

O MAGNIFY THE

WORL

November 24, 2019
FUMC Portsmouth, NH

We Gather for Worship
Christ the King Sunday

Prelude & Entrance of Christ's Light

Gratitude Moments

***Call to Worship**

L: Jesus is here with us today and every day!

P: He reigns over all the earth.

Children: Hallelujah!

L: O magnify the Lord together!

P: We praise Christ's holy name!

Children: Hallelujah!

ALL: Hallelujah!

***Hymn** "Crown Him with Many Crowns" v. 1, 2, 4 UMH #327

A Time for the Child in all of Us

Prayer (unison)

God of love, we give you thanks for sending Jesus to teach us, live and die for our sins, and then raise him from death to reign with you. Remind us that there is no love for us that is greater than your love in Christ. Guide and lead us as we serve you here in this place and time. Give us wisdom and discernment as we seek to be faithful in building your kingdom here on earth. Amen.

Sung Response "Spirit of the Living God" UMH #393

We Proclaim the Word
Colossians 1:11-20

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

Message "Reigning Over All" Rev. Dr. Deb Hanson

We Respond to God's Word

***Hymn** "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" v. 1, 4, 6 UMH #154

Prayers of the People

Silent Prayer and Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

Our Father, who 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 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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

***Doxology** (*Please join in singing the following*) UMH #94

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

***Prayer of Dedication** (unison)

Great and Generous God, we present our offerings to you and pray that they may help others who seek your love and care through these gifts. Use them to make a difference in our world. Amen.

We Go Forth to Serve

***Hymn** "How Great Thou Art" UMH #77

***Choral Benediction** (*Congregation encircles the Sanctuary*)

May the Lord, gracious God bless and keep you forever. Grant you peace, perfect peace, courage in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and seek His face, and His grace forever. May the Lord, mighty God bless and keep you forever.

***Pastor's Charge**

Postlude

**Please stand as you are comfortable*

*TFWS = The Faith We Sing UMH = United Methodist Hymnal
Large print bulletins are available from the greeters*

Welcome!

Whether you are joining us for worship for the first time or after many years of attending here at First UMC, we want you to know that you are welcome!

We are an inclusive community that invites everyone to be part of our church fellowship. Thank you for being here, and we hope that you have had a meaningful experience of worshipping our God so you leave this place feeling that you have been blessed to be a blessing. Please join us again!

Rev. Deb Hanson

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson
Pastor's Assistant - David Richards
Liturgist - Art Munson
Lay Leader - Susan Sarosiek
Acolyte - Jan Cansdale
Director of Music - Bevan Bloemendaal
Greeters - Sue Lange
Ushers - Yvonne Griffin & David Richards
Sound Tech - Sue Sarosiek
Worship Service Tech - Steve Scott
Photographer - Dave Atkinson
Sunday School - Aerial Sillanpaa & Kaya Sarosiek



WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER...

Rev. Charles & Anona Hartman

Dan Strange

Anne Coffey

Ken Young

Rev. Bill & Gayle Gardei

Marion Collishaw

Sylvia Bartlett

Gil Stebbins

Woodie Lange

Jim New

Bobbie Noble

Barbara Glidden

Judy Doyon

Charles Gilman

Ruth Griffin

Jim Slater

Barbara Sylvester

Barbara Millar

Barbara Clement

Yvonne Griffin

Our Denomination

Our Church Family



Come join us for coffee hour after church service in Sanborn Hall. We'd love to catch up with you and see how your week has gone.



UPCOMING EVENTS

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

11/26 - Tuesday, there will be an Interfaith Thanksgiving Service held at the North Church of Portsmouth at 7:00 pm. The address is 7 Congress Street, Portsmouth, NH. If you have any questions see Rev. Deb. This is open to everyone.

11/28 - Happy Thanksgiving to everyone. FUMC office will be closed.

11/30 - Greening of the Sanctuary at 9:00 am in preparation for Advent and Christmas. We have decided to at this time to revive the making of Gingerbread houses. We need people to bring empty and clean milk/juice cartons for this project (single serving size) We need about 20. All are welcome. Please come help and have some fun!

12/1 - Advent begins!

The Giving Tree is up. The deadline for the wrapped gifts to be returned is December 15th. Please attach red bell to each gift. One of the families on the list for the Giving Tree is looking for two bureaus, a desk and chair - they can be used. If anyone has any of these items to donate, please contact Sue Sarosiek.

There are still 4 hand painted Christmas ornaments featuring FUMC in the office for sale at a price of \$14. Please feel free to drop in and look them over. It might be just what your holiday tree needs.

Donations are being accepted for computer updates. Computers are used in the office, our financial systems, our worship service and the Narthex. The amount needed for this upgrade is \$2,000. Please prayerfully consider donating to computer upgrade. Thank you

Church Conference News

Please pick up your Church Conference booklet in Sanborn Hall. They are alphabetical by last name.

In accordance with the Book of Discipline, the trustees submitted a request to accept a bequest from the Estate of Beverlea Meadows. As many of you know, Beverlea was a member of this church, the daughter of Ethel Mundy and lovingly designated the Portsmouth First United Methodist Church as a partial beneficiary of her estate. The Church Conference accepted the bequest unanimously. See David Richards for any questions.

**In loving memory of Betty Munson,
adoring mother of six, by Art Munson.**





FUMC PORTSMOUTH A RECONCILING CONGREGATION

We, the congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, are dedicated in worshipping, learning, and serving with all people as we embrace Jesus Christ's message of love and acceptance. As a United Methodist Church we stand fully behind the statement "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors". We celebrate our diversity and invite all persons regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full membership and participation in the life of this community of faith.



New England Annual Conference Tri-State District
The Rev. Sudarshana Devadhar, Bishop
The Rev. Taesung Kang, District Superintendent

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
129 Miller Avenue - Portsmouth, NH 03801
Office Phone 603-436-6038 office@fumcportsmouth.net
Pastor office hours - Tuesday and Thursday 9 am - 12 pm
[call to ensure availability]
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

Check out our website at www.fumcportsmouth.com

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SERMON TRANSCRIPT GIVEN BY
REV. DR. DEB HANSON

“Reigning Over All” – 11/24/19
First UMC – Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1:11-20

THEME: Jesus is King of all.

A commentary in the New York Times: LONDON — *A girl meets a prince. The prince needs a wife. The glass slipper fits: she is young, dewy, inexperienced, eager — swept up and blinded by the romance of it all. He proposes within months. Their wedding is watched by 750 million people worldwide and features at least five clergymen, 3,500 guests and one spectacularly frothy pearl-encrusted wedding dress whose 25-foot train has to be stuffed into the bridal carriage, where it threatens to suffocate the bride.*

That was 40 years and a lifetime ago, and there was to be no happily ever after for Prince Charles and Diana, the Princess of Wales. (According to the Times, He turned into something of a frog; she grew, in life and in death, to be more Evita than Cinderella.) In retrospect, it was probably not very helpful that the groom’s sometime mistress and future second wife was among the wedding guests.

A generation later, another girl would meet another prince and the inexorable machinery of a new royal marriage would be set in motion. The outer trappings are the same — the stuffy announcement from the palace, the formal photographs, the staged interview with the deferential journalist. But the romance between Prince William, the heir to the heir to the throne, and his longtime girlfriend, Kate Middleton, is an altogether different sort of fairy tale from Charles and Diana’s . . . (“William and Kate: A Fairy Tale, Ending Unknown” by Sarah Lyall, November 20, 2010 in the New York Times).

Here in the United States, we have very little experience of royalty and sometimes look down our noses at the idea of supporting a royal family. Yet, in many ways we are fascinated by Great Britain’s royal family and many have adopted them as our own. The idea of kings and queens, princes and princesses seems more like stuff made of a fairy tale, yet, we know from following Charles and Diana that it is real life and far from perfect – in fact, life for the royals may be MORE challenging.

When we think of a ruling monarch, we often think of crowns, robes, jewels, power, servants, authority, people bowing, and unquestionable respect. There have been kings and queens who have been ruthless and nasty, but there have also been monarchs who have truly cared for the people and have ruled fairly. The kings and queens of Israel had that kind of history. There were some who were selfish, greedy, and horrible to the people, and there were some who were generous and kind.

Today is Christ the King Sunday as well as Thanksgiving Sunday, and we are reminded that Jesus is a different kind of king. His crown was a crown of thorns; his robe was thrown on his bleeding back as he was walked toward the cross; his jewels were not diamonds, emeralds, and rubies but gems of wisdom that he shared about life in God’s kingdom. His power, as he told Pontius Pilate, was not of this world, but it was and is the greatest power in the universe. HE was a servant; his authority came, not from people or by force, but from God; the people who bowed to him were the outcasts in society who recognized him as God-in-the-flesh; and

the respect he received came from those who knew him well and yet betrayed and rejected him when the going got tough.

Yet, the power of God prevailed, and Jesus Christ was raised from the dead to overcome even death. Why would God go through the challenge of becoming human and living here on this earth among human beings? *There is a story about King James V of Scotland who would occasionally put on the simple clothing of a peasant and move freely around. He would become friends with ordinary folks, participate in their lives, sharing their difficulties, sympathizing with them in their sorrows, celebrating with them in their joys. He believed he was a better ruler who could show compassion and mercy because he had walked in their shoes, lived their lives, and shared in their journeys. God understands our human experience better because, in Jesus, God lived the human life and knows what we go through.* (Illustrations Unlimited, pp. 305-306, #13). God loves us and sent Jesus to be the ruler of our hearts.

As King of our lives, Jesus offers us things that NO other king can offer: forgiveness of sins, unending love, and salvation. Following Jesus is challenging because he asks a lot of us – in fact, he asks us to turn over our very lives into his care – that requires tremendous trust. Our Colossians passage reminds us that, in Christ, we are made strong, we are claimed by God; we are given the inheritance of the saints which is the love and acceptance of Christ in our lives. We know God because we know Jesus. He is the image of the invisible God and the one to whom we are supposed to give allegiance first and foremost as his followers. One of the earliest Christian confessions is *Christos Kyrios* which is translated “Christ is Lord.” The kingdom of God isn’t something far away in a distant land, but right here in our midst.

One pastor described the kingship of Christ this way: “Christ is kingly – but the armies he commands do not seek vengeance or inflict violence. Instead they sow mercy and kindness and proclaim God’s love. Christ’s kingdom is filled with riches – but those riches are not stockpiled gold in the treasury. They are the endlessly distributed productive activity of people . . . and all of creation sharing life with one another.” (Paul Bellan-Boyer at Text This Week for November 21, 2010 in the commentary section.)

C.S. Lewis wrote: “Christianity is the story of how the rightful King has landed, you might say in disguise, and is calling us all to take part in his great campaign of sabotage.” (Kate Huey, Weekly Seeds on line for November 21, 2010.) What is the great campaign of sabotage? It is the most challenging of all – to learn how to live as a Christian in a world that really doesn’t want to hear the message or follow along. In fact, we struggle with it ourselves. It’s very hard to live differently – to live counter-culturally. Where the world tells us to take care of ourselves and put ourselves first, Christ tells us to become a servant to all and to put others first. Where the world tells us that success is measured by how much money we have, how big our house is, how fancy our cars are, how far we can get ahead in the world, Christ tells us to live simply, to be successful in sharing God’s love, and to care about others.

The thing about living in the example of Jesus is where we find our grounding. We find a center from which to live. Back in the 1950’ and 60’s, the church was the center of the community, but as the 60’s progressed with its anti-establishment push-back, the Baby Boomers began to question everything and reject organized religion – organized administration

in businesses, government - EVERYTHING. Instead of finding a center, it seemed that there was a sort of centrifugal force that sent everything outward and disconnected us from the center.

Today we live in world where centrifugal force seems to be the common experience that informs our world, and in the midst of not having a center to hold us together, we discover that there is increased anxiety, worry, and fear. Things seem to be falling apart because there isn't a center to hold us together. Our Colossians passage, which is a type of hymn in many ways, addresses a community of faith in Colossae during a time when they were feeling that same loss of center, of wondering how to get along in a world where the powers of evil seemed stronger than the good. The hymn reminds us that Jesus was, is, and always will be part of the creation of the universe – the firstborn of all creation. He is the image of God in the flesh, and he has also conquered death – the beginning and the end. He is the head of the Church, and it is in his church that we can find our center.

We are called to live counterculturally, to offer hope where there is no hope, to offer a hand of peace rather than war, to bring love where there is hatred, and joy where there is despair. We live it. We live in relationship with Jesus, the Christ who is the center of the Christian faith. Our work is to point people toward that center in all that we do, and we are called to be always growing in that relationship with Jesus.

As we grow closer in our relationship with Christ, we claim our heritage of being made in the image of God. Christ's sacrifice was to die for us, but the ultimate victory was to win over death. God held NOTHING back for us. Do we hold anything back from God? Have we turned our hearts over to God? Have we made Jesus, the Christ the Ruler of our lives? Does he guide our actions? Our words? Our thoughts? Our reactions? The passage from Colossians lifts up a joyful celebration of what Christ has done for us.

Forty-eight years ago on December 7, my grandma Moen died of complications from cancer. She was a great witness to her faith. She didn't talk about it all the time, but she would share thoughts about life and death and Jesus in little ways – little ways that made a big impact. Forty-eight years ago, people who had cancer were kept in the hospital in what they called the "cancer ward" so that is where she was after her second operation where they discovered that it had taken over her entire body. Obviously great strides in understanding and treating cancer have been made – thankfully – but forty-eight years ago, the diagnosis of cancer meant that treatment was limited, and the end result was death. During the last few weeks of her life when Grandma was still conscious, I went to see her and held her hand as she smiled up at me. When I asked her how she was doing, she said very softly and simply, "Come, Lord Jesus." Jesus was Lord of her life. I had forgotten that incident until recently, but it has been part of the legacy she shared with me as a faithful child of God who trusted fully in Jesus.

On this Christ the King Sunday/Thanksgiving Sunday, we can rejoice in the knowledge that God loves us and that Jesus Christ has set the example for us and has conquered sin and death. He wants to be King of our hearts and lives. He has set us free, not from pain or worry or trouble, but from the burden of carrying those difficulties alone. Salvation in Jesus Christ releases us from the shackles of life so we can live life fully no matter what our circumstances. All he asks is that we keep him in our hearts and live thankfully and as faithfully as we can in

God's grace. Jesus wants to be the King of our hearts. I think it helps to regularly ask ourselves: "What rules my life?" "Who rules my life?"

Into my heart, into my heart,

Come into my heart, Lord Jesus;

Come in today, come in to stay,

Come into my heart, Lord Jesus. Amen.