



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BETHEL

An Open and Affirming Church

November 20, 2022

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome! We welcome you to our worship this morning and are grateful for your presence. No matter who you are, or who you love, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. Please introduce yourself to an usher or Reverend Ryan Gackenheimer to learn more about our ministries.

SHARING OF OUR GIFTS

Those attending worship in the sanctuary please leave your offerings in the giving baskets located in the rear of the sanctuary. If you would like to give electronically, visit our website where you can find a donation link.

TODAY!

November 20th after morning service: The Annual Congregational Meeting. It is an important meeting for our church. Please attend if you can.

November 20th after morning service: Thanksgiving Pot-luck Brunch

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please send request to the Prayer Request Email:

PRAYER@firstchurchbethel.org

We thank our worship leaders for their participation in this morning's service:

Worship Leader: Reverend Ryan Gackenheimer

Deacon of the Day: Claudia Anderson

Organist: Dana Mancuso

Video & Tech Support: Jim Welsh, Wade Anderson, Pam Smith

Church Contact Information:

Telephone: (203) 743-1877. Address: 46 Main Street, Bethel, CT 06801.

Director of Music: Dana Mancuso (dmancuso.live@gmail.com)

Secretary: Kathy MacAulay (secretary@firstchurchbethel.org)

Pastor Emeritus: The Rev. Dr. Sheldon Smith

Senior Deacon: Marcia Merritt (pesinger37@aol.com)

Head Trustee: Jim Welsh (jim.welsh.jr@gmail.com)

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SUNDAY ORDER OF WORSHIP

UCC Candidating Service

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Please stand either in body or spirit*

PRELUDE

Come and Gather

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We are all called to gather, to worship, and to bring our whole selves.

Many: We bring our gifts, our joys, and our hopes.

One: We are invited to lay down our burdens and heavy loads as we celebrate the unconditional love of our God.

Many: We bring our sorrows, our pains, our losses.

One: God beckons us to be as present as we are able and to receive abundant grace.

All: Let us worship our God with all we are and all we have.

INVOCATION AND LORD'S PRAYER

Holy one, you are always present and everywhere. Open our eyes, minds, and hearts to your presence in this sacred place and within each of us. May your Spirit enliven us this day as we seek you, sing of your praise, and live in your love. Let us pray as Jesus taught us to pray saying,

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN #276**

We Gather Together

vs. 1 & 3

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Let us come before our God bringing our entire selves seeking God's forgiveness.

All: God of abundant grace, we come to You just as we are. You know our hearts and our actions. We ask your forgiveness for all that we have said and done, and that which we have left unsaid and undone. Empower us to find the courage to stand against systems of oppression, to recognize our complicity, and to change our behavior. We offer you now our personal silent confession.

Time of Silent Confession...

One: Holy One, we give thanks that you know our hearts and call us to be the beloved children of God you would have us be. Help us to live in Micah's words as we do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you. And may you all know that you are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

A CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

***HYMN OF PRAISE #453** *Called as Partners in Christ's Service* vs. 1&2

SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:1-8 CEB (Common English Bible)

SERMON: Unique Gifts Make Us Whole

SHARING OUR GIFTS

Invitation to Give

Let us give with joyous hearts that God's light and love may be made manifest in this world, through the generosity that is so freely given to us.

Musical Offering *"Lift My Life Up" Unspoken*

Unison Prayer of Dedication

God of abundant gifts, we give thanks for the many ways in which you have blessed us. May our giving bring joy and make your presence known in all that we do and say. Amen.

***PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

***CLOSING HYMN #270** *Of All the Spirit's Gifts to Me* vs. 1-5

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE #614 (All welcome to join) *I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me* vs. 1-4

Attributions:

Prelude

Come and Gather

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:10, 3:9, 11; 13:12-16, Romans 12:4-5, 15:6-7; Vince Ambrosetti, b.1956

Tune: RIUNIAMO, 8 8 8 8 8 7 9 8; Vince Ambrosetti, b.1956

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Opening Hymn

#276 We Gather Together (vs. 1 & 3)

Words: *Nederlandsche Gedenckclanck*, 1626; tr. Theodore Baker, 1894; adapt. Ruth Duck, 1981

Music: Dutch melody (16th century); arr. Edward Kremser, 1877

Adapt. © 1981 Ruth Duck; used by permission

Hymn of Praise

#453 Called as Partners in Christ's Service (vs. 1 & 2)

Words: Jane Parker Huber, 1981

Music: John Zundel, 1870

Words © 1981 Jane Parker Huber

Musical Offering

"Lift My Life Up" Unspoken

Songwriters: Chad Mattson / Jason Ingram / Jon Lowry / Seth Mosley

Lift My Life Up lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC

Closing Hymn

#270 Of All the Spirit's Gifts to Me (vs. 1 - 5)

Words: Fred Pratt Green, 1979

Music: John B. Dykes, 1865

Words © 1979 Hope Publishing Co.

Postlude

#614 I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me (vs. 1 - 4)

Words: African-American spiritual

Music: African-American spiritual; arr. Bill Thomas, 1994

Arr. © 1995 Chalice Press

Prelude

Come and Gather

Opening Hymn

#276 We Gather Together (vs. 1 & 3)

1. We gather together to ask the God's blessing;
to turn to a wisdom surpassing our own;
The powers that oppress us now cease to distress us.
O God, be present with us, and make your will unknown.

3. May all sing your praises, Redeemer triumphant,
defend us, befriend us, whatever may be.
May your congregation escape tribulation.
Your name be praised forever, O God, make us free!

Hymn of Praise

#453 Called as Partners in Christ's Service (vs. 1 & 2)

1. Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,
we respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.

2. Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.
Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,
Blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.

Musical Offering

"Lift My Life Up" Unspoken

Closing Hymn

#270 Of All the Spirit's Gifts to Me (vs. 1 - 5)

1. Of all the Spirit's gifts to me,
I pray that I may never cease
to take and treasure most these three:
love, joy, and peace.

2. The Spirit shows me love's the root
of every gift sent from above,
of every flower, of every fruit,
that God is love.

3. The Spirit shows if I possess
a love no evil can destroy;
however great is my distress,
then this is joy.

4. Though what's ahead is mystery,
and life itself is ours on lease,
each day the Spirit says to me,
"Go forth in peace!"

5. We go in peace, but made aware that,
in a needy world like this,
our clearest purpose is to share
love, joy, and peace.

Postlude (all welcome to join)

#614 I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me (vs. 1 - 4)

1. I'm gonna live so God can use me
anytime and anywhere.

I'm gonna live so God can use me
anytime and anywhere.

2. I'm gonna work...

3. I'm gonna pray...

4. I'm gonna sing...