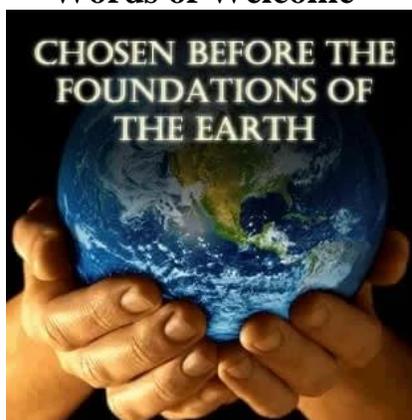


Order of Worship for January 3, 2021
Second Sunday after Christmas
The First Congregational Church of Hanover
An Open and Affirming Congregational of the United Church of Christ
The Rev. Richard Bartlett, Guest Minister
Mr. Chad Weirick, Minister of Music

Words of Welcome



Prelude

Call to Worship (Psalm 98)

O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things. His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory. The LORD has made known his victory; he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations. He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God. Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises. Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody. With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD. Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

Invocation

Our Father and our God we praise your name for sending Jesus to bring us life, joy, and peace in this Christmas season and forever more. The greatest gift we can be given is Christ in our hearts, the hope of glory. The world brings us much conflict, failure, sorrow and grief, but you have given us life and that more abundantly. Fill us this morning with your light that roots out all that detracts from your presence and then overcomes the world. Amen.

Scripture Lessons

Old Testament: Jeremiah 31:7-14

^{31:7} For thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel." ⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. ⁹ With weeping they shall come, and

with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. ¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock." ¹¹ For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. ¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. ¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. ¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

New Testament: Ephesians 1:3-14

^{1:3} Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Gospel: John 1:1-9 and 10-18

^{1:1} In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and

truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Gloria Patri

Hymn: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain:

Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star:

Sermon: *Holy and Blameless before Him in Love*

Hymn: *O Come All Ye Faithful*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him, born the king of angels.

Refrain:

O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest!"

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning, Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, begotten, not created.

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

The Offering

The Doxology

Communion Hymn: *Let Us Break Bread Together*

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Hear the Good News that this table is for all who wish to know the presence of Christ in their lives and to share in the community of God's people. All are welcome to this time of remembering and celebrating at the table of Christ.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Let us open our hearts to prayer, recalling God's great acts of salvation.

THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Leader: Merciful God, we recall anew the acts and words of Jesus on the night He was betrayed... We remember Christ's promise not to drink of the vine again until the heavenly banquet at the close of history. And so we say boldly that which we believe:

People: Christ has died; Christ has risen; Christ will come again.

THE OFFERING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

Matthew 26:26 (NRSV) While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." ²⁷ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another and send us forth into world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Hymn of Dedication: *Let There Be Peace On Earth*

Let there be peace on earth And let it begin with me
Let there be peace on Earth The peace that was meant to be
With God as our Father Brothers all are we
Let me walk with my brother In perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me Let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry step I take Let this be my solemn vow
To take each moment and live Each moment in peace eternally
Let there be peace on earth And let it begin with me

Benediction

Postlude



