

South Congregational Church, UCC

A Service led by Rev. Dr. Billy Brown



Sunday, November 23, 2025

27 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301

603-224-2521, www.southchurchconcord.org

Welcome to South Congregational Church, United Church of Christ! Whoever you are, whatever your faith tradition, whatever creed you profess, whatever your age, ability, race, sexual orientation or gender expression: You are welcome here!

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE Love Lifted Me by Smith/Raney

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Bless the Lord, O my soul

And all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul

And do not forget all of God's benefits.

Bless the Lord, O my soul

The Lord forgives all your shortcomings, and heals all your wounds.

Bless the Lord, O my soul

The Lord redeems our lives when we are lost

And crowns us with steadfast love and mercy.

Bless the Lord, O my soul

Let us worship the Lord with thankful hearts

For all the good the Lord has provided. Amen.

*HYMN #28

For the Beauty of the Earth

UNISON PRAYER

We gather this morning to harvest the grace and love given to us in our Lord, Jesus Christ. And, as Jesus taught us, we acknowledge that You, gracious God, are the

source of our harvested gifts. When the harvest of love is bountiful, our hearts and minds are filled with joy, laughter, and openness to Your care. We confess that in those times we forget we are not the ultimate provider of our bounty. When the harvest of love is scarce or seems to be absent, we become isolated and attempt to provide through selfish barriers and hoarding of riches. Today, in this hour, remind us over and over again of Your steadfast promise to be with us always with our abundant love and radical hope. Remind us to stay open to the possibilities of finding Your love in opening ourselves to new life and new experiences. Even in the face of the uncertainty we feel in our lives, give us courage to surrender to Your constant presence in the love You gave us in the gift of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

May the peace of Christ be with you. And also with you.

CHORAL ANTHEM Alleluia by Philip Hayes (1738-1797)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Loving God, open our eyes that we may see the world as You see it. Open our ears that we might hear what You would have us hear. Open our hearts that we may be renewed to love and serve. Amen.

1ST SCRIPTURE LESSON

Jeremiah 23:1-6

A MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Julia Wagner

2ND SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke: 1:68-79

SERMON

From Whence Cometh Your Lift?

Rev. Dr. Billy Brown

*HYMN #38

"Lift Up Your Hearts!"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father-Mother in Heaven, hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come, Your will be done on Earth as it is in
Heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our
debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the
kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

AN INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Virtual Offering Plate: To make an online donation, please use the "Donate" button on the website, which will get you to the current donation link, or mail/drop off a check at the office. Thinking of remembering your church in your estate? Please contact Planned Giving.

NOVEMBER FAITH IN ACTION MISSION:

The Christmas Fund

To make a contribution, please use the white envelopes in the pews, or visit the Church's website
(www.southchurchconcord.org)

to donate. Thank you!

OFFERTORY You Raise Me Up by Graham/Lovland
Cal Genzel, soloist

*SUNG RESPONSE 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.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN #474 I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me

BENEDICTION & Invitation to Celebrate the Opening of the
Lift!

POSTLUDE Restoration arr. John S. Dixon

Pianist: Abigail Charbeneau
Music Director: Sue Berlenbach
Christian Education Director: Julia Wagner
Memorial Bells Director: Carlene Ruesenberg
Livestream Technician: Walton Irvine
Sexton: Walton Irvine

Today's Participants:

Assistive Listening: Sue Marcotte-Jenkins
Lay Leader: Lynne Morgan
Ushers: Debbie Lincoln & Sue Marcotte-Jenkins
Counting & Deposits: Carlene Ruesenberg & Janice Dutton



Flowers this week are donated by Sally Bird

*"In Memory of Kerry and all my Loved Ones
who have passed on."*

ASSISTIVE LISTENING

Having difficulty hearing in the sanctuary? An Assistive Listening Assistant is at the back of the sanctuary and is glad to help you connect your smartphone to South Church WiFi and the “Listen WiFi” smartphone app. Once you’ve paired your hearing aids to your phone, connected to the South Church WiFi network, and have downloaded the “Listen WiFi” app, you can use this listening system to better hear all the presenters in the sanctuary.

IMPORTANT INFO FOR ASSISTIVE LISTENING USERS:

Please use our new Wi-Fi connection:

Netgear47

Password (all lower-case letters):

sweetwater840

REMINDER:

When using your hearing aids with the “Listen WiFi” phone app:

Some phones work best with the volume on both your Phone & your Hearing Aids turned all the way Up. Other phones work best with your Phone turned all the way Up & your Hearing Aids turned all the way Down.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – November 23rd, 2025

HAPPENING TODAY AFTER WORSHIP!

RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY Please join the celebration of the grand opening of our **NEW LIFT today!** We'll have a ribbon cutting ceremony then proceed Fellowship Hall to enjoy everyone's company over coffee and cake.

Don't forget to stock up on **Thanksgiving Treats at the GENESIS CIRCLE BAKE SALE** in Fellowship Hall after worship as well!

DECORATING THE SANCTUARY Worship and Spiritual Life members will be decorating for Advent and the Christmas season. Helping hands are welcome!

A NEW SECURITY SYSTEM A security keypad for the door on the parking lot side of the building has been installed. To enter this door, you will need to enter an individual PIN. (You will still need a key to enter the rest of the church.)

If you have a key for the outside door and want to sign up for a PIN, we will be registering security PINS after church TODAY. Please speak with Gail Desjardins or Betsy Clardy if you have questions or need assistance.

~ ~ ~

FROM WORSHIP AND SPIRITUAL LIFE: There will be an Ecclesiastical Council for **Derek Waldron** today, Sunday Nov. 23rd at **3:00pm** at the Deerfield Community Church (15 Church Street, Deerfield, NH). You are welcome to attend in person or by Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89313124732>

Derek is a Member in Discernment at South Congregational Church. He and his family worshipped with us for a few years before he went on to further his training for ministry. He is currently serving as pastor of West Congregational Church in Concord as well as a chaplain in the army reserves. The next step in his process toward ordination is the Ecclesiastical Council, where he will present a paper on his theology and faith journey and answer questions from clergy and lay delegates who will then vote on his fitness for ministry. Once he is approved, he is eligible to be ordained. You are in our prayers, Derek!

We are delighted that **Rev. Dr. Beth Donaldson** will be joining us as our **TRANSITIONAL PASTOR** on January 19, 2026. She has a reputation not only as a stellar preacher and worship designer, but also an active listener, collaborator and consensus builder. Beth will help us process our current feelings, discern what we want in our next settled pastor, and will assist with all the procedural tasks of the search process. Additionally, she will perform the more traditional pastoral role of helping us live into **our** dreams – our Mission and Vision – now, and for as long as we need her to be with us. Please join us in welcoming her on January 19!

IMMIGRATION PROJECT: CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS: AN IMMIGRANT'S JOURNEY IN DETENTION – an exhibit of Becky Fields' photographs paired with poetry by an African man who came here legally asking for asylum but was jailed and tracked. South Church and Temple Beth Jacob are co-sponsoring this exhibit in Fellowship Hall until November 29. Hours:

- 9 am – 1 pm, Monday through Thursday
- 6 pm – 8 pm Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday

Noon – 3 pm Saturday; 9 am to Noon, Sundays

FIELD TRIP! The Senior High School Youth Group, Ministry of Fun, and the Christian Formation Committee invite you to tour the new food pantry at Christ the King Parish (67 South State St.) on Sunday, Dec. 14 at 7:00 p.m. The new pantry resembles a grocery store where users may select foods that match their dietary preferences. Tour the pantry, hear how it came into existence, and gain a better understanding of this new community resource. Please bring some canned or dry foods to help fill the shelves. We will meet in the pantry parking lot.

A MULTI-GENERATIONAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT will take place during worship on December 14th. There are roles for all ages and experiences. Rehearsals will be Sunday, December 7th (following worship) and Saturday, December 13th from 10-2. A simple lunch will be provided. For more information, see Julia Wagner or email her at cedirector@southchurchconcord.org

OPERATION SANTA CLAUS – Make donations for Youth Group members to purchase Christmas gifts for three siblings in foster care. Call 603-224-2521 or email cedirector@southchurchconcord.org for details. Thank you!

MOMENT FOR MISSION: The Faith in Action Moment for Mission for November is **The Christmas Fund**. The fund cares for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ (UCC). The fund provides emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities, pensions, and health premiums. The fund also provides Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. Please consider donating to help support The Christmas Fund. Your generosity is much appreciated!

FROM THE NH UCC CONFERENCE - Disaster Relief After Hurricane Melissa: On October 28th, Hurricane Melissa made landfall in Jamaica as a Category 5 storm, one of the most powerful and destructive on record in the Caribbean. Its devastation also impacted Haiti and Cuba.

The United Church of Christ has issued an appeal to help immediate and long-term recovery efforts in these Caribbean countries. The primary needs at this stage are shelter, safe drinking water, sanitation, healthcare and food. Donations to the appeal can be made by sending checks to the New Hampshire Conference (140 Sheep Davis Road, Pembroke, NH 03275) with Hurricane Melissa Appeal in the memo, or by emailing nhcucc@nhcucc.org for access to their Giving portal.

NEW ONLINE DONATION APP

We launched a new digital giving platform that will support recurring gifts and gifts via bank transfers! Questions? Contact the office at office@southchurchconcord.org

PRAYER REQUESTS

If you have Prayer Requests, please fill out the yellow bookmarks in the pews and place them in the basket on the Altar.

ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to contribute to worship by purchasing a flower arrangement for the Altar, please contact Linda Gray at RevLinGray@yahoo.com to choose a date.

USHERS & LAY LEADERS NEEDED

We're looking for up to 6 ushers for each of the Christmas Eve services. Lay Leaders are also needed for several Sundays. Please contact the office if you are able to help.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES! Do you enjoy spending time with kids and helping them grow in their faith? We're looking for **Sunday School teachers, nursery attendants, and youth group advisors** to join our amazing team!

The only requirements are:

- A love for children
- Completion of our Safe Church compliance training

Whether you can help weekly or just occasionally, we'd love to have you involved. If you have any questions or are interested, please contact Julia Wagner at

cedirector@southchurchconcord.org. Thank you for supporting the next generation of our church family!

FROM THE TRANSITION TEAM - Gayle Murphy will lead us in worship through Advent and for Christmas Eve Services. Our On-Call pastors will continue to provide Emergency Pastoral Care.

- If you have a death in the family, a sudden hospitalization or other significant life crisis, please call 603-333-5812 to reach our emergency On-Call Pastor.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a transition in life and would like a visit with one of our trained Lay Ministry Volunteers, please call and leave a message at the office (603-224-2521) or give Toni Callahan a call. Her number can be found in the Church Directory.

During Mariah's Transition Back: As Mariah continues to heal with the goal of returning to work full time, **Michelle Johnson**, our part-time Church Bookkeeper, will function as our **Temporary Office Manager**. In this capacity she'll be managing office functions and various administrative projects. Her hours, which are still part-time, will vary based on Mariah's and our office volunteers' availability. You can reach Michelle at bookkeeper@southchurchconcord.org or by calling the Church's main number, 603-224-2521.