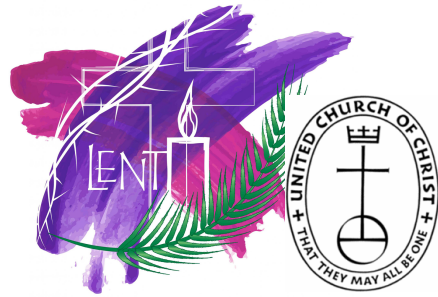


LEADERS



*Second Sunday of Lent
Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ
March 5, 2023*

Welcome!



*Welcome High Point University Chamber Singers
High Point, North Carolina! We are glad you are here!*



Leaders:

Good Morning – and thank you...

We are going to keep it simple this morning. There will be a brief intro and then just follow along.

As for lights:

Use the light board to light everything up and then shut it down, but leave the breakers on. That should leave the lights on, without the flickering from sound. Let's try that.

Welcome

S2 Connie Welcome

Good morning everyone and welcome to Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ, where we like to say, "You are welcome before you arrive!" My name is Connie Kauffman and it is my privilege to serve today as liturgist and thank you for being with us in person or online. It is good to be together.

Click

And what a wonderful and uplifting and inspiring performance last night by this amazing High Point University Chamber Singers and their leader Dr. Marc Foster. You brought joy and spirit and song and the - words of song – that we and everyone else needs to hear.

Thank you and thank you for being part of our worship this morning. We are delighted you are here and invite you afterwards to our hospitality, talk back and to hang around as you like.

We wish you the very best in your continuing Choir Tour and more, much more – in the magnificent lives we know are before each and every one of you!

Ringling of the Bell

Prelude

“Sinfonia for Trumpet and Organ”
by Henry Purcell, Arranged by S. Drummond Wold
James Cesare, trumpet soloist

Please stand if you wish and join in this morning’s Call to Worship

Call to Worship

**All: The prayer: un-confounded by listless prose
 or sustained pronouncements...**

**Simply we pray, touching the earliest depths
of all Love’s mystery:**

**Day by Day; Day by day
O Dear God, three things we pray:**

**To see thee more clearly,
Love thee more dearly
Follow thee more nearly
Day by day by day by day...**

Please remain standing and join us in our opening hymn:

Hymn

“Welcome to This House” Sing! Prayer and Praise #7

Welcome to this house,
open and affirming.
In God's Love we are all one.
Hand in hand we stand.

Welcome to this house,
where God gives the call to serve.
All will sing, praises we bring.
Welcome to this house of God.

Welcome to this house,
caring and accepting.
In God's Love we are all one.
Welcome to this house of God.

Welcome to this house,
blessed by Word and Harmony.
Child of God, born from above.
Know that Christ is love.

Welcome to this house,
there is room for ev'ryone.
All will sing, praises we bring.
Let us all be one.

Welcome to this house,
filled with peace and charity.
Child of God, born from above,
welcome to this house of God.

Please be seated

Unison Prayer

Liturgist:

Friends, in this season of Lent, we are invited to consider how we live as followers of Jesus – to look at our decisions and our actions straight on, and to hold them up to the example of Jesus – and to find a way to address what troubles us, directly, as we may. In this time of silence and prayer together, let us look at our lives. And so, we pray first in silence.

(Silent Prayer for One Minute)

Please join together in praying this morning's Unison Prayer

In Unison by Joseph H. Gilmore

**The children of the earth are kin to you,
God like mountain wind,
 desert's solitude,
 a nomad's night fire,
 a Troubadour's songs, mirthful, melancholy,
In the Morning Time of It All,
 the Garden Time,
 the time of Dreaming Innocence,
 (your dream, our innocence),
we bore in a glad and shining way
 the image of you
 in the bodies of us,
 the "hearts" of us,
 the very breath of us.**

**We were joyfully us
 in our work and our play,
 in our silence and speaking,
 in our gender expression and loving,
 in our intimacy and conviviality,
 in agreement and dispute.**

**Moon of God,
 eternally preferring round
 on the way to round,
 circling:
bring us back again and ever again
to our Beginning Place.
And forgive the long
and painful
treks from ourselves
in exile from you
and your sacred image in us.**

Anthem "Where I Find God" by James Ahrend; The Chancel Choir
featuring High University Point Chamber Singers

Some people find God in churches, Some people find God above,
Some people say God is far away, Some people say God is Love,
Some people look for salvation, Some people search for the Way,
Some people search for a miracle cure, Others just live for today!

If I were only more wise,
Could I see the Divine shining out through your eyes?
If God were right here in each other, Maybe God never left us at all!
Could it be simple but true? Where I find God is right here with you!

Some people find God in nature, Others don't know where to look,
Some people keep God right there on a shelf, On pages of words in a book;
Some people hear God in music, Others see God in the stars,
Some people find God in mountains and hills, Others in great works of art!

If I were only more wise,
Could I see the Divine shining out through your eyes?
If God were right here in each other, Maybe God never left us at all!
Could it be simple but true? Where I find God is right here with you!

Some people say God has left us,
Others say God's all around,
Some say God lives in the heart that forgives,
Or the soul that was lost and is found;
Some people find God in Christmas,
There in a manger so small,
Some people find it so hard to find God in the tears and the fears of us all!

If I were only more wise,
Could I see the Divine shining out through your eyes?
If God were right here in each other,
Maybe God never left us at all!
Could it be simple but true?
Where I find God is right here with you!

Joys and Concerns

Please respond, **“God, hear our prayers.”**

The Prayer of Jesus – “The Lord’s Prayer”

(You are invited to pray this prayer in the ways that are closest to your heart.)

**Creator God who is in heaven; Hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done; on Earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.
Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil
for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Please rise

Passing of Christ’s Peace

May the Peace of the Risen Christ be with you all!
And also with you.

Please extend a sign of peace to one another.

Please join us in singing:

Hymn “Spirit of the Living God” New Century Hymnal #283

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me
Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.**

Please be seated.

Gospel Reading

John Chapter 3:1-10

¹ A certain Pharisee named Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin,
² came to Jesus at night. "Rabbi," he said, "We know you're a teacher come from God, for no one can perform the signs and wonders you do, unless by the power of God."

³ Jesus gave Nicodemus this answer:

"The truth of the matter is, unless one is born from above,
one cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁴ Nicodemus said, "How can an adult be born a second time? I can't go back into my mother's womb to be born again!"

⁵ Jesus replied:

"The truth of the matter is,
no one can enter God's kingdom
without being born of water and the Spirit.
What is born of the flesh is flesh;
what is born of the Spirit is Spirit.
So don't be surprised when I tell you that
you must be born from above.

The wind blows where it will.
You hear the sound it makes,
but you don't know where it comes from or where it goes.
So it is with everyone
who is born of the Spirit."

'How can this be possible?' asked Nicodemus.

¹⁰ Jesus replied,

"You're a teacher of Israel, and you
still don't understand these matters?"

Anthem

“The Impossible Dream”

from Man of La Mancha, by Mitch Leigh and Joe Darion,
Arranged by Mark Hayes, The Chancel Choir featuring
High Point University Chamber Singers

To dream the impossible dream
To fight the unbeatable foe
To bear with unbearable sorrow
To run where the brave dare not go

To right, the un-rightable wrong
To love pure and chaste from afar
To try when your arms are too weary
To reach the unreachable star

This is my quest, to follow that star
No matter how hopeless, no matter how far
To fight for the right without question or pause
To be willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause
And I know if I'll only be true to this glorious quest
That my heart will lie peaceful and calm
When I'm laid to rest

And the world will be better for this
That one man, strong and covered with scars
Still strove with his last ounce of courage
To fight the unbeatable foe
To reach the unreachable star

Provocation & Holy Communion

This is a draft... follow as best you can. Only a couple of slide movements...

S35

Words matter.

In the beginning of John, the Evangelist makes it clear how one Word in particular matters: From John 1:1

Click

In the Beginning there was the Word;
the Word was in God's presence,
and the Word was God.
The Word was present to God from the beginning.

Through the Word all things came into being,
and apart from the Word nothing came into being
that has come into being.

And the Word was life, and that life was humanity's light—
a Light that shines in the darkness,
a Light that the darkness has never overtaken.

Click

Perhaps some of the most powerful words ever written. For a moment, let's set aside that John was writing decades after Jesus' execution at the hands of a torture created by the Persians in 300 – 400 BCE : crucifixion - a word that is at the root of our own word: "excruciating" – a slow, painful suffering.

For a moment, let's also set aside that the purpose of John's gospel is to affirm in the most powerful of ways that Jesus Christ is Divine, the Messiah, the Beloved One of God. This especially made clear towards the end of Chapter 3, following this morning's reading in John 3:16:

Click

Yes, God so loved the world
As to give the only Begotten One
That whoever believes in Jesus may not die,
But have eternal life.

From the earliest of John's words to here and beyond, John has one purpose. To prove Jesus' Divinity.

Click

For a moment, knowing these things about John, let's return to the first few verses and the Word. The presence. The word that excites all things into being. The Word that is light, shines in the darkness and brings life to all humanity. That "Word" has no word in our language or abilities to explain, let alone wrap our minds in. It is though, within us, it is what we have been created from and given to share. It is a reflection of who we are in the presence of God – not as standing before in judgment as is so often used for behavior modification – but in the shekinah – the glittering presence of God – in which we reside, from which we go into our lives and into the world around us: that, is the Word in us.

It is that presence of God in us. The Word in us that that changes the world because it changes our direction back to God from which it came, long before 1st Century in the Common Era. It is the Abba that Jesus speaks of in his time; the Divine that John presents in Jesus.

Last night we were truly blessed with a performance by these Chamber Singers and their Leader Marc Foster. Long before they appeared here last night they felt a “word” a “nudge” a “light” that moved them. Every choice, practice session, the encouragement of those who teach and lead, challenges, long nights in college, life opening up with choices and decision – families, friends, determination and doubts – was an unfolding of what the Word: sing means to them.

Sing. Sometimes referred to as a “spell” so powerful in how it moves others. Voices and accompaniments and words that yes, as Dr. Marc said last night, moves us into the light that knows the shadows, as well.

And so, when Nicodemus came to Jesus out of those dark shadows; Nicodemus who only appears in John’s Gospel; he was seeking... more... of the Word he knew, the more evidenced in Jesus by the things Nicky (as his friends called him) was able to do.

He might have said to Jesus, “How do you sing like that?”

And Jesus might have said to him, “Nicodemus, how will you sing the Word in you to change the world? That is up to you...”

In times like we are in, our times, like others before, it is the same question: How will we sing the Word of Love and Life given to us from before eternity, from “above” us – so far beyond us – that it has to be above – for there is not enough room here for such a beginning.

How will we sing to our warring peoples; the hard-hearted heartless leaders who follow only a word of their own: power.

How will we sing to those bringing life into the world, beginning families, caring for elders, tending to the sick, comforting those in loss.

How will we sing to the rising sun on Easter morn, that is – Every morn, with the wonder and inspiration that only a deep expression of creation-in-us, God-with-us, echoes when such beauty reminds us of how beautiful each of us are.

How will we sing to stop those who are determined to use the teachings and texts as implements of their own desire to marginalize and legislate the rights of women, voters, trans kin of ours, queer people who bring a very special song to the world; a song God has called us to sing.

How? Indeed.

In 1966 I saw the original off-Broadway production of *The Man of La Mancha* with Richard Kiley on the experimental thrust-stage (theater in the round) at the Anta Washington Square theater in Greenwich Village. I was 15. It was my first play. A high school Spanish trip. I was spellbound from the moment I took my seat, taken into another dimension as the ceiling opened and the stage entered into the dungeon, the cell where Cervantes and his fellow cellmates performed the story as they awaited their fate during the Spanish Inquisition.

It was from that moment on for me (and for many others who saw one or more of the 2,328 Tony Award performances) it was an assurance that there was a world out there looking for the dream, the Word of Life and Love; the proof that goodness would bring us to one another and for many – their senses.

It was an affirmation that no matter what, we keep on singing. And when it comes to others and how we care for others as a reflection of how we are cared for and loved from the beginning that, yes, in our own quiet or not so quiet ways (both are needed):

That we are willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause.
And to know, if we can only be true to this glorious quest...
That the world will be (as it continues to be) better for this.

So, I say this to myself, to you, if you wish to hear:

Let no one tell you otherwise...
Let no one tell anyone otherwise...

You are loved and beautiful and here to be who you are, love who you love, vote for whom you wish, express yourself in all your glory, be safe from violence on the streets and in the public space; receive the care you need; take have your rights as a woman; live fully and wide as a trans person; dress in drag if you wish...

And in all the ways you are able keep on singing.

For, in the beginning, the Word, perhaps better said – was really a song, just begun.

S36 - Communion

And so, when Jesus gathered with his own song, and brought the disciples and friends he loved together at the table, for the last time; a meal that would have occurred all during his ministry; this one, though, with the troops coming closer each day, he sand to them as he always did, perhaps with a bit more urgency:

Friends, remember how I love you. Oh, how I have and will continue to love you. Remember what we have done, how we have brought heart and words and promise to those who had no voice, were infirm, lost, forgotten – and remember we did these things because we are loved by Abba, by God, and so we love God with all our heart and all our soul and all our might and we love one another as ourselves... never held hostage to others who refuse what we have to say – but always open to the day they may...

And I am sure he said something like, remember me how I love you, what I taught you, that I am always with you as God is always with you as the ruach is always with you and the best way to remember to remember is when you sit and break bread, and remember that it is in the breaking of bread and out old and hard ways that we have more to give, that the light shines through, and as you drink... remember that it is in our veins as this drink is in our bodies a covenant that brings us to this world ... with words from long before we knew them to the many who are starving and thirsting to hear you.

Do these things, remember me, and now, enough talk... eat!

The Table is Set for All

“The Bread of Life” and “The Cup of Blessing”

(The fruit of the vine is grape juice and there is also gluten free bread on the table, if you prefer.)

Please remain seated

Benediction

Please rise...

Church Covenant

**In response to God's love,
we covenant with each other...
to be faithful to the demands
and inspiration of the eternal spirit,
revealed in the event of Jesus Christ;
to accept and respect each other
with love and concern
in our worship and witness;
to reach out with the courage of our convictions
in the cause of justice,
liberation, and equality for all.
In this, we covenant to keep the
ultimate promise: "I care, I am with you."**

Please be seated

Ringling of the Bell

Postlude

High Point University Chamber Singers



Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ

For more nearly 175 years, Sayville's Congregational Church has served families on the South Shore of Long Island and has been a voice for the progressive Protestant tradition. A member of the United Church of Christ since it was established in 1957, we celebrate God's love, however you may know God, by our continuing to advocate for the oppressed, while welcoming all on their spiritual journey, from wherever they may come. Thank you for being with us today. Please contact us at any time for more information about our congregation and questions you may have.

Thank you!

High Point University Chamber Singers
Dr. Marc Ashley Foster, Chair, Department of Music
& Director of Choral Activities

The Chancel Choir
James Cesare, Trumpet Soloist
Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ
Sean Cameron, Music Director

Liturgist – Connie Kauffman
Usher – Lorraine Martin
Hospitality – Thank you, All!
Media Team – Karin Conrad, Mark Conrad,
Connie Kauffman, Kathy Leis and Hank Maust

2023 Lenten & Easter Schedule (Update)

V = Vestry S = Sanctuary O = Online

Wed., March 8	Bible Jam	10 AM & 7 PM	S,O
Sat., March 11	Combined Boards Meeting	10 AM	V,O
Sun., March 12	Third Sunday in Lent		S,O
Wed., March 15	Bible Jam	10 AM & 7 PM	S, O
Sat., March 18	Chair Yoga with Randolph	11 AM	V
Sun., March 19	Fourth Sunday in Lent		S,O
Wed., March 22	Bible Jam	10 AM & 7 PM	S,O
Sat., March 25	Chair Yoga with Randolph	11 AM	V
Sun., March 26	Fifth Sunday in Lent		S,O
Wed., March 29	Bible Jam	10 AM & 7 PM	S,O
Sat., April 1	Chair Yoga with Randolph	11 AM	V
Sun., April 2	Palm Sunday		S,O
Wed., April 5	No Bible Jam; Returns on April 12		
Thu., April 6	Maundy Thursday Service	7 PM	S,O
Fri., April 7	Good Friday – Sanctuary	Open 12-3 PM	S,O

Easter Sunday

Sun., April 9	Easter Sunrise Service on The Great South Bay		
Board: 5:40 AM	Departure: 5:50 AM Sunrise: 6:26 AM		
Return :7 AM	Park at Sayville Ferry, 41 River Road		
Polish Breakfast	7:15 AM	Fellowship Hall	

Easter Sunday in Our Vestry at 10:00 AM

Easter Egg Hunt to Follow on the Front Lawn!



“Where you are welcome long before you arrive!”

Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ
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Heather Corcoran, Church Administrator; eChimes Editor
Ray Bagnuolo, Pastor ray@sayvilleucc.org 631-827-8611 (Cell/Text)

Today’s Service is being simulcast on our church channel at
www.echimestv.org Tune in any time!

Peace. Shalom. Salaam. Shanti.
For the ways of peace are many. “Namaste”