

The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



PRELUDE

“Adagio from Toccata, Adagio and Fuge”

J.S. Bach

WELCOME

✠ **HYMN #726**

“Will You Come and Follow Me”

(✠ *The congregation may rise, in body or in spirit.*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Hear the word of the Lord: “I have no pleasure in the death of anyone,” says the Lord God.

ALL: We turn, then, and Live.

We did not come here because we have earned a seat or because of who our parents were, or what office we hold, or what we have said about ourselves.

We came because the door to Life stands open.

God does not ask, “What did your ancestors do?” God asks, “Will you turn, and live?”

We turn our hearts toward you, O God, because we are Light in your eyes and we wish to see a way to become Light for others.

We are listening.

Make us new. Make us honest. Make us yours.

All: For you have no pleasure in the death of anyone. Turn us, then and show us how to live. Amen.

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Lead Me, Guide Me”

Lead me, guide me a-long the way; For if You lead me, I can-not stray.

Lord, let me walk each day with Thee: lead me, O Lord, lead me.

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CALL TO RECONCILIATION

One: Let us come before God honestly – not hiding behind excuses, not hiding behind our reputations, but answering for ourselves.

All: Merciful God, we confess that we have loved the comfortable lie. We have blamed the sour grapes of others for the ache in our own teeth. We have hidden behind our history, our hurt, our habits, and used them as reasons not to turn.

We confess that we have loved our own authority more than your truth. Like the leaders in the temple courts, we have calculated our answers to protect ourselves rather than to seek Love and goodness.

Forgive us, O God. You take no pleasure in our diminishment – only in our turning toward Life. Give us new hearts Give us honest hearts. Give us the courage to answer for ourselves, and the grace to actually go. (silence)

Amen

(Silence is kept)

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

One: Hear the good news: at any moment you can cast all the missteps you have committed and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit . . . “God has no pleasure in the death of anyone. Turn, then and live.”

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, and we are free to turn.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Lead Me, Guide Me”

RESPONSIVE PSALTER: Psalm #25:1-9

ONE: Lord, I give my life to you.

ALL: My God, I trust you. Do not let me be disgraced, and do not let my enemies gloat over me.

No one who trusts in you will ever be put to shame. Shame only comes to those who betray others for no reason.

Show me the right path, Lord. Point out the road for me to follow.

Lead me by your truth and teach me, because you are the God who saves me. I put my hope in you all day long.

Remember your compassion and unfailing love, Lord, which you have shown since ancient times.

Do not remember the rebellious faults of my youth. Instead, remember me in the light of your unfailing love and goodness.

The Lord is good and does what is right. He shows the proper path to those who go astray.

He leads the humble in doing right and teaches them his way.

A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

THE LORD’S PRAYER (*debts/debtors*)

Hymnal, p. 35

✕ **HYMN #697**

“Take My Life”

All attending Sunday School may leave as we sing the hymn.

OFFERTORY

THE LIGHT OF SERVICE

Offerings not specifically designated for the Church (including any checks with “Light of Service” or “LOS” in the memo line) will be given to an organization doing compassionate work that complements our church’s mission. This week, we share our gifts with CROP Hunger Walk.

ONE: God has poured gifts into our lives; we now return our tithes and offerings.

**ALL: Let us gather our gifts with grateful praise,
and offer them to God’s purposes.**

RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

Our church welcomes every size gift, and thanks you for your generosity.

ANTHEM

“The Eyes of All Wait upon Thee”

Jean Berger

✕ **DOXOLOGY**

OLD 100TH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit ever more;
One God of grace, whom we adore! Amen.**

✕ **UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God, these gifts are not sour grapes handed down from someone else’s harvest – they are ours to give, from what we have today. Like the son who said no and then went, let this offering be less about what we said we would do, and more about what we actually do. Take what we bring and use it to build a vineyard where others find a place to live. In Christ’s name, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Old Testament, p.959

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 21:23-32

New Testament, p.28

SERMON

“No Hiding Place”

Rev. Dr. Eileen Epperson

PASTORAL PRAYER

✠ **HYMN #744**

“Arise, Your Light is Come”

BENEDICTION

One: Go now, not as those who have merely said the right words, but as those who actually go. Go, remembering that God has no pleasure in your death, only in your turning. Go, and turn – not once, but every day – and find that in the turning, there is more of your life.

And may the God who welcomes the ones who said no and then went, the Christ who exposes what is hidden so that we can be made whole, and the Spirit who gives us new hearts, go with you now and always.

All: Amen

POSTLUDE

“Praise the Lord with Drums and Cymbals”

Sigfrid Karg-Elert



Welcome to Church!

Gathered in 1744, the Congregational Church of Salisbury is an Open and Affirming member of the United Church of Christ, in a “net zero” building powered by clean energy. Our church is also a welcoming home to people from a great variety of church backgrounds and life experiences. Your presence is a gift to us! We hope you will feel God’s Spirit here today through our worship and fellowship.

We seek to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds and love our neighbors as ourselves.

*This Church is **Open** to all for participation, membership, leadership and employment regardless of race, ancestry, class, gender identity, physical and mental ability or sexual orientation. We **Affirm** each individual as a child of God, celebrating the total identity of each person.*

*As an **Open and Affirming** Congregation, we commit to work toward ending ignorance, fear, hatred, prejudice, and discrimination against any person.*

*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome here!*

If you are visiting us, Welcome! Please sign our guest book and introduce yourself to our Pastor or to one of the Deacons. Fill out a welcome card in the pew to join our email list.

Kindly set phones to silent

Today’s Worship Leaders

Ushers: Sarah Morrison & Anne Williams

Reader: Louise Brown • **Deacon:** Don Mayland

Fellowship host: Hospitality Committee

Today’s liturgy is adapted and reprinted from *Lectionary Liturgies* by the Rev. Thom Shuman © 2025 (lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com); used by permission.

Psalm adapted from *The Psalms in Worship*, Mary Susan Gast, © 2002; used by permission.

Our Ministry Team

Ministers: All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

Worship & Music

Music Director: David Baranowski
Bell Choir Director: Mary Davidson

Faith Formation

Sunday School Coordinator: Holly Tierney
Sunday School Assistant: Stephanie Tierney

Holding the Parts Together

Church Administrator: Catherine Chatham
Sexton: Richard Tietjen

Church Officers: Charlie Noyes, *moderator*;
Janet Offensend, *treasurer*; Liz Wing, *clerk*

In Our Prayers:

We gladly list joys and concerns, and typically print them for four weeks after they are offered in worship. (Prayer requests may be renewed at any time.)

New concerns:

Weekly prayer from UCC Global Ministries,
for the people of Japan and for our mission
partners.

Continuing concerns:

Friends and family now serving our country in the
armed forces • All those serving or living in war or
conflict zones around the world.

Family & Friends

who have passed away

•

We thank God for the gift of life, and pray for the
Spirit's strong presence with family and friends
who grieve.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A PASTORAL VISIT, please call the church office (860-435-2442) or email Catherine Chatham (cchatham@salisburyucc.org). Sometimes we don't find out about an injury or illness or other need until long after — so please call!

This Week at Salisbury UCC

SUNDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER

10AM Worship
*followed by fellowship & refreshments
in the Parish Hall*
12:45PM The CROP Hunger Walk

MONDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER

9:00AM Preparations for Fall Festival Begin
9:00 AM Drop offs for the Treasure Trove
accepted

TUESDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

9AM Fall Festival Preparations continue
through October 9th

WEDNESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER

9:15AM Centering Prayer (via Zoom)
12:15PM Staff meeting
4PM Choir rehearsal

FRIDAY, 2 OCTOBER

8:45AM Men's Bible study

SUNDAY, 4 OCTOBER

10AM Worship and Sunday School
11:30AM Church Council meeting



The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Meeting in Grace • Transformed by Love • Serving with Joy

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Office Hours: 8:30am – 1:30pm, Monday, Thursday, Friday