

**United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
February 28, 2021 – Second Sunday in Lent**

PRELUDE *Song*
Bob Oehme, organ

by Flor Peeters

WELCOME (Pastor John)

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Linda Oehme)

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Rita Giangarra)

God, your Son Jesus Christ bore the cross for our salvation
and was raised from the dead for the redemption of the world.
Give us the courage to take up our cross and follow him
that through his grace we may accept the cost of faithful discipleship
and receive the joy of everlasting life with Christ,
who lives with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

CALL TO WORSHIP (Ericka Tyler)

Christ died for our trespasses but was raised for our justification.
Thanks be to God.

HYMN *What a Covenant*

Elisha A. Hoffman, 1887
Tune: LEANING by Anthony J. Showalter, 1887

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 (Rita Giangarra)

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ² And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³ Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴ "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵ No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷ I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai [*SAY-rai*] your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

SPECIAL MUSIC *What Wondrous Love Is This?*
Hand Bell Choir

Arranged by Kevin McChesney
based on a traditional "Southern Harmony" tune

SCRIPTURE (Ericka Tyler)

Mark 8:31-38

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, ^[a] will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words ^[b] in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

SERMON (Pastor John)

INTERLUDE *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*
Bob Oehme, organ

Tune: CONVERSE by Charles Converse
Arranged by James Boeringer

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's promises,
let us pray for the world and for our needs, saying,
Holy God, hear our prayer.
God, you blessed Abraham and Sarah
and promised to make them the ancestors
of many nations.
In Jesus Christ you have opened your covenant
to everyone who lives by faith in you.
For all the descendants of Abraham and Sarah,
both Jews and Christians,
that they may trust in your promise,
dwell together in peace, and be a sign of your abiding love,
Holy God, **hear our prayer.**

God, Jesus your Son called disciples to follow his way
of sacrificial love.

For all pastors and teachers,
that they lead the church by humble example,
take up their cross in faithful service,
and live for the sake of the gospel,
Holy God, **hear our prayer.**

God, your reign encompasses all the earth,
though many do not remember your
gracious sovereignty.

For peace among the nations
and for integrity within governments,

that your will be done on earth as in heaven,
Holy God, **hear our prayer.**

God, you hear the cry of the poor,
and you satisfy the hungry with good things.
For the poor and the oppressed,
that they may find deliverance,
and for all who voluntarily take up the cross of self-denial
to serve the poor and alleviate human misery,
Holy God, **hear our prayer.**

God, you know the needs of the afflicted
and you hear their cries.
For those who suffer illness of mind or body,
that they may find relief from suffering
and be restored to wholeness,
Holy God, **hear our prayer.**

Grant these prayers, Holy God, by your grace.
Stir up in us the will to seek out your kingdom
with the dedication of our lives in ministry to the world,
for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ,
through whom we pray. **Amen.**

BLESSING

Disciples of Jesus,
do not shun the way of the cross,
but follow wherever our Lord may lead.

POSTLUDE *To God All Praise and Glory*
Bob Oehme, organ

Roger C. Wilson
Based on MITT FREUDEN ZART
From Bohemian Brethren, 1566

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