

**United Church of Christ, First Congregational  
Norwich, New York  
July 18, 2021**

**PRELUDE** *God is our Refuge and Our Strength*  
Bob Oehme, organ

Paul Davis

**WELCOME** (Pastor John)

**PRAYER OF THE DAY** (Gwendolyn Breese)  
Steadfast God, you sent Jesus as witness  
that no one is outside your healing reach.  
Help us to trust in the abundance of your love  
as we share your compassion and generosity  
wherever we may go,  
with you, in Christ, and through the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Linda Oehme)

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (Judy Smith)  
ONE: Beautiful are the words of God!  
**ALL: Beautiful also are the skins of God's people!**  
ONE: Beautiful is the mind of God!  
**ALL: Beautiful also are the hopes of God's people!**  
ONE: Beautiful is the heart of God!  
**ALL: Beautiful also are the souls of God's people!**  
ONE: God made the heavens and the earth!  
**ALL: To God be the glory for the things God has done.**

**HYMN** *O God Our Help In Ages Past (#25)*

by Isaac Watts, 1719  
Tune: ST. ANNE, William Croft, 1708

**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**

***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 your 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** (Gwendolyn Breese)

2 Samuel 7:1 - 14a

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup>the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." <sup>3</sup>Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

<sup>4</sup>But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" <sup>8</sup>Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>12</sup>When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup>I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings.

**ANTHEM** *There Is A Balm In Gilead*  
Hand Bell Choir

Arranged by Ron Mallory

### **SCRIPTURE** (Judy Smith)

Mark 6:30 - 34, 53- 56

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup>He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. <sup>32</sup>And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. <sup>33</sup>Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. <sup>34</sup>As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

<sup>53</sup>When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret [ghen-nay-sar-et'] and moored the boat. <sup>54</sup>When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, <sup>55</sup>and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. <sup>56</sup>And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

**SERMON** (Pastor John)

**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 mist 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.**

**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.