

**United Church of Christ, First Congregational  
11 West Main St., Norwich NY 13815**

**March 22, 2020**

***A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD***

**PRELUDE**

"Notturmo" by Ottorino Respighi. Jason Handy, pianist

**WELCOME**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Holy God, why is it that we look, but do not see? Bring us again and again into your light until your ways become visible to us, and bear fruit in us. Touch us so that we are utterly changed, a “before” and “after,” a “now” and “then”; that we may also say, “One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” Lord, we believe; help our unbelief. In Christ’s light, we pray. Amen.

***WE PRAISE GOD***

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

God does not see as mortals see. We look on the outward appearance; God looks on the heart.

Jesus, Light of the World, give us eyes to see as you see! Once we lived in darkness, but now— as children of light, we are called to what is good and right and true. Jesus, Light of the World, give us eyes to see as you see!

**\*HYMN** Mary Williams, voice; Bob Oehme, organ  
See next page.

# Be Now My Vision

Ancient Irish text, c. 8th century; transl. Mary E. Byrne, 1905  
Versified by Eleanor H. Hull, 1912; adapt.

*Unison*

1 Be now my vi - sion, O God of my heart;  
2 Be now my wis - dom, and be my true word;  
3 Rich - es I need not, nor life's emp - ty praise,  
4 Sov - ereign of heav - en, my vic - to - ry won,

noth - ing sur - pass - es the love you im - part—  
ev - er with - in me, my soul is as - sured;  
you, my in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways;  
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heav - en's Sun!

You my best thought, by day or by night,  
Moth - er and Fa - ther, you are both to me,  
You and you on - ly are first in my heart,  
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, your pres - ence my light.  
now and for - ev - er your child I will be.  
great God, my trea - sure, may we nev - er part.  
still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Dating from the eighth century or earlier, this Irish hymn was translated into prose by Mary Byrne. It was then versified by Eleanor Hull, author of several books on Irish literature and history. David Evans arranged the Irish melody for this text in 1927.

Tune: SLANE 10.10.9.10.  
Traditional Irish melody  
Harm. David Evans, 1927

## ***A TIME OF SHARING***

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER ('DEBTS')**

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, for ever. Amen.

### **\*THE CONGREGATIONAL GREETING OF PEACE**

**ONE:** May the peace of Christ be with you.

**ALL:** And also with you.

## ***WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD***

### **SCRIPTURE - Psalm 23**

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;

<sup>3</sup> he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff—  
they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
my whole life long.

## **SCRIPTURE** - Ephesians 5:8-14

<sup>8</sup> For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—<sup>9</sup> for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. <sup>10</sup> Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; <sup>13</sup> but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, <sup>14</sup> for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”

**SERMON** Rev. John Steitz

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Silent Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

## ***COMMISSION AND BLESSING***

**\*CLOSING HYMN** Mary Williams, voice; Bob Oehme, organ  
See next page.



## **BLESSING**

May the love of God pursue you,  
the light of Christ enfold you,  
and the Holy Spirit keep you;  
as you dwell in the house of the Lord  
your whole life long.