

**United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
July 19, 2020**

A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE *Notturmo in G Minor*
Jason Handy, piano

Fanny Mendelssohn

WELCOME (Pastor John)

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Linda Oehme)

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Ericka Tyler)

Sower of the Field,
continue to be gracious with us
that we may ripen into the children of God's realm
and live with you forever,
shining like the sun
in God's heavenly home. Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP (Ericka and Leona Tyler)

ONE: People of God, let us gather to worship and praise God's name.

ALL: I give thanks to you, O God, with my whole heart. I will glorify your name forever!

ONE: For great is your steadfast love for me.

ALL: You have delivered my soul from the depths.

ONE: God says, "Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go."

HYMN *For the Healing of the Nations*

Tune: WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Aidan Sullivan, Mary Williams, Elspeth Hunter, Ericka Tyler, Meena Conant, Jason Handy
Bob Oehme, organ

CHILDREN'S TIME (Linda Oehme)

The Lord's Prayer

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 86:11-17 (Miranda Hunter)

Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.
¹² I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.
¹³ For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.
¹⁴ O God, the insolent rise up against me;
a band of ruffians seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.
¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.
¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the child of your serving girl.
¹⁷ Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

ANTHEM *Shadow and Substance*

Dan Damon, 1989
Tune: TWILIGHT

Elspeth Hunter, Aidan Sullivan, voice
Jason Handy, piano

Shadow and substance, wonder and mystery,
Spellbinding spinner of atoms and earth;
Soul of the cosmos, person and energy,
Source of our being: we sing of your worth.

We are your image, formed in community;
Sisters and brothers of Adam and Eve.
You gave us color, custom and history;
Teach us to honor what others receive.

Naming the nameless Spirit of unity.
Scanning the heavens for signs of your care;
God of the ages, give us humility;
Guide us to mystical union in prayer.

SCRIPTURE - Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 (Miranda Hunter)

²⁴ He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷ And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' ²⁸ He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹ But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." ³⁷ He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

SERMON (Pastor John)

INTERLUDE *Spirit of the Living God*
Mary Williams, voice

Daniel Iverson, 1926

PASTORAL PRAYER (Pastor John)

CLOSING HYMN *Christ Will Come Again* Tune: IDA
Meena Conant, Ericka Tyler, Jason Handy, Aidan Sullivan, Pete Williams, Elspeth Hunter, voice
Bob Oehme, organ

BLESSING

May God our parent, Christ our brother, and the Spirit who gives us breath bless you and keep you this day and forevermore.

POSTLUDE *To God be the Glory*
Bob Oehme, organ

Edward Broughton