

**United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
July 12, 2020**

A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE *Bunessan*

Cheri Willard, flute; Jason Handy, piano

Arr. John Purifoy
Tune: Gaelic Melody

WELCOME (Pastor John)

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Katie Izzo)

Author of Life, Living Word, Holy Breath,
we have stumbled through the week
and groped our way back to this place.
Illumine the steps before us
and write your word on our hearts,
for we carry the name of Jesus
and would walk in the light of his love. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Linda Oehme)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Katie Izzo)

ONE: God's creation delights and astonishes.

ALL: Let the people pause and wonder!

ONE: God, the Creator, has made it all. Let all creation shout and sing!

ALL: Alleluia!

HYMN *Almighty God, Your Word is Cast*

Tune: ST. FLAVIAN

Mary Williams, Jason Handy, Brad Morrison, Meena Conant, Ericka Tyler, Aidan Sullivan, voice
Bob Oehme, organ

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

(Mary Williams, Jennifer Mallozzi, Pastor John, Judy Smith,
Linda Oehme, Gary Gray, Pat Burke, Wade Burke)

COMMUNION HYMN *Jesus, the Joy of Loving Hearts*

Tune: HESPERUS

Meena Conant, Jason Handy, Mary Williams, voice
Bob Oehme, organ

INVITATION:

ONE: In Luke's Gospel we read that Jesus, at the table with two of the disciples, took bread and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, and their eyes were opened, and they recognized the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread.

In the Acts of the Apostles we read that as the church was gathered, often in the homes of the believers, Christians devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and community, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers.

ALL: Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, we gather at your table to know you in the breaking of the bread.

COMMUNION PRAYER:

ONE: Holy God, we praise and bless you for creation and the gift of life and for your abiding love which

brings us close to you, the source of all blessing. We thank you for revealing your will for us in the giving of the law and in the preaching of the prophets.

ONE: We thank you especially that in the fullness of time you sent Jesus, born of Mary, to live in our midst, to share in our suffering, and to accept the pain of death at the hands of those whom Jesus loved. We rejoice that in a perfect victory over the grave you raised Christ with power to become sovereign in your realm. We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to gather your church by which your work may be done in the world and through which we share the gift of eternal life.

ALL: With the faithful in every place and time, we praise with joy your holy name: Holy, holy, holy, God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High.

ONE: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying: "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

PASTOR JOHN: Consecrate, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and wine, and bless us that as we receive them at this table, we may offer you our faith and praise, we may be united with Christ and with one another, and we may continue faithful in all things.

In the strength Christ gives us, we offer ourselves to you, eternal God, and give thanks that you have called us to serve you. Amen.

BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE:

Through the broken bread we participate in the body of Christ.
Through the cup of blessing we participate in the new life Christ gives.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS:

Eat this, for it is the body of Christ, broken for you.
Drink this, for it is the blood of Christ, shed for you.

MUSIC *Bread and Wine*
Jason Handy, piano

by Richard Blake

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

ALL: We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

POST- COMMUNION HYMN *Jesus, the Joy of Loving Hearts*
Meena Conant, Jason Handy, Mary Williams, voice
Bob Oehme, organ

Tune: HESPERUS

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE Psalm 119:105-112 (Bob Oehme)

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.

¹⁰⁶ I have sworn an oath and confirmed it,

to observe your righteous ordinances.
107 I am severely afflicted;
give me life, O LORD, according to your word.
108 Accept my offerings of praise, O LORD,
and teach me your ordinances.
109 I hold my life in my hand continually,
but I do not forget your law.
110 The wicked have laid a snare for me,
but I do not stray from your precepts.
111 Your decrees are my heritage forever;
they are the joy of my heart.
112 I incline my heart to perform your statutes
forever, to the end.

ANTHEM *Thy Word* Words and music by Michael W. Smith and Amy Grant
Choral Setting by Jack Schrader
Pete Williams, Jason Handy, Brad Morrison, Aidan Sullivan, voice
Jason Handy, piano

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and light unto my path.
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

When I feel afraid, think I've lost my way,
still you're there right beside me.
And nothing will I fear as long as you are near.
Please be near me to the end.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and light unto my path.
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
for I am thy God, I will still give thee aid.
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

I will not forget your love for me, and yet,
my heart forever is wandering.
Jesus, be my guide, and hold me to your side;
and I will love you to the end.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and light unto my path.
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

SCRIPTURE Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (Bob Oehme)

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ Let anyone with ears listen!"

¹⁸ "Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

SERMON (Pastor John)

INTERLUDE

In Thee Alone

Pachelbel

Bob Oehme, organ (recorded 4/30/17)

PASTORAL PRAYER (Pastor John)

For Our Families.

For the Human Family.

Contemplative Prayer (Jesus prayer)

(Said while inhaling) Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God

(Said while exhaling) have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silent Prayer

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Mary Williams)

CLOSING HYMN *You Are Salt for the Earth, O People*

Tune: BRING FORTH

Erica Tyler, Leona Tyler, Bonnie Connolly, Pat Burke, Pete Williams, Miranda Hunter, Elspeth Hunter, Mary Williams, John Kolb, Jason Handy, Bob Oehme, organ

BLESSING (Pastor John)

Sisters and brothers, sow the gospel wherever you go—
not judging the soil on which you stand—
for God brings forth fruit from unexpected places.

POSTLUDE *Trumpet Rondo*

by Fenton Rhoden

Bob Oehme, organ