

*The Congregational
Church of Salisbury*
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**16 May 2021 • 10:00AM
Seventh Sunday of Easter**



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 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 and click "join."

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

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

You may also watch the service on our YouTube channel, which has better audio quality (though we'll miss visiting with you in the Zoom meeting!):

www.youtube.com/channel/UCBLRqeZ9Gxj7828rN9sp7og/

REFLECTING AS WE GATHER

“When we gather to share our stories, I know the devil runs out the door when the smallest, weakest orphan stands up to attest to the goodness of God.”

— *Eric Irvuzumugabe,*

My Father, Maker of the Trees: How I Survived the Rwandan Genocide

“The old adage that ‘there are two sides to every story’ is not true. There is a story for every storyteller.”

— *Kenneth Eade*

“Your fear ain’t nothin but gum on the bottom of your shoe. The residue from some past experience is all it is. You can scrape the gum off or it can serve as a reminder of your testimony of survival.”

— *Suzette Hinton*

WE GATHER AS THE CHURCH

PRELUDE

GREETING

INTROIT

“Gathered Here”

Phil Porter

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: The God of New Beginnings has called us to this place.

ALL: We come to celebrate the new life that is ours as we grow in faith.

Holy God, let your joy ring through the universe,
and let your vision see to the depths of every soul.

**We will be shouters of joy and seekers of God’s light,
here and wherever we go. Praise God for this day!**

HYMN #451

“Open My Eyes, That I May See”

OPEN MY EYES

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

One: Christ has promised to be with us, yet we live as if we have been left all alone, on our own. Let us confess our rootlessness, as we pray,

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

You call to us, God of mercy, but we are too busy listening to the whispers of those who would draw us away from you. Rather than follow Jesus as you hope, we are filling in the potholes on sin’s streets for a more comfortable journey. You promise to keep watch over us, but we hope you will close your eyes to how we treat others.

Forgive us, Author of life. Forgive our wavering commitment and plant our feet firmly on the paths to the realm of grace. Forgive our low

expectations of discipleship and give us opportunities to serve your people.
Forgive our faltering faith and fill us with the delight and joy we find as your
children, sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ our Teacher and Savior.

(We pray in silence)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: In forgiveness, God plants us deep in the rich soil of mercy and grace, our lives
watered by hope, our joy made complete in Jesus Christ.

**All: The fruit we bear — hope, love, *shalom* —comes from the seeds God has
placed within us. Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Amen.**

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Gathered Here”

Phil Porter

RESPONSIVE PSALTER: Psalm 1

ONE: Happy are those who do not heed the rhythm of blighted hearts,

**ALL: Or tread any path that does not lead to life,
Or sit aloof and scoff in arrogance.**

Delight is served up to those who yearn to know the mind of God,

Who sink their roots into wisdom’s generous soil.

They are like trees planted by streams of water,

Trees which yield their fruit in its season,

Whose leaves never wither,

Because they are nourished by the flow of grace.

In all that they do, they thrive.

Not so for the wayward,

For those who disregard The Holy One.

They dry up;

The winds blow them away like dust.

Their branches are brittle;

They have no roots to sustain them.

They cannot stand before the howling gales of change.

Nor can the self-satisfied mingle unnoticed

in the company of those who follow the road to deliverance.

For The Almighty watches over those who journey in faithfulness,

But the walk of the wayward leads nowhere.

WE PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL IN WORD

A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

THE LORD’S PRAYER (*debts*)

MODERN TESTIMONY

“Testimony” (excerpt)

I want to tell you that the world
is still beautiful.
I tell you that despite
children... shot down in school rooms,
... despite the thinning film
that encloses our aching world.
Despite my own terror and despair.

I want you to know that spring
is no small thing, that
the tender grasses curling
like a baby's fine hairs around
your fingers are a recurring
miracle. I want to tell you
that the river rocks shine like God...

I want to remind you to look
beneath the grass, to note
the fragile hieroglyphs
of ant, snail, beetle.

I want to say, like Neruda,
that I am waiting for
“a great and common tenderness,”
that I still believe
we are capable of attention,
that anyone who notices the world
must want to save it.

ANCIENT TESTIMONY:

I John 5:9-13

SERMON

“Speaking from the Heart”

John A. Nelson

WE RESPOND IN PRAYER AND FAITH

PASTORAL PRAYER

OFFERTORY

ONE: Like Jesus' first followers, we give ourselves to God. The deeper the giving, the more completely we open ourselves to receive the grace that God is pouring out all the time, beautiful and unceasing. Don't hold back. Dig deep, give with joy, and be renewed.

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

RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

MUSICAL OFFERING

✠ 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

Thank You, God, for the opportunity to share in your creative, healing, and transforming work among people. Because you have blessed us, we have much to give. These offerings express our gratitude and our hope to be more fully your own loyal community: we bless them in the gracious name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

HYMN #687

“Our God, Our Help in Ages Past”

ST. ANNE

BENEDICTION and SUNG AMEN

POSTLUDE



Participants in Today's Celebration

Worshippers:

Members and Friends of the Congregational Church of Salisbury, UCC

Salisbury UCC Choir;
Jennifer Oberto, *cantor*

Dr. Samuel Lord Kalcheim, *music director*

Mary Davidson, *reader*
Karin Noyes, *online host*

The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson, *preacher*