

Greetings members and friends of First Congregational Church of Shelburne,

This week's Worship Resource is attached and can also be found on our web page, [shelburnechurch.org](http://shelburnechurch.org). There will be a YouTube video posted by Saturday evening. This is a communion Sunday as well as the Fourth of July Weekend. This Sunday's service is designed to focus on both. If you wish to participate, please have the two necessary elements on hand; a drink for communion and bread of your choosing.

I believe an update from your Pastoral Search Committee is on the way. Your PSC has been diligent in their task to complete the Church Profile. In addition, a separate team is seeking out conversations with local congregations that may be interested in a shared ministry situation. Please keep both teams in your prayers as they continue their work over the summer months.

Please remember we include prayer requests every week.  
Any requests may be sent to me at [pastor01089@gmail.com](mailto:pastor01089@gmail.com).

God be with you as we unite in praise, in ministry and in worship even from a distance.

Pastor Rob

## **Welcome to Communion Sunday Worship** July 5, 2020

**Good Morning** to our members and friends at home,

This Sunday is Communion Sunday and the Fourth of July weekend. This service has been designed to include both. If you wish to participate in communion, please have two elements ready. First, a drink in a cup or glass. This could be juice of any kind or water. (yes, wine is also acceptable) Second, a piece of bread of any kind. From sliced, to French, a hamburger roll to a Triscuit cracker, all may be used.

Our Sunday morning YouTube video will be posted on our webpage by Saturday evening that follows this order of worship and includes Communion. If you are unable to access the video, you are welcome and encouraged to follow this resource on your own and celebrate Communion by reading the Communion prayers and serving yourself keeping in mind that even when alone, we are all a part of the body of Christ.

### **And now let us be in worship**

#### **A Call to Worship** Psalm 67

L Let the nations be glad and sing for joy.

**P For you judge the people with equity and guide the nations upon the earth.**

L May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere the Lord.

#### **Morning Prayer & Lord's Prayer** *Isaac Watts*

My God, how endless is thy love! Thy gifts are every evening new; And morning mercies from above gently distill like early dew. I yield my powers to thy command, to thee I consecrate my days; perpetual blessings from thy hand, demand perpetual songs of praise. We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray saying... *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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

## **Prayers of the People**

Our prayers this morning come from the first and the third Presidents of the United States. The first prayer was written by George Washington and our second prayer is Thomas Jefferson's prayer for the nation. These will be followed by a time of meditation to include your own prayers before concluding with a prayer for our country today. Let us Come to God...

### George Washington

I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in His holy protection, that He would incline the hearts of the Citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to Government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow Citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have served in the Field, and finally, that He would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all, to do Justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that Charity, humility and pacific temper of mind, which were the Characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed Religion, and without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy Nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Thomas Jefferson: A Prayer for the Nation

Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage; We humbly beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will. Bless our land with honorable ministry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people, the multitude brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endow with Thy spirit of wisdom those whom in Thy name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that through obedience to Thy law, we may show forth Thy praise among the nations of the earth. In time of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in Thee to fail; all of which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And now, let us open our hearts, and then our minds, that our prayers may now rise like incense in this time of meditation.....

Gracious God, even as we remember and give thanks for those who struggled and died and birthed this nation, your own experiment in a government by and for your people, even as we gaze at the many patriots past, those known to us, and those known only unto you, who sacrificed much, who risked all, that in our day we may be guided by the concepts of life, liberty and happiness for all people, we fervently pray for our nation today. We pray for those who struggle in poverty in a land of abundance, for those who are cast adrift with no voice, no

resources & no support. We pray for those who desire to be educated but find themselves left behind and left out with outdated schools, books, and equipment. We pray, O Lord, for those who struggle here, in our nation, even though we know our poverty is nothing as compared to other places in your creation. Grant, O God, as we come to celebrate our nations beginnings this week, that we may not only look to those in need here, but to remember our obligations to the rest of your creation, for where great blessings have been given, great responsibilities are also expected. And always, help us to be more faithful to your call, in the name of Christ, Amen

**Scripture:** Revelation 21:1-6

The book of the Revelation to John was put in its final written form toward the end of the first century. The author of this work is said to be John the Seer, a Christian exiled to the island of Patmos by Emperor Domitian. The Book of Revelation is the most controversial book in the Christian scriptures. During the first centuries as the Christian canon was being developed, Revelation was included one moment and excluded the next. Even Martin Luther in the 1500's commented that the Book of Revelation is "neither apostolic nor prophetic" and stated that "Christ is neither taught nor known in it" For all the debate, however, Revelation is an accepted part of the Christian Scriptures and offers a picture of the Apocalypse that has inspired countless Christians, poets, composers and artists. Today's selection speaks about what God is about to do.

*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying,*

*"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."*

*And he that sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."*

*And he said unto me, "Write: for these words are true and faithful." And he said unto me, "It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."*

This weekend we celebrate the birth of our nation. Those who rebelled against English rule took an enormous risk. The Congregational Church of the day used scripture in its preaching in support of self-governance. One text was this passage from the Book of Revelation. These words from John held out the promise that God was doing a new thing in the creation of what would become the United States of America. This is a good day to reflect on what new thing God may be doing in our day.

**The Sacrament of Communion**

### The Invitation

Jesus said, Come, unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest,  
This morning may we come to this table of Christ seeking rest.

This morning, may we find true refreshment for our tired and parched souls  
in the breaking of bread and the pouring of the cup

This morning, may we find fresh forgiveness and mercy overflowing in the birth of Jesus of  
Nazareth, the Lord's Christ.

This morning, may we find that the grace of Christ may come to us at this table,  
in the breaking of this bread and the pouring of this cup.

### The Prayer of Consecration

Lord, this thy feast, prepared by thy longing, spread at thy command, attended at thine  
invitation, blessed by thine own word, distributed by thine own hand. The undying memorial of  
thy sacrifice upon the cross. The full gift of thine everlasting love, and its perpetuation till time  
shall end. Lord, this is the bread of heaven, bread of life, that whoso eats, shall hunger no more.  
And this is the cup of pardon, healing, gladness, strength, that whoso drinks, shall thirst not  
again. So, may we come, O Lord, to thy table; in humble gratitude, ready to receive thy grace.  
Amen.

### Blessing of the Bread

On the night that Jesus was to be betrayed, he sat at table with all of his disciples. During the  
course of the meal, he took bread off the table. When he had given thanks, he broke it and gave  
it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."  
(You break your bread and eat)

### Blessing of the Cup

Again, on that same night, Jesus took a cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for  
you is the new covenant in my blood. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit  
of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. (You may drink from your cup)

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Philip Doddridge (1702-1751)*

Blessed Lord, I adore my gracious Saviour who has instituted, as with his dying breath, the holy  
grace of his supper, to be through all ages a memorial of his dying love, and a bond of that  
union which it is his sovereign pleasure that his people should preserve. O Lord, this day, I  
would graciously ask for thou to instruct me in my duty and to teach me the way, which I  
should take! Amen.

### **Benediction**

Let us depart in peace, in love and in charity with our neighbors.

May we be joined together in the common goal of service  
to God and to our Country.

May God bless this our common goal.

Amen.