

 ***No matter who you are***

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

 ***you are welcome here.***

20 September 2020 10:00am

***“Leaning into God.”***

**Prelude:** Preludes on "I Love to Tell the Story"        Emma Diemer,

 Charles Ore, Wilbur Held

I love to tell the story; 'twill be my theme in glory

to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

*Composers can take a melody from a hymn like "I Love to Tell the Story," and tell the same story in very different ways. Emma Lou Diemer told the story more quietly and slowly; Charles Ore told the story in a sparkly, calliope-like way.*

**Welcome**

**Introit:** Every Mother, Every Father          Owen Stroud

       Every mother, every father, called to raise up faithful children

       May your heart be patient, may your mind be clear,

       may our God be with you and calm your fear.

**Call to Worship and Prayer-**

**Transforming God,**

**As we share the stories of our faith together from afar, empower us to listen with our whole hearts. Teach us, Holy One, to love beyond our imagination. Forgive us when we misstep and mislead. Strengthen our ability to offer compassion and practice grace. Hear now the individual prayers of your hearts** *(Hold Silence)*

***In the kinship of faith, we pray for* . . .** Alison and Kurt L. and family on the death of her father; Susan and Kirk L. and family on the death of her mother and godmother; Norm & Edie Z., on the death of Norm’s brother; Susan B., on the death of her stepfather; Peter P., and family on the death of his cousin Vincent; Dut M., and Anyikor A. and family on the death of her brother, Natali; Dianne R.; Emily; Linda & family, sister of Phyllis W.; Berdella Z; Tim B., Doris and Wilson T.; Mary and her son David; Carin S., Cindy M.; Barbara & Chip G., Jackie & Frank; 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; 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:** Matthew 28: 16-20

**Sermon:** The Gospel According to Horton Rev. Joseph

**Hymn:** All Things Bright and Beautiful

*Refrain*: All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,

All things wise and wonderful: the Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings:

God made their glowing colors, God made their tiny wings. *Refrain*

The purple-headed mountain, the river running by,

The sunset and the morning that brightens up the sky. *Refrain*

The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun,

The ripe fruits in the garden: God made them every one. *Refrain*

God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell

How great is God Almighty, Who has made all things well. *Refrain*

**Invitation to Offertory**

**Offertory Music**

**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:** Trumpet Jubilation            Richard Frey

**+ + +**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

**Clergy Phone Hours: Please call** 203-453-5249 to speak with Ginger (ext. 204) Tues., 9-11am; or Jake (ext. 205) Wed., 2-4pm.

**Announcements,** *continued*

**In-Person Worship Has Begun!** We have intentionally invited groups of people – no more than 60 - to come specific dates so that everyone will have the opportunity to worship at least once in the first 8 weeks. All health recommendations will be followed: 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 continue to be available online for those not attending in-person worship. **Please RSVP to the Church Office by Tuesday to reserve a seat for a particular service.** *If there are open seats on Wednesday,* *it will be noted in the Worship section of the Steeple- you may call or email the Church office by Thursday 2pm to request one of those seats.* **An email confirmation worship attendance will be sent out on Thursday or Friday.**

**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, Women’s Fellowship & Outreach, HR, PF, and any other committees.

**Facebook Live Weekly Offerings:**

**Sundays at Noon – Judi Wallace will offer a 10:16 Moment/Sunday School Lesson.**

**Wednesdays at Noon- Ginger and Jake will hold their 30 minute “unfiltered” Bible Study.**

**Thursdays at Noon – Bill will offer an organ/piano recital: 30 Minutes of Joy!**

**UN International Day of Peace Celebration Monday, Sept. 21, 11:45 am -** This year, our program will be more limited and held on the front steps of the church. All are welcome: ***please wear face masks and stand at an appropriate distance from each other.*** This year we will honor Guilford peacemakers. First Selectman Matt Hoey will present awards to five members of the Guilford Human Rights Commission, as well as student Moira McGovern for the Navajo Nation project she initiated. A moment of silence will be held at noon, the church bells will ring, peace statements read, and the Peace Pledge recited. We close with prayer. We hope to videotape the program so it may be watched at a later time.

 *Peace, Affirmation, & Justice*

**Save Sat., Oct. 10th 10am – 3pm for the First Church tag/yard sale outdoors, weather permitting with a rain date TBD.** Social distancing, wearing of masks is required. Furniture, and lots of other items. ***Volunteers are needed, although we are not receiving any new donations at this time***.  For more information, please contact Lisa Freund at 203-907-6376 or lafct7177@gmail.com.

**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.

**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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