

 ***No matter who you are***

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

 ***you are welcome here.***

11 October 2020 \_ 10:00am

***“Leaning into God.”***

**Prelude:** Benedictus            Alec Rowley

**Welcome**

**Introit:** In Labor All Creation Groans

In labor all creation groans 'til fear and hatred cease,

'til human hearts come to believe in God alone is peace.

In labor all creation groans 'til false divisions cease,

'til enemies are reconciled and God alone their peace.

Be our peace, Christ, our peace.

**Call to Worship:**

We gather here today to worship God, to set aside all the things that may distract us from our faith, to wonder and understand words spoken, and to listen to music that speaks to us each in different ways. With the love of God all around us, we will continue to worship.

**10:16 Moment**

**Sharing Peace of Christ**

**Prayer:**

**Leader: God in your mercy -**

People: Hear our prayer.

***In the kinship of faith, we pray for* . . .** Jay, brother of Mark T.;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; Ryan, son of Susan M.; Andrew, son of Gary & Pam K.; Dianne R.; Sue, sister-in-law of Lynne O.; Christine S.; Emily; Frank W.; Doris and Wilson T.; Jim H.; Doma; Cindy M.; 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:** Matthew 22: 2 - 14

Earlier in the passage, Jesus embodied righteous indignation, and then offered this parable:

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.  He sent the servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused.*

*“Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet’ But they paid no attention and went off – one to a field, another to business. The rest seized the servants, mistreated them, and killed them.*

*“The king was enraged. He sent the army and destroyed the murderers, and burned their city and then said to the servants ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you can find.’ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.*

*“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed one there who was not wearing wedding clothes. He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless.*

*“Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’*

*“For many are called, but few are chosen.”*

**Sermon:** “Send in the Clowns” Rev. Joseph

**Music:** Send in the Clowns (A Little Night Music)    Stephen Sondheim

Kristin Huffman, soloist

**Invitation to Offering**

Help us to be generous givers, oh God, both of our money and our lives.  Let us speak and listen and feel.  Let us share what we have for the building up of Your work in this church and in a World filled with both turmoil and bright moments of joy and peace. We offer ourselves, as we are, and our gifts. Amen.

**Stewardship Moment**

**Offertory Music:**

**Benediction**

**Postlude:** Einzug der Gladiatoren       Julius Fučík

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**Virtual Fellowship Hour:** Call or email some First Church folks you miss seeing and share the peace of Christ with them!

**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 through Nov. 1!** Please see below for the invitees for each service. 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. 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.

**Nov. 1 All Saints Day:** families of those whose services were led by Ginger or Jake, or those who lost loved ones since All Saints Day 2019.

**In-person Worship Starting Sunday, November 8:** All seats for in-person worship services starting November 8 will be reserved on the website. Look in the Steeple and the November Landmark for details.

**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 offers a 10:16 Moment/Sunday School Lesson.**

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

**Thursdays at Noon – Bill offers 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

**First 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

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 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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