

United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
August 23, 2020

A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE *Pastorale*
Bob Oehme, organ

by Robert Lau

WELCOME (Pastor John)

PRAYER OF THE DAY ¹ (Lilit Danielyan and John Kolb)
Gracious God, though you are known by many names and depicted in many ways,
we know you most fully in Jesus Christ, our Messiah, your Son.
We thank you for forming us into the church, the body of Christ in the world.
Help us to live as he taught us:
loving you,
loving neighbor,
unified in Christ,
using our varied gifts and skills
in the service of ministry,
until all things are transformed
into what is good and acceptable and perfect.
In Christ's name, we ask it. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Mary Williams)

CALL TO WORSHIP ¹ (Lilit Danielyan and John Kolb)
ONE: We give thanks to God with our whole heart.
ALL: We give thanks for God's steadfast love and faithfulness!
ONE: Though high above all things, God sees the lowly.
ALL: Even when we are in deep trouble, God makes us live again.
The love of God lasts forever!

HYMN *Glorious Things of You Are Spoken*

Tune: AUSTRIAN HYMN by Franz Joseph Haydn, 1797
Words John Newton 1779

Meena Conant, Jason Handy,
Pete Williams, Mary Williams, Shannon Richards, Megan Carpenter
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 138 (Jason Handy)
I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart;
before the gods I sing your praise;
²I bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness;
for you have exalted your name and your word
above everything.

³ On the day I called, you answered me,
you increased my strength of soul.
⁴ All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O LORD,
for they have heard the words of your mouth.
⁵ They shall sing of the ways of the LORD,
for great is the glory of the LORD.
⁶ For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly;
but the haughty he perceives from far away.
⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies;
you stretch out your hand,
and your right hand delivers me.
⁸ The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever.
Do not forsake the work of your hands.

SCRIPTURE Matthew 16:13-20 (Jason Handy)

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

ANTHEM *I Love You Lord*²

Words and music by Laurie Klein
Choral setting by Jack Schrader

Aidan Sullivan, Henry Carpenter, Jason Handy, Brad Morrison,
Bob Oehme, Pete Williams.
Jason Handy, piano

I love you, Lord
And I lift my voice
To worship You
Oh, my soul rejoice

Take joy, my King
In what You hear
Let it be a sweet
Sweet sound in Your ear

SCRIPTURE Exodus 1:8-2:10 (Jason Handy)

⁸ Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹ He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. ¹⁰ Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." ¹¹ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. ¹² But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³ The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, ¹⁴ and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ “When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.” ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?” ¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.”

² Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. ² The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. ³ When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

⁵ The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. “This must be one of the Hebrews’ children,” she said. ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” ⁸ Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes.” So the girl went and called the child’s mother. ⁹ Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed it. ¹⁰ When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses because, she said, “I drew him out of the water.”

SERMON (Pastor John)

INTERLUDE *Sweet Hour of Prayer*
Bob Oehme, organ

Tune: SWEET HOUR by William B. Bradbury, 1861

PASTORAL PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN *My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*
Bonnie Connolly, Jason Handy
Ericka Tyler, Elspeth Hunter, Miranda Hunter, Pete Williams
Bob Oehme, organ

Edward Mote, 1834;
Tune: SOLID ROCK BY William B. Bradbury 1863

BLESSING

May God who restores,
Christ who calls,
and the Spirit who empowers
bless you
and increase your joy and gladness,
now and always.

POSTLUDE *Trumpet Rondo*
Bob Oehme, organ

Fenton Groden

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