

North Branford Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
The Order of Worship for Sunday, October 18, 2020
The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
The Season of the Spirit

Praising God Together Through a Psalm Psalm 25: 1-10

Prelude *All Who Are Thirsty*

Gathering

Greetings

*Responsive Call to Worship

Leader: Good morning, Church! Ever realize that you just weren't seeing things the right way? That you were blind to something important? In the midst of our times of stubbornness, we need to ask God for the right perspective on situations! Let's pray with the words of a song today: Open the eyes of my heart, Lord!

People: Open the eyes of my heart! I want to see You!

Leader: To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory

People: Pour out your power and love as we cry "holy, holy, holy"

Leader: Loving Father, open our eyes to and through your words, spoken at times in the most amazing ways, even by a donkey!

People: And keep our focus on you, especially when we may be tempted to stray away, or like Balaam, be seduced by earthly treasures, where moth and rust consume. (see Matthew 6: 19)

All: Lead us not into temptation, dear God, and deliver us from evil and our egos! Amen & Amen!

Cantored Chorus: Open the eyes of my heart Lord/Open the eyes of my heart/I want to see You/I want to see You

*Prayer of Invocation & The Lord's Prayer - Together, as one.

Holy Spirit, sometimes I am stubborn. I want to go my own way, and may not heed your warning to avoid the route I think is best. Instead, help me listen to those divine inspirations that offer me a better and brighter way forward. Give me the humility to accept that I was wrong, and the courage to change direction and make things right. Like the angel standing in front of Balaam, stop me in my tracks if I am about to cause harm to myself or others. Come now, Holy Spirit, and fall afresh on me, and lead me on your paths.

And as we have prayed to you, Holy Spirit, we now pray to you, Dear Father, with the words your Son taught us...

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen

*Hymn of Praise & Preparation *Seek Ye First* K. Lafferty

Preparing

Readings from the Epistles 2 Peter 2: 1 & 14b-16; Jude 1: 11
A Reading from the Book of Acts Acts 16: 6-10

The Offertory Invitation

Presenting of our Offerings, Gifts & Tithes

Cantored Response: *Thanks* (Hall) - Thanks, thanks, I give you thanks/For all you've done/I am so blessed. My soul has found rest./ O Lord, I give you thanks.

Prayer of Confession and Dedication - Together, as one.

Lord, thank you for your work in our lives. Help us to side with you in every situation, never calling evil what you deem as good, never seeing as good what you view as evil. Help us separate the wheat from the chaff, help us to discern your will and your way for our living. And please forgive us for our missteps, when we have failed to see things your way, for which we now confess. (please pause for a moment of silent confessional prayer)

Thank you for your many blessings and for offering us second (and third!) chances, opportunities to change, and moments to repair relationships. And in gratitude for your forgiveness and your goodness, we now dedicate our offerings and our lives to you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Children's Message

Prayers of & for the People

Prayers of Joy and Concern; Testimonies of God's Work in our Lives
Time of Silence
Pastoral Prayer

* Gloria Patri (*recited not sung*)

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen, Amen.**

Proclaiming

Readings from the Old Testament Numbers 22-25, selected verses

Sermon *Sightless & Seduced*

Parting

*Hymn of Gratitude *Come Thou Fount* adapt from Wyeth

*Call to Service & Benediction

*Sharing the Peace of Christ

Pastor: As disciples of Christ, we have been graced with Christ's peace,
peace for our own lives, peace to share. And so with great joy, I
gift you the peace of our Lord.

People: As I gift you.

Pastor: Let us now share that peace of Christ with each other by waving, and
by calling, e-mailing and texting those from whom we're physically
apart. And let us carry that peace of Christ with us into this Season of
Pentecost, and into our world, as we together say, **AMEN!**

Postlude *You Shall Go Out with Joy* Dauermann & Rubins

*All who are able, please stand

Deacon – Andrea Barlow
Liturgy Assistant– Wendy Tarry
Music Director – Kelliann Festa
Accompanist– Rachel Postovoit
Pastor – The Rev. Vance Taylor
Ministers – Our Members!

WE ARE THE CHURCH TOGETHER!

**North Branford Congregational Church
United Church of Christ**

*Christ-centered Teaching
Scripture-based Preaching
To our neighbors: Outreach*



*Hidden Gems of the Old Testament:
Balaam and the Donkey – Numbers 22-25*

October 18, 2020

Hymn 1: SEEK YE FIRST

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God
And His righteousness
And all these things shall be added unto you
Allelu Alleluia

Man does not live be bread alone
But by every word
That proceeds from the mouth of
God
Allelu Alleluia

Ask and it shall be given unto you
Seek and ye shall find
Knock and it shall be opened unto you
Allelu Alleluia

Hymn 2: Come thou fount of every blessing

Come thou fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing thy grace
Streams of mercy never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise
Teach me some melodious sonnet
Sung by flaming tongues above
Here's the mount I'm fixed upon it
Mount of thy redeeming love

Here I raise my Ebenezer
Hither by thy help I come
And I hope by thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home
Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wandering from the fold of God
He, to rescue me from danger
Interposed His precious blood

O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm
constrained to be!
Let thy goodness like a fetter, bind my
wandering heart to thee
Prone to wander Lord I feel it, prone to
leave the God I love
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it
for thy courts above

Psalm 25: 1-10

- ¹ To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
- ² O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.
- ³ Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
- ⁴ Make me to know your ways, O LORD;
teach me your paths.
- ⁵ Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.
- ⁶ Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your
steadfast love, for they have been from of old.
- ⁷ Do not remember the sins of my youth or my
transgressions; according to your steadfast love
remember me, for your goodness' sake, O LORD!
- ⁸ Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
- ⁹ He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.
- ¹⁰ All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and
faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and
his decrees.



When the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand, the donkey turned off from the way and went into the field; but Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back into the way.

Numbers 22:23

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