

Worship from Home
First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, UCC
Sunday, February 21, 2021

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship (From Moira Laidlaw)

One: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Many: And also with your spirit.

One: We come, trusting in God's mercy and love, longing to know and to learn more about God's ways.

Many: We come, to be guided in the ways of God's truth - to experience the joy of God's salvation.

One: We come, at the beginning of our Lenten journey, aware of God's steadfast love helping us to overcome the trials and temptations which can descend on us at any time.

All: Lead us, O God, to do what is right in your eyes and teach us to follow the humble way of Christ, your beloved Son, our crucified and risen Lord.

*Hymn *"More Like You"*

More like you, Jesus, More like you.
Fill my heart with your desire to make me more like you.
More like you, Jesus, more like you.
Touch my lips with holy fire and make me more like you.

Lord, you are my mercy. Lord you are my grace.
All my deepest sins have forever been erased.
Draw me in your presence. Lead me in your ways.
I long to bring you glory in righteousness and praise.

Unison Prayer of Invocation (from The Rev. Richard Fairfield)

Most loving and gracious God, you who turn deep darkness into morning and who darken the day into night, you part the waters from the waters and bring your people forth into the promised land, you who are indeed our refuge and our strength, be present with us this day as we call upon and worship you. Answer our prayers and guide us in the way of righteousness. Help us hear your word and to treasure it in our hearts so that in good times and in bad we may remain faithful to you and safe in your arms. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

¹³ Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." ¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷ For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. ¹⁹ After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— ²⁰ to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, ²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

⁹ At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."
¹² At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, ¹³ and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Take this moment, sign and space;
Take my friends around;
Here among us make the place

Where your love is found.

Take the time to call my name,
Take the time to mend
Who I am and what I've been,
All I've failed to tend.

Take the tiredness of my days,
Take my past regret,
Letting your forgiveness touch
All I can't forget

Take my talents, take my skills,
Take what's yet to be;
Let my life be yours, and yet
Let it still be me.

Prayers of the People (*sharing of joys and concerns*)

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (*debts and debtors*)

Invitation to Give

Offertory

*Prayer of Dedication (From The Rev. Richard Fairchild)

Gracious God, you led your people through the wilderness into the Promised Land - and your Son from a time of testing to a time of glory beyond all glories. As we take our Lenten journey with him, accept these gifts from our hands and grant that our lives may be fully dedicated to your purpose so that we may inherit all your promises and bring praise unto your name. Amen

*Hymn *"In the Midst of New Dimensions"*

In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?

Refrain:

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,

We your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever,
Now and ever more.

As we stand a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,
Grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams.

Refrain

Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
May your blazing phoenix spirit resurrect the church again.

Refrain

*Benediction