



CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, BROCKTON, MA



October 13, 2024

10:00 am

OPEN AND AFFIRMING 15 YEAR CELEBRATION SERVICE

“Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.” ~Mahatma Gandhi~

AN ASTERISK IN THE BULLETIN INDICATES THAT ALL FOR WHOM IT IS COMFORTABLE SHOULD RISE FOR THAT PART OF THE SERVICE

RINGING OF THE CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

****Christ Congregational Church Statement of Welcome****
Adopted by congregational vote on October 18th, 2009

We, at Christ Congregational Church, United Church of Christ of Brockton, celebrate the diversity of God’s creation and seek to be a community of Christians who live in openness to the voice of the Still Speaking God.

We celebrate family in all its diverse forms and honor, support, and bless all loving and committed relationships.

As we seek to live out our mission to live Christ’s compassion and promote justice, healing, and wholeness of life, we welcome into our community persons of every gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, mental and physical ability, age, race, nationality, economic and social status, faith background, marital standing and family structure.

We invite and welcome all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our congregation as we seek to grow together in faith and love.

We remember our promises made at baptism, therefore no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome to this United Church of Christ.

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

‘Gather Us In’

No. 284

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Paul wrote to the Romans, encouraging them to rejoice in home, be patient in tribulation, and constant in prayer.

ALL: In a world that often pressures us to conform and lose hope, we find strength in God's promises and in our community of love and acceptance.

Leader: The early Christians faced persecution but persisted in their faith and hope.

ALL: We too face trials, yet we hold on to our faith, resisting the pressure to abandon our beliefs and values. We stand firm in our commitment to be a welcoming and affirming church.

Leader: Paul's message reminds us to be patient in tribulation, knowing that endurance produces character, and character produces hope.

ALL: Our resilience is a testament to our faith. We trust that God's love and justice will prevail. We are committed to standing with our LGBTQIA+ siblings against all forms of hate.

Leader: Let us stand together, resisting oppression and embodying hope, creating spaces of safety and bravery for all.

ALL: We are called to resist despair; persist in faith, and embrace hope. Let us worship with hearts full of hope and voices raised in praise. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE *(in unison)*

Loving God, we confess that sometimes we lose sight of hope in the face of trials. We allow fear and doubt to overshadow our faith. At times, we have not created the safe and brave spaces needed by our LGBTQIA+ siblings. Forgive us for our moments of weakness and for the times we have failed to support others in their struggles. Renew our hearts, strengthen our resolve, and help us to embody Your love and hope. Transform us into beacons of persistence and resilience, shining Your light in the darkest places. Help us to stand with the marginalized and resist all forms of hate. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

*SUNG RESPONSE

'When Morning Gilds the Skies' (vs. 1)

No. 100

TIME FOR ALL AGES

Dani Kardisco



SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM FOR ZACHARY JOHN SWEENEY

Today we bask in the joyful love of God with Zachary, his parents Kristin S. & Michael J. Sweeney, and Zachary's God Parents Billy DeFreitas & Danielle Rosales, as we celebrate the sacrament of baptism with them. Baptism is an outward sign of something that we know to be true through our faith - that God loves us, always has loved us, and will never stop loving us. Through the sacrament of baptism we, as a congregation, promise to be a community of faith for Zachary to always be able to return to so that he can be forever reminded of God's love.

*SONG OF PREPARATION

'I Am the Light of the World'

No. 469

SCRIPTURE

Romans 12:1-17

12 So, brothers and sisters, because of God's mercies, I encourage you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice that is holy and pleasing to God. This is your appropriate priestly service.

2 Don't be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you can figure out what God's will is—what is good and pleasing and mature.

3 Because of the grace that God gave me, I can say to each one of you: don't think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. Instead, be reasonable since God has measured out a portion of faith to each one of you. 4 We have many parts in one body, but the parts don't all have the same function. 5 In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other. 6 We have different gifts that are consistent with God's grace that has been given to us. If your gift is prophecy, you should prophesy in proportion to your faith. 7 If your gift is service, devote yourself to serving. If your gift is teaching, devote yourself to teaching. 8 If your gift is encouragement, devote yourself to encouraging. The one giving should do it with no strings attached. The leader should lead with passion. The one showing mercy should be cheerful.

9 Love should be shown without pretending. Hate evil, and hold on to what is good. 10 Love each other like the members of your family. Be the best at showing honor to each other.

11 Don't hesitate to be enthusiastic—be on fire in the Spirit as you serve the Lord! 12 Be happy in your hope, stand your ground when you're in trouble, and devote yourselves to prayer.

13 Contribute to the needs of God's people, and welcome strangers into your home. 14 Bless people who harass you—bless and don't curse them. 15 Be happy with those who are happy, and cry with those who are crying. 16 Consider everyone as equal, and don't think that you're better than anyone else. Instead, associate with people who have no status. Don't think that you're so smart. 17 Don't pay back anyone for their evil actions with evil actions, but show respect for what everyone else believes is good.

SERMON

Pastor Jeff Kardisco

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Alex Green

During this time, we invite you to embrace the transition from hearing the word to gathering ourselves in prayer by taking a moment for quiet reflection either in your pew, or by coming forward to light a candle to give light to the prayer(s) on your heart that have no words to be expressed

Come and Light a Candle...



TIME FOR COMMUNITY PRAYER: REDEDICATING OURSELVES TO OUR OPEN AND AFFIRMING COVENANT

In becoming Open and Affirming (ONA) a church doesn't simply "put out a statement" or change church policy. The church enters into a covenant, with one another as individuals and with other ONA congregations, to actively seek to welcome those who historically have been unwelcome within the community of the church. Covenants have a strong foundation in scripture, and unlike contracts they're commitments built on trust. Today, as the month of October marks 15 years since we first entered into this covenant together, we will recommit ourselves to our covenant to be Open and Affirming - and we reaffirm that **NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.*

Leader: Siblings in Christ here at Christ Congregational Church, United Church of Christ of Brockton - do you celebrate the diversity of God's creation, and do you commit to working together to be a community of Christians who live in openness to the voice of the Still Speaking God?

ALL: We do with God's help and guidance.

Leader: Do you celebrate family in all its diverse forms and honor, support, and bless all loving and committed relationships?

ALL: We do with God's joy and grace.

Leader: Do you recommit to your promise to live a mission to live Christ's compassion and to promote justice, healing, and wholeness of life?

ALL: We do with God's steadfast hope in our hearts.

Leader: Will you continue to welcome into our community persons of every gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, mental and physical ability, age, race, nationality, economic and social status, faith background, marital standing, and family structure?

ALL: We will as Jesus walks with us to build beloved community.

Leader: Will you continue to invite and welcome all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our congregation as you continue to seek to grow together in faith and love?

ALL: We will with God's spirit of inclusion and community.

Leader: Friends, having committed ourselves once again to this sacred mission - to extend extravagant welcome in Jesus' name to a world in need of welcoming spaces - let us speak together with one voice in concluding our statement of extravagant welcome saying...

ALL: We remember our promises made at baptism, therefore no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome to this United Church of Christ. We commit ourselves to this covenant together now, and for the life of our beloved community, in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray together saying...

THE PRAYER OF JESUS *(in unison)*

Our Creator (Father) who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

CALL FOR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

'Stand by Me'

(Shackley)

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

'Bring Many Names' (vs 6)

No. 10

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***CLOSING HYMN**

'Spirit'

No. 249

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

'I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing' (Becker/Davis/Cook/Greenaway)

Participating In Today's Worship Service:

Rev. Jeffrey Kardisco, Senior Pastor

Alex Green, Music Director

Laura Ramos, Soloist

David Wilcox, ASL Interpreter

Dani Kardisco, Christian Education Director

I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing (Becker/Davis/Cook/Greenaway)

I'd like to build the world a home,
And furnish it with love.
Grow apple trees, and honey bees,
And snow white turtle doves.

[CHORUS]

I'd like to teach the world to sing
In perfect harmony,
I'd like to hold it in my arms
And keep it company.

I'd like to see the world for once
All standing hand in hand,
And hear them echo through the hills
For peace throughout the land.
That's the song I hear.

[Instrumental break][CHORUS]

Gather Us In

Unison D A C G Gm/B^b Dm

1. Here in this place, the new light is stream-ing, sha-dows of doubt are
 2. We are the young—our lives are a mys-tery; we are the old, who
 3. Here we re-ceive new life in the wa-ters; here we re-ceive the
 4. Not just in build-ings, small and con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,

C G D A C G

van-ish a-way. See in this space our fears and our dream-ings,
 yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his-tory,
 bread of new birth; here you shall call your sons and yourdaugh-ters,
 light years a-way, here in this place the new light is shin-ing;

Gm/B^b Dm C Am7 D

brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.
 now is God pres-ent, and now is the day.

A C/G D/F⁺ G A C/G

Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en; gath-er us in; our
 Gath-er us in— the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in— the
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pass-ion, give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er; gath-er us in and

D/F⁺ G A D A C G

spir-its in-flame. Call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en;
 proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so low-ly;
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,

Gm/B^b Dm C Am7 D C/D Gm/D D

we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.
 fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

WORDS and MUSIC: Marty Haugen, 1981

GATHER US IN
 lrr.

1. When morn ing gilds the skies, my heart a - wak - ing cries,
 2. Dis - cord - ant hu - man - kind, in this your con - cord find,
 3. Sing, suns and stars of space, sing, all that see his face;
 4. Be this, while life is mine, my can - ti - cle di - vine;

may Je - sus Christ be praised! A - like at work and prayer
 may Je - sus Christ be praised! Let all the earth a - round
 may Je - sus Christ be praised! God's whole cre - a - tion o'er,
 may Je - sus Christ be praised! Be this the e - ter - nal song,

to Je - sus I re - pair; may Je - sus Christ be praised!
 ring joy - ous with the sound, may Je - sus Christ be praised!
 both now and ev - er - more: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
 through all the a - ges long: may Je - sus Christ be praised!

WORDS: German hymn (early 19th century); tr. Edward Caswall, 1858, alt.
 MUSIC: Joseph Barnby, 1868

LAUDES DOMINI
 666.666

I Am the Light of the World!

Unison F B \flat C F

"I am the light of the world!"

B \flat C F

You peo - ple come and fol - low me!" If you

Gm Dm C F B \flat

fol - low and love you'll learn the mys - ter - y of

Gm C F Fine

what you were meant to do and be.

WORDS: Jim Strathdee, 1969, in response to a Christmas poem
by Howard Thurman
MUSIC: Jim Strathdee, 1969

LIGHT OF THE WORLD
Irr.
#-92-100

F B \flat C F

1. When the song of the an - gels is stilled, when the
2. To find the lost and lone - ly one, to
3. To free the pris - nér from all chains, to
4. To bring hope to ev - 'ry task you do, to

Gm Dm C

star in the sky is gone, when the
heal the bro - ken soul with love, to
make the pow - er - ful care, to
dance at a ba - by's new birth, to

F B \flat C F

ma - gi and the shep - herds have found their way home, the
feed the hun - gry chil - dren with warmth and good food, to
re - build the na - tions with strength of good - will, to
make mu - sic in an old per - son's heart, and

Gm B \flat C

work of Christ - mas is be - gun:
feel the earth be - low, the sky a - bove!
see God's chil - dren ev - 'ry - where!
sing to the col - ors of the earth!

Bring Many Names

Unison Eb Ab Fm Bb

1. Bring man - y names, beau - ti - ful and good,
 2. Strong moth - er God, work - ing night and day,
 3. Warm fa - ther God, hug - ging ev - ery child,
 4. Old, ach - ing God, grey with end - less care,
 5. Young, grow - ing God, ea - ger, on the move,
 6. Great, liv - ing God, nev - er - ful - ly known,

Eb Ab Bb Eb

1. cel - e - brate, in par - a - ble and sto - ry, ho - li - ness in
 2. plan - ning all the won - ders of cre - a - tion, set - ting each e -
 3. feel - ing all the strains of hu - man liv - ing, car - ing and for -
 4. calm - ly pierc - ing e - vil's new dis - guis - es, glad of good sur -
 5. say - ing no to false - hood and un - kind - ness, cry - ing out for
 6. joy - ful dark - ness far be - yond our see - ing, clos - er yet than

Ab Fm Bb Eb

1. glo - ry, liv - ing, lov - ing God. Hail and Ho -
 2. qua - tion, gen - i - us at play: Hail and Ho -
 3. giv - ing till we're re - con - ciled: Hail and Ho -
 4. pris - es, wis - er than de - spair: Hail and Ho -
 5. jus - tice, giv - ing all you have: Hail and Ho -
 6. breath - ing, ev - er - last - ing home: Hail and Ho -

WORDS: Brian Wren, 1987
 MUSIC: Carlton R. Young, 1987

WESTCHASE
 9 10.11 9

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d=56-60

Ab Eb Fm Bb Eb Bb Eb

1. san - na! Bring man - y names!
 2. san - na, strong moth - er God!
 3. san - na, warm fa - ther God!
 4. san - na, old, ach - ing God!
 5. san - na, young, grow - ing God!
 6. san - na, great, liv - ing God!

Spirit

Unison

D G A D Bm

Spir - it, Spir - it of gen - tle - ness, blow through the wil - der - ness,

E A D G A D

call - ing and free, Spir - it, Spir - it of rest - less - ness,

Bm G A D G D *Fine*

stir me from plac - id - ness, wind, wind on the sea.

D G A G

1. You moved on the wa - ters, you called to the
2. You swept through the des - ert, you stung with the
3. You sang in a sta - ble, you cried from a
4. You call from to - mor - row, you break an - cient

WORDS and MUSIC: James K. Manley, 1975
© 1978 James K. Manley

SPRIT
Irr.
♩ = 132-140

D Bm

deep, then you coaxed up the moun - tains from the
sand, and you gift - ed your peo - ple with a
hill, then you whis - pered in si - lence when the
schemes, from the bond - age of sor - row the

E A D G A

val - leys of sleep, and o - ver the e - ons you
law and a land, when they were con - found - ed with
whole world was, still, and down in the cit - y you
cap - tives dream dreams; our wom - en see vi - sions, our

G D Bm

called to each thing, "A - wake from your slum
i - dols and lies; then you spoke through your proph -
called once a - gain, when you blew through your peo -
men clear their eyes, With bold, new de - ci -

G A D G/A D A *D.C. al Fine*

bers and rise on your wings."
ets to o - pen their eyes.
ple on the rush of the wind.
sions your peo - ple a - rise.