



Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ

Worship for A Time of Passage
January 28, 2024



The Bell is Rung

Prelude "Tenderly" Music by Walter Gross, Lyrics by Jack Lawrence
James Cesare, trumpet soloist

(Please remain seated and listen as Mike leads us in our Call to Worship)

Call to Worship “The Quietness” by Joseph H. Gilmore

The Quietness
appears as it will,
sometimes at the end of a slow walk
or the finish of an unyielding day.
It consumes the observers of
Sun Rises, Sun Fall,
and long-ago built cairns
on mountainous trails.

Quiet deepens Mystery,
at the far away point where
Crosswalks and Destinations of Everything-Everywhere
merge into one. It deems that
when all else has been tried—
when ingenuity and guile have been exhausted—
the truth of the Quiet stands firm:
We are less than all.

It is *there*, in that black shimmering velvet
filled with the hypnotic presence of the universe’s Source
that God’s warmth, peace, and love read our hearts.

God of the Calm and Quiet,
strengthen us as we seek to let the Spirit fill and guide us.
Re-energize our lives with deep roots in your Quiet,
as we reach out to serve.

Remind us always, please, that
when the Noise fills the space which craves for your Peace,
and we forget
that you are there—
remind us that we can move to the
humbling side of your Quiet Mystery
and know that You move with us always.

The Chancel Choir “Where I Find God”
Words and Music by James Ahrend

(Please rise as you wish and join us in praying our Call to Worship.)

Unison Prayer “Mysteries, Yes” by Mary Oliver

Truly, we live with mysteries too marvelous
to be understood,

How grass can be nourishing in the
mouths of lambs.

How rivers and stones are forever
in allegiance with gravity
while we ourselves dream of rising.

How two hands touch and bonds will
Never be broken.

How people come, from the delight or the
Scars of damage,
to the comfort of a poem.

Let me keep my distance, always, from those
who think they have the answers.

Let me keep company with those who say
“Look!” and laugh in astonishment,
and bow their heads.

(Please remain as you are and join us in singing.)

Hymn “Waiting for You” Sing! Prayer and Praise #20

We are waiting for you,
knowing that you always abide,
We are waking to your presence,
and our hearts are open wide
open wide, open wide.

(Please be seated.)

Joys, Celebrations and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer & Assurance of God's Love

Prayer of Jesus (As you wish to pray this prayer...)

Anthem "The Best of Times" from *La Cage aux Folles*
Words and Music by Jerry Herman

(Choir returns to the pews and remains standing, with the congregation rising, as they wish.)

Passing of the Peace of Christ

(Please be seated.)

Reading Psalm 46 from Psalms for Praying by Nan C. Merrill

The Beloved is our refuge and our strength,
a Loving Presence in times of trouble.
Therefore, we need not fear though
the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
Though its waters roar and foam,
through the mountains tremble with its tumult.
There is a river whose streams
make glad the Holy City,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
The Beloved is in the midst of it,
it shall not be moved;
Our loving Creator is an ever-present help.
The nations may be at war,
countries left in ruins,
yet that is the Voice of the Almighty
heard, slowly breaking through hearts of stone.

The Beloved is ever with us,
the infinite Heart of Love.
Come, behold the works of the Beloved,
how love does reign even in humanity's desolation.
For the Beloved yearns for wars to cease,
shining light into fearful hearts; loving
even those who oppress the weak,
refining hearts of steel.

"Be still and know that I am Love.
[Be still and know that I am God.]
Awaken! Befriend justice and mercy;
Do you not know you bear my Love?
Who among you will respond?"
O Blessed One, You know all hearts, You are ever with us;
May Love ever guide our lives!

(Please remain seated.)

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.

Homily "The Greatest *Show* of All: Matthew 22:36-40"

United Church of Christ
Ceremony for the Completion of Authorized Ministry
January 28, 2024

Mark Conrad, Moderator

On January 15, 2017, Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ called Rev. Ray Bagnuolo to serve as Pastor.

Pastor Ray

I thank Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ, its members, and friends from near and far, the Cloud of Witnesses who preceded us, and those who will follow in the days ahead. I thank you all for your support of this vibrant ministry and me in my time with you.

I am grateful to the Sacred in your midst that makes it possible for you to really mean it when you say: “You are welcome here—long before you arrive, from wherever it is you may be on your spiritual journey.” I am grateful for your faithfulness in believing that “God is still speaking...” and for continuing to seek all that means in your lives. And, I promise that I will always hold dear the words that hang in before us: “Be Not Afraid”. Yes. “You Are Not Alone”. Yes.

And personally as well as prophetically, I thank you for your courage in embracing the Queer Community. Your power is awesome and felt far beyond this congregation in so many important ways. Yes. You understand the gifts of the human heart so well, including the one that tells us that just as the bread needs to be broken to share, sometimes our hearts need to be broken to be there for others. How genuinely and unconditionally you live into that wisdom!

And this: You have supported me, as your pastor and healed me in ways I never expected or knew I needed. Yes. I am sad at leaving, as it should be; and, Yes: I am joyful for the one you will call in the time ahead, as you pass on your amazing gifts of love and service – again.

The People

Ray, we receive your gratitude and thankfulness. We now accept that this is our time to send you forth, so you may follow God's continuing call in your life with what you have shared and learned with us.

We have been abundantly prepared and blessed by the Spirit's steadfast presence in our lives and this congregation. We accept that this is our time, too, to bring forward what we have shared and learned together in the ministry that continues here.

We express our gratitude for your time among us. As we follow the paths that are before us, we know this is all part of the one wondrous, winding and great path we share.

As our hearts feel the strain of this separation, we also feel the strains of joy for the wonder and mystery of God's ways and all that is to come.

Pastor Ray

Friends, I accept your gratitude and your love and all you say, both spoken and held in silence.

Mark Conrad, Moderator

Do you, members and friends of Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ now release Ray from the duties of pastor?

The People

We do with God's help.

Mark Conrad, Moderator

Do you offer your encouragement for Ray's ministry as it unfolds in new ways?

The People

We do with the help of God.

Mark Conrad, Moderator

Ray, do you release Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ from turning to you and depending upon you?

Pastor Ray

I do with the help of God.

Mark Conrad, Moderator

Ray, do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry and the relationship for those who serve now and will come to serve us.

Pastor Ray

I do, with the help of God.

*Witness of the Suffolk Association and New York Conference Representatives
Of the United Church of Christ*

Deacon Karen Maust, Committee Chairperson

Suffolk Association of the United Church of Christ Committee on Ministry

Ray, on behalf of the Suffolk Association of the United Church of Christ of Christ, and the member churches of this Association, we witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, gratitude, love and release.

Rev. Barbara Toll, Associate Conference Minister

New York Conference United Church of Christ

Ray, on behalf of the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ, we, too, witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, gratitude, love and release.

Further, on behalf of United Church of Christ, the member churches of the Suffolk Association, and the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ, we embrace you and this congregation in our prayers.

Lastly, we pledge our support in all the transitions and the ways of discernment that are ahead, as God leads us further into our shared time of love and service to all.

All the People

Thanks be to God.

The People

God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help us to trust the future, which rests in your care. In this time of your love, we have gathered in your name – in all the ways we know you. You have seen our laughter and laughed with us. You have felt our tears and shed yours beside us, and you have been with us in the deep joy that is always with us, always.

Guide us, please, as we hold cherished memories. Moving us as we build upon this time and all time before and to come. Fulfilling our part of the journey until that moment when we are one with you, and with each other, in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray and give our thanks. Amen.

(Please rise, if you wish, and join us in singing.)

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.)

Benediction

Choral Blessing "Smile" from *Modern Times*
Words and Music by Charlie Chaplin

Ringling of the Bell

Postlude "So When My [Our] Songs are Sung" from *Emmanuel*
Words and Music by Dorothy Davidson Hausske

Video Presentation followed by Hospitality! Please join us!

Announcements for January 28, 2024

Please join us following worship for a time of enthusiastic gathering, celebration, laughter and yes, a few tears – all part of our shared time for the last seven years.



James' Baptism

Congratulations to the Ryan Clan!

As Susan says,
"James was the best behaved!
Laughing and cooing through it all!"

Go, James!

Sunday School Continues each Sunday in February at 10 A.M. in the Fellowship Hall. February's theme is "Prayer":

- *Sunday, February 4 – Storytelling:* What are the different kinds of prayer? How does the Bible teach us to pray? (Led by Sylvia Sewell)
- *Sunday, February 11– Praying in Color:* Sometimes we don't have the words we need to pray. Explore how art and colors can help. (Led by Kristine Houghtalen)
- *Sunday, February 18– Drumming:* Feel the beat of the drums as the spirit moves us into prayer. (Led by Jeanine McKenna, Maia Lewis, Roxy York Sferra)
- *Sunday, February 25 – Labyrinth:* What is a labyrinth? Experience taking this prayerful walk, as well as make a finger labyrinth to take home. (Led by Gini McLaughlin)

"Souper Bowl of Caring" Luncheon, Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024. Join us after service for our "Souper Bowl of Caring" Luncheon. Soup, bread and desserts are on the menu. Donations to support Sharing a Meal will be gratefully accepted. You can help by providing soup or dessert. Contact Roberta Smith (631-472-2092) or Kathy Leis (631-589-0544) for more info.

Ash Wednesday Service and Ashes: Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Sanctuary

Rebel Readers Roundtable Next book is: Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult. Discussion date: Monday, February 26 at 7:00 PM in the Vestry.

Need help? Do you have any announcements for Sunday, eChimes, or our Website? Do you have prayers for us to add to our prayer list? Please call Heather at 631-589-1519 or email Churchadmin@sayvilleucc.org. She is the place to start for whatever you may need! Office hours are Monday through Friday 9 A.M. - 4 P.M.



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, in all the ways you may know God. As an expression of God's love, we 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!

Rev. Barbara Toll, Association Conference Minister

Michael Jayne, Liturgist; Hilda Baeza, Usher

Music Director Sean Cameron and The Chancel Choir

Trumpet Soloist, James Cesare

Preparers of Worship and the Sanctuary

All the Hospitality Planners and Contributors

Media Team – Karin Conrad, Mark Conrad,

Connie Kauffman, Kathy Leis and Hank Maust

Heather Corcoran, Church Administrator

Samantha and Dan, Building and Grounds Support

And all of you!

Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ

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Heather Corcoran, Church Administrator; eChimes Editor

Ray Bagnuolo, Pastor Emeritus; raybagnuolo@gmail.com 914-272-8326

Today's Service is simulcast www.echimestv.org Tune in any time!

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