



*Who of you by worrying  
can add a single hour  
to his life?*

*Matthew 6:27*

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



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



**An Open and Affirming Church**

**September 24, 2023**

**10:00 a.m**

**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Blessing of the Animals**

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***PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD***

**CHIMING OF THE HOUR**

**PRELUDE** *Song*

Flor Peeters

**WELCOME**

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MISSION MOMENT**

Pete Williams, UCC Neighbors in Need Offering

***GATHERING***

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**ONE:** O God, life-giving Spirit, you provide all things, and all things belong to you.

**ALL:** **Thank you for the earth, the plants, the fish, the birds, the animals, and all of us.**

**ONE:** We see your holy image in the diversity of all life,

**ALL:** **And in the distinctions that we carry as human beings, as well.**

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\*Please stand in body or in spirit.

**Large Print Bulletins are available from the ushers.**

Call to Worship by Rev. Tim Devine  
Prayer of Invocation by Bob Hostetler  
Litany for God's Creatures by Duke Chapel

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ONE: We ask your presence here,  
**ALL: That we may delight in all creatures and live in harmony with them, to the honor of your name.**

## **PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

### **\*OPENING HYMN**

*All Things Bright and Beautiful*  
(Tune: ROYAL OAK)

#31

## **TIME OF SHARING**

### **CHILDREN'S MOMENT**

*(Children are welcome to stay in the front pew until after the anthem.)*

### **LITANY ON BEHALF OF GOD'S CREATURES**

ONE: Gracious God, you created the earth and all that is in it and proclaimed it good. All this belongs to you, and yet we harm your creation. Forgive us, we pray, and help us to be champions of all those who suffer, so that we may be channels of your goodness.

**ALL: Hear us, O God!**

ONE: We give you thanks, O God, for the life and witness of the prophets who remind us of your true purpose and for those special people who minister with tenderness to all living beings.

**ALL: Hear us, O God!**

ONE: We give you thanks, O God, for animals who live in our homes, on farms, in the wild, and in havens of refuge. Make us ever aware of our stewardship of creation, and help us to be faithful in caring for all you have created.

**ALL: Hear us, O God!**

ONE: We pray today for animals who are mistreated in any way...for those who are tortured, deserted, abused, exploited and used for unnecessary experimentation, and for any whose lives are spent in extreme confinement. Help us to stop abuse in any form. Open our mouths to the defense of the defenseless, and above all, open our lives to your ways.

**ALL: Hear us, O God!**

ONE: We ask forgiveness for the part we have all played in systems that employ violence and promote hardness of heart.

**ALL: Hear us, O God!**

ONE: We remember before you our companion animals who have died. We remember at this time also, those animals who are lost or separated from their owners.

**ALL: Hear us, O God!**

## **BLESSING OF THE PETS**

### **ANTHEM**

*Let Us Give Thanks for Unknown Blessings*

by Carol Browning

*(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 the song that we will sing.

Peace be the joy, our spirits ring.

Peace be the love that sets us free,  
peace for all, peace for you and me.

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

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

## **INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND GENEROSITY**

### **DISCIPLESHIP 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.**

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

## **WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD**

### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

Psalm 148

Pew Bible OT p. 645

Matthew 6:25-29

Pew Bible NT p. 6

**REFLECTION** *Sermon on the Pets*

## **RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

**INTERLUDE** *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ* Samuel Scheidt

### **AFFIRMING OUR FAITH**

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

### 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

*O God, Your Creatures Fill the Earth*  
(Tune: ELLACOMBE)

Insert

### BENEDICTION

**POSTLUDE** *March*

Flor Peeters



### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**NURSERY CARE** is available for children up to the age of five beginning at 9:00am - up the stairs at the front of the building.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTS TODAY** - Children start out in the service, and then after the Children's Moment and the choir anthem, they head upstairs. For details, talk to Ericka Tyler, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries.

**DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER NEWSLETTER** is September 25.

**THERE IS CHOBANI YOGURT** in the church refrigerator. Please feel free to enjoy some here, or take some home to enjoy later.

**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 on our website.

## CALENDAR

*The Chenango Muslim Community meets upstairs daily at 9:30pm & Fridays at 1:30pm*

### **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**

- 9:00am Nursery, upstairs
- 10:00am Worship, Nave - Blessing of the Pets  
Sunday School for K-8 - after the Children's Moment
- 12:00pm Blessing of the Pets, Courthouse park, downtown Norwich, weather permitting.

### **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**

- 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom
- 10:00am Knitting Group, kitchen
- 3:00pm Tai Chi, Founders Room
- 6:30pm Garden Club Meeting, Founders Room, Kitchen
- 7:00pm MEMC/Norwich Band rehearsal, Nave
- 7:00pm Music Committee Meeting, upstairs and Zoom

### **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26**

- 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen
- 5:00pm Soup Kitchen, St. Bart's Parish Center.
- 7:00pm Executive Council Meeting, Zoom

### **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27**

- 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom
- 6:00pm D. Burch, Nave
- 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal, Nave

### **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28**

- 7:00pm Trustees Meeting, Zoom

### **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29**

- 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom

### **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30**

- 9:30am Susquehanna Association Fall Meeting, Homer UCC

### **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1**

- 9:00am Nursery, upstairs
- 10:00am Worship, Nave - Communion  
*Neighbors in Need Offering*  
Sunday School for K-8 - after the Children's Moment
- 11:00am Coffee Hour

September 24, 2023

**TODAY'S PARTICIPANTS:**

**Pastor and Teacher:** Rev. Jason Boyd

**Liturgist:** Michael Moren

**Director of Music Ministries:** Mary Williams

**Organist:** Robert Oehme

**Mission Moment:** Peter Williams

**Director of Children and Youth Ministries:** Ericka Tyler

**Live Stream:** Chris McSweeney

**Sunday Sexton:** Mya Yantz

**Nursery:** Fiora Breese

**NEXT WEEK'S PARTICIPANTS - 10/1**

Usher: Jane Prime

Liturgist: Ed Tucker

Flowers: Jane Prime

Coffee Hour:

**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:** Pete Williams

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES:** Mary Williams

**ORGANIST:** David Burch

**DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES:** Ericka Tyler

**PARISH COORDINATOR:** Cheri Oakley

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANT:** Jennifer Mallozzi



**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Temporarily by appointment only.