

United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
September 6, 2020

A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDER *March No. 1*
Meena Conant, organ

J.S. Bach
Arranged by E. Power Biggs

WELCOME (Pastor John)

PRAYER OF THE DAY¹ (Ed Tucker)

Almighty God,
whose ways are far beyond our understanding,
help us to trust your judgments
so that we may do your will
by loving you and one another.
In the name of Jesus we pray. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Linda Oehme, Mary Williams)

CALL TO WORSHIP¹

ONE: Listen! The Lord calls out to us, offering life!

ALL: Teach, lead, turn us to your ways, O God.

ONE: Walk in the paths of God's commandments with delight.

**ALL: Teach, lead, turn us to your ways, O God. With our whole heart, we will
turn to you and live!**

HYMN *Where Charity and Love Prevail*

Latin hymn, 9th century,
Paraphr. By Omer Westerndorf, 1961
Tune: St. Flavian

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 Exodus 12:1-14 - (Brad Morrison)

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: ² This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³ Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. ⁴ If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. ⁷ They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸ They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. ¹⁰ You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹ This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. ¹² For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

SPECIAL MUSIC *Canzonetta From "Eight Duets Opus 39"*
Alyssa Jutting, violin and Allie Rehn, cello

by Rheinhard Gliere

SCRIPTURE Matthew 18:15-20 (Brad Morrison)

¹⁵ “If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

SERMON (Pastor John)

INTERLUDE *Take Courage Now My Feeble Soul*
Meena Conant, organ

John Schopp

A HYMN AS A PRAYER (Mary Williams)
*Spirit of Jesus, If I Love My Neighbor*²

Brian Wren, 1973, rev. 1994

Spirit of Jesus, if I love my neighbor,
Out of my knowledge, leisure, power or wealth,
Open my mind to understand the anger of helplessness
that hates my power to help.

And if, when I have answered with kindness,
My neighbor rises, wakened from despair,
Open my heart to hear the cry for justice
that struggles for the changes that I fear.

If I am hugging safety or possessions,
Uncurl my spirit, as your love prevails,
To join my neighbors, work for liberation, and find...
my freedom at the mark of nails.

PASTORAL PRAYER (Pastor John)

CLOSING HYMN *Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers*

Rogan Powell, 1948

Tune: PLEADING SAVIOR,
Melody from The Christian Lyre, 1831

BLESSING¹

May the Creator who made the light,
the Christ who is the light,
and the Spirit who ignites the light within
abide with you and all creation now and always.

POSTLUDE *Sheep May Safely Graze from Cantata No. 208*³

J.S. Bach

Arr. Donna Gilliam & Mizzy McCaskill

Cheri Oakley, flute and Jason Handy, piano

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