

The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



PRELUDE

Gymnopédie I

Erik Satie

WELCOME

⌘ **HYMN #408**

"Sweet, Sweet Spirit"

SWEET SPIRIT

(⌘ *The congregation may rise, in body or in spirit.*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Baptized to begin lives of faith,

**ALL: we would witness to all you do
in our communities, in our midst, in our world.**

Baptized to serve,

**we would speak up for the voiceless,
we would bring justice and joy to those who have none.**

Baptized to speak,

**we would heal, and not hurt;
we would bless, and not curse.**

Baptized to do what is right,

**we would not play favorites,
but treat each as your Beloved.**

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Walk in the Light”



The musical notation is written on three staves in a 3/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some rests. The lyrics are: "We will walk in the light, beau - ti - ful light. Come where the dew-drops of mer-cy shine bright. O, shine all a - round us by day and by night. Je-sus, the light of the world."

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CALL TO RECONCILIATION

ONE: Why do we huddle in the shadowed corners of life, rather than running to the Light of life? Why do we love the wrong we do, rather than grasping the good news offered to us? As we struggle with such questions, let us speak to God of all we have failed to do, seeking hope and grace as we pray, saying:

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**We search for your light, Star Caster,
but too often end up settling for the dimness of temptation.
Our motives for seeking to find Christ are not always pure,
for we expect him to fulfill our desires, rather than your hopes for us.
We seek gifts of success, fulfillment, health, even wealth,
rather than those of servanthood, of compassion, of peace.**

**Forgive us, Shaper of our lives,
that we put our longings ahead of your grace.
Guide us to be like those wise people of so long ago,
who found hope, instead of a destination;
who found grace, instead of gratitude;
who found salvation, instead of a sign.
As we journey with your Son, our Master and Savior, Jesus Christ,
fill us with the light of your joy and love.**

(Silence is kept)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Walk in light! God has poured grace into our hearts, God has flooded our souls with love, and the light of hope shines in us. God forgives us, and illuminates our way.

This is the light which has come to all, the light of forgiving love we will give to everyone we meet. Thanks be to God! Amen.

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Walk in the Light”

We Feast at God’s Table

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

ONE: We have come asking for the child –

**ALL: Wondering where that love might be born,
Seeking that joy that might satisfy our thirst,
Wandering through the darkness of so many mistakes.**

We have come to this place where sages from the east and shepherds from the hills and animal witnesses met around a young mother and her newborn. We have come to this place called Bethlehem –

**to this place where our hearts rise like yeast;
to this place where we meet our newborn hope;
to this place where we taste our deepest joy.**

In Bethlehem, where we assumed the worst,
imagining that no good can come,
we somehow missed its name. Bethlehem:
Bethel meaning house; *Lehem* meaning bread.

**There is something here that will satisfy our hunger.
No matter how long we have wandered,
here our hearts arise. Our light has come.**

In this bread and in this cup,
we celebrate something we can’t quite understand.

**Because God has made a house at this table.
Because God satisfies our hunger in the most unlikely places.
Because God comes to be with us, now and always.**

It is with this expectation that we come to the table
to taste and see that God is here.

REMEMBERING JESUS AT THE TABLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*depts*)

Hymnal, p. 35

PRAYER AT THE TABLE

**Holy Spirit, come into this bread and this cup.
Transform these ordinary objects as you change our hearts
to shape and form your world with the joy you promise.
Pour your grace upon us, so we overflow with your love.
Help us to remember how a newborn baby might grow into
a little child that would one day turn to his hope-filled friends
in an upper room, and open to them a new union with God.**

SHARING THE MEAL

We celebrate an open communion, and welcome every person to the table. We understand the sharing of the bread and the cup in Jesus' name to be a reenactment of an ancient vision of God's feast for all people. We don't require you to be a member of our church, or any church, to participate with us in this feast of grace: all that is needed is that you desire the nurture God is offering. As communion is served we hold the bread until all have received, to signify our unity in Christ. We drink the cup as we are served, to signify our personal relationship with Christ.

(We use gluten-free bread and unfermented grape juice, to extend a wider welcome.)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

ONE: Eternal and gracious One,
though we live in a world of need,

**ALL: here we have tasted your goodness
and hungered for a world more just.**

Though afflicted by brokenness and division,

here we have heard your call to be a people of healing community.

Though daily we touch our limits,

here we have received the fullness of your grace.

You have filled us, O God:

inspire us to live in love and to share your *shalom!* Amen.

OFFERTORY

ONE: From the prophets and teachers of our faith we hear a life-changing story: God appears among us. God makes a home with humanity! What can we do, when God comes so near? We bring our own treasure; we sing our own joy; we offer our own wonder. Let us give, richly and boldly.

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

RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

Our church welcomes every size gift, and thanks you for your generosity.

ANTHEM

Thou Must Leave Thy Lowly Dwelling

Hector Berlioz

✠ EPIPHANY BLESSING

GREENSLEEVES

**Bring gifts of wonder, awe, and praise;
come join in jubilation;
The Holy Child, by love and grace,
has come with God's salvation.**

**Raise, raise a song on high,
the mother sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
the babe, the child of Mary.**

✠ UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy One, you have given a bounty of blessings both spiritual and tangible. We pray that you will gather up the gifts we offer and will transform them into food for the hungry, hope for the despairing, healing for the broken, and peace that dispels hurt and fear. In the name of Emmanuel, God-With-Us: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 42:1-9
Matthew 3:13-17

*Old Testament, p. 820
New Testament, p. 3*

SERMON

“Fulfillment”

Pastor John A. Nelson

PASTORAL PRAYER

✠ HYMN #490

“Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters”

BEACH SPRING

BENEDICTION and SUNG AMEN

POSTLUDE

Forest Green

Craig Phillips



Welcome to Church!

Gathered in 1744, the Congregational Church of Salisbury is an Open and Affirming member of the United Church of Christ. It is also a welcoming home to people from a great variety of church backgrounds and life experiences. Your presence is a gift to us! We hope you will feel God's Spirit here today through our worship and fellowship.

*We seek to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds and love our neighbors as ourselves. This Church is **Open** to all for participation, membership, leadership and employment regardless of race, ancestry, class, gender identity, physical and mental ability or sexual orientation. We **Affirm** each individual as a child of God, celebrating the total identity of each person.*

*As an **Open and Affirming** Congregation, we commit to work toward ending ignorance, fear, hatred, prejudice, and discrimination against any person.*

*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

If you are visiting us, Welcome! Please sign our guest book and introduce yourself to our Pastor or to one of the Deacons. Fill out a welcome card in the pew to join our email list. Assistive Listening Devices are available; please ask an usher for assistance.

Kindly set phones to silent (unless you're expecting a call from Jesus).

Today's Worship Leaders

Ushers: Sarah Morrison and Joanne Taber

Reader: Eileen Epperson • *Deacon:* Patricia Palmer

Flowers have been placed in the Meeting House by Allison Gray,
in honor of First Responders.

Today's liturgy is adapted and reprinted from *Lectionary Liturgies* by the Rev. Thom Shuman © 2023
(lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com); used by permission.

Cover art: Anonymous, c. 1920, "The Baptism of Christ," school of Rembrandt van Rijn.

Our Ministry Team

Ministers: All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

Worship & Music

Music Director: David Baranowski
Bell Choir Director: Mary Davidson
Cantor: Jennifer Oberto

Faith Formation

Sunday School Coordinator:
Holly Tierney
Sunday School Assistant:
Jennifer Kronholm-Clark

Holding the Parts Together

Administrative Assistant: Loriann Chevremont
Sexton: Richard Tietjen
Stewardship & Database Mgr: Kelly Rybczyk

Church Officers: Betsy Beck, *moderator*;
Jennifer Weigel, *treasurer*;
Jennifer Oberto, *clerk*

Pastor and Teacher: The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson

Occasions for Service, Witness, and Prayer

IN OUR PRAYERS:

We gladly list joys and concerns, and typically print them for four weeks after they are offered in worship. (Prayer requests may be renewed at any time.)

New additions:

Weekly prayer from UCC Global Ministries: for the peoples of Korea; for Hanshin University, the National Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, and all seeking peace.

Toby Reifsnyder, recovering from heart attack and surgery • Bill Hayhurst, recovering from successful heart valve replacement • Noble Richards

Continuing concerns:

Margaret Haubrich, in memory care • all affected by gun violence, especially survivors, those tending to the traumatized, and those advocating for safety • The people of Ukraine and all striving to end war • All who serve or live in war or in conflict zones around the world.

For those in treatment for cancer — Jenny, Frank Swaye, David Douyea, MingMing, Deborah Merwin, Keith Blanton and others — prayers for healing and strength.

Family & Friends who have passed away

Families and friends of beloveds who have died due to Covid-19 disease, including 11,630 in the US in the last four weeks

We thank God for the gift of life, and pray for the Spirit's strong presence with family and friends who grieve.

Friends and family now serving our country in the armed forces • All those serving or living in war or conflict zones around the world.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A PASTORAL VISIT, please call the church office (860-435-2442) or email Pastor John (jnelson@salisburyucc.org). Sometimes we don't find out about an injury or illness or other need until long after — so please call!

408 There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit

1 There's a sweet, sweet Spir - it in this place, and I
2 There are bless - ings you can - not re - ceive till you

The first system of music features a treble and bass staff in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody in the treble staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The bass line consists of quarter notes G2, A2, B2, and C3. The lyrics are positioned below the treble staff.

know that it's the Spir - it of the Lord; there are
know him in his full - ness and be - lieve; you're the

The second system continues the melody and bass line. The treble staff has a dotted quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The bass line has a dotted quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3. The lyrics are positioned below the treble staff.

sweet ex - pres - sions on each face, and I
one to prof - it when you say, "I am

The third system continues the melody and bass line. The treble staff has a dotted quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The bass line has a dotted quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3. The lyrics are positioned below the treble staff.

know they feel the pres - ence of the Lord.
going to walk with Je - sus all the way."

The fourth system concludes the melody and bass line. The treble staff has a dotted quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The bass line has a dotted quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3. The lyrics are positioned below the treble staff.

This gospel hymn grew out of this African American author and composer's intense experience of prayer with her interracial choir in Los Angeles one Sunday morning before worship. She recalled that sense of "a sweet, sweet Spirit" when she sat down at her piano the next day.

Refrain

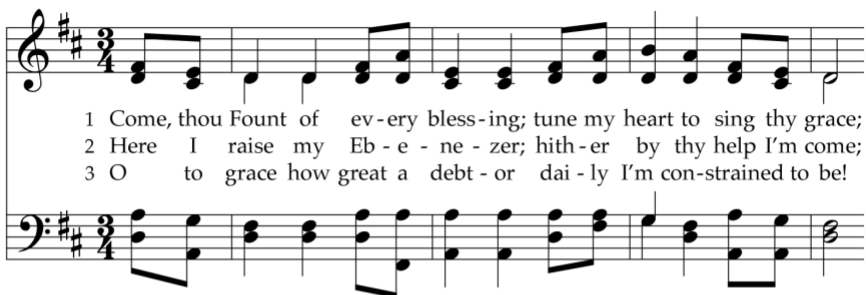
Sweet Ho - ly Spir - it, sweet heav - en - ly Dove, stay right here

with us, fill - ing us with your love; and for these bless - ings we

lift our hearts in praise; with - out a doubt we'll know that we have

been re - vived when we shall leave this place.

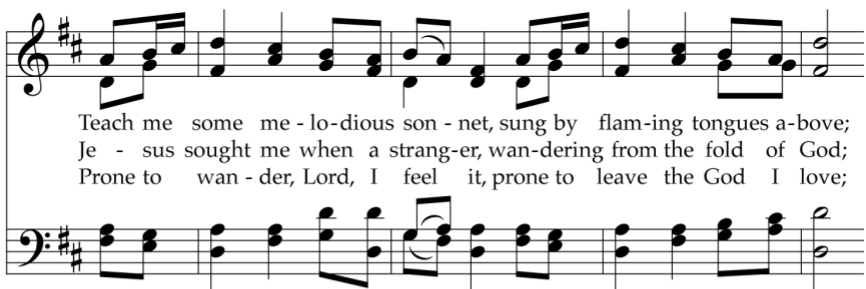
Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing 475



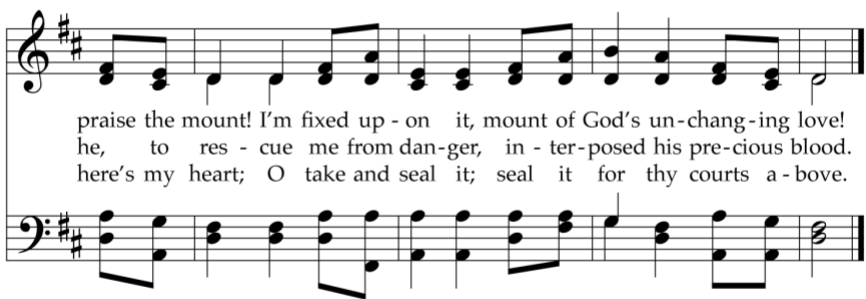
1 Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2 Here I raise my Eb - e - ne - zer; hith-er by thy help I'm come;
3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be!



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud-est praise.
and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar - rive at home.
Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to thee.



Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a-bove;
Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God;
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;



praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un-chang-ing love!
he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter-posed his pre-cious blood.
here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Written for Pentecost by a British Baptist pastor, this text is full of biblical terms like "Ebenezer" (1 Samuel 7:12), Hebrew for "a stone of help" set up to give thanks for God's assistance. The tune name honors hymnal compiler Asahel Nettleton, who probably did not compose it.

Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters

Capo 3: (D) F (Bm) Dm (G) B^b

1 Wash, O God, your sons and daugh-ters, new - born crea - tures
2 Ev - ery day we need your nur - ture; by your milk may
3 O how deep your ho - ly wis - dom! Un - i - mag - ined,

(D) F (Bm) Dm

of your womb. Num-ber them a - mong your peo - ple, raised like
we be fed. Let us join your feast, par - tak - ing cup of
all your ways! To your name be glo - ry, hon - or! With our

(G) B^b (D) F (A) C

Christ from death and tomb. Weave them gar - ments bright and
bless - ing, liv - ing bread. God, re - new us; guide our
lives we wor - ship, praise! We your peo - ple stand be -

(Bm) Dm (F#m) Am (Bm) Dm (G) B^b (A) C (D) F

spark-ling; com- pass them with love and light. Fill, a - noint them;
foot - steps, free from sin and all its snares, one with Christ in
fore you, wa - ter-washed and Spir - it - born. By your grace, our

(Bm) Dm (G) B^b (D) F

send your Spir - it, ho - ly dove and heart's de - light.
liv - ing, dy - ing, by your Spir - it, chil - dren, heirs.
lives we of - fer. Re - cre - ate us; God, trans - form!

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This text incorporates many of the images associated with the water of baptism in the Thanksgiving Over the Water in *The Book of Common Worship*, especially nourishment, the calling forth of life, cleansing and renewal, freedom from bondage, and sharing in Christ's resurrection.

This Week at Salisbury UCC

SUNDAY, 8 JANUARY

10AM Worship
*followed by fellowship & refreshments
in the Parish Hall*

MONDAY, 9 JANUARY

11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club

TUESDAY, 10 JANUARY

10AM Tai Chi class
4PM Centering Prayer (via Zoom)
5:15PM Handbell Choir rehearsal

WEDNESDAY, 11 JANUARY

12:30PM Staff Meeting
4PM Women's Bible Study
6PM Board of Deacons meeting

THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY

5:30PM Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAY, 13 JANUARY

8:45AM Men's Bible Study

Opportunities

“COMPLETING 2022 - CREATING 2023” — We bring along into the new year unfinished business, unnoticed relationships, and promises made and not kept. We don't acknowledge accomplishments or regrets. The new year is burdened before it begins! *Would you like a really new year?* Saturday, 21 January, 10a-4p, via Zoom. Sliding scale fee.

Also: **WHAT IS YOUR STORY ABOUT FORGIVENESS?** Wednesday, 25 January, 9:30a – 1:30p. In person at Wisdom House, 229 East Litchfield Road, Litchfield. Both led by Eileen Epperson; for more information email info@forgivenesscoaching.com.



The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey: you are welcome here.

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Office Hours: 8:30am – 1:30pm, Monday-Thursday