

**United Church of Christ, First Congregational  
Norwich, New York  
June 6, 2021 – COMMUNION SUNDAY**

**PRELUDE** *Canon, Fuguetta and March on Ebenezer*  
Bob Oehme, organ

by William Gudger

**WELCOME** (Pastor John)

**PRAYER OF THE DAY** (Ed Tucker)

God of days,  
we praise your name, for your grace sustains us.  
We wait for you, Lord, for your word strengthens us.  
Our outer nature is wasting away day by day,  
but our inner nature is being renewed by your  
daily bread.  
Grant us the eyes to see what cannot be seen and to  
gaze on what is eternal.  
May we revel in your work  
and be a visible witness of your invisible kingdom.  
In Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Linda Oehme)

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (Jessica Posner)

O give thanks to the Lord with your whole heart.  
**On the day I called, you answered me.**  
God's steadfast love endures forever.  
**Thanks be to God!**

**HYMN** *I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me* (#474 )

African-American Spiritual  
Tune: I'M SO GLAD

**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** (Jessica Posner)

2 Corinthians 4:7 - 5:1

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. <sup>8</sup>We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup>always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. <sup>11</sup>For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup>So death is at work in us, but life in you.

<sup>13</sup>But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and so we speak, <sup>14</sup>because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. <sup>15</sup>Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

<sup>16</sup>So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, <sup>18</sup>because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

**5** For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

**ANTHEM** *We Live by Faith and Not by Sight* (#256)

Henry Alford, 1844  
Tune: Dunlaps' Creek, Samuel McFarland, c. 1816

We live by faith and not by sight;  
no gracious words we hear  
From Christ who spoke as non e'er spoke,  
who still we know is near.

We may not touch Christ's hands and side,  
nor follow where Christ trod;  
But in confessing we rejoice:  
our Savior and our God!

Help then, O Christ, our unbelief;  
and may our faith abound  
To call on you when you are near  
and seek where you are found:

That when our life of faith is done,  
in realms of clearer light  
We may behold you as you are  
with full and endless sight.

**SCRIPTURE** (EdTucker)

Mark 3: 20-35

<sup>20</sup> and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. <sup>21</sup> When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." <sup>22</sup> And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." <sup>23</sup> And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? <sup>24</sup> If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. <sup>25</sup> And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. <sup>26</sup> And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. <sup>27</sup> But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered. <sup>28</sup> "Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; <sup>29</sup> but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— <sup>30</sup> for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."  
<sup>31</sup> Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. <sup>32</sup> A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters<sup>[a]</sup> are outside, asking for you." <sup>33</sup> And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" <sup>34</sup> And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! <sup>35</sup> Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

**SERMON** (Pastor John)

**INTERLUDE** *Adagio*  
Jason Handy, piano

W. A. Mozart  
arranged by Lani Smith

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** (Pastor John)

Jesus says this is a house of prayer.  
God, who is in the midst of us, hears us even before we say a word.  
Thus God is waiting to hear from us and wants to work through our prayers.  
As we pray, I invite you to name either aloud or silently  
particular places or people that enter your mind.  
When I pray, "Come, come, O Holy Spirit,"  
respond with "hear our prayer."

O God in whose mercy we find refuge and strength,  
we offer our petitions to you.  
Guide us by your Spirit that our prayers may serve your will.  
Hear our prayers of adoration and thanksgiving. . . .  
*[silence]*  
Come, come, O Holy Spirit,  
**hear our prayer.**

Hear our prayers of longing for God's shalom. . . .

*[silence]*

Come, come, O Holy Spirit,  
**hear our prayer.**

Hear our prayers of the needs of the community. . . .

*[silence]*

Come, come, O Holy Spirit,  
**hear our prayer.**

Hear our prayers for interpersonal reconciliation. . . .

*[silence]*

Come, come, O Holy Spirit,  
**hear our prayer.**

Hear our prayers for the world and for personal struggles  
with temptations and evil. . . .

*[silence]*

Come, come, O Holy Spirit,  
**hear our prayer.**

All these things we pray in the name of Christ Jesus,  
who points us to the saving grace  
and the redeeming power in us. **Amen.**

### ***THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER***

#### **INVITATION:**

ONE: In Luke's Gospel we read that Jesus, at the table with two of the disciples, took bread and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, and their eyes were opened, and they recognized the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread. In the Acts of the Apostles we read that as the church was gathered, often in the homes of the believers, Christians devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and community, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers.

**ALL: Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, we gather at your table to know you in the breaking of the bread.**

#### **COMMUNION PRAYER:**

ONE: Holy God, we praise and bless you for creation and the gift of life and for your abiding love which brings us close to you, the source of all blessing. We thank you for revealing your will for us in the giving of the law and in the preaching of the prophets.

ONE: We thank you especially that in the fullness of time you sent Jesus, born of Mary, to live in our midst, to share in our suffering, and to accept the pain of death at the hands of those whom Jesus loved. We rejoice that in a perfect victory over the grave you raised Christ with power to become sovereign in your realm. We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to gather your church by which your work may be done in the world and through which we share the gift of eternal life.

**ALL: With the faithful in every place and time, we praise with joy your holy name: Holy, holy, holy, God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High.**

ONE: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying: "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

**PASTOR JOHN:** Consecrate, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and wine, and bless us that as we receive them at this table, we may offer you our faith and praise, we may be united with Christ and with one another, and we may continue faithful in all things.

In the strength Christ gives us, we offer ourselves to you, eternal God, and give thanks that you have called us to serve you. Amen.

#### **BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE:**

Through the broken bread we participate in the body of Christ.  
Through the cup of blessing we participate in the new life Christ gives.

**SHARING THE ELEMENTS:**

Eat this, for it is the body of Christ, broken for you.  
Drink this, for it is the blood of Christ, shed for you.

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:**

**ALL: We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

**BLESSING** (Pastor John)

May the steadfast love of God give you hope,  
the redeeming power of Christ give you courage,  
the abiding presence of Spirit give you strength,  
as you serve the will of God  
this day and every day.

**POSTLUDE** *Hymn to Joy*  
Bob Oehme, organ

Beethoven  
Arranged by Albert L. Travis

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