

# Welcome to First Congregational Church



Leroy Person, untitled, ca. 1981

Person was a woodcarver and sculptor from a remote area in northeastern North Carolina. He was semi-literate and developed his own alphabetic and numerical system that few could decipher. His work is admired for its sense of color and mark making.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*[Please send any announcements for the bulletin or weekly Enews to the Secretary ([secretary@concordfirstchurch.org](mailto:secretary@concordfirstchurch.org)) by **9am Thursday morning**. Please include the exact wording of how you would like the announcement to appear. Any information received after 9am will be included in the following week's bulletin and Enews. Thank you!]*

**Reminder:** We will no longer be live-streaming our worship services on Facebook. Go to **[Youtube.com/ConcordsFirstChurch](https://www.youtube.com/ConcordsFirstChurch)** to watch the services live.

**NEW Website:** Please visit and explore at [www.concordfirstchurch.org](http://www.concordfirstchurch.org).

**Weekly Prayers for the Nation:** Join Rev. Renee' for a weekly hour of prayer for our nation on Zoom. Wednesdays at 1pm. Zoom link is in the weekly E-News and in the calendar on the website.

**Crop Walk:** The CROP Hunger Walk is a nationwide movement sponsored by Church World Service to raise funds to end hunger and poverty in the U.S. and around the world. Please consider donating to this program. Please address checks to The First Congregational Church and on the memo line add the words **Crop Walk**. Thank You.

### **Volunteers Needed for the Musicians' Flea Market**

Our annual Musicians' Flea Market has become a favorite event in the community and it will be our largest in-person outreach event this year. To make it all happen, we're looking for a few volunteers to lend a hand.

A small crew is needed on Friday morning, October 31, to set up tables in Hanna Hall. On Saturday, we'll need helpers for 2-hour shifts to welcome guests, collect admission, and serve coffee and donuts. After the event ends at 1:00 p.m., we'll need a few people to help with cleanup and putting everything back in order.

This year, **New Hampshire Chronicle** will be on site to film some footage and conduct a few interviews during the event — something to keep in mind when deciding what to wear!

If you can spare a little time, your help will be greatly appreciated — and it's a wonderful way to share in the spirit of hospitality and fellowship.

Please see Jock Irvine to sign up. Thank You

**All Saints Sunday, November 2, 2025:** If you have names of loved ones that died in the past year that you would like to be read on All Saints Sunday, please send them to Kathy by 9AM, October 30th. Thank You

**NH Council of Churches:** "Dear friends in faith, This is Lisa Beaudoin from the NH Council of Churches! I'm writing to warmly invite you to join us for the 2nd Annual Granite State Jubilee on Saturday, **November 8, 2025, 9am-1pm**, for a morning of fellowship, reflection, and action. Our keynote speaker will be Eva Castillo, a fierce advocate for immigrant rights, and we will honor Reverend Jason Wells (Inclusive Love Award), Louise Spencer (Faithful Witness Award), and Representative Alexis Simpson (Compassionate Heart Award). In deep gratitude & peace, Lisa."

[At the October Council meeting, the Council voted to increase our \$200 budgeted donation to the NH Council of Churches to \$240. This provides an unlimited number of congregants that can attend the Jubilee on November 8th. To register, email Lisa at [lisa@nhchurches.org](mailto:lisa@nhchurches.org) and let her know that you are a member of First Church, Concord]



Hear now from the book of Psalms...

Hebrew Scriptures Psalm 46 (The Voice)

Pastor Emilia

God is our shelter and our strength.

When troubles seem near, God is nearer, and God's ready to help.

So why run and hide?

No fear, no pacing, no biting fingernails.

When the earth spins out of control, we are sure and fearless.

When mountains crumble and the waters run wild, we are sure and fearless.

Even in heavy winds and huge waves,

or as mountains shake, we are sure and fearless.

[pause]

A pure stream flows—never to be cut off—

bringing joy to the city where God makes the Divine home,

the sacred site where the Most High chooses to live.

The True God never sleeps and always resides in the city of joy;

God makes it unstoppable, unshakable.

When it awakes at dawn, the True God has already been at work.

Trouble is on the horizon for the outside nations, not long until kingdoms will fall;

God's voice thunders and the earth shakes.

You know the Eternal, the Commander of heavenly armies, surrounds us and protects us;

the True God of Jacob is our shelter, close to the Divine heart.

[pause]

Come, gaze, fix your eyes on what the Eternal can do.

Amazing, God has worked desolation here on this battlefield, earth.

God can stop wars anywhere in the world.

God can make scrap of all weapons: snap bows, shatter spears,  
and burn shields.

"Be still, be calm, see, and understand I am the True God.

I am honored among all the nations.

I am honored all over the earth."

You know the Eternal, the Commander of heavenly armies, surrounds us and protects us;

the True God of Jacob is our shelter, close to the Divine heart.

[pause]

Here ends the lesson.

**Amen.**

Let us share together from the book of Isaiah...

Hebrew Scriptures Isaiah 30:15-18 (The Voice)

Annie Papinsick

Listen! The Lord, the Eternal, the Holy One of Israel says,

**In returning and rest, you will be saved.**

**In quietness and trust you will find strength.**

But you refused. You couldn't sit still; instead, you said,

**"No! We will ride out of here on horseback.**

**Fast horses will give us an edge in battle."**

But those who pursue you will be faster still.

When one person threatens, a thousand will panic and flee.

When five terrorize you, all will run pell-mell,

Until you are as conspicuous as a single flag standing high on a hill.

Meanwhile, the Eternal One yearns to give you grace and boundless compassion; that's why God waits.

**For the Eternal is a God of justice.**

**Those inclined toward God, waiting for Divine help, will find happiness.**

Here ends the lesson.

**Amen.**

Here now from the Gospel of Mark...

Gospel Lesson

Mark 1:29-38 (The Living Bible)

Annie Papinsick

Then, leaving the synagogue, Jesus and his disciples went over to Simon and Andrew's home, where they found Simon's mother-in-law sick in bed with a high fever. They told Jesus about her right away. He went to her bedside, and as he took her by the hand and helped her to sit up, the fever suddenly left, and she got up and prepared dinner for them!

By sunset the courtyard was filled with the sick and demon-possessed, brought to him for healing; and a huge crowd of people from all over the city of Capernaum gathered outside the door to watch. So Jesus healed great numbers of sick folk that evening and ordered many demons to come out of their victims.

*The next morning he was up long before daybreak and went out alone into the wilderness to pray.*

Later that day, Simon and the others went out to find him, and told him, "Everyone is asking for you."

But Jesus replied, "We must go on to other towns as well, and give my message to them too, for that is why I came."  
Here ends the lesson.

**Amen.**

SERMON

'The Joy of Shapes that Dance: Starting with Stillness'

Rev. Emilia Halstead

PAUSING FOR MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

SONG:#488

Be Still, My Soul (Public Domain)

Be still, my soul! For God is on your side; bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;  
Leave to your God to order and provide; in every change God faithful will remain.  
Be still, my soul! your best eternal friend through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul! For God does undertake to guide in future days as in the past;  
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake; all now mysterious shall be clear at last.  
Be still, my soul! the waves and winds still know how Jesus' power ruled them long ago.

Be still, my soul! the hour will soon be here when we shall be with God whom we adore,  
With disappointment gone, no grief nor fear, sorrow replaced with joy forevermore.  
Be still my soul! when change and tears are past, all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

Ukama Partnership Prayers: (*Written by our partner church, Harare Church UCCZ in Zimbabwe*)

Greeting from Harare Church, UCCZ

Responsive Prayers with Harare Church, UCCZ:

As far as prayers are concerned, thank you very much for your concern for us. These are the prayer requests for Harare Church:

**We pray for good health to all Harare Church members.**

**We pray for our minister, Rev Chaka Mhlanga, and his family that they continue to faithfully serve God.**

**We pray for those who are seeking employment as well as some of our youth members, who have started writing their examinations.**

**We pray also for unity of purpose as we are building a dormitory to stay in when we go for a national prayer meeting. The dormitory is currently waiting for roofing.**

**We pray for our next big project as we are looking forward to raising funds to buy a church vehicle.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(*Response to each verbal prayer:*)

God of the Stillness,  
**Receive our prayer.**

PASTORAL PRAYER (created by Pastor Emilia using ChatGPT)

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Sung Amen: #772

Nothing Can Trouble

Nothing Can Trouble

Contributors: Jacques Berthier, Taizé Community

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Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten.  
Those who seek God shall never go wanting.

Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten.  
God alone fills us.

Offertory

INVITATION (crafted by Rev. Emilia with ChatGPT)

GRATITUDE MUSIC As Pants the Hart for Cooling Streams (Public Domain)

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (crafted by Pastor Emilia with ChatGPT)

Holy and gracious God,

You are our refuge and strength, our ever-present help in every season. In the stillness, You remind us: "Be still, and know that I am God."

**From that sacred quiet, You call us into movement—  
to act with courage, to give with compassion,  
to join in Your work of healing and hope.**

Bless these gifts, O God, that they will become instruments of Your peace.

**May our offerings, born from stillness, move outward in love, revealing  
Your beauty in the world. In Christ's name we dedicate ourselves and  
these gifts. Amen.**

**CLOSING SONG: #247 My Shepherd Is the Living God**

My Shepherd is the Living God, Thomas Sternhold & Isaac Watts

Contributors: Eric Routley

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1 My shepherd is the living God, I therefore nothing need;  
In pastures fair, near pleasant streams you settle me to feed.  
You bring my wandering spirit back when I forsake your ways,  
And lead me for your mercy's sake in paths of truth and grace.

2 When I walk through the shades of death, your presence is my stay;  
A word of your supporting breath drives all my fears away.  
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my table spread;  
My cup with blessings overflows, your oil anoints my head.

3 The sure provisions of my God attend me all my days;  
O may your house be my abode, and all my work be praise.  
There would I find a settled rest, while others come and go -  
No more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home.

SETTING OUR INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

GREATEST COMMANDMENT

SENDING & BLESSING (crafted by Pastor Emilia with ChatGPT)

POSTLUDE I've Got Peace Like a River (Public Domain)