconcord.org.

Page Turners for May: we will be reading part 2 of *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese. Our gathering will be on May 20th from 2-3pm in the chapel and on Zoom. All are welcome! (This is our last gathering until September.)

Mothers' Day

Mothers' Day is May 12th. You may have seen the ads from stores "to give something she'll cherish!" You can do that by donating to the CWS blanket fund in honor of or in memory of your mother. Please let Sara Nichols or the church secretary know so a list can be compiled and published in the bulletin on Mothers' Day. Cards will be available if you want to give someone a card. Remember a blanket does more than keep someone warm, it can be a window shade, a room divider, a picnic blanket, a baby carrier, a tote bag, a shawl, or a raincoat. It also shows that someone cares about them.

May 7th, at 2PM — Jazz Sanctuary Sampler Service at Havenwood—All are invited.

Welcome to First Congregational Church
An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

May 5, 2024

***Please stand if you are able**

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

Golden Breaks the Dawn

Annie Papinsick

Setting Intentions for Worship

CALL TO WORSHIP: (created by Emilia Halstead, from the 'Orientation' of The Forest Therapy School curriculum)

Nature is not a place to visit. It is home. –Gary Snyder

We are not separate from this Earth; we are a part of it, whether we fully feel it in our bodies yet or not. –Sharon Blackie

We cannot win this battle to save species and environments without forging an emotional bond between ourselves and nature - for we will not fight to save what we do not love. —Stephen J. Gould

We didn't come into this world. We came out of it, like a wave from the ocean. We are not a stranger here. —Alan Watts

We're born a baby and we grew because we ate the planet and we breathed the planet. –Clare Dubois

We have a nervous system. We have a circulatory system. But what most people don't realize is that we also have a connective system.

We have an instinctive longing to connect with nature, with family, with community, and with the deepest parts of ourselves. –Jon Young

If there is a future, it will be green. —Petra Kelly

COMING INTO THE INVISIBLE EMBRACE OF BEAUTY: (from John O'Donohue)

Though beauty is autonomous, there seem to be occasions when human presence can become congruent with her will. In creative work no amount of force or mechanical management can guarantee beauty. Suddenly, without expecting it, beauty is there. Yet ultimately beauty is a profound illumination of presence, a stirring of the invisible in visible form and in order to receive this, we need to cultivate a new style of approaching the world.

OFFERING OUR MOMENTS OF BEAUTY

SONG: #489 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say [Lyrics] (Public Domain)
[Tune: Kingsfold, #51 (Public Domain)]

I heard the voice of Je-sus say, "Come un-to Me and rest;
Lay down, O wea-ry one, lay down your head up-on My breast.'

I came to Je-sus as I was, so weary, worn and sad;
And there I found a rest-ing place, where Jesus made me glad.

I heard the voice of Je-sus say, "Behold, I free-ly give
The liv-ing wa-ter; thirs-ty one, draw near, and drink, and live."

I came to Je-sus, and I drank of that life giv-ing stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul re-vived, and now I am redeemed.

I heard the voice of Je-sus say, "I am the lost world's Light,
Look unto me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright."

I looked to Je-sus, and I found my guiding Star, my Sun;
And in that light of life I'll go till tra-vel-ing days are done.

Hear now Psalm 106 from the Rev. Benjamin Chavis psalter...
Psalter Lesson Psalm 106
Here ends the Psalter Lesson.
Amen.

Hear now from the Hebrew Scriptures...
Hebrew Scriptures 1 Kings 19:11-13 (The Voice) Sheila Swenson
Eternal One (All): **Leave this cave, and go stand on the mountainside in My presence.**

Narrator: The Eternal passed by him. The mighty wind separated the mountains and crumbled every stone before the Eternal. This was not a divine wind, for the Eternal was not within this wind. After the wind passed through, an earthquake shook the earth. This was not a divine quake, for the Eternal was not within this earthquake. After the earthquake was over, there was a fire. This was not a divine fire, for the Eternal was not within this fire. After the fire died out, there was nothing but the sound of a calm breeze. And through this breeze a gentle, quiet voice entered into Elijah's ears. He covered his face with his cloak and went to the mouth of the cave. Suddenly, Elijah was surprised.

Eternal One (All): **Why are you here, Elijah? What is it that you desire?**

Here ends the Lesson.

Amen.

Let us share now together from the Gospel according to John...

Gospel Lesson John 4:14, 7:33-39a, 8:14 (The Voice) Sheila Swenson

Jesus (Sheila): (John 7:33-36) I am going to be with you for a little while longer; then I will return to the One who sent Me. You will look for Me, but you will not be able to find Me. Where I am, you are unable to come.

Some People in the Crowd (All): **Where could He possibly go that we could not find Him? You don't think He's about to go into the Dispersion and teach our people scattered among the Greeks, do you? What do you think He means, "You will look for Me, but you will not be able to find Me," and, "Where I am, you are unable to come"?**

Jesus (Sheila): (John 8:14) Even if I am making bold claims about Myself—who I am, what I have come to do—I am speaking the truth. You see, I know where I came from and where I will go when I am done here. You know neither where I come from nor where I will go.

Narrator (Emilia): (John 7:37-38) On the last day, the biggest day of the festival, Jesus stood again and spoke aloud:

Jesus (Sheila): If any of you is thirsty, come to Me and drink. If you believe in Me, the Hebrew Scriptures say that rivers of living water will flow from within you.

Jesus (Sheila): (John 4:14) I offer water that will become a wellspring within you that gives life throughout eternity. You will never be thirsty again.

Continued on next page

Responsive Prayer with the Republic of Congo:

O God of love and fidelity, You send us as Disciples to care for one another, live the Gospel, and dwell in hope.

We are infinitely grateful to you for this beautiful country, the Republic of Congo, for its biodiversity, its wealth, and its people.

Receive our prayer and supplication for:

All our brothers and sisters who are sick, isolated, persecuted, and battered by life;

All unloved, abandoned, exploited, and starving children;

All the men and women in authority in our country, instill in them your love and wisdom so that the decisions they make are dictated by love, justice, and fairness and not by partisan considerations;

In every country of the world, inspire men and women of peace, dialogue, justice, and tolerance.

For the Disciples Church in the Congo, may the love of Christ be the concrete model and reference that underpins our community.

Make us, Lord, attentive to the cries of those whose most basic rights are being trampled underfoot and allow that one day, your law of love may be the only law observed in our country and throughout the world. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(Response to each prayer:)

Divine One who holds our souls,

Receive our prayers.

PASTORAL PRAYER (written by George David Weiss / Robert Thiele)

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, which 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, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sung Amen: #245

The Day of Resurrection, verse 3 (Public Domain)

Now let the heavens be joyful,

let Earth its song begin,

the whole world keep high triumph,

and all that is there in;

Let all things seen and unseen

their notes of gladness blend,

for Christ again has risen,

our joy that has no end.

our joy that has no end.

Offertory

Invitation (adapted from prayer written by Carol Penner)

GRATITUDE MUSIC

O Come to Me, You Weary

Annie Papinsick

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

O God, you come to us not in the chaos of the whirlwind, not in the roar of the earthquake, not in the crackling heat of the fire, but in the sound of the gentle breeze. We are grateful for the ways that you gentle our minds, bring peace to our hearts and pause to our bodies that we might meet you in your beauty. We ask that you bless these gifts of our time and treasure so that all might know your grace and beauty. Amen.

SONG COMMUNION LITURGY (FOR THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM)

(Tune: DOWN TO THE RIVER, Irr.,)

Text: Beth Quick 2019, Incorporating phrases from "Down to the River to Pray."

[While it is hard to pinpoint the exact origins of the song, "Down to the River to Pray" has been referred to as a hymn, a spiritual and an Appalachian song. Some believe it was a Native American Tribal song that was adapted to include Christian lyrics. It is attributed to George H. Allan in the Slave Songbook of 1867, and Alison Krauss popularized it in the 2000 film, O Brother, Where Art Thou?]

Let's all go down to the river to pray.
Share in the meal and celebrate.
We've been baptized. We are redeemed.
Rejoice! Give thanks today.
O children, lift your hearts.
Lift your hearts, lift your hearts.
O God, we lift our hearts.
Lift our hearts to praise.

One day Christ came to the river to pray,
where John was there to pave the way.
"Christ comes with power, with Holy fire.
Prepare! Prepare today."
And there Jesus was baptized.
There God spoke: "You are mine."
And there, Jesus was baptized.
Lift up your hearts in praise.

Today we come to the font to pray,
Share in the waters of your grace.
You fill us with your holy fire.
O God, show us the way.
O God, we're baptized.
May your Spirit come inspire.
Fill us with your holy fire.
We come to the waters today.

One night Christ came to the table to pray,
Sharing a meal when evening came
He poured the cup. He broke the bread
That night he was betrayed.
"Remember," Jesus said.
"Loving cup and living bread."
"Forgiveness," Jesus said,
There at the table of grace.

Pour out your spirit, Holy one.
God, may your Holy Spirit Come
Upon these gifts that make us one.
O God, fill us again.

Sung Prayer of Thanksgiving:

**Made like Christ, we're sent out
Sharing what God's all about.
Made like Christ, we're sent out.
Our new lives have begun.**

CLOSING SONG: #249

Peace I Leave with You, My Friends

PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU, MY FRIENDS #NCH249

Type: Music

Tune: ARRANGEMENT © 1994, The Pilgrim Press

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SETTING OUR INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

GREATEST COMMANDMENT

BENEDICTION

UNISON SENDING: (written by Rev. Heather A. Moody)

O God, help us to listen for your still, small voice. Give us the courage to go wherever you lead us, trusting that you will prepare the way. We pray all this in the name of our Companion on the journey, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

POSTLUDE

We Live by Faith and Not by Sight

Annie Papinsick