



Healing of the Man Born Blind by Duccio di Buoninsegna

Duccio di Buoninsegna is thought to be one of the greatest Italian painters of the Middle Ages. He is one of the first painters to study space and depth, placing his subjects in architectural settings. His use of color and ability to make his subjects seem heavenly make his paintings breathtaking.

In his work, *Healing of the Man Born Blind*, Jesus is placed center stage, while the blind man is shown twice. The blind man's rod moves the viewers eyes across the piece to tell the story of his miraculous healing. Jesus first touches the blind man's eyes and our eyes are led to the next scene where the blind man gazes upward with his sight restored as he is dropping his guiding stick. The miracle as described in John 9 comes alive in Duccio's rendering, inspiring in the viewer a sense of awe and wonder.

**United Church of Christ
Norwich, New York**



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



An Open and Affirming Church

March 19, 2023

10:00 a.m

Fourth Sunday in Lent

PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*

Robert Lau
Tune: BRADBURY
by William Bradbury

WELCOME

(Please sign the attendance pad found in the pew.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION MOMENT – *One Great Hour of Sharing*

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: In the darkest valley,

ALL: At the banquet table;

ONE: In the hard work of life,

ALL: At the moments of ease;

ONE: In our day-to-day reality,

ALL: At times set aside—

ONE: Like this time, now—

ALL: For worship, for listening, for paying attention;

ONE: With every step we take:

ALL: Goodness and mercy follow us; our cups overflow.

*Please stand in body or in spirit.

Large Print Bulletins are available from the ushers.

Call to Worship: Rev. Karla Miller

Lenten Affirmation of Faith: Patmos Abbey—The Order of Saint Columba

Duccio di Buoninsegna, -1319?. Healing of the Man Born Blind, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56662> [retrieved March 14, 2023].

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LENTEN SERVICE OF DIMINISHING LIGHTS

ALL: Loving God, we thank you that you are with us, and that we may call upon you no matter where we are, or what we are feeling. Keep us mindful of your presence and trusting in your promise—that you are working with us in the moment-by-moment unfolding of our lives. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** *Just As I Am* #207
(Tune: WOODWORTH L.M.)

TIME OF SHARING

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

(Children in grades K-8 are invited to remain in the front pew for the choir anthem.)

ANTHEM *My Shepherd* by Anna Laura Page

(Children in grades K-8 are invited to go upstairs to Sunday School at this time.)

PASTORAL BLESSING OF PEACE

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

ALL: And also with you.

SUNG RESPONSE *Peace* by Judy A. Rose

Peace be to you in all you do.

Peace be the way in all you say.

Peace be the light that shines so bright
from your heart on the world this day.

Peace, peace, peace, peace. Peace be to you in all you do.

Peace, peace, peace, peace. Peace be to you in all you do.

LENTEN INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

ONE: O gracious God, we hear your voice calling us ...

ALL: To share whatever gift it is that you have given to us to do
your work on Earth.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To acknowledge you as the giver of all good gifts, and to give
without counting the cost.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To give without counting the cost, and to share without
expecting something in return.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To share without expecting something in return.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To be wise in the way of caring for ourselves and others, and
to hold all of our treasures and values with open hands.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To be gracious and unbegrudging in our giving, and to recognize the abundance of blessings in each passing day.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To grow in giving thanks for everything, to be happy with having what we need, and to be wise enough to know what it is that we want and do not need. . .

ONE: Give us generous hearts, and let us pray together....

ALL: O gracious God, who so generously lavishes our lives with goodness, create in our hearts a deep center of gratitude, a center that grows so strong in its thanksgiving that sharing freely of our treasures becomes the norm and the pattern of our existence. Remind us often of how much you cherish us, of how abundantly you have offered gifts to us, especially in the hours of our greatest need. May we always be grateful for your reaching into our lives with surprises of joy, growth, and unearned love. Amen.

One Great Hour of Sharing offering received today.

Offering plates are located at both Nave doors for your convenience.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

UNISON READING OF SCRIPTURE - Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;

for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

SCRIPTURE READING

John 9:1-41

Pew Bible NT p. 105

SERMON *Down in the Mud*

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

INTERLUDE

LENTEN AFFIRMING OUR FAITH

We believe that our lives are held within the encircling love of God, who knows our names and recognizes our deepest needs.

We believe that Christ is the divine Child of the living God, and that his grace is like living waters that can never be exhausted.

We believe in the birthing, renewing, enabling Spirit of God who yearns over our welfare as a mother yearns for her child.

We believe that God is in the arid desert as well as in green pastures, and that hard times and disciplines are also loving gifts.

We believe that our journey has a purpose and a destination, and that our path leads to a human glory we cannot yet imagine.

We believe that in the church we are fellow pilgrims on the road, and that we are called to love one another as God loves us.

This is our faith and we are humbled to profess in Jesus the Christ. Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS/CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, Who art in heaven hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

***CLOSING HYMN** *Amazing Grace* #547
(Tune: AMAZING GRACE)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Voluntary* William Selby

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE ARE STILL WORKING to provide a safe and clean environment for worship and other activities. You can read our full COVID SAFETY PROTOCOLS posted on the bulletin board and online. There is a button on our homepage: <www.uccnorwichny.org>. Or use this direct link <https://www.uccnorwichny.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Covid-Protocols-04_01_22.pdf>

NURSERY CARE is available for children up to the age of five beginning at 9:00 a.m. The Nursery is located up the stairs at the front of the building. Children are welcome in the entire the service or can leave with the Sunday School children – whatever works best for your family.

LENTEN BOOK STUDY. Discussion groups for *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem* are held on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. or Thursdays at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom through April 13th. A link to the Zoom meeting is available from the church office. Books are still available in the church office.

IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER, please don't take any risks to get to church on a Sunday morning. You can tune in to the live stream at <www.uccnorwichny.org/live-stream-2> If we cancel church all together, we will post on Facebook and Instagram, and also with a message on the church phone (607-334-3434).

FREE TAX PREPARATION - AARP Foundation's Tax-Aide program provides *FREE* tax preparation regardless of age to anyone who cannot afford a paid tax service and especially people 55 or older. Volunteer tax preparers work from the UCC Church in Norwich three days per week from February 13 to April 14. **If you want to use this service, you must call Chenango County Area Agency on Aging at 607-337-1770 for an appointment.** Walk-ins will not be accommodated. Please note that this tax service does not handle the following tax situations: foreclosures; farms; rental income and properties; businesses; self-employed with inventories and off-setting expenses; energy tax credits; and anyone who owns digital currencies.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS for high school seniors and college students are available on the church website (www.uccnorwichny.org) under the LINKS tab. The deadline to apply is April 15.

JASON HANDY'S MASTERS RECITAL is on Sunday, March 26 at 7:30 p.m. in Casadesus Recital Hall, Binghamton University. He will perform works by Richard Strauss, Benjamin Britten, Valerie Coleman and Johannes Brahms. You are invited to attend.

CALENDAR

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 19

9:00 a.m. Nursery, upstairs
10:00 a.m. Worship, Nave
Sunday School - children excused during service
11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour, Founders' Rm.
11:30 a.m. Bell Choir, upstairs
6:00 p.m. LGBTQ+ Fellowship, Zoom

MONDAY, MARCH 20

8:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep, Founders' Rm.
10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle, Zoom
10:00 a.m. UCC Knitting Group - Mayflower Room
3:00 p.m. Tai Chi, Mayflower Room
3:00 p.m. J. Handy Lessons, upstairs
7:00 p.m. Deacons Meeting, Zoom

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

8:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep, Founders' Rm.
1:00 p.m. Piecemakers, Mayflower Room
5:00 p.m. E. Fischer Lessons
7:00 p.m. Book Discussion Group on Zoom. (See announcements.)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

9:00 a.m. Home Bureau, Founders' Room
10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle, Zoom
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Nave

THURSDAY, MARCH 23

8:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep, Founders' Rm.
2:00 p.m. Book Discussion Group, (see announcements) on Zoom

FRIDAY, MARCH 24

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 26

9:00 a.m. Nursery, upstairs
10:00 a.m. Worship, Nave
Sunday School - children excused during service
11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour, Founders' Rm.
11:30 a.m. Bell Choir, upstairs
6:00 p.m. LGBTQ+ Fellowship, Zoom

March 19, 2023

TODAY'S PARTICIPANTS:

Pastor and Teacher: Rev. Jason Boyd

Liturgist: Miranda Hunter

Director of Music Ministries: Mary Williams

Organist: Jason Handy

Director of Children and Youth Ministries: Ericka Tyler

Live Stream: Jennifer Mallozzi, Chris McSweeney

Sunday Sexton: Elspeth Hunter

Nursery: Fiora Breese

Usher: Pat and Tom Whitmore

Coffee Hour: Mary and Pete Williams

NEXT WEEK'S PARTICIPANTS - 3/26

Usher: Elizabeth Barber-Breese

Liturgist: Gary Gray

Flowers:

Coffee Hour: Rose Laughlin

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

11 West Main St., Norwich NY 13815

607-334-3434 - office@uccnorwichny.org - www.uccnorwichny.org

MINISTERS: All the People

PASTOR AND TEACHER: Rev. Jason Boyd

MODERATOR: John Kolb

CHAIR OF DEACONS: Mary Williams

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES: Mary Williams

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES: Ericka Tyler

PARISH COORDINATOR: Cheri Oakley

FINANCIAL ASSISTANT: Jennifer Mallozzi

CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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