

United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
August 1, 2021 - Communion

PRELUDE *Rhosymedre*
Jason Handy, organ

founded Ralph Vaughan Williams
Arranged by Robert Lau

WELCOME (Pastor John)

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Ericka Tyler)

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Sovereign. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Linda Oehme)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Katie Izzo)

ONE: This is the day that God has made;

ALL: let us rejoice and be glad in it.

ONE: O Come, let us worship with glad and open hearts;

ALL: let us give thanks and praise to God, our Maker.

HYMN *All Things Bright and Beautiful* (#31)

Cecil F. Alexander, 1848
Tune: ROYAL OAK,
Adapted by Martin Shaw, 1915

All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
All thing wise and wonderful,
our dear God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colors,
and made their tiny wings.

The purple-headed mountain,
the river running by,
The sunset and the morning that brightens up the sky.

The cold wind in the winter
the pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
God made them every one.

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.

AFFIRMING OUR FAITH (Jason Handy and Brad Morrison)

United Church of Christ Statement of Faith in the form of a doxology

ONE: We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit,

ALL: God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

ONE: You call the worlds into being,

ALL: create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

ONE: You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

ALL: You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

ONE: In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot,

ALL: conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

ONE: You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,

ALL: creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

ONE: You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others,

ALL: to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

ONE: You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,

ALL: courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

ONE: Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.

ALL: Amen.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE (Ericka Tyler)

2 Samuel 11: 26 - 12:13a

²⁶When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. ²⁷When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son.

But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD, **12** ¹and the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had very many flocks and herds; ³but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meager fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him." ⁵Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; ⁶he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

⁷Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; ⁸I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. ⁹Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. ¹¹Thus says the LORD: I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this very sun. ¹²For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." ¹³David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."

SCRIPTURE (Katie Izzo)

John 6:24-35

²⁴So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

²⁵When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" ²⁶Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." ²⁸Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" ²⁹Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." ³⁰So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?" ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³²Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is that which^[a] comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

³⁵Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

ANTHEM *Break Now the Bread of Life (#321)*

Mary A. Lathbury, 1877
Tune: BREAD OF LIFE
by William F. Sherwin, 1877

Break now the bread of life, Savior, to me,
as you once broke the loaves beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page I seek you, Lord;
my spirit yearns for you, O Living Word.

Bless now the truth, dear Christ, to me, to me,
As you once blessed the bread by Galilee;
Then shall all bondage cease, all shackles fall,
and I shall find my peace, my all in all.

SERMON (Pastor John)

INTERLUDE *Bread and Wine*
Jason Handy, piano

by Richard Blake

A LITANY OF INTERCESSION (NCH #878) (Pastor John)

- ONE: Gracious God, who loves all and forgets none, we bring to you our prayers for all your children.
For all whom we love, watch over, and care for;
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For all prisoners and captives, and all who suffer from oppression, that you will manifest your mercy toward them,
and make all hearts as merciful as your own.
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For all who bear the cross of suffering, the sick in body or mind;
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For all those who are troubled by the sin or suffering of those they love;
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For all who are absorbed in their own grief, that they may be raised to share the sorrows of others, and know the
saving grace of the cross;
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For all perplexed by the deeper questions of life and overshadowed with doubt, that your light may guide them;
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For all who are tried by temptations or weakness, that your mercy maybe their strength.
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For all who are lonely and sad in the midst of others' joy, that they may know you as their friend and comforter;
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For the infirm and aged and for all who are dying, that they may find their strength in you and light at the evening
time;
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: For all forgotten by us, but dear to you;
- ALL: Hear us, O God.**
- ONE: O compassionate God, hear our prayers, answer them according to your will, and make us channels of your
infinite grace, through Jesus Christ we pray.
- ALL: 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 *In Highest Majesty*
Jason Handy, piano

by David Paxton

Permission to reprint, podcast, and / or stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #735996-A. All rights reserved.

Prayers, Call to Worship, Blessing are reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion* © 2015