

An asterisk () indicates times when you are invited to stand. Selections in BOLD are responses spoken by the congregation.*

Welcome and Announcements

Deacon

Prelude

Praeludium
Simon Sechter (1788-1867)

Norman McFarlane

Call to Worship

The Rev. Dr. Claire W. Bamberg

“Catherine’s Poem” by Ann Weems

Leader: Eyes receiving

All: Gifts receiving

All: Our hearts can see so many things.

Leader: A child in the snow many angel wings,

All: The grand bravado of marching bands

All: An elderly couple holding hands

Leader: The warm sweet silence of the early morn,

All: A lullaby sung to a precious newborn,

All: A fire’s warmth and a trusting face,

Leader: Heartfelt thanks!

All: Blessings of grace!

Leader: Eyes Receiving

All: Gifts Receiving

***Gathering Hymn**

The Sun is On the Sea and Shore

3

Message for All

Sarah Pradhan

Joy and Concern cards will be collected by the Deacons

It is a “we all worship together Sunday.” There will be no Sunday School. After the message for all, children are welcome to spend time in the playground or sit with their grownups.

Presentation and Collection of Pledge Cards

Please come forward down the center aisle and return by the side aisle to contribute your pledges.

***Prayer of Dedication (unison)**

Loving and generous God, we are grateful for the gifts you have given us. Help us to use these gifts to burn brighter. May our gifts of treasure be the fuel, may our gifts of time and talent be the oxygen, and may our faith ignite our flame. Let our light shine and bring out the God-colors of the world. Let our light shine and illuminate the beloved community. Let our light shine! In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

***Prayer Response**

We Give Thee but Thine Own (Verse 1)

#382

We give thee but thine own, whate’er the gift may be;

All that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

Scripture

The Rev. Dr. Claire W. Bamberg

As we hear the words of scripture

Let us listen in the words for the Word of God.

The NOW Testament: Little Blue and Little Yellow by Leo Lionni

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be ignorant...there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the powerful working of deeds, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of gifts, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by the one and same Spirit, who allots to each one individually as the Spirit chooses.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into the one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as they chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect, whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

The grass withers and the flower fades
But the Word of God shall stand forever

Sermon Message

"It Has Begun"

The Rev. Dr. Claire W. Bamberg

Prayers of the People for the World

The Rev. Dr. Claire W. Bamberg

Lord in your mercy

All: hear our prayers.

The Lord's Prayer

The Rev. Dr. Claire W. Bamberg

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, now and forever. Amen.

The Sacrament of Communion

All are welcome to partake in the sacrament of communion.

Invitation

He was always the guest.
In the homes of Peter and Jairus, Martha and Mary, Joanna and Susanna,
he was always the guest.
At the meal tables of the wealthy where he pled the case of the poor,
he was always the guest.
Upsetting polite company, befriending isolated people, welcoming the stranger,
he was always the guest.
But here, at this table, he is the host.
Those who wish to serve him must first be served by him,
those who want to follow him must first be fed by him,
those who would wash his feet must first let him make them clean.
For this is the table where God intends us to be nourished.
this is the time when Christ can make us new.
So come, you who hunger and thirst for a deeper faith, for a better life, for a fairer
world.
Jesus Christ, who has sat at our tables, now invites us to be guests at his.

Words of Institution

Prayer of Consecration

Come, Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread, and bless this fruit of the vine. May they be
for us sacraments of your grace, symbols of your love. Amen.

Invitation to the Table

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Come now, for all things are ready,
and all are welcome.

***Closing Hymn**

Lift Every Voice and Sing

631

***Benediction**

The Rev. Dr. Claire W. Bamberg

I Thessalonians 5: 11-21

Therefore encourage one another...encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be
patient with them all. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do
good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all
circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the
Spirit, do not despise prophesying, but test everything; hold fast to what is good...

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness;
Be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good;
Render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted;
Support the weak; help the afflicted;
Honor all people; love and serve God;
Rejoicing through the power of the Holy Spirit.
The grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God,
And the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen

***Parting Song** *God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again (modified)*

**God be with You till we meet again.
By God's counsels guide, uphold you.
God will place arms all around you.
God be with you till we meet again.**

Postlude

Fuga
Bohuslav Matěj Černohorský (1684-1742)

Norman McFarlane

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This is an Open and Affirming Church

We affirm the dignity and worth of every person, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, race, mental or physical ability or sexual orientation. We offer sacraments and rites to all who enter our circle of faith. We celebrate the gifts that each person brings to First Congregational Church and invite them to share in all areas of its service, leadership, activities, responsibilities and privileges.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

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