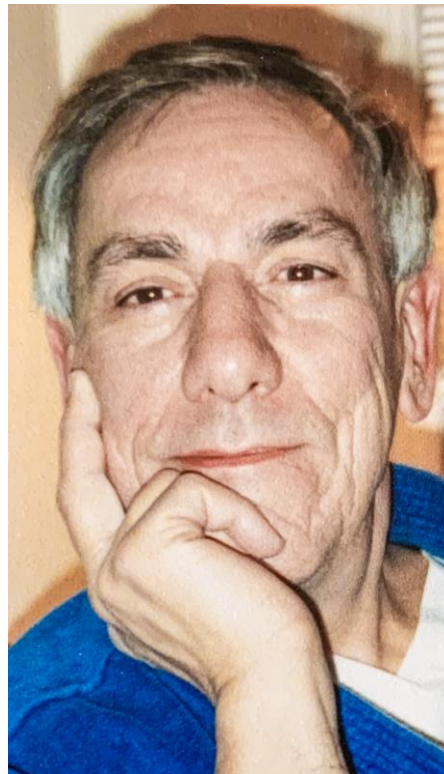


## Celebration of the Life of Robert Pierce

February 10, 1936 – November 7, 2023



Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ

Saturday, January 13, 2024, at 10:30 A.M.

Sayville, New York

## The Bell is Rung

Prelude                    “Precious Lord Take My Hand” from *Emmanuel*  
The Chancel Choir; Sean Cameron, Music Director

Opening Prayer            Rev. Ray Bagnuolo

I want this to be a place  
where we can touch and be touched  
by the utterly,  
the unmistakably sacred –  
the breath in all breathing,  
the light in all seeing,  
the fire in every righteous anger,  
the resonance in deep silence,  
the love which graces and ennobles all loves,  
the hospitality which bids a welcome  
to each of our returnings –  
and grieves a little  
at each of our leavings.

The unmistakably sacred  
which precedes all of our singing;  
the sighing which, when we are awake,  
calls us home to ourselves,  
where in our blood and bones  
the body of God dwells.

-- Joseph H. Gilmore

(Refrain)

Spirit, spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness,  
calling and free. Spirit, spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness, wind on the sea.

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;  
And over the eons you called to each thing,  
“Awake from your slumber and rise on your wings.” (Refrain)

You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,  
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
When they were confounded by their idols and lies,  
Then you spoke to their prophets to open their eyes. (Refrain)

You sang in the stable, you cried from a hill,  
then you whispered in silence when the whole world stood still;  
And down in the city you called once again,  
When you blew through your people on the rush of the wind. (Refrain)

You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,  
From the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams.  
Our people see visions, our folks clear their eyes.  
With bold new decisions your people arise. (Refrain)

Gospel Reading

John 14:1-6, 25-27

Jesus said to the disciples, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In God's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and I will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I'm going."

Thomas said to him, Rabbi, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Jesus continues...

"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom I will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

Hymn "My Faith is an Oaken Staff"      New Century Hymnal # 418

My faith is an oaken staff, the traveler's well-loved aid;  
My faith, it is a song of trust, sustains me undismayed.  
I'll travel on and still be stirred by silent thought or social word;  
By all my perils undeterred, a pilgrim unafraid.

My guide is Jesus Christ whose steps, when travelers have trod,  
Whether beneath was flinty rock or yielding grassy sod,  
They carried on, their joy unspent;  
                  through pain and trial they onward went,  
Unstayed by pleasure,  
                  still they bent their zealous course to God.

My faith is an oaken staff, O let me on it lean.  
My faith provides the ground of hope, supports a purpose keen.  
Your Spirit, God, upon me send, that I may be what you intend.  
With patient courage, we'll contend as radiant saints serene.

Homily                      Rev. Ray Bagnuolo, Pastor

Remembering Robert  
                  With Voices of Family and Friends

Pastoral Prayer      Rev. Ray Bagnuolo

Benediction Singing of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm by Bobbie McFerrin  
(Video presentation)

Church Covenant                      Reading

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."

Postlude                      "So When My Songs Are Sung" from *Emmanuel*  
The Chancel Choir; Sean Cameron, Music Director

Thank you Everyone....



Robert's Family thanks you for joining us today.  
It is so good and comforting to be together.

The Family asks that any donations in Robert's name be made to  
Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ.

Please join us following this morning's service in our Vestry  
for a light hospitality hour, along with a time for  
shared memories, conversations, and support of one another.

Today's service will be available online at [www.sayvilleucc.org](http://www.sayvilleucc.org)

Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ  
131 Middle Road, Sayville, NY 11782-3101  
631-589-1519; [churchadmin@sayvilleucc.org](mailto:churchadmin@sayvilleucc.org)  
Rev. Ray Bagnuolo 631-827-8611, [ray@sayvilleucc.org](mailto:ray@sayvilleucc.org)

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*Peace. Shalom. Salaam. For the ways of peace are many. "Namaste"*