



The Congregational Church of Salisbury  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

# 14th Sunday after Pentecost

3 September 2023, 10am



## PRELUDE

*Andante from Italian Concerto*

J.S. Bach

## WELCOME

✘ **HYMN #331**      “God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand”  
(✘ *The congregation may rise, in body or in spirit.*)

NATIONAL HYMN

## ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER

### CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Gathered as God's people, we come to worship together:

**ALL: singing praises to the One who loves us,  
opening our hearts to the One who calls us.**

Called to be followers of Jesus, we come to share our lives together:

**to celebrate the joys of our hearts,  
to mingle our tears with God's.**

Challenged to become partners with the Spirit, we will seek peace and hope:

**pouring ourselves out for the worthy and unworthy alike,  
as God pours out life and hope, wonder and grace.**

### RESPONSE IN SONG      “We Are Standing on Holy Ground”

We are stand-ing on ho-ly ground, and I know that there are an-gels all a - round—

Let us praise Je-sus now;— we are stand-ing in God's pres-ence on ho-ly ground.—

*Words and Music: Geron Davis, 1983. © 1983 Meadowgreen Music Co. (a div. of The Sparrow Corp.)/Songchannel Music.  
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## **A PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION**

ONE: Holy God, Maker of all

**ALL: Have mercy on us.**

Jesus Christ, Servant of the poor

**Have mercy on us.**

Holy Spirit, Breath of life

**Have mercy on us.**

Let us in silence confess our faults and admit our frailty.

*(Prayer in silence)*

Before God, with the people of God, I confess to my brokenness:  
to the ways I wound my life, the lives of others, and the life of the world.

**May God forgive you, Christ renew you,  
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.**

Amen.

**Before God, with the people of God,  
we confess to our brokenness:  
to the ways we wound our lives,  
the lives of others,  
and the life of the world.**

May God forgive you, Christ renew you, and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.

**Amen.**

## **ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

With the whole church,

**We remember that we are forgiven by God,  
befriended by Christ, empowered by the Spirit.**

With people everywhere,

**We affirm God's goodness at the heart of humanity,  
planted more deeply than all that is wrong.**

With all creation,

**We celebrate the miracle and wonder of life: the unfolding  
purposes of God, forever at work in ourselves and the world.  
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** (*debts/debtors*)

*Hymnal, p. 35*

**RESPONSE IN SONG**      “We Are Standing on Holy Ground”

**RESPONSIVE PSALTER:** Psalm 26:1-8

ONE: Judge me, O Holy One;

**ALL: I have walked in complete devotion to You;  
I have trusted in You without wavering.**

Verify me, O God, examine me; test my heart and mind.

**Your love is before my eyes;**

I walk in faithfulness to You.

I do not sit with the frivolous,

**Nor do I consort with charlatans;**

I refuse the company of the bloodthirsty,

**And will not sit with the arrogant.**

I wash my hands in integrity, and serve at Your altar, Most High,

**Singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,**

**And telling all Your wondrous deeds.**

O God, my God, I love to be in Your presence,

**In those places where Your renown abides.**

✠ **HYMN #5**

“God the Sculptor of the Mountains”

JENNINGS-HOUSTON

**OFFERTORY**

**THE LIGHT OF SERVICE**

*Offerings not specifically designated for the Church (including any checks with “Light of Service” or “LOS” in the memo line) will be given to an organization doing compassionate work that is close to the heart of a participant in our church. This month, we share our gifts with the **CROP Hunger Walk**, now in its 40<sup>th</sup> year in NW Connecticut thanks to Joanne Taber and the late Pastor Dick Taber.*

ONE: God has poured gifts into our lives; we now return our tithes and offerings.

**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.*

**MUSICAL OFFERING**

*A Memorial Piece*

Hubert Parry

✘ 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

**Holy God, you who set hearts and spirits ablaze, remind us that we stand on holy ground when we walk with the lonely, work beside those seeking justice, bring hope to the forgotten, and share from our abundance with those who have nothing. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

Romans 12:9-21  
Exodus 3:1-15

*New Testament, p. 197*  
*Old Testament, p. 62*

**SERMON**

“Becoming”

Pastor John A. Nelson

✘ **HYMN #405**

“Praise God for This Holy Ground”  
Verses 1 & 2

HEYMONYSTRAAT

## **We Feast at God's Table**

**INVITATION**

**RESPONSIVE THANKSGIVING**

One: God be with you.

**Many: 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:

**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**

*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 God's nurture. (We use gluten-free bread and unfermented grape juice in an effort to remove barriers to anyone's participation in the sacrament.)*

## **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 hope-filled community.**

Though daily we touch our limits,  
**here we have received the abundance of your grace.**  
You have filled us, O God:  
**inspire us to live in love and to share your *shalom!* Amen.**

⌘ **HYMN #405**

“Praise God for This Holy Ground”  
Verses 4, 5, & 6

HEYMONYSTRAAT

**BENEDICTION** and **SUNG AMEN**

**POSTLUDE**

Trumpet Tune

Brenda Portman



## 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).**

# 331 God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand

(optional)

1 God of the a - ges, whose al-might - y  
 2 Thy love di - vine hath led us in the  
 3 From war's a - larms, from dead - ly pes - ti -  
 4 Re - fresh thy peo - ple on their toil - some

hand leads forth in beau - ty all the star - ry band  
 past. In this free land by thee our lot is cast.  
 lence, be thy strong arm our ev - er sure de - fense.  
 way. Lead us from night to nev - er - end - ing day.

of shin - ing worlds in splen - dor through the skies,  
 Be thou our rul - er, guard - ian, guide, and stay:  
 Thy true re - li - gion in our hearts in - crease.  
 Fill all our lives with love and grace di - vine,

our grate - ful songs be - fore thy throne a - rise.  
 thy word our law, thy paths our cho - sen way.  
 Thy boun - teous good - ness nour - ish us in peace.  
 and glo - ry, laud, and praise be ev - er thine.

This hymn was generated by 19th-century centennial celebrations: the words by the Declaration of Independence and the music by the adoption of the United States Constitution. Despite these origins, no specific nation is mentioned in this hymn of praise and prayer for peace.

# God the Sculptor of the Mountains 5



1 God the sculp - tor of the moun - tains, God the  
 2 God the nui - sance of the Pha - raoh, God the  
 3 God the dress - er of the vine - yard, God the  
 4 God the un - ex - pect - ed in - fant, God the



mill - er of the sand, God the jewel - er of the  
 cleav - er of the sea, God the pil - lar in the  
 plant - er of the wheat, God the reap - er of the  
 calm, de - ter - mined youth, God the ta - ble - turn - ing



heav - ens, God the pot - ter of the land:  
 dark - ness, God the bea - con of the free:  
 har - vest, God the source of all we eat:  
 proph - et, God the res - ur - rect - ed truth:



you are womb of all cre - a - tion;  
 you are fount of all de - liv - erance;  
 you are host at ev - ery ta - ble;  
 you are pres - ent ev - ery mo - ment;



we are form - less; shape us now.  
 we are aim - less; lead us now.  
 we are hun - gry; feed us now.  
 we are search - ing; meet us now.

Despite the great sweep of these stanzas, each one ends by describing how our human condition needs God's help: formless, aimless, hungry, searching. Each of these adjectives is followed by a related three-syllable petition: shape us now, lead us now, feed us now, meet us now.



# Praise God for This Holy Ground 405

Capo 2: (D) (G) (A) (Bm)  
E A B C#m

1 Praise God for this ho - ly ground,  
 2 Praise God in whose word we find  
 3 Praise God who through Christ makes known  
 4 Praise God's Spir - it who be - friends,  
 5 Though praise ends, praise is be - gun

(Em7) (D/F#) (Em7) (Asus4) (A)  
F#m7 E/G# F#m7 Bsus4 B

place and peo - ple, sight and sound.  
 food for bod - y, soul, and mind.  
 all are loved and called God's own.  
 rais - es, hum - bles, breaks, and mends.  
 where God's will is glad - ly done.

Refrain (D) (G) (Em7) (A) (F#7) (Bm)  
E A F#m7 B G#7 C#m

Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah!

(D) (Em7) (A7) (D)  
E F#m7 B7 E

God's good - ness is e - ter - nal.

Although several passages in the Psalms come close to the wording of this refrain, none matches it exactly. The refrain serves as a summation of the stanzas, each of which is filled with multiple instances of God's providential mercy, and all of them are worth pondering.

## Today's Worship Leaders

*Ushers:* Sarah Morrison, Allison Gray

*Reader:* Kevin Wolgemuth • *Deacon:* Barbara Collins

Today's liturgy is adapted and reprinted from *Lectionary Liturgies* by the Rev. Thom Shuman © 2022 (lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com); used by permission.

Psalm adapted from *The Psalms in Worship*, Mary Susan Gast, © 2002; used by permission.

## 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

### Holding the Parts Together

**Administrative Assistant:** Loriann Chevremont

**Sexton:** Richard Tietjen

**Stewardship & Database Mgr:** Kelly Rybczyk

**Church Officers:** Betsy Beck, *moderator*;

Janet Offensend, *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.)

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#### New concerns:

Weekly prayer from UCC Global Ministries: for  
Mission Partners in the Philippines —

United Church of Christ in the Philippines • Union  
Theological Seminary • Southern Christian College  
• Silliman University • Dansalan College Foundation

#### Continued concerns:

Andrew Marshall • Deborah Lifton • Sue Spring •  
Carl Morner, hospitalized with atrial fibrillation  
while recovering from lung surgery, and his family •  
Margaret Haubrich, in memory care

For students, teachers, staff, and families preparing  
for the start of a new school year

Neighbors around the world recovering from  
catastrophic wildfires, floods, and hurricanes • all  
affected by gun violence, especially survivors, those  
tending to the traumatized, and those advocating  
for safety • the peoples of Sudan and Ukraine •  
neighbors who serve or live in war or in conflict  
zones around the world • for peacemakers.

For those in treatment for cancer — Peter  
Kiernan, Jenny, Frank Swaye, David Douyeva,  
Deborah Merwin, Keith Blanton — prayers for  
healing and strength.

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**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!

## This Week at Salisbury UCC

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### SUNDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER

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

11:30AM Church Council meeting

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### MONDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER

*Church Offices closed – Labor Day*

8AM Food Pantry Board meeting  
9:15AM Centering Prayer (via Zoom)  
11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club

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### TUESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER

*Church Offices closed*

4PM Board of Christian Action  
6:30PM Tai Chi class

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### WEDNESDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER

12:30PM Staff Meeting

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### FRIDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER

9am Men's Bible Study



***Please Recycle this Bulletin!***



*The Congregational Church of Salisbury*

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*Meeting in Grace • Transformed by Love • Serving with Joy*

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