

 ***No matter who you are***

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

 ***you are welcome here.***

27 September 2020 10:00am

***“Leaning into God.”***

**Prelude:** Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

**Welcome**

**Introit:** O God, With Hope I Enter In

O God, with hope I enter in And call to mind your desert grace:

To wayworn people you have been A presence in the wilderness.

But far from Sinai have I roamed And bear the hidden wounds of strife;

Away and worn, I yearn for home; Athirst, desire the spring of life.

O break the rock, let water flow And wash the dust and drought from me;

I taste your peace, your presence know, And drinking deep, am healed and free.

**Gathering Prayer:**

**Called this morning to service in Christ-**

**Called to worship Christ: to gather in Christ, to adjust to the realities of the moment with Christ.**

**We are called, all of us, to this place for this moment.**

**We are indeed called, this morning, to worship.**

**Let us pray:**

**Lost- these days, O God, we are lost. We cannot see what is coming. We cannot predict what is ahead on the trail of tomorrows. We don’t know what is next. Where are we going and how?**

**Trusting- these days, O God, we are going deeper into our trust in you,**

**our trust of our covenanted community—learning every day to lean deeper into you.**

**Lost and yet trusting—this is our balancing act of the Spirit and challenge the spiritual for today. As we lean deeper into trust of God, we lift the following prayers:**

***In the kinship of faith, we pray for* . . .** Bev P. and family on the death of her son, Jason; 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; Andrew, son of Gary & Pam K.; Dianne R.; Emily; Linda & family, sister of Phyllis W.; Berdella Z; Frank W.; 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, all those working in healthcare; 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:** Exodus 17: 1 - 7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.  The people quarrelled with Moses, and said, ‘Give us water to drink.’ Moses said to them, ‘Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?’  But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, ‘Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?’  So Moses cried out to the Lord, ‘What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.’  The Lord said to Moses, ‘Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.’ Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.  He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarrelled and tested the Lord, saying, ‘Is the Lord among us or not?’

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

**Hymn:**  Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah, Pilgrim through this barren land;

I am weak, but Thou art mighty; Hold me with Thy powerful hand;

Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,

Feed me till I want no more, Feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain, Whence the healing waters flow;

Let the fire and cloudy pillar Lead me all my journey through;

Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,

Be Thou still my strength and shield, Be Thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, Bid my anxious fears subside;

Death of death, and hell’s destruction, Land me safe on Canaan’s side;

Songs of praises, songs of praises,

I will ever give to Thee, I will ever give to Thee.

**Call to Offering and Prayer**

**Offertory Music:**  Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

handbell duet: Paul Kuehn, Liza Catino

**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:**  Hymn to Joy             Michael Burkhardt

**+ + +**

**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.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Sunday, Sept. 27th Family Event: Prayer Walk for All ages! C**ome by First Church between 11am and 2pm to take a prayer walk outside around the grounds, praying at stations set up at various places. Please wear face coverings and remain physically distanced.  Maps and the starting place will be on the side lawn of the Church between the Church and Spencer House. Don't forget to deliver a joy or a concern to the mailbox! And tune in to Live with Judi at NOON or anytime on the First Church Facebook Page!  Special guest this week!! Charlie the Churchmouse returns!! Don't miss it!

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

**In-Person Worship Continues:**  We have intentionally invited groups of people 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 contact-tracing. If you are not healthy, please stay home. 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.**

**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.

**Announcements,** *continued*

**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!**

**Please submit prayer requests** to include in the worship bulletin by Wednesday each week to office@firstchurchguilford.org.

**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.

**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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