

United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
January 10, 2020

A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE *Epiphany Carol*
Hand Bell Choir

by Linda R. Lamb
Based on the hymn tune DIX

WELCOME (Pastor John)

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Linda Oehme)

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Rita Giangarra)

God of heaven and earth,
we gather in the name of Jesus
to hear your holy Word
and to be immersed in your Spirit.
Speak to us with grace and truth
and pour out your love upon us
so that this temple may resound
with joyful shouts of glory;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

CALL TO WORSHIP (Ericka Tyler)

In the beginning,
God created the heavens and the earth.
The Spirit of God
swept over the face of the waters;
then God said: Let there be light,
and God saw that it was good.
At the beginning of his ministry,
Jesus was baptized by John.
The heavens opened,
and the Spirit descended like a dove;
then God said: This is my beloved Son,
in whom I am well pleased.

HYMN *O Radiant Christ Incarnate Word*

Ruth Duck
Tune: WAREHAM by William Knapp, 1738

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 Genesis 1:1-5 (Ericka Tyler)

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

ANTHEM *Welcome to Our World*
Soloists: Leona Tyler, Jason Handy

Words and Music by Chris Rice
Arranged by Lloyd Larson

Tears are falling, hearts are breaking,
how we need to hear from God.
You've been promised, we've been waiting;
welcome holy child, welcome holy child.

Hope that you don't mind our manger,
how I wish we could have known.
But long awaited holy Stranger,
make yourself at home, please make yourself at home.

Bring your peace into our violence,
bid our hungry souls be filled.
Word now breaking heaven's silence,
welcome to our world, welcome to our world.

Fragile finger sent to heal us,
tender brow prepared for thorn,
tiny heart whose blood will save us, unto us is born.

So, wrap our injured flesh around you,
breathe our air and walk our sod.
Rob our sin and make us holy,
perfect Son of God, perfect Son of God.
Welcome to our world.

SCRIPTURE Mark 1:4-11 (Rita Giangarra)

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

SERMON

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray to the Lord, saying,
Give strength, O Lord, and bless us with peace.
All-glorious God,
maker of heaven and earth,
hear us as we pray:
Give strength, O Lord,
and bless us with peace.

We pray for the world you have made. . . .
Move again over these troubled waters,
steeped in chemicals and stained with blood.
Where carelessness and violence bring chaos
restore order, goodness, and life.
Give strength, O Lord,
and bless us with peace.

We pray for the church you have redeemed. . . .
Renew in us the gifts of your Spirit
and the call to Christian discipleship.
Where history and heresy have divided us,
make us one in the baptism we share.
Give strength, O Lord,
and bless us with peace.

We pray for the peoples you have created. . . .
Give to the leaders of all nations
the wisdom to know what is good.
Where people are poor and hungry
provide justice and daily bread.
Give strength, O Lord,
and bless us with peace.

We pray for the loved ones you have given us. . . .
Bless our families, friends, and neighbors;
keep them safe from trouble and danger.
Where there is sorrow, sickness, or suffering
send your Spirit of comfort and healing.
Give strength, O Lord,
and bless us with peace.

All this we pray in the name of the Lord Jesus,
whose voice is our strength and salvation,
whose breath is the Spirit of peace. **Amen.**

BLESSING

Go forth in the light and love of God, giving glory to God in all that you do.