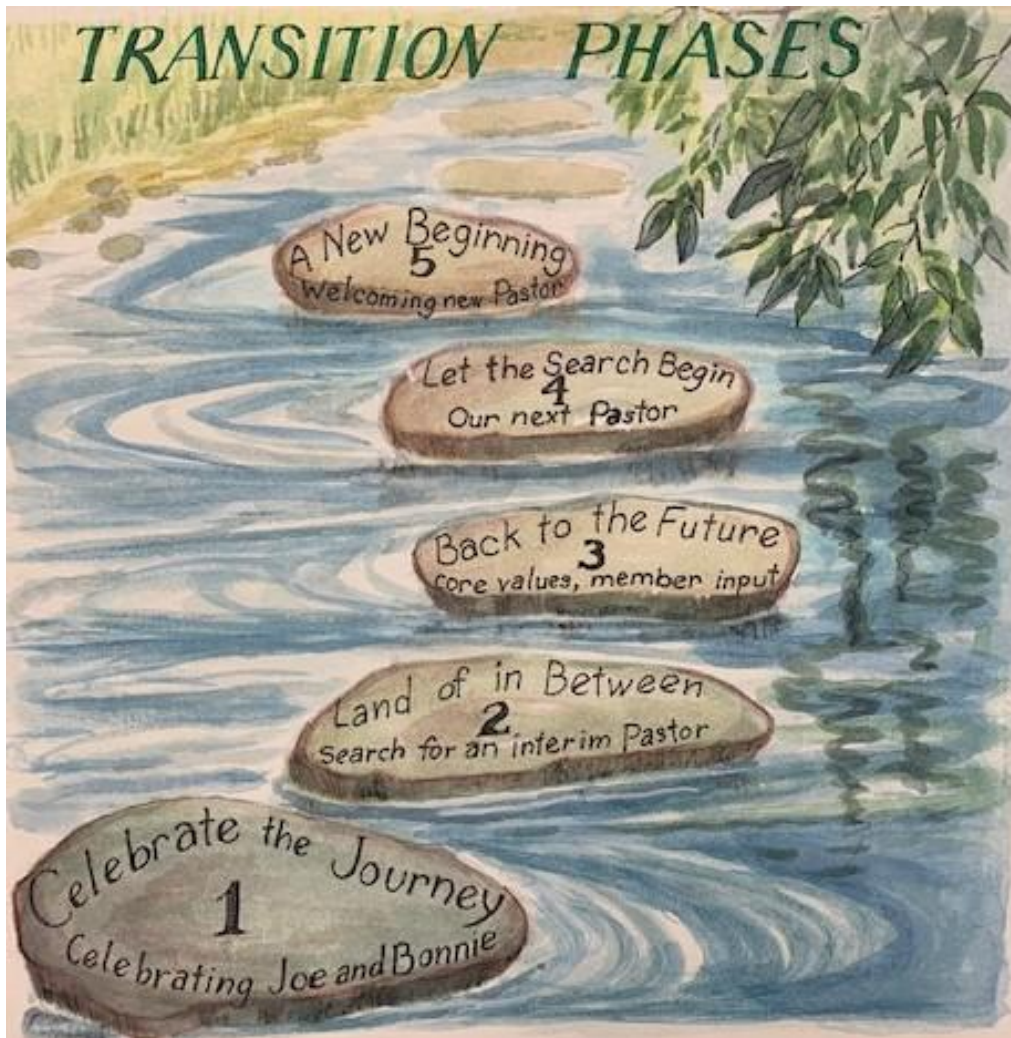


**United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
November 14, 2021 – In Person and Live Stream,
10:00a.m.
Rev. John Steitz**



By Judy Smith

United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
November 14, 2021 – In Person and Live Stream, 10:00a.m.
Rev. John Steitz

PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE

[PAUSE]

WELCOME (Pastor John)

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Liturgist)

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP (Liturgist)

LITURGIST: Please join me in the Call to Worship.

ONE: Let our hearts exult in the Lord;

ALL: our strength is exalted in God.

ONE: Let our mouths be ever fixed in praise;

ALL: God has given us the victory.

ONE: There is no Holy One like the Lord;

ALL: there is no Rock like our God. Praise the Lord!

[PAUSE]

INVOCATION (Pastor John)

Merciful God,
You hear our cries and honor our tears.
Stir in us such a passion during worship
that we might vow to give you our best,
for the glory of your name. Amen.

OPENING HYMN *O My Soul Bless Your Creator* (#13) Anon
Tune: STUTTGART, Attrib. to Christian F. Witt,
Psalmodia Sacra, Gotha, 1715

TIME OF SHARING

CHILDREN'S MOMENT (Linda Oehme)
The Lord's Prayer

BLESSING OF PEACE (Pastor John)
ONE: May the Peace of Jesus Christ be with you.
ALL: And also with you.

OFFERTORY PLEDGE (Pastor John)
ONE: We love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.
ALL: We pledge our whole selves to God.
ONE: We love our neighbors as ourselves.
ALL: We pledge to do justice as Christ's ambassadors of reconciliation.
ONE: We love one another as Jesus loves us.
ALL: We pledge to be and become Christ's Beloved Community in our life together.
ONE: We make disciples by teaching and modeling how to follow Jesus' Way of Love.
ALL: We pledge to be Jesus' disciples sharing Jesus' Way of Love in the way we live our lives and practice our faith.

*We will not be passing the offering plates.
Instead, they are located at both doors for your
convenience as you enter or exit the Nave.*

TRANSITION COMMITTEE CELEBRATION AND RECOGNITION

The Transition Journey

Linda Oheme and Mary Williams

Celebration and Recognition

Pastor: The Transition Committee was formed to guide the congregation during the first three phases of our Transition Journey: Celebrate the Journey, Land of In- Between, and Back to the Future. They have been faithful and dedicated throughout this liminal period.

ALL: We celebrate and thank the Transition Committee for their steadfast faith and dedication. You have helped us to celebrate Pastor Joe and Bonnie Connolly's ministry with us, searched for and secured an intentional interim minister, and developed our church profile.

Pastor: We especially give thanks that God has guided us through this Transition Journey during a time of pandemic and the global and societal transitions emerging from this ongoing transformation. We are thankful that as the pandemic moved all local churches to new ways of doing ministry, God's Spirit guided the Transition Committee to understand Who We Are, Who Is Our Neighbor, and Who Is God Calling Us To Be.

ALL: God is faithful! The Transition Committee has been faithful! Thanks and Praises Be to God!

Pastor: Our Core Values statement emerged during this liminal time of global pandemic. We have been led by God's Spirit and the Transition Committee to discern and affirm as a faith community our Core Values: Spiritually Alive, Neighborhood Engagement, Loving Church Family, and Making Disciples.

ALL: Empowered by God's Spirit we affirm that we Love God with all of our hearts, souls, mind and strength; we Love neighbor as ourselves; we Love one another as Jesus loves us; and we seek to teach and practice Jesus' Way of Love as his disciples. During this Transition Journey we have been called to affirm our faith as being grounded in God's Love.

Presentation of the Church Profile.

Linda: On behalf of the Transition Committee I present to the congregation the completed church profile. (Hands church profile to John Kolb.)

John: On behalf of the congregation I receive the church profile. The Executive Council has reviewed and approved this church profile.

Closure of the Work of the Transition Committee.

Pastor: The work of the Transition Committee is now complete. We celebrate your ministry. We declare you released from your responsibilities and duties. Thank you!

ALL: Thank you for the work you have done to guide us through the first phrases in our Transition Journey.

Pastor: We give thanks to God for leading and sustaining us as we have moved through the early phases of the Transition Journey. God has sustained us through celebrating our past, being faithful in the liminal land of in-between, and moving us forward toward the future God is calling us into.

ALL: We give thanks to God for the spiritual discernment and mission clarity that has emerged during our Transition Journey. Thanks and Praises Be to God!

Pastor: We give thanks to God to the Transition Committee for the work you have done. You have been faithful, you have been dedicated, and you have been a blessing for us as a congregation. We now ask God for continued guidance as the work of the Search Committee begins.

ALL: To the Transition Committee we give you our thanks for your faithfulness and dedication. To the Search Committee we pledge our continuing prayers. In everything we give Thanks and praises to God. Amen.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING 1 Samuel 2:1-10

LITURGIST: Hear now this reading from 1st Samuel, Chapter 2, verses 1 through 10.

1 Hannah prayed and said, "My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in my God. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in my victory.

2 "There is no Holy One like the Lord, no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God. **3** Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. **4** The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble gird of strength.

5 Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry are fat with spoil. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. **6** The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down Sheol and raises up. **7** The Lord makes poor and makes rich; he brings low, he also exalts. **8** He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and on them he has set the world. **9** "He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness; for not by might does one prevail. **10** The Lord! His adversaries shall be shattered; the Most High will thunder in heaven. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king, and exalt the power of his anointed."

SPECIAL MUSIC “*Agnus Dei*,”

Georges Bizet

Alexander Bonner, tenor and Jason

Handy, piano

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,

(Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,)

Miserere, nobis,

(Have mercy on us,)

Dona nobis pacem.

(Grant us peace.)

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 13: 1-8

LITURGIST: This reading is from the Gospel according to Mark, Chapter 13, verses 1 through 8.

13 As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!” **2** Then Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.” **3** When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, **4** “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?” **5** Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. **6** Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’^[a] and they will lead many astray. **7** When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. **8** For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

SERMON (Pastor John)

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

INTERLUDE

AFFIRMING OUR FAITH

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

LITURGIST: Please join me in the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith as a doxology found in the bulletin.

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.

SHARING OF JOYS/CONCERNS (Pastor John)

(Joys and prayers requests should be written on the prayer slips as you enter the Nave prior to the start of worship.)

PASTORAL PRAYER (Pastor John)

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

CLOSING HYMN *Jesus Shall Reign (#300)* Isaac Watts, 1719; Alt.
Tune: DUKE STREET L.M., Attrib. to John Hatton, c. 1793

BLESSING (pastor John)

May the Lord continue to bless and keep you,
this day and forevermore

POSTLUDE *Epilogue,*

Lani Smith

Please remain seated until the usher dismisses you.

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Liturgist: Bob Oehme
Greeter: Pete Williams
Usher: Linda Oehme

Flowers: Oehme Family

Questions for Reflection

What can you do to encourage another person? What can you do to make your prayers and worship more passionate?

Household Prayer: Morning

Dear God,
empower me to encourage others for the glory of your name as I go throughout my day.
In Jesus' name I ask. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Dear God,
Thank you for keeping me throughout the day.
Grant me a night of peaceful rest, and put a song of praise in my heart when I wake in the morning.
In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHENANGO COUNTY COVID-19 NUMBERS

| This week (11/9) | | Last week (11/3) |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Active Cases | 120 | 94 |
| Quarantines | 297 | 278 |
| Hospitalizations | 5 | 5 |
| Deaths | 86 | 86 |

CHENANGO CO. VACCINATION RATE (people 18+)

as of 11/04/21 – 70.4% with at least one dose

SIGN UP- If you would like to offer the altar flowers, or be an usher, greeter, or liturgist please sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway, or contact Linda Oehme or the church office. Thank you.

SHARING OF JOYS/CONCERNS - Please fill out the prayer request form in the hallway as you enter the Nave prior to the service.

HELP US FILL A BOX WITH SOCKS DURING THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER. SOCKS are items that are in great demand by homeless people, and are especially needed in winter. These donations will be distributed through Helping Hands. Look for the SOCK BOX in church during November. Thank you for your help!

THANKSGIVING PROJECT DONATIONS NEEDED. Non-perishable food (no glass containers) to include with fixings for a Thanksgiving meal - stuffing, gravy, canned vegetables, soup, cranberry sauce, pie crust mix, pie filling, etc. Monetary donations are also welcome, as we will be giving certificates for a turkey or ham. You can bring food donations to the church on Sundays during worship. Donations can be made out to the church with "Thanksgiving" in the memo line. Thank you!

LOVE GOD, LOVE NEIGHBOR - Join us on Mondays to show our support, love and affirmation of those in the LGBTQ+ community by

posting a rainbow selfie on your social media account with #rainbowmondays.

WE SUPPORT MUSIC EDUCATION – If you need help affording music lessons, consider applying for a Music Scholarship. Applications are available from the church office. For more information, talk with Meena Conant, Music Committee Chair.

IF YOU NEED HELP with something, please reach out to the church office, a Deacon or Pastor John. We're here to help each other.

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HOLIDAY FUNDRAISERS FOR THE PLACE

Cookie Kit - \$15.00

Tickets are available through December 11. Pick up Nov. 30 - Dec. 18 at Cottage Bakery 17-19 S Broad St., Norwich

Fraser Fir wreaths - \$30.00 10" ring (25" tip to tip)

Red Poinsettias - \$15.00 in a 6" pot

Pick up Nov. 24 - Dec. 15 at Pires Flower Basket, 216 N Broad St.

Tickets are available at The Place and from any Board member (Warren Nash, April Reese, Stephanie Boland, John Axtell, Brianna Curley, Deb Sanderson, Stephanie Meek, Sandy Smith, Lois LoPresti, and **Norma Kinney**).

For more information, email Sharon Vesely, Executive Director at execdirector@theplacenorwich.com or call (607) 336-9696 ext. 103.

SAVE THE DATE - Decorating the Church for Advent on December 4th at 10:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome. Masks required.

CALENDAR

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14

9:00 a.m. Sunday School, on Zoom

10:00 a.m. Worship, Nave

11:30 a.m. Bell Choir, Chapel

3:00 p.m. Cantata Rehearsal, Zoom

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15

10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle on Zoom

1:30 p.m. K. Given Tutoring, kitchen

2:00 p.m. E. Fischer Lessons, upstairs

3:00 p.m. Tai Chi, Founders' Rm.

6:30 p.m. TC Garden Club, Founder's Rm.

7:00 p.m. Search Committee, Zoom

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

1:00 p.m. Quilting Circle, Kitchen

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle on Zoom

3:30 p.m. J. Handy Lessons, upstairs

6:15 p.m. Democratic Committee, Founder's Rm, Kitchen

7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal on Zoom

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

1:00 p.m. Piecemakers Meeting, Founders' Rm.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

9:00 a.m. Thanksgiving bag Prep, Founder's Rm

10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle, on Zoom

3:30 p.m. J. Handy Lessons, upstairs

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20

12:00 p.m. Paul Flores Memorial Service, Nave

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

- 9:00 a.m. Sunday School, on Zoom
- 10:00 a.m. Worship, Nave
- 11:30 a.m. Bell Choir, Chapel
- 1:30 p.m. ONA Community Group, Mayflower Rm
ONA Youth Group, Founder's Rm
- 3:00 p.m. Cantata Rehearsal, Zoom

The Chenango Muslim Community meets upstairs daily at
9:30 p.m. and Fridays at 1:30 p.m.

Covid-19 Safety Protocols

(September 2021)

- Face coverings will be required upon entry and exit to the building.
(Masks will be available.)
- Social distancing of 6 feet (minimum) will be observed at all times.
- Physical contact with those outside of your household should be avoided.
- Everyone will be required to check in for attendance with the usher upon arrival.
- Please consider coming early to allow time for signing and for a slower entry into the Nave due to social distancing.
- At this time we are not able to accommodate childcare for children of any age. Children will remain in the Sanctuary and are asked to stay seated with their family/household.

- Seating in the Nave will look very different. Our ushers may assist in seating you. Please keep in mind that you may not be able to sit in the pew you are accustomed to and that your seat may change from week to week.
- The bulletins will contain everything you will need to follow along with the service (scripture, hymns, readings etc). They will be located in the pews and will be an indication as to where you can sit upon entry into the Nave.
- Currently, due to State and Conference guidelines, we will be unable to sing along with the hymns, but we do encourage you to hum along with them.
- Passing of the peace will be suspended at this time.
- Hearing assistive devices will be available for those that need them. You will receive the headset in a bag. Please write your name on the bag and store the headset in the same bag for use during future services.
- Offerings will be collected by placing your envelope in an offering plate upon entering or exiting the Nave.
- Once the service is over, we will leave the building in an orderly manner to allow for social distancing. The ushers will dismiss the congregation row by row.
- Coffee Hour and other such gatherings will remain suspended until further notice.
- One person at a time will be allowed in the restrooms (unless family group).
- Hand sanitizing stations are located near the Nave entrance hall and in each pew. Please wash your hands or use sanitizing stations frequently.

- We ask that if you are not feeling well and /or may be exhibiting cold or flu-like symptoms, that you refrain from attending until you feel better.
- Prayer requests can be emailed to the church office by Friday. On Sunday morning, we will utilize the prayer basket for prayer requests.
- Disinfection Plan: our Custodian will disinfect all high touch surfaces, including rest rooms and seating areas, before and/or after weekly services.