

 ***No matter who you are***

 ***or where you are on life’s journey,***

 ***you are welcome here.***

16 August 2020 10:00am

***“Seasons of Life – Embracing the Day”***

**Welcome**

**Introit:**

**Gathering:**

We open our hearts, our hands, and our minds.

 We breathe in the breath of God, and breathe out the love of God,

 And we continue in worship.

**10:16 Moment** Judi Wallace

**Pastoral and Communal Prayer:**

**The floods of life come, Comforting God. Remind us how to use resources, and build shelter from approaching storms.**

**Empowering and Divine One, help us to discern the journey before us and enlighten us as we travel together offering your love and grace.**

**Incline your ear and hear the sounds, the utterances of our hearts:**

**For Tom P., and family on the death of Elizabeth; Jennifer Willcox and family on the death of her mother, Judy; Janice N. & family on the death of her mother, Rita; Pete R. and family on the death of Pat; for Patti M., and family, on the death of Steve; Tim B., friend of the Ramseys; newborn Brooks in NICU, grandson of Karen O.; Kathy W. on the death of her sister; Janet, sister of Cathy G.; Catherine W.; Janice B.; Cherry recovering from surgery; Alex, grandson of Larry & Jodi B.; Marlene D.; for those who have lost their beloved pets;** **Carin S.,** **Cindy M.; Mary-Lynn O.; Jackie and Frank; John and Crissy and Nate and Dylan; parents who cannot visit their children and grandchildren; those awaiting diagnosis; those suffering from the virus, those who are grieving; all those struggling with difficult diagnoses; family and friends of those who have completed suicide and those contemplating suicide; those living with chronic diseases, dementia and cancer, and their families; those living with domestic violence; families dealing with addictions; those who suffer; those living with natural and human-made disasters;** **and for peace and health for all.**

Now we pray as Jesus taught saying . . .

**Our Father *(or Creator)*, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom *(kin-dom)* 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 who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom *(kin-dom)*, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Scripture:** Excerpts from Genesis 6-9

**5**The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. **6**The Lord’s heart was deeply troubled, but Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. **9**This is an account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous person, blameless at this time among the people of his day. He walked faithfully with God. **10**Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

**11**Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. **12**God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. **13**So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. **14**So make yourself an ark of cypress[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+5%3A32-10%3A1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-152c)] wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out.**15**This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high.[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+5%3A32-10%3A1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-153d)] **16**Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+5%3A32-10%3A1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-154e)] high all around.[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+5%3A32-10%3A1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-154f)] Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. **17**I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. **18**But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your family with you. **19**You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, **22**Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

God said **4**Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights and after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth. On that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. **12**And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

**17**The waters increased they lifted the ark high above the earth. **18**The ark floated on the surface of the water.  The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than fifteen cubits. **21**Every living thing that moved on land perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all humankind.  Only Noah and those with him in the ark were left. **24**The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days. **2**Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky. **3**The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down, **4**and the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

After forty days Noah opened a window, sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. **8**Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. **9**The dove couldn’t find a place to perch and returned because the water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark.

**10**He waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark. **11**When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth. **12**He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

The water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry.

**15**Then God said to Noah, **16**“You, your family, and all the animals, every creature come out of the ark. you **17**Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you. Multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number on it.”

**20**Then Noah built an altar and the Lord said “Never again will I curse the ground

**22**“As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.”

**Sermon:** Rev. Dr. Brasher-Cunningham

**Offering**

**Offering Question:**

**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.***

*(You are welcome to sing your preferred version of the Doxology.)*

**Commission/Benediction:**

Life is short, and we don't have much time

 to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us.

So be swift to love, make haste to be kind,

 and may the love of God be with you this day and all of your tomorrows. Amen.

**Postlude:**

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**Passing the Peace and Fellowship Hour:** Share the peace of Christ and catch up with some First Church folks you have not seen in a while.

**Please submit prayer requests** to include in the worship bulletin by Wednesday each week to office@firstchurchguilford.org.  To respect privacy, we ask for first names and non-sensitive prayers only please. Please contact the clergy with sensitive non-worship-ready prayer requests.

**Offerings:** Our ministries continue, albeit in different ways. We know that some are not in a position to give or keep up with their pledge at this time, and we hold you in prayer. If you are able to continue to give, thank you.

**Clergy Phone Hours Wednesday 2-4pm - please call** 203-453-5249 (ext. 205) to speak with Jake. Ginger’s hours will resume next week.

**Worship for Sunday, August 23rd will be emailed on Saturday, August 22nd.**

**In-Person Worship:**

When we begin in-person worship in September, to keep the maximum number to 70, we are intentionally inviting groups to come specific dates so that everyone will have the opportunity to worship once in the first 8 weeks. All health recommendations will be followed: temperature-taking, requiring masks, physical distancing, hand-sanitizing, as well as documentation of those who are attending for contact-tracing. If you are not healthy, we will lovingly ask you to return home to care for yourself. The service will be available online for those unable to come to worship.

**Please RSVP to the Church Office to reserve a seat for a particular service.** Groups/boards/committees have been gathered in this way:

Sept. 6: Jake’s Installation- his family, UCC representatives, Search Committee.

Sept. 13: Senior Adults (those 70 years and older)

Sept. 20: Families with children up through the 4th grade

Sept. 27: Families with children 5th grade through college, Music, Trustees

Oct. 4: Persons who have experienced the death of a loved one during the past three years, Deaconess/Visitors, and Deacons

Oct. 11: Church Council, Business Committee, and those who have not attended yet

Oct. 18: Stewardship Committee, Community & Global Justice Board, all Garden Teams, Harvest Fair Committee, and Nominating Committee

Oct. 25: Finance Board, Women’s Fellowship and Outreach, HR, PF, and any other committees.

**Welcome to First Congregational Church!**

We are thankful that you are worshiping with us, and we hope that you have found inspiration and fellowship. If we can be of service to you, please contact one of us:

 The Rev. Dr. Ginger Brasher-Cunningham, Lead Minister, ginger@firstchurchguilford.org

 The Rev. Jake Miles Joseph, Minister of Faith Formation, jake@firstchurchguilford.org

 William C. Speed, Director of Music Ministries, bill@firstchurchguilford.org

 Judi Wallace, Director of Children and Youth, judi@firstchurchguilford.org

 Penelope Rebuzzini, Office Manager, office@firstchurchguilford.org

 Annemarie Alexa, Bookkeeper/Data Manager, financeoffice@firstchurchguilford.org

 Mark Twombly, Sexton, mark@firstchurchguilford.org

 Carlo Pappolla, Sunday & Special Event Sexton

 The Rev. Dr. Sandra Wiens, Coord, Prison & Re-entry Min.,sandra@firstchurchguilford.org

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