

The First Church in Belfast

United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Frame Raising Sunday

June 10, 2018

10:00 a.m.

WE ARE GATHERED IN

WELCOME TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

PRELUDE

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT

CALL TO WORSHIP

(Poem from chapter on "First Church in Belfast" by Hester Pierce Brown in
Historic Churches and Homes of Maine, read by Jane Grant)

*The old church stands on rising ground,
with long approach. On either side
Are grand old elm trees ranged around,
Their branches reaching high and wide.*

This old church stands on rising ground.

On sacred ground. On sturdy ground.

Built on a foundation of rock,

It has strengthened and fed the faith of the people.

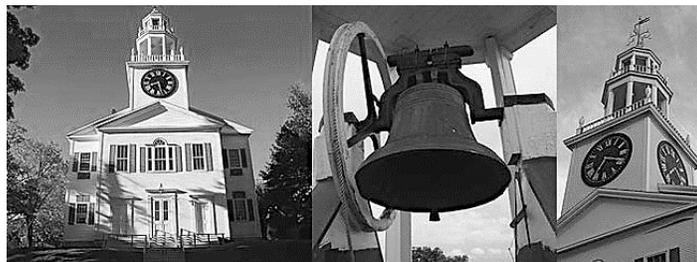
*When twilight falls on desk and Book,
When peals the old bell, sweet and clear,
I seem to see in some dim nook,
The smiling shade of Paul Revere.*

This old bell has known a grand history.

It has mournfully tolled the death of Abraham Lincoln.

It joyfully rang out the end of the Civil and World Wars.

It has celebrated weddings, grieved tragedies, and gathered the people here today.



*The old clock looks with placid face
Upon the frenzied moves of men;
Its measured stroke may end a race,
Or start life's whirring wheels again.*

The old clock gracing the steeple
was placed by the town to keep track of the hours.
Inside we share with our ancestors a different time.
The *kairos* of God, full, flowing, and ever present.

*Long may the old church stand to stress
The rugged faith its builders knew.
Long may its strong, straight lines express
Their vision of the just and true.*

Long may the old church stand as a sign
of the blessing of God on all people who look upon her.
Long may song and prayer fill this sanctuary
and flow out into the world, rivers of hope and love.

-silence-

***OPENING HYMN** “They Did Not Build in Vain” #373

***PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

YOUNG PEOPLE’S CIRCLE

GREETING OF PEACE

*Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

***HYMN OF GRACE** “Come, O Fount of Every Blessing” #459

WE HEAR THE WORD

RESPONSIVE READING Psalm 127:1-2 Richard Fiske

Unless God builds the house,
those who build it labor in vain.
Unless God guards the city,
the guard keeps watch in vain.
It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil,
for God gives sleep
to God’s beloved.

GOSPEL READING Matthew 7:21-27

MESSAGE “*They Labored Not in Vain*”

WE LIVE THE WORD**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** (adapted from *The Book of Worship*)

Gracious God, we give thanks today for all that has taken place and continues to be encouraged within this blessed sanctuary:

**For the worship of God in prayer and praise,
for the preaching of the Word,
for baptisms in water and communion around the table.**

For the comfort of those who mourn,
for the help of those who are struggling,
for the guidance of those who seek strength.

**For guarding against evil,
for fostering faithfulness,
for promoting peace and justice in all the earth.**

For the opening of minds to your wisdom,
for the care of the needy,
for the giving of hope and courage.

**For the unity of all believers in Christ,
for respect for all faiths
for the celebration of unity in diversity among all people.**

For the consecration of life and service,
in grateful remembrance of those who have gone before us,
and in gratitude for our life together in this church,

**We give thanks to you, Holy God, for this church's past
and ask your guidance and blessing for the future.**

The Lord's Prayer

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.

INVITATION TO GIVE***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.

(Note: The First Church honors the diverse languages of faith. Please sing with words that are meaningful to you. Other versions of the Doxology are found in our hymnal, #776-781.)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

O God of all good gifts, we give thanks for the calling to be your church and for the resources you give us to fulfill our calling. Receive these offerings today. May we have the courage and vision to use them well as our foremothers and fathers taught us. May we build for you a community of beauty and service, in Jesus' name. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”

#76

BLESSING

POSTLUDE



YEAR ANNIVERSARY
The First Church in Belfast
—— BUILT IN 1818 ——

Everyone is invited to attend our
Frame Raising Celebration

from noon to 4:00 p.m. today
on the front lawn.

Helpers are needed immediately following the worship to help set up and later to help take
down.

See Todd Hall or Vicki Keller if you can help.

**Happy 200th Anniversary
First Church Sanctuary!**