

 ***No matter who you are***

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

 ***you are welcome here.***

4 October 2020 10:00am

***“Leaning into God”***

**Prelude:** Remembrance                A. Bruckner

**Welcome**

**Introit:** We Cannot Measure How You Heal        text: John Bell, Graham Maule

We cannot measure how you heal or answer every sufferer’s prayer,

yet we believe your grace responds where faith and doubt unite to care.

The pain that will not go away, the grief that clings to days now past,

the fear of what the future holds, are present as if meant to last.

But present too is love which tends the hurt we never hoped to find,

the private agonies inside, the memories that haunt the mind.

So some have come who need your help and some have come to make amends;

your love which shaped and saved the world is present in the love of friends.

Lord, let your Spirit meet us here to mend the body, mind and soul,

to disentangle peace from pain, and make your broken people whole.  Amen

**Call to Worship and Prayer-**

We celebrate God’s love—knowing that God’s embrace of care is eternal.

Grief, bereavement, and the journey of loss and remembrance take time and manifest in countless different ways, but you, O God, are always with us. Today, we remember those whom we have loved and lost, knowing that our journey is shared by the Divine source of life and our companions in faith.

We are not alone and we live in God’s world. We are not alone even if we are lonely. We are not alone even when we are in a time of sadness. We are never alone- God walks the way with us. *(Hold Silence)*

***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.; Sue, sister-in-law of Lynne O.; Emily; Linda & family, sister of Phyllis W.; Frank W.; Doris and Wilson T.; Jim H.; Doma; Mary and her son David; 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:** Philippians 1: 3

*I thank my God every time I remember you….*

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

**Hymn:** I Remember Everything     Pat McLaughlin; John Prine

Rev. Milton Brasher-Cunningham, soloist

**Invitation to Communion:**

Leader: God be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: We give you thanks, O God, for being the giver of insight and understanding, the author of light and hope, and the beginning of grace and love.

**People: We come to the table in gratitude and with a spirit of humility.**

Leader: With those from the south and north, east and west, sages of old and prophets of today,

**People: we gather as people seeking justice, desiring unity, practicing love through physical distancing and in spiritual connecting.**

Leader: We share this feast at the table of inclusivity and declare together:

**All: In the cross, Jesus was your presence of unending love and in the empty tomb the bright light of life. With the generations- past, present and future-**

**we proclaim grace and hope of life eternal.**

**Communion Prayer**

**Sharing of Bread and Cup –** *please use bread and juice you have at home.*

**Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving**:

**Eternal Spirit, as this once-scattered grain was gathered to become one loaf, so may all your people be woven together by your grace and peace. As this fruit was brought forth from the vine, so may we go forth in your love, planting fields of compassion that harvest mercy and justice. Amen.**

**Stewardship Moment**

**Call to Offering**

**Offertory Music:** Be Still, My Soul            Sibelius arr. Marohnic

**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.)*

**Benediction**

**Postlude:** Be Still, My Soul               J. Sibelius

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**First Church Tag /Estate Sale Sat., Oct. 10th 10am – 2pm outdoors,** weather permitting. Social distancing, wearing of masks required. Furniture, & other items. ***Sorry we cannot accept any new donations at this time.*** ***Volunteers are needed!*** For more information, please contact Lisa Freund at 203-907-6376 or *lafct7177@gmail.com*.

**Clergy Phone Hours:**The clergy are available by phone - 203-453-5249: Ginger (ext. 204) Tues., 9-11am; Jake (ext. 205) Wed., 2-4pm.

**In-Person Worship in October!** Please see below for the invitees for the remaining October services. The service will continue to be available online for those not attending in-person. For those who do attend, please follow all health recommendations of wearing masks, physical distancing, and hand-sanitizing. **Please RSVP to the Church Office to reserve a seat worship by the Tuesday before—or earlier!** *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.*

***Please stay home if: you do not feel well the morning of the service or you have recently traveled to states on CT's current travel advisory or have been exposed to a confirmed COVID positive.***

***All worship attendees will receive an email confirming their attendance, and will give guidelines for Sunday morning.*** Please read the letter as it will help orient you to worship.

**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.

**2021 Stewardship Packets have been mailed & emailed!** This program year as we focus on “Leaning into God,” please prayerfully consider what you are able to give to support the ministries of First Church. The pandemic has required us to shift and be creative in worship, fellowship and outreach, and we thank you for your steadfast prayers, ministry and the financial support you have been able to offer. First Church has weathered many things in 377 years, and we will weather this pandemic as well … ***Leaning into God***!

**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!**

**For Those Needing Emotional Support During this Time:**

Holly Starkman, PhD LCSW 203-987-5771 Guilford

Susan Dobuler, LCSW (Children) 203-689-0761 Guilford

Claire Keenan  LCSW (Couples) 203-654-0840 Madison

Nancy Lucas, 860-319-7811 LSW, Essex, Ct

Elizabeth Strazar, LSW, 203-290-8609, Guilford, Ct

Leslie Hyman, MSW 230-915-9534, Guilford, CT

Nicole Amurgo, MSW 203-710-9309, Guilford, CT

Cathy Gilbert, LPC D.min &

Mahlon Gilbert, LPC D.min 860-228-9927  Madison CT

Matthew Fisel, ND Acupuncturist/Naturopath 203-453-0122 Guilford

Jackie Kos, DC Chiropractor  203-484-7579 Guilford

 Audra Chmiel, Certified: IM=X Pilates, Spin personal trainer  Madison

**Our church members who can possibly offer references:**

Cheryl Cummin, LCSW trauma work

Donna Gregory, Spiritual Director

Barbara Shulman-Kirwin, Forgiveness/empowerment coach

Mags DePetris, Alanon Contact

Diane Rotnem, PhD, LCSW

**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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