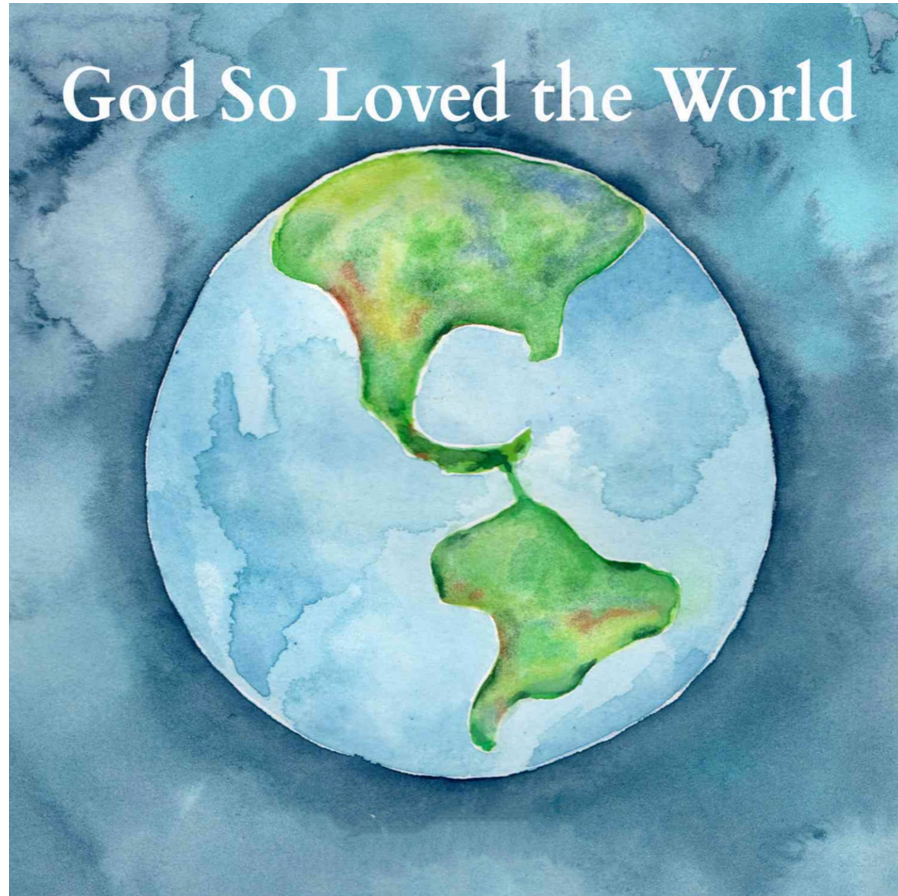




First Congregational Church of Hanover

United Church of Christ

We Strive to Be a Church that Welcomes All and Empowers All in
Christ to Share their God Given Talents.



Sunday, March 10, 2024 at 9:30 AM

Fourth Sunday in Lent and Scout Sunday

Our Worship Service

*Please stand as you are able.

Prelude

Please enter a quiet time of reflection when the prelude music begins.

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Leader: O give to the Lord, for God is good.

People: For God's steadfast love endures forever.

Leader: Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

People: Those God redeemed from trouble.

Leader: Our God is good!

All: Let us give thanks with voices raised on high.

***Sharing the Peace of Christ**

***Processional Hymn**

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies

Blue Hymnal #720

Morning Prayer

Most Holy God, who works beyond understanding, our God who gives us Jesus as our one true savior. We come today to worship you in song, prayer and love. We raise our voices in our call to live true and come into the light. In this time in Lent, we open ourselves up, creating room in our heart, mind and soul to be transformed by your resurrecting power. Come to us and show us your glory for you are our God and we are your people. Amen.

Celebration of Scout Sunday

Update on Scouting Activities

Unison Reading

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Recognition of Scouts & Leaders

Girl Scout Promise: On my honor, I will try: to serve God and my country, to help people at all times, and to live by the Girl Scout Law.

Cub Scout Oath: On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Presentation of Scout Sunday Patches

Anthem

Scripture Readings

Numbers 21:4-9

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom, but the people became discouraged on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole, and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

John 3:14-21

¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned, but those who do not believe are condemned already because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

***Gloria Patri (sung)**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon

For God So Loved the World

Rev. Peter

***Sermon Hymn**

God Loved the World

insert

The Deacons will collect the prayer cards during this hymn.

The Offertory

Invitation to Giving

Offertory

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

A Time of Prayer

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer (unison)

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.

***Closing Hymn**

Let There Be Peace on Earth

Blue Hymnal #677

***Benediction**

Postlude



Holy Week in Hanover

Sunday, March 24 at 9:30 a.m.

Palm Sunday

*Celebration of Jesus' Triumphal
Entry into Jerusalem*

Thursday, March 28 at 7:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday

Tenebrae Shadows and Light

Sunday, March 31 - Easter Day

Celebration of Christ's Resurrection

Sunrise Service - 6:15 a.m.

Easter Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Our Prayer List

The wars in Israel and Ukraine
The family of Jasmin Lane, who died in the fire in Middleboro March 2, and her grandmother who was injured
The family of MaryAnn Sabin, who passed February 19
The family of Marion Rose, mother of Mary Beth Tarnauskas, who passed Feb 12
Jennifer, daughter-in-law of Janet Hamilton, for breast biopsy
Jessie, Lynn White's niece, with new serious health concerns
Carl Ryburg and his family, nephew of Carolyn Frattalone
Jake, grandson of Maddie Thomas, recovering from knee surgery
Holly Taylor, with lung cancer
Elsa Marshall, taking care of brother Bruce and his wife in Chicago
Twins Lyman and Luke in NICU
The Conforto family
Mary Lou Hill, health concerns
Cynthia Ness, terminal bile duct cancer
Cathy Churchill, Lynn White's friend
Mark Gifford, with pneumonia
Marianne, who is in hospice
Judy, with health issues
Josephine, Adrienne Rafferty's mother-in-law, hip replacement

We Continue Our Prayers for Those with Long-Term Needs:

Those with COVID
Cynthia Ness, with cancer
Michael, Glenda Larson's brother-in-law, with CJD, a fatal disease
Laura Delaplain's sister Cathy, with multiple myeloma
Lori Bruni's stepson, with paraplegia
Lynn White, new cancer treatment
Marjorie, mother-in-law of Susan Conant, with health issues
Elsa Marshall's brother Bruce, cancer
Ericka, Ginny Hunt's daughter, under treatment at Dana Farber
John, friend of Glenda Larson, with Parkinson's
Rick and Alberta, brother and sister-in-law of Dennis Falcione
Tom Evans, cousin of Marilyn Melchin, with liver cancer
Joe, friend of Janet Hamilton, with terminal blood and lung issues and his wife Cathy and daughter Kaitlin
Karen, Flo McNeilly's friend, with bone marrow cancer
Carol Brew, mother of Kim Blanton, living with dialysis and heart failure
The husband of Dolly's caregiver, with kidney failure

Serving in the House of the Lord

The chancel flowers are given by Tina and Jay Donovan in honor of James' 25th birthday and Julia's 19th birthday

The lay reader is Flo McNeilly.

The Deacon of the Month is Al Alexander.

Coffee Hour is hosted by Elisabeth Meader.

Minister's Tea, Wednesday, March 13



On Wednesday, March 13, you are all invited to a special time to gather with Rev. Peter and members of the church. The event takes place in the vestry (under the sanctuary) from 3:00-4:30 p.m. Enjoy getting to know each informally while also enjoying special treats.

Church Cabinet Meets March 14 at 7 pm

This week's Cabinet meeting is on Thursday, March 14, 2024. The rest of the Cabinet meetings in 2024 will follow the first Thursday schedule for June 6, September 5 and



Flower Fundraiser

The Flower Committee is selling mini-bouquets during coffee hour for \$5 as a fundraiser. Many of them have been shared with shut-ins and have been gratefully received.



Thrift Shop Needs Jewelry and Buttons



Clean out old, unused jewelry and bring pins, earrings, bracelets, etc. to coffee hour. Also bring those boxes and jars of odd buttons as well. Give them to either Priscilla Cedrone or Glenda Larson.~ Thank you!

Church Yard Sale, Saturday, April 13



Let your family and friends know that we are planning for a yard sale on the second Saturday in April. We're accepting gently used household items and clothing. ** No electronics or heavy furniture.** Drop off upstairs in Riley Hall Tue/Thu 9-1 or Wed/Sat 10-2. We're looking for volunteers to help and bakers to bake! Sign up at coffee hour or contact Adrienne Rafferty at adrraf@verizon.net.

Easter Lily Orders



Use this form to order Easter lilies and either give it to a member of the Flower Committee (Glenda Larson and Janet Cook) or return it to the church office (17 Silver St, Ste 201, Haver MA 02339). **The price is \$15 each. No orders can be accepted after March 18.**

Given by: _____

How many? _____

In (Memory/Honor) of: _____

On Easter: I will take _____

Give to Homebound _____

Faith Formation Across the Ages

John 3:14-21

This Gospel was written in 90 to 100 AD to an audience of believers to encourage them to remain true to the faith. John's Gospel was not seeking to win converts but to keep those in the faith community from being unduly influenced by false teaching that reduced the identity of Jesus by attempting to strip him of his divinity. When we reduce the transformative, redemptive work of Christ and Christ's church, we condemn the world in the here and now.

Jesus is talking with Nicodemus in this Scripture. Nicodemus is identified as one of the Pharisees, the preeminent Jewish sect. Nicodemus wants to hear from Jesus, wants attention from Jesus, and still refuses to abide with Jesus. Although John focuses exclusively on the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, it is possible that disciples of both teachers may have been present as well. Jesus is not speaking to a crowd; he's having a conversation with a person. Jesus informs Nicodemus that his ministry is not individualistic. Jesus comes for the world and its salvation.

The word for "believe" is used five times in our passage: once in verses 15 and 16, and three times in verse 18. According to John's Gospel, at issue is not cognitive misunderstanding versus cognitive understanding, but rather love of the Light versus love of the darkness, acceptance versus rejection. Jesus refuses to have his ministry reduced but rather insists that his ministry is towards the world-changing, system-shattering, kingdom-building reign of God on earth as it is in heaven.

Questions to Consider:

How do you understand condemnation? Have you ever experienced condemnation? If so, how did you feel and how did you respond?

Nicodemus lived by and upheld the norms of his society, like many Christians of today.

How does wanting a faith that will sustain us in times of trouble and also sustain the status quo contribute to the "darkness" of our societies and our lives, our world?

Jesus informs Nicodemus that his ministry is not individualistic. Jesus comes for the world and its salvation. What alternative responses can we as followers of Jesus cultivate to reduce condemnation and nurture love?

The children will go to Faith Formation during the singing of the Gloria Patria.

Shalom with love always,
Elsa Marshall
Minister of Faith Formation



We are grateful that you are with us this morning. We hope you find nurture in our worship and warmth in the fellowship of our congregation.

If you are worshipping with us for the first time, please take a brochure from the pew racks and fill out a Connect Card and place it in the offering plate, or hand it to a minister. Please take a moment to meet the ministers following the worship service.

Join us! Following worship, you are invited to a time of fellowship and refreshment downstairs in the Vestry. (Just follow the crowd.)

We are a praying church. If you would like to lift joys or concerns during the time of prayer, please fill out a prayer card, found in the pews. These will be collected during the second hymn, and read by the minister. You may also lift names aloud during the time of prayer.

Restrooms are located on the lower level of the church. There is an elevator behind the door at the front right of the church.



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Church Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.
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