

**Order of Worship**  
First Church Congregational  
An Open and Affirming Congregation of the  
United Church of Christ  
Fairfield, Connecticut



*The Parable of the 10 Virgins by Ain Vares*

**NOVEMBER 8, 2020**

**Prelude**

*God's Eye Is on the Sparrow*

Civilla D. Martin

**Welcome and Announcements**

*We seek to extend the extravagant love of God to all people, all the time. Regardless of your race, class, ancestry, gender identity, marital status, ability, age, immigration status, political orientation, or sexual orientation -who you love - you are always welcome at First Church, on line, on the lawn, or eventually in the Sanctuary and Chapel. God loves you just as you are. So do we!*

**Interlude**

*Spirit of the Living God*

Daniel Iverson

**Call to Worship**

Leader: Are you awake? Are you alert?

**People: Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.**

Leader: Are you watching the signs?

Are you interpreting what is happening today?

**People: Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.**

Leader: Do you see opportunities for ministry?

Do you see the poor, the homeless, the hungry, the needy?

**People: Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.**

Leader: Come, let us worship and let us work in the reign of God.

**All: Christ has extended the invitation:**

**let us work together in the reign of God on earth.**

~ Rev. Mindi, on her [Rev-o-lution](#) blog.

## Hymn

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple pour your power;  
From the e - vils that sur - round us and as - sail the Sav - ior's ways,  
Cure your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to your con - trol.  
Set our feet on loft - y plac - es; gird our lives that they may be  
Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils we de - plore;

5  
crown your an - cient church - 's sto - ry; bring its bud to glo - rious flower.  
from the fears that long - have bound us - free our hearts for - faith and praise.  
Shame our reck - less, self - ish glad - ness, rich in things and poor in soul.  
ar - mored with all Christ - like grac - es, in the fight to set us free.  
9  
let the search for your sal - va - tion be our glo - ry - ev - er - more.

Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age, for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.  
Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age, for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.  
Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age, make our bro - ken spir - its whole, make our bro - ken spir - its whole.  
Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age, in the quest for lib - er - ty, in the quest for lib - er - ty.  
Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age, serv - ing you whom we a - dore, serv - ing you whom we a - dore.

## Unison Prayer of Invocation and Lord's Prayer

*We worship you, O God, as the one in whom we have placed our hope. We share the desire of your people of old to tell of the blessings you have effected in our lives. When we think about the greatest blessing of all - the gift of yourself in human flesh - Jesus Christ - we joyfully acknowledge that our hope in you is not misplaced. We choose to serve you because you chose to touch our lives so graciously in Christ. May our faithful witness and the service of our lives reveal the depth of our love and gratitude as we worship you, O God, and as we praise and adore you in Jesus' name and in the power of the Holy Spirit we pray : 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

~ Copyright © Moira Laidlaw, posted on her [Liturgies Online](http://www.liturgiesonline.com) website. Visit that site for other great lectionary-based resources.

## Children's Sermon

### Candle of Witness

*WIFI for Bridgeport Students*

Amy Watson

### Interlude

*Tù Ha Venido a la Orilla*  
(Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore)

Cesáreo Gabaráin

### Scripture

Matthew 25:1-13

### Sermon

The Reverend Vanessa Rose

**Hymn**

**“Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning”**

Keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your  
It's our faith makes us hap - py; it's our faith makes us hap - py; it's our

5  
lamps \_\_\_\_\_ trimmed and burn - ing, for this work's al - most done.  
faith \_\_\_\_\_ makes us hap - py, for this work's al - most done.

9  
Sis - ters, don't grow wear - y, broth - ers, don't grow wear - y, chil - dren,

14  
don't grow wear - y, for this work's al - most done.

**A Time for Silent Reflection**

**Joys and Concerns**

**The Prayers of the People**

**Invitation to the Offering and Prayer of Dedication**

**Benediction**

**God Be With You**

God be with you till we meet a-gain; by good coun-sel guide, up - hold you,  
With a shep-herd's care en-fold you; God be with you till we meet a-gain. A - men.

**Postlude**

*Let Justice Flow like Streams*

Jane Parker Huber

You can make your donation, gift or pledge at any time by **Mail** to 148 Beach Road, Fairfield, CT 06824; the secure **Church Website** <https://firstchurchfairfield.org>, click on the tab “Giving,” and scroll down to access Online and PayPal; or **Electronic Transfer of Funds** from your bank.

**LEADING US IN WORSHIP**

The Reverend David W. Spollett  
The Reverend Vanessa Rose  
Ms. Heidi Butler, Student Pastor  
Mr. Robert Codio, Worship Music Leader  
Ms. Cheri Evan, Minister of Congregational Life  
David McKinnis and Alan Fuehring, Worship Tech Team

*Please hold in your prayers...*

**Disciples at First Church:** Sandy Bromer, Michael Dyslin, Bill Gatto, Sonia Gutierrez and Henry Hernandez, Gayle Hand, Joyce Hutchings, Christy Jefremow, Cathy Kane, Adelaide Kitchen, Alice and Jerry Krenke, Lillian Klein, Gerry Kuroghlian, Stu Nazzaro, Kathy O’Brien, Tracy Parfitt, Jack Robinson, Esther Sotolongo, Rachel Spollett, Joe and Lauren Strickland’s five grandsons in Libya, Arlene Studer, Joann Van Esselstyn, Bill Verdier, Elinor Wilber, and Edith Zambo.

**Those on the Front Lines of COVID-19:**

Eric Anderson, member of First Church; Michelle Baker, member of First Church; Elizabeth Brennan, friend of Jeanne Reed; Laura Burr, member of First Church; Raquel Canete, friend of Joe and Fran Evan; Pertrinea Cash, First Church Member; Kim Chaffee, member of First Church; Marguerite Dolan, mother of Matt Dolan and mother-in-law of Vanessa Rose; Ericka Gordon, niece of Jane Keller and Davis Miller; Brooke Hine, granddaughter of Jerry and Alice Krenke; Stephen Huelskamp, friend of Nina and Mark Engstrom; Greg Jefremow, member of First Church; Kristin Koch, member of First Church; Tracie and Devon Lingenfelter, niece and great niece of Charlotte Dyslin; Kristin Lupo, member of First Church; Lauren Redler McGrath, friend of Nina and Mark Engstrom; Maria Pellegrino, colleague of Beth McKinnis; Beth McKinnis, member of First Church; Diane Marble, sister-in-law of Charlotte Dyslin; Casey Redler, friend of Nina and Mark Engstrom; Maria Sutton, member of First Baptist; Anna Taft and her group of volunteers Tandana Foundation, works in Ecuador and Mali, friend of Jeanne Reed; Edite Weddle, member of First Church; Westport EMS; Ann Yergeau, friend of Nina and Mark Engstrom.

**Serving in the military:** James Classy, Sam Classy, Trevor Dawson, David Elmore, Sean Lomnitzer, Alec Lee and Chris Muschett.

**Family and Friends:** Gabe, George, Gloria and Eric, Brenda Baker, Nick Bandanza, Anne Barnes, Walter Beck, Michelle Browser, Kevin Butler, Meg Cavanaugh, Amber Chiang, Clara Chokenea, David Ciaburro, Aristodemo Ciabatta, Elizabeth Clark, Charlotte Cole, Jan Craig,

Tedi Crawford, The Daly Family, Steve Daniels, Brandon Deedon, The DiGioia Family, Jacqueline Geoffroy, Greenawalt and Darnall Families, Linda Drew, Janet Faller, LaTonya Franklin, Scott Ferguson, Nat Ferrante, Allen Freedman, Lauren Frey and Brian's parents, Joan Grabowski, Dave Gurrieri, Ira Jane Han-Cajegas, Nancy Huber, Keli Imperatori, Mary Jean Jacob, Norma Jenkins and Family, Barton Jones, Art Keller, Patricia Keller, Bernie Keller, Steve Kinne, Ed Kitchen, Nancy Kovacs, Desmond Leach, Jan MacMillen, Michael Maxwell, Eileen Maloney, Tim Marble, Verne Marble, Nicole Mateo and her grandmother Bunny Deubner, Peter J. McGuinness, Lyn McCullers, MaKayla and John McGovern, Claire McMonagle, Matilda, Moeller and Schumann families, Michael Moran, Kathy Murdock, Joelle Murphy, Anne and George Noel, Parus Family, Erika Pascarello, Amadeu Pereira, Mike Platt, Dimitri Psachoulias,, Katie Pieterse, Sara Redeghieri,, Dick Reese, Sally and Paul Robinson, Katelyn S., Greg Sago, Lawrence (Connie Sargent's cousin), Wes Schultz, Violet, JoAnn Sharnick, Darlene Scaia, Kristin Schleiter, Louise M. Schmidt, Levi Schmidt, Sergei, Nasir Sellers, Connie Sokalsky, Ryan Steward, Seth Sullivan Steven Szymczak and family, Paul Taylor, Howard Thompson, Jenny and Mike Tkacz, Harumi Ishihara Sugiyama, Danielle Taal and her five sons, Max Varalli, Sarah Wakeman, Andy Yuan, Virginia MacDonald and her children Linda Hotchkiss, Dan MacDonald, Gianfranco Grande's mother, Elizabetta, Sydney West and family, Brian Zagorski, and Reva Zamero.

### **The Needs of God's Beloved World**

- The people of the Yucatan Peninsula and of Louisiana, battered by Hurricane Zeta
- The victims of COVID-19: nearly 1.2 million deaths worldwide, over 225,000 in the US, and 44 million who have been sick, ten percent who have chronic afflictions
- Those who are suffering economically due to the pandemic and the economic crisis
- All health care workers who continue to provide care at the risk of their own lives
- Essential workers who have continued to work despite the risk
- Those who are lonely, anxious, afraid, and isolated in this time of social separation
- All who suffer from depression, anxiety, and all mental illnesses and their families
- Mental health providers who care for all who are suffering mentally and emotionally
- All who work to prevent domestic violence and to care for the victims of such violence
- People targeted by hatred of all kinds, including anti-Black, anti-Migrant, anti-Gay, anti-Trans, anti-Semitic, anti-Islamic, anti-Christian prejudice, and actions
- All who are committed to the work of antiracism and the eradication of white supremacy
- Survivors of sexual assault, abuse, and harassment and those who love them
- Parents and all who are involved in education: teachers, administrators, and staff
- Those who suffer from catastrophic diseases who are not receiving adequate health care
- Syrian refugees, especially the children, and all the world's 71 million refugees
- Uighur Muslims in China and Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar and Bangladesh
- Those who are addicted and their loved ones; those who have died and those in recovery
- Migrants and asylum seekers who flee gang violence and grinding poverty
- Refugees and immigrants, especially at risk of deportation

- Victims of war in Iraq, Sudan, the DR of Congo, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, & Libya, especially the grandsons of Joe and Lauren Strickland,
- Our Brothers and Sisters at the First Baptist Church of Stratford
- Our community partners: Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, School Volunteer Association, Mercy Learning Center, Operation Hope, Westbridge, Simply Smiles, Make the Road Connecticut, and the Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants
- We work and pray for justice and its fruit which is peace

**This Week:**

**Sunday, Nov. 8**

9:00am Bible Study on Zoom  
No Confirmation  
9:30am Disciple Road on Zoom  
10:15am Worship Facebook Live  
10:30am Middle Road  
12:00pm Worship on the Lawn

**Tuesday, Nov. 10**

6:00am-8:00pm Pray for Our Nation  
12:30pm Pastoral Team Meeting  
6:00pm Handbell Choir, Webb Room

**Wednesday, Nov. 11 Veterans Day**

Church offices closed  
10:00am Bible Study on Zoom???

**Thursday, Nov. 12**

6:30pm High Road  
7:00pm Brainstorm Session on Raising Funds via Zoom (details below)

**Sunday, Nov. 15**

9:00am Bible Study on Zoom  
9:00am Confirmation  
9:30am Disciple Road on Zoom  
10:15am Worship Facebook Live  
10:30am Middle Road  
12:00pm Worship on the Lawn

**Welcome the Stranger** ministry, has identified some specific key items needed by resettled refugee families as winter approaches:

-Baby clothes for winter (3 boys and 1 girl), 3-6months

-New Blankets

-New scarves, hats and gloves for both children and adults.

Please drop off your items in Wakeman Hall, box near the stage, **by Friday Nov 13**. I will deliver these items to CIRI (CT Institute for Refugees and Immigrants) who will distribute the items to families in need.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or if you are unable to make a drop-off and would like to make alternative arrangements.

Patty Gregory

(203) 209-9129



**Covenant to Care** will be collecting donations for Shop Rite and Stop and Shop Gift Cards in place of Thanksgiving Baskets. If you would like to donate please send a check payable to First Church and write "Thanksgiving Baskets" in the memo line.

**Questions?**

**Contact Marilyn Henry 203-255-5296**



So many things in our lives have changed since March when the Covid-19 pandemic sent us into the safety of social distancing. And we know we are facing more months of cautious living. We miss shopping and volunteering at The Store, creating and purchasing homemade treasures at Three Kings Bazaar, eating, and serving others at the Pasta Dinner. In addition to sharing fellowship, these activities also raised money for First Church supporting our mission to welcome all, love all and seek justice for all.

While we wait for the development of a viable vaccine, we have an opportunity to get creative with new ideas that fit our socially distanced way of life. That is why we are coming together to brainstorm ways to tap into the awesome talents of our First Church family.

**Please join us  
to brainstorm new ways to raise money to support the mission of First Church  
Thursday November 12 @ 7pm via Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85059796875?pwd=R2R5Y1lsYVR0WmxvWkhyc1NmNzk3QT09>

Meeting ID: 850 5979 6875

Passcode: 148001

**Alone we are smart, but together we are brilliant!**

Questions: [clara.harmon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:clara.harmon@sbcglobal.net) 203-816-7318

In the midst of so much change, remember that *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)*



## *WIFI for Thanksgiving*

Distance learning is here to stay,

BUT how do you learn without a laptop...without access to the internet?

Janus Center for Youth in Crisis, a service of the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport is helping 90 Greater Bridgeport youth with laptops.

Now, they need internet access.

You can help make that happen!

The total cost for a year is \$190

(\$70 for the Wi-Fi Hot Spot and \$10/monthly charge.)

Will you make a Thanksgiving gift with that cost?

You can help with the installation cost, or a month or two charges, or for an entire year.

Your gift (payable to First Church, memo "Wifi) will help a young person to succeed in school.

What a great way to bridge the educational opportunity inequity gap and celebrate Thanksgiving!



"Gifts of Warmth " for



OPERATION  
**HOPE**

Due to health concerns we will only be accepting **NEW items** this year.

Please find it in your heart to look for the following items while you are doing your own holiday shopping.

These gifts can include New Coats, scarves, hats, boots, mittens gloves and long underwear.  
Extra Large sizes

are always appreciate! The drive will begin November 28th and run through December 10th.

**Look for the "Gifts of Warmth" Box in Wakeman Hall.**





## You Can Help!!

Deliver Non-Perishable Food, Diapers, Checks, and Gift Cards  
to Wakeman Hall

By **Thursday Noon** for delivery  
to the Food Pantry at Mercy Learning Center on Friday Morning!!

### These are basic items that will help right now:

- bags of rice and bags of any type of dried beans, lentils, etc.
- tomato paste, tomato sauce, or diced tomatoes
- oatmeal, cream of wheat, corn meal,
- pasta, cooking oil, flour
- powdered or evaporated milk
- canned meats, canned fruit, canned vegetables
- toilet paper, bars of soap, other toiletries
- Diapers: sizes 4, 5, and *especially* 6
- Gift cards: Stop and Shop, Shop Rite, Walgreens, CVS
- Financial Donations: Mail to First Church, check payable to Mercy Learning Center.



### ALL CHURCH MEETING ON ZOOM

Monday, November 16

7:30 pm on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84387700653?pwd=VjQ1UC8vRnZuVWVVZE93ZmtTWmtmdz09.>

### Update on

- Capital Improvements
- CONECT and Work for
- Racial Justice

### Reports and Action on

- Solar Project
- HVAC for Safety and Hygiene