

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



HE QI, *THE BAPTISM OF JESUS*

JANUARY 10, 2021
Baptism of the Lord and Affirmation of Our Baptism

Prelude

Be Now My Vision

David Evans

Welcome and Announcements

We seek to extend the extravagant welcome of God to all people, all the time. Regardless of your race, class, ancestry, gender identity, marital status, ability, age, immigration status, or sexual orientation you are always welcome at First Church. We affirm your inherent dignity as a child of God. God loves you just as you are. So do we!

Musical Interlude

God of the Sparrow

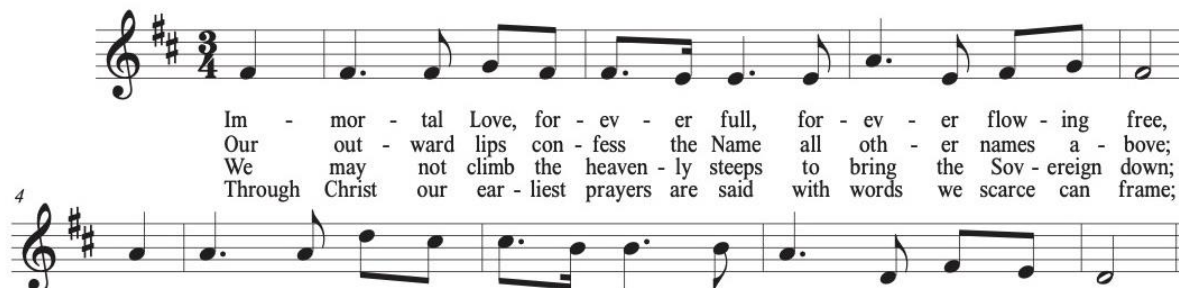
Carl F Schalk

Call to Worship

Leader: In the beginning, O God, when you created the heavens and the earth,
People: *The earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep.*
Leader: And the wind, your Spirit, was sweeping over the face of the waters.
People: *And so your creative will began, and continues still, recreating each new day.*
Leader: We pray that we may feel the wind, your Spirit, sweeping over our assembly,
People: *So that the words of our mouths and meditations of our hearts are pleasing unto you, our Creator, Redeemer, and Friend. Amen.*

Hymn

“Immortal Love, Forever Full”



Im - mor - tal Love, for - ev - er full, for - ev - er flow - ing free,
Our out - ward lips con - fess the Name all oth - er names a - bove;
We may not climb the heaven - ly steeps to bring the Sov - ereign down;
Through Christ our ear - liest prayers are said with words we scarce can frame;

4
For - ev - er shared, for - ev - er whole, a nev - er - ebb - ing sea!
Love on - ly knows from where it came and com - pre - hends God's love.
In vain we search the low - est deeps for One no depths can drown.
The last low whis - pers of our dead still ech - o with Christ's name.

Unison Prayer

We have arrived this day, O God, seeking an experience of your presence, the reality of your love. We are often lost, without purpose or meaning, without a sense of acceptance or place of belonging. We pray that in our worship your Holy Spirit will descend upon us like a dove.

Words of Assurance and the Lord's Prayer

Hear the ancient words that name and claim you as a child of God. Be refreshed, and made new in the love of these words, “You are my child, my beloved, in whom I am well pleased.” Even now, Divine Love is at work in you to deepen your knowledge of the love Jesus Christ, who has never left you, and who has taught us to 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.

Unison Prayer and Words of Assurance adapted from Bryan Schneider-Thomas
accessed at [Ministry Matters™ | Worship Elements: January 10, 2021](#)

Children's Sermon

Christ Candle “CONNECT” Anna Marotti, Work for Racial Justice Team Member

Musical Interlude *What Ruler Wades through Murky Streams* David Hurd

Scripture Mark 1:1-11

Sermon “You are my beloved with whom I am well pleased” The Reverend David W. Spollett

A Time for Silent Reflection

*~You are invited to prepare a small
bowl of water where you are in worship.*

*We will use this water to affirm our
Baptism and renew our vows to
Be Christ's Disciples.*

Hymn

“O Radiant Christ, Incarnate Word”

O ra - diant Christ, in - car - nate Word, e - ter - nal
Our bar - tered, bus - y lives burn dim, too tired to
Your glo - ry shone at Jor - dan's stream, the font where
O Light of Na - tions, fill the earth; our faith and
love care, re - vealed in time: Come, make your home with - in our
we too numb to feel. Come, shine up - on our shad - owed
hope were born a - new. At - tune your church to know you
and love re - new. Come, lead the peo - ples to your
hearts, that we may dwell in light sub - lime.
world: your ra - diancance bathes with power to heal.
near; il - lu - mine all we say and do.
peace, as stars once led the way to you.

Affirmation of Our Baptism

Leader: Sisters and Brothers, as we recall Christ’s baptism, we claim our own identity as the beloved of God who have been baptized in Christ. We celebrate the gift of God’s redeeming grace and empowering love.

People: By the Holy Spirit we are baptized into one body, so that we may be Christ for the world.

Leader: Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith.

All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!

Prayer of Blessing the Water

Leader: Eternal God, you have come to us in Jesus Christ, to give us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit. You have called us “beloved” and called us to Christian vocation. Bless us now with your Holy Spirit and this water that we may be Christ to the world!

~You are invited to dip your fingers into the baptismal water and to make the sign of the cross on your hand or forehead as a sign of your commitment to living your baptism. Remember and be thankful that you are beloved of God and baptized as a Disciple of Jesus Christ.

Unison Prayer

Loving God, you fill all things with a dignity and hope that we can never comprehend. Thank you for leading us into a time when more of reality is being unveiled for us all to see. We pray that you will take away our natural temptation for cynicism, denial, fear and despair. Help us have the courage to awaken to greater truth, greater humility, and greater care for one another. May we place our hope in what matters and what lasts, trusting in your eternal presence and love. Listen to our hearts’ longings for the healing of our suffering world. (A time for silent prayer.) Knowing, good God, you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in love. Amen.

Prayer adapted from Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM and accessed at <https://cac.org/2021-daily-meditations/#listen>.

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

The Power of Your Love

Geoff Bullock

Go in peace and strength to love and serve the Lord and all God's people!

LEADING US IN WORSHIP

The Reverend David W. Spollett

Ms. Heidi Butler, Student Pastor

Mr. Robert Codio, Worship Music Leader

Jane Barnes, Hymn Leader

Cheri Evan, Minister of Congregational Life

Anna Marotti, Work for Racial Justice Team Member

Worship Tech Team: David McKinnis, Andrew McKinnis, and Alan Fuehring

Please hold in your prayers...

Our sympathy and prayers are with Tom Kane and his daughters Caroline and Olivia and their mother Cathy in the death of Tom's mother Joyce. Please reach out in love and hold them in your prayers during this time of their bereavement.

Our prayers for healing and recovery are with Donna Schmidt who has been transferred to a rehabilitation hospital in Pennsylvania to be near her family. Donna has made great progress over the past five weeks after she was struck by an automobile on the Old Post Road. You may send cards and greetings to Donna c/o Operation Hope, 636 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT 06824.

Disciples at First Church: Barbara Barton; Sandy Bromer; Ken and Betsy Dalling; Michael Dyslin; Bill Gatto; Sonia Gutierrez and Henry Hernandez; Fenton Furrer; Gayle Hand; Joyce Hutchings; Christy Jefremow; Cathy Kane, her brother Scott and great niece, Amelia; Adelaide Kitchen; Alice and Jerry Krenke; Lillian Klein; Gerry Kuroghlian; Mimi Maniscalco; Stu Nazzaro; Kathy O'Brien; Gerry O'Donovan; Jack Robinson; Charlie Simmons; Donna Schmidt; Esther

Sotolongo; Rachel Spollett; Joe and Lauren Strickland's five grandsons in Libya; Arlene Studer; Maria Sutton; Joann Van Esselstyn; Bill Verdier; Elinor Wilber; and Edith Zambo.

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

Those on the Front Lines of COVID-19:

Members of First Church: Eric Anderson, Michelle Baker, Laura Burr, Pertrinea Cash, Brooke Hine, Greg Jefremow, Kristin Koch, Kristin Lupo, Beth McKinnis, Kim Chaffee Trupp, Edite Weddle; *Friends of First Church:* Elizabeth Brennan, Raquel Canete, Marguerite Dolan, Fairfield EMS, Ericka Gordon, Stephen Huelskamp, Tracie and Devon Lingenfelter, Lauren Redler McGrath, Maria Pellegrino, Diane Marble, Casey Redler, Maria Sutton, Anna Taft, Westport EMS, and Ann Yergeau.

Family and Friends: Gabe, George, Gloria and Eric, John Anderson, Brenda Baker, Nick Bandanza, Anne Barnes, Walter Beck, Doreen Birdsell, David Braun, Michelle Browser, Kevin Butler, Jaret Chase, 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, Tom Dwyer, Janet Faller, LaTonya Franklin, Scott Ferguson, 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, Sharon Kaley, Art Keller, Patricia Keller, Barnie Keller, Steve Kinne, Nancy Kovacs, Jeannette Lazarus, Desmond Leach, Jan MacMillen, Michael Maxwell, Eileen Maloney, Tim Marble, Verne Marble, 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, Morgan Paige, Parus Family, Erika Pascarello, Amadeu Pereira, Mike Platt, Dimitri Psachoulis,, Katie Pieterse, Sara Redeghieri, Dick Reese, Hilarys Rivera, Sally and Paul Robinson, Katelyn S., Greg Sago, Larry Lawrence (Connie Sargent's cousin), Ken Sawicki, Violet, JoAnn Sharnick, Darlene Scaia, Kristin Schleiter, Louise M. Schmidt, Levi Schmidt, Sergei, Connie Sokalsky, Ryan Steward, Seth Sullivan, Steven Szymczak and family, Paul Taylor, 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, Sydney West and family, Brian Zagorski, Reva Zamero, and James Zamora's family.

The Needs of God's Beloved World:

- Citizens who are elected to serve in public office that they may seek always to serve the common good, uphold the rule of law, and to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of our democratic republic
- All citizens respect the will of the people as expressed in free and fair elections that have been administered and certified by duly authorized officials, courts of law, and the branches of government empowered to do so

- Those who are suffering the effects of the economic crisis: lost jobs, businesses closed, wide spread food insecurity, threat of eviction or foreclosure, and homelessness
- All who have suffered from the COVID-19 pandemic: worldwide over **88 million infected**, many living with chronic conditions and more than **1.9 million deaths**; in the US over **21 million infected** and more than **361,000 deaths – 1 out of every 920 people.**
- Health care professionals who provide care for COVID-19 patients as new cases surge
- Thanksgiving for all who created effective and safe Coronavirus vaccines in record time
- Essential workers who have continued to work in spite of the risk
- Parents and all who are involved in education doing the best they can in the pandemic 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
- All who are targeted by 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
- The world's 72 million refugees, especially children & immigrants at risk of deportation
- 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
- 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, School Volunteer Association, Mercy Learning Center, Operation Hope, Westbridge, Simply Smiles, Make the Road Connecticut, and the Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants

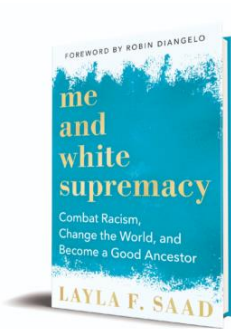


You Can Help!!

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.



Me and White Supremacy

Create the change the world needs by creating change within yourself

---Layla Saad

You are invited to join a group of 10-12 First Church members in intimate conversation about white supremacy.

Beginning Thursday January 21 (7-830 pm), the Working for Racial Justice strategic pathway team is hosting a 12-week *Me and White Supremacy* Zoom workshop series to combat racism, change the world and become a good ancestor.

To learn more, or to register, please contact clara.harmon@sbcglobal.net / 203 816 7318 (cell).



Monday Night Faith Discussion Group

Starting this Monday, January 11th, Deacon David McKinnis will lead a discussion group over Zoom for six weeks using Rob Bell's acclaimed NOOMA videos as our jumping off point to discuss issues of faith. Each of the NOOMA videos are expertly crafted short, spiritual reflections.

"NOOMA" - or pneuma - is the Greek word for wind... life... breath... Spirit. This week we will starting off, appropriately enough, with the video entitled Breathe. You can find it here -

<https://youtu.be/-EFLRDNAx-Y>

We will gather to socialize starting at 7:30 with the program starting at 7:45.

The Zoom meeting link is -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85822632622?pwd=NjBqWndOM3ZNaUYrYUVKTVc0TWQ5QT09>

Meeting ID: 858 2263 2622

Passcode: 523345

Contact David via email at david@bethanddavid.org<mailto:david@bethanddavid.org

Call/text 203-246-8138 if you want more information.

SAVE THE DATE!

