

The United Church of Christ
First Congregational
Norwich, New York





**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
Norwich, New York 13815**



An Open and Affirming Church

January 9, 2022

10:00 a.m.

PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE *Improvisation on "Divinum Mysterium"* David Lasky

WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: The voice of God resounds upon the water.

ALL: The Spirit of the Lord hovers over the stream.

ONE: The Son of God is named, "Beloved."

ALL: And all who worship shout out, "Glory!"

ONE: Ascribe to the Lord majesty and strength.

ALL: Let us worship God in holy splendor.

INVOCATION

OPENING HYMN

Breathe on Me, Breath of God (#292) Edwin Hatch, 1886

Tune: TRENTHAM by Robert Jackson, 1894

TIME OF SHARING

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

The Lord's Prayer

Large Print Bulletins are available from the ushers.

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PASTORAL BLESSING OF PEACE

ONE: May the Peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

OFFERTORY PLEDGE

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.*

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.

ALL: 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.

ONE: We rejoice that in a perfect victory over the grave you raised Christ with power to become sovereign in your realm.

ALL: 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. 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."

ALL: 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."

ONE: 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

(Please lift up your elements as we break bread and pour wine)

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

(Open and partake of the elements at this time.)

COMMUNION MUSIC

Brightest and Best

Tune: WALKER
Southern Harmony, 1855
Harm. Jonathan McNair, 1994

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Acts 8:14-17

¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵ The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit ¹⁶ (for as yet the Spirit had not come[□] upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). ¹⁷ Then Peter and John[□] laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with[□] the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

SPECIAL MUSIC

Spirit of Comfort, Spirit of Hope Words by Douglas Nolan
Tune by David Angerman and Douglas Nolan

Lord, You are God, in the tempest and the gale.
Lord, You alone are God and Your mercies never fail.
For Your love is everlasting And Your peace can calm our fears,
Lord, Your grace is like an ark sailing through a sea of tears.

Spirit Holy, come and fill this house with grace.
Spirit, Worthy, we are one in Your embrace.
Spirit, come inhabit all our praise.
As we worship and we pray, help us Lord, to find our way.
Spirit, come renew our hearts to day.

Spirit, Holy, You are faithful, You are true.
Jesus, Worthy, all our joy begins with You.
Spirit, come empower all we do.
Make this church a welcome place
filled with mercy, love and grace.
Spirit, come refresh our faith today.

Come, Spirit, shower us with promise and with love.
Restore our lives, refresh our faith.
Stretch out Your rainbow of assurance before us.
Descend with power. Descend with power.
Descend with power on this place.

Spirit, Holy, come and fill this house with grace.
Spirit, Worthy, we are one in Your embrace.
Spirit, come inhabit all our praise.
Breathe in us a mighty wind;
help this church to live again.

Spirit, come restore our hope today.
Spirit come restore our hope.
Spirit, come refresh our faith.
Spirit come renew our hearts today.

SERMON

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

INTERLUDE *Meditation on "Coventry Carol"* David Lasky

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.

SHARING OF JOYS/CONCERNS

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

PASTORAL PRAYER

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

CLOSING HYMN

O Radiant Christ, Incarnate Word (#168 to the tune of #306)

Words by Ruth Duck, 1989

Tune: WAREHAM by William Knapp, 1738

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Praise my Soul, The King of Heaven* Lani Smith

Please remain seated until the usher dismisses you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MASKS ARE REQUIRED THROUGHOUT THE WORSHIP SERVICES. In order to reduce the risk of spreading infection, it is important that everyone wear a mask while in the church building, unless speaking from a microphone, singing a solo during worship, or receiving communion.

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

CHENANGO COUNTY COVID-19 NUMBERS

	This week (1/4)	Last week (12/29)
Active Cases	449	227
Quarantines	583	431
Hospitalizations	13	12
Deaths	92	92

CHENANGO CO. VACCINATION RATE (people 18+) as of 1/4/2022 – 73.9% 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.

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.

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.

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.

CALENDAR

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

SUNDAY, JANUARY 9

9:00 a.m. Sunday School, on Zoom
10:00 a.m. Worship, Nave

MONDAY JANUARY 10

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.
7:00 p.m. Search Committee Meeting, on Zoom

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11

9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Training, Founders' Room
1:00 p.m. Quilting Circle, Kitchen
7:00 p.m. Deacon's Meeting, on Zoom

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12

10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle on Zoom
3:30 p.m. J. Handy Lessons, upstairs
7:00 p.m. Zoom Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13

1:00 p.m. Quilting Circle, Kitchen

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14

10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle, on Zoom
3:30 p.m. J. Handy, Lessons

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16

9:00 a.m. Sunday School, on Zoom
10:00 a.m. Worship, Nave
1:30 p.m. ONA Community Groups

Questions for Reflection

How may I live in the power of the Holy Spirit this day?
What in my life is like chaff that the Holy Spirit burns away in order for me to live as a free and faithful child of God?

Household Prayer: Morning

Loving God,
we begin this new day in the sure knowledge
that you have claimed us as your children.
In all that we do,
keep us mindful of actions that are pleasing in your sight.
In all that we say,
make us attentive to the witness we give to your love.
Let our lives be an example to all whom we encounter,
living as daughters and sons of God
who follow in the path of Jesus,
our Lord and our brother. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

As evening comes and we end the labors of this day,
we thank you, Lord Jesus, that you have been our companion.
If we have disregarded your fellowship, forgive us.
Where we have strayed from your path, correct us.
Let us rest this evening as children of God,
sheltered in the love of those who belong to your holy family of
grace. Amen.

Watch a live stream of our service Sundays at 10:00 a.m. at
www.uccnorwichny.org/live-stream-2

Past worship services can be viewed at
www.uccnorwichny.org/sermons

TODAY'S PARTICIPANTS IN MINISTRY OF SERVICE:

Interim Pastor: **Rev. John Steitz**

Director of Music Ministries: **Mary Williams**

Organist Emeritus: **Bob Oehme**

Director of Children's/Youth Ministries: **Linda Oehme**

Sunday Sexton: **Shea Breese**

Live Stream: **Jennifer Mallozzi, Chris McSweeney**

Usher: **Linda Oehme**

Greeter: **Chris Mallozzi**

Liturgist: **Ericka Tyler**

MINISTERS: All the People

INTERIM PASTOR: Rev. John Steitz, 215-820-1650 (cell)

MODERATOR: John Kolb

CHAIR OF DEACONS: Mary Williams

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES: Mary Williams

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S/YOUTH MINISTRIES: Linda Oehme

PARISH COORDINATOR: Cheri Oakley

FINANCIAL ASSISTANT: Jennifer Mallozzi

FAMILY COUNSELING MINISTRY: Joanne Ferguson

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS - By appointment only.

CONTACT:

Address: 11 West Main St., Norwich NY 13815

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E-mail: office@uccnorwichny.org

Web site: www.uccnorwichny.org

facebook

January 9, 2022

Covid-19 Safety Protocols (September 2021)

- Face coverings will be required upon entry and exit to the building. (Masks will be available.) **As of 12/5/21** - masks are required throughout the service, unless speaking from a microphone, singing a solo during worship, or receiving communion.
- 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.