

REFLECTING AS WE GATHER

“If the only prayer you said was thank you, that would be enough.”

— *Meister Eckhart*

“Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.”

— *A.A. Milne, Winnie-the-Pooh*

“Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good.”

— *Maya Angelou, Celebrations: Rituals of Peace and Prayer*

WE GATHER AS THE CHURCH

PRELUDE

“Sinfonia” from Cantata 156

J.S. Bach

GREETING

INTROIT

“Gathered Here”

Phil Porter

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Our lives scattered on the floor of the world,
our limits pushed by stress and its best friend, impatience,
we come:

**ALL: For here, God would gather us,
bringing us to the realm of peace.**

Wondering if truth is fake or worth pursuing,
questioning whether anyone is worth following or believing,
we come:

**For here, God would feed us with wisdom,
sending the One who would lead us to the realm of hope.**

Questioning the motives of everyone in power,
doubting that justice can be found anywhere,
we come:

**For here, God brings us to worship with sisters and brothers, scooping us up
from every place we have strayed and binding us with joy.**

HYMN #367

“Come, Ye Thankful People, Come”

ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR

CALL TO REFLECTION

In the safety of this sacred place I invite you now into a time of silence.

(Silence)

May our ears be attuned to hear the great symphony of the universe,
and the solo song of every beating heart.

(Silence)

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Mighty and tender God — the deep within all; the encompassing heart of all — we enter now into your kin-dom, your community of wholeness, a realm of peace:

**We bring our hunger,
and the hunger of the world.
We bring our inner stranger,
and the exiled of the world.
We bring our hurting selves,
and the hurting of the world.
We bring our separation from you,
caused by what we have done and what we have not done.
We open ourselves to your healing forgiveness.**

Inspired by your grace, we dare to imagine integrity in our inner life, our relationships, our planet, and all the ways we live together:

**We dare to imagine the reign of Christ,
love's Servant and love's Self:
your heart given freely
to heal and renew each of us and all the world.**

(We unburden ourselves in silent prayer.)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God searches for the lost,
and finds us;
God invites the hungry to the table,
and feeds us;
God sends Jesus,
and frees us from death's prison;
God forgives all who sin,
and heals us with mercy and grace.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Gathered Here”

Phil Porter

RESPONSIVE PSALTER: Psalm 100

ONE: Let all the earth make a joyful noise to God Most High.
ALL: Dedicate yourself to the Holy One with gladness;
Come into the presence of the Almighty with singing.
Know that the Creator is God.
It is God who made us,
Not we ourselves;
We are God's people,
The flock that the Blessed One cares for.
Enter the gates of the Author of Life with thanksgiving,
Enter the gardens of the Creator with jubilation.

Give thanks to the Almighty!

Honor the One Who has made all things good.

For the Holy One is good;

God's steadfast love endures forever,

And the faithfulness of the Most High embraces all generations.

WE PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL IN WORD

A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*debts*)

MODERN TESTIMONY

"Gratitude"

Melody Beattie

ANCIENT TESTIMONY:

Ephesians 1:15-23

SERMON

"Thankful Anyway"

John A. Nelson

WE RESPOND IN PRAYER AND FAITH

PASTORAL PRAYER | SILENT PRAYER

OFFERTORY

ONE: We cultivate a habit of giving, knowing that some of God's people are counting on our generosity. Even more, God invites us to give as a sign and symbol of our gratitude. All that we have is a gift from God, the source of every blessing! Think of that with wonder, and return some of God's gifts with joy! Dare to trust that all our offerings, of heart and wallet, are sharing the hope that is ours by God's grace.

ALL: Let us offer our gifts with grateful praise,
and commit them to God's purposes.

RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

MUSICAL OFFERING "Allein gott in der höh sei ehr" BWV 711

J.S. Bach

✘ **DOXOLOGY**

OLD 100TH

**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**

Generous God, add your blessing to our offering, that in our gratitude for you someone soon will be transformed by your compassion, your hope, your grace, and your fullness of life. We ask in Jesus' name: Amen.

HYMN #643

"Now Thank We All Our God"

NUN DANKET

BENEDICTION and SUNG AMEN

POSTLUDE

Giga from Partita no. 3 in E major for Solo Violin

J.S. Bach



Participants in Today's Celebration

Members and Friends of the Congregational Church of Salisbury, UCC	<i>Worshippers</i>
Jennifer Oberto	<i>Cantor</i>
Tom Key	<i>Reader</i>
Salisbury UCC Choir	
Dr. Samuel Lord Kalcheim	<i>Music Director</i>
The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson	<i>Preacher</i>