

*The Congregational  
Church of Salisbury*  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**6 September 2020 • 10:00AM**  
**“Land Sunday”**  
**First Week of the Season of Creation**



**WELCOME!**

Welcome to the Congregational Church of Salisbury, UCC! While we refrain from meeting in person during the COVID-19 crisis, we continue to share in worship together, virtually. This bulletin will guide you through the process of joining us in worship.

**HOW WE WILL WORSHIP TOGETHER**

Today's service will be held over Zoom, which is videoconferencing technology available free of charge online. Zoom allows us to see one another throughout the service. To prevent background noise, you will be put on 'mute' for the majority of the service. Even when we can't hear you, you are invited and encouraged to speak your part in the responsive readings, sing boldly, and participate fully.

**PREPARE FOR OUR ONLINE WORSHIP**

1. Visit [zoom.us/download](https://zoom.us/download) to find the Zoom app for desktop, laptop, or smartphone
2. For desktop computer users, make sure your webcam is plugged in
3. To practice, join a test meeting: visit [zoom.us/test](https://zoom.us/test) and click “join.”

If you are not able to use a smartphone or computer, you can also call in via any regular phone (see next page).

**JOIN WORSHIP ONLINE**

Link to join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/954580657>

Or join Worship by Phone:

Call (646) 876-9923. When prompted, enter this meeting ID: 954 580 657

Notice of Livestream on YouTube

Please note that our Zoom Worship Service will be livestreamed simultaneously on YouTube, so we can welcome as many people as possible into our worship together. If you are uncomfortable with the possibility of your name or face appearing online, you can turn off your camera or watch the service on our YouTube channel:

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCBLRqeZ9Gxj7828rN9sp7og/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBLRqeZ9Gxj7828rN9sp7og/)

# WE GATHER AS THE CHURCH

## PRELUDE

“Prelude in C major”

A. Bruckner

## GREETING

## INTROIT

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

J. Nelson

Ho-ly! Ho-ly! Ho - ly! Cre - a - tor God Al - migh - ty! Fo - rest, land, and  
wil - der - ness are full of life from Thee. Wa - ter, air, and spi - rit,  
each re - veals Thy glo - ry. Christ in all cre - a - tion: praise and ho - nor be!

## CALL TO WORSHIP

led by Bob Maxwell

ONE: In the name of the Creator, the fountain of life,  
in the name of Christ, the pulse of life,  
and in the name of the Spirit, the breath of life. Amen.

**ALL: Holy! Holy! Holy!**

**Earth is filled with God's presence.**

Christ, we come into your presence to worship in this sanctuary called Earth:

**A planet pulsating with your presence —  
a presence quivering in the forests,  
a presence vibrating in the land,  
a presence pulsating in the wilderness,  
a presence shimmering in the rivers and ocean.**

God, reveal yourself to us in this place, and show us your face in all creation.

**Holy! Holy! Holy!**

**The whole earth is filled with your glory!**

**RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

ONE: As we praise the God of all creation, we remember and confess:

**ALL: We remember the first garden,**

**where God planted a forest.**

**We remember the gardens**

**and the forests of our childhood,**

**the places where we played in the past**

**when we felt close to Earth, to trees**

**and to our kin born of Earth.**

Jesus Christ, crucified on a tree, hear our cry.

**We regret that we have become alienated from Earth**

**and have treated this garden**

**as a beast to be tamed,**

**as a domain to be dominated,**

**and as a place to be ruled for our gain.**

We remember and confess how we have polluted the forests in our garden planet.

**We are sorry.**

**We have ignored the distant sounds in the forest,**

**the sound of chainsaws clearing for greed and gain,**

**the sound of those old forest giants falling forever,**

**the sound of rare species breathing their last.**

**We are sorry.**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

ONE: Christ hears your confession from the cross,

forgives your sins against the work of the Creator's hand,

and calls you now to open your ears and your hearts

to protect and to care for all that God has planted for life and wonder.

**ALL: Christ, teach us to love Earth as our home**

**and all living creatures as our kin.**

**Help us to return home to Earth.**

I speak for Christ:

I invite you to come home to Earth, and I call you to care for this planet with love,

to nurture the forest as I have nurtured you, and to join me in healing creation.

**Shalom! Shalom!**

**We are coming home!**

As we come home to Earth:

**Christ, have mercy.**

As we seek to love our home:

**Christ, have mercy.**

As we seek to care for our kin:

**Christ, have mercy.**

## WE PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL IN WORD

### A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER (*debts*)

#### RESPONSIVE PSALTER: from Psalm 139

ONE: You are all around me;

**ALL: You lay Your hand upon me.**

Such knowledge is beyond me.

**It is so lofty that I cannot attain it.**

You it was who created my inmost being.

**You knit me together in my mother's womb.**

I give You thanks,

**For I am awesomely and wondrously made.**

Your work is wonderful;

**That I know very well.**

My frame was not concealed from You,

when I was being shaped in a hidden place,

intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

**Your eyes saw my unformed substance.**

In Your book were written

all the days that were formed for me,

when none of them as yet existed.

**How weighty to me are Your thoughts, O God!**

How vast is their number!

I try to count them;

**They outnumber the grains of sand.**

I end;

**Yet I am still with You.**

#### MODERN TESTIMONY from "A Forest Hymn"

*William Cullen Bryant*

The groves were God's first temples. Ere we learned

To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,

And spread the roof above them, — ere we framed

The lofty vault, to gather and roll back

The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood,

Amidst the cool and silence, we knelt down,

And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks

And supplication. For our simple heart

Might not resist the sacred influences,

Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,

And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven

Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound

Of the invisible breath that swayed at once  
All their green tops, stole over us, and bowed  
Our spirit with the thought of boundless power  
And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why  
Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect  
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore  
Only among the crowd, and under roofs,  
That our frail hands have raised? Let me, at least,  
Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,  
Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find  
Acceptance in God's ear.

**ANCIENT TESTIMONY:** Genesis 2:4b-15

**SERMON** "The Spirit of the Woods" John A. Nelson

## **WE RESPOND IN PRAYER AND FAITH**

### **PASTORAL PRAYER | SILENT PRAYER**

#### **OFFERTORY**

**ONE:** God is so filled with the power of life that with a word, whole worlds come into being. We rejoice that God has called us into being along with all creation: forest, land, wilderness, water. In celebration of God's goodness, and in honor of our oneness with all created things, we return to God a portion of the gifts given to us. We bless our tithes and offerings in the holy name of God.

**All: With our gifts and with all creation, we bless our Creator.**

#### **RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS**

##### **MUSICAL OFFERING**

##### **✕ DOXOLOGY**

OLD 100<sup>TH</sup>

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise Christ, all people here below;  
praise Holy Spirit ever more;  
One God of grace, whom we adore! Amen.**

##### **✕ UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Creator God, through your love you have given us gifts to share. Accept our tithes and offerings as an expression of our thanksgiving and as a sign of our concern for those in need. May all that you have made be blessed. May our giving lead us into deeper connectedness with your wide, wild, sacred, and fragile world. We ask it in Jesus' name; Amen.**

## WE MEET AT THE LORD'S TABLE

### INVITATION

### RESPONSIVE THANKSGIVING

ONE: God be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts!

**We lift them to God.**

Let us give thanks to our God.

**It is good and right to give God our thanks and praise.**

O God, we thank you for the rich blessing of your Creation, and come to offer our whole selves as you call us to live for your realm of *shalom*.

**Our hearts fill with joy and wonder as we answer your call to be your people.**

**Thanks be to you, O Holy One, for the goodness of your creation.**

### BLESSING THE ELEMENTS

Christ invites everyone to eat the bread of life, to drink the cup of the new covenant.

**Jesus said, I am the bread of life. She who comes to me shall never hunger; he who believes in me shall never thirst.**

On the night of his arrest Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to God, broke it and said, This is my body which is for you; do this remembering me.

**After supper Jesus took the cup and said, This is the cup of the new covenant. Whenever you drink it, do so remembering me.**

And so we breathe out hope as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

### UNISON PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

**Come, Holy Spirit. Continue to pour out your life-giving, healing power on us, and on this meal that nourishes us. As we share this food and drink, may we become, for each other, the hope that Jesus has awakened in us. In this meal we celebrate the promised banquet when all shall be fed abundantly, and all shall drink from the river of the water of life. Amen.**

### SHARING THE MEAL

#### COMMUNION HYMN

“Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup”

*J. Berthier*

### UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

**We thank you, Christ, for the meal we have celebrated with you. By your grace and the gift of yourself we are healed. Strengthened by you, renewed by awareness of our oneness with all living things, we boldly go into the world as agents of healing for God's good creation. Amen.**

**HYMN #625**

**“How Great Thou Art”**  
verses 2, 4

HOW GREAT THOU ART

**BENEDICTION and SUNG AMEN** (Hymnal, #600)

**POSTLUDE**



**Participants in Today’s Celebration**

Jennifer Oberto	<i>Cantor</i>
Bob Maxwell	<i>Reader</i>
Salisbury UCC Choir	
Nicholas O’Neil	<i>Video production</i>
Dr. Samuel Lord Kalcheim	<i>Music Director</i>
The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson	<i>Preacher</i>
Members and Friends of the Congregational Church of Salisbury, UCC	<i>Worshippers</i>