

United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
May 17, 2020

A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE *Slane*

Traditional Irish Melody

Cheri Oakley, flute Arranged by John Purifoy
Bob Oehme, piano
(recorded October 28, 2018)

WELCOME (Pastor John)

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Miranda Hunter)

Loving God, in whom we live and move and have our being, help us to choose life in you, that we may keep the commands of Jesus, follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and witness to the hope that is within us, sharing Christ's love in the world. **Amen.**

CALL TO WORSHIP (Ellie and Miranda Hunter)

ONE: Bless the Lord, O people, sing!

ALL: Let the sound of praise ring out.

ONE: Come and hear what the Lord has done,

ALL: the Lord who has made everything!

HYMN *Enter, Rejoice and Come In* (Tune: ENTER, REJOICE)

Mary and Pete Williams, voice
Bob Oehme, organ

CHILDREN'S TIME (Linda Oehme)

The Lord's Prayer

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE (Gary Gray)

Acts 17:22-31

²² Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³ For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶ From one ancestor^[a] he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷ so that they would search for God^[a] and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we too are his offspring.'

²⁹ Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰ While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

ANTHEM *Thee We Adore*

UCC Choir (recorded March 4, 2018)

Thomas Aquinas, 1227-1274
trans. James R. Woodford, 1820-1885
Plainchant Tune
arr. Ralph M. Johnson

Thee we adore, O hidden Savior, thee,
Who in thy sacrament art pleased to be;
Both flesh and Spirit in thy presence fail,
Yet here thy presence we devoutly hail.

Fountain of goodness, One of Trinity.
By Your resurrection You have set us free.

Increase our faith and love, that we may know
The hope and peace which from thy presence flow.

O Christ, whom now beneath a veil we see:
May what we thirst for soon our portion be,
To gaze on thee unveiled, and see thy face,
The vision of thy glory and thy grace.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE (Gary Gray)

Acts 2:42-47

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds^[a] to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home^[b] and ate their food with glad and generous^[c] hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

SERMON

ORGAN INTERLUDE

Herzlich tut mich verlange
Bob Oehme, organ

J. G. Walther

PASTORAL PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN *Blessed Be the Tie That Binds* (Tune: DENNIS)

Mary and Pete Williams, voice
Bob Oehme, organ

BLESSING (Pastor John)

May God, who creates, redeems, and sustains,
keep you steadfast in faith, buoyant in hope, and abounding in love.
And the blessing of God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

POSTLUDE *Spiritual*
UCC Handbell Choir (recorded November 18, 2018)

Arr. by Barbara Baltzer Kinyon