

United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
February 7, 2021

A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE *I Trust, O Christ, In You Alone*
Bob Oehme, organ

Johann Pachelbel
Tune: ALLEIN ZU DIR

WELCOME (Pastor John)

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Linda Oehme)

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Katie Izzo)
Gracious God, you call us to follow Christ
and spread the good news of your love for all people.
Help us to become all things to all people
that we might reach many with your good news. **Amen.**

CALL TO WORSHIP (Judy Smith)
Have we not known? Have we not heard?
Has it not been told to us since the beginning?
Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.

HYMN *Precious Lord, Take My Hand*

Words and Music by Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932
Tune: PRECIOUS LORD

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 (Katie Izzo)

Isaiah 40:21-31

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

²² It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;

²³ who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

²⁴ Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,

when he blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

²⁵ To whom then will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;

because he is great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.

²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,

“My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God”?

²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

²⁹ He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.

³⁰ Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;

³¹ but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

ANTHEM *There is a Balm in Gilead*
Bell Choir

Arranged by Ron Mallory

There is a balm in Gilead
to make the wounded whole,
there is a balm in Gilead
to heal the sin-sick soul.

Sometimes I feel discouraged
and think my work's in vain,
but then the Holy Spirit
revives my soul again. Refrain

If you cannot preach like Peter,
if you cannot pray like Paul,
you can tell the love of Jesus
and say, "He died for all." Refrain

SCRIPTURE (Judy Smith)

Mark 1:29-39

²⁹ As soon as they^[a] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹ He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³² That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴ And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵ In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷ When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸ He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹ And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

SERMON (Pastor John)

INTERLUDE *Amazing Grace*

Leona Tyler and Jason Handy, piano

(Leona is recipient of a UCC Music Lesson Scholarship)

Early American Melody

Arr. by Nancy and Randall Faber

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (Pastor John)

God of the universe,
you sit above the circle of the earth,
and so we pray for the oceans and mountains,
inland water and the air we breathe.
Save and protect them, we pray.

Since the beginning of our faith,
we have looked to you to gather the outcasts,
heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds.
So we pray for the poor of the world,
the sick and the lonely.

God, you build up Jerusalem,
and so we pray for our country,
for all the countries of the world,
and for all of our leaders.
May we all come to see that your delight
is not in the strength of the military
but in those who hope in your steadfast love.

How good it is to sing praises to you, O God.
We pray for your church,
here and around the world.
Empower us to go from town to town,
proclaiming the message of Christ.

Everlasting God, Creator of the ends of the earth,
we bless you, for you are gracious.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING (Pastor John)

May the Spirit of Jesus
take your hand and lift you up
so that you may be of service to others.

POSTLUDE *March in G*
Bob Oehme, organ

by Henry Smart
Arranged by Frank Ritter