



10AM

January 9, 2022

First Parish of Westwood, UCC

Growing Faith, Sharing Love, Grounding Lives

Guest Preacher: Reverend Jane MacIntyre

Baptism

We Are an Open & Affirming Church

First Parish of Westwood affirms the dignity and worth of every person regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental ability, family structure, education level, economic circumstance and faith or religious tradition.

GATHERING

WELCOME AND NAMING OUR GRATITUDE

CENTERING OUR FOCUS UPON GOD

The New Year

Sarah Tocco

CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 43:1-5a

But now, . . . , hear the word of YHWH --

the One who created you, the One who fashioned you, Israel: Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

When you pass through the seas, I will be with you; when you pass over the rivers, you will not drown. Walk through fire, and you will not be singed; walk thru flames and you will not be burned.

I am YHWH, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your deliverer. . .

You are more precious to me than Assyria; you are honored, and I love you. . . .

Have no fear, for I am with you.

OPENING HYMN NO. 270 Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song

Like the murmur of the dove's song, like the challenge of her flight, like the vigor of the wind's rush, like the new flame's eager might: Come, Holy Spirit, come.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S PRESENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

"God's Ability" by John van der Laar, Sacredise.com – Adapted by JEM

Almighty God, when we are overwhelmed by responsibility or struggle, we forget your ability.

When we are proud of our dreams or achievements, we forget your ability,

When we are faced with great suffering or great opportunity, we forget your ability.

But, you are God – with all that the word implies, and you are right here, with us, within us, in partnership with us;

and so whatever we may face, whatever we may have to endure or enjoy, we praise you for your divine ability.

Oh, God, for all that we should have remembered, for all we should have forgotten, for all that we should have done, for all we should not have done, for all the times we thought about ourselves and not others: forgive us.

We ask your Holy Spirit to embrace us, your Holy Spirit to fill us, and we celebrate the knowledge that you have walked this road before us, incarnate, baptized, mortal, and eternal.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Siblings in Christ: The Good News is that Christ calls us to new life and enables us to begin again - and again and again and again. Friends, believe the Good News of the gospel. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

SCRIPTURE

Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22
Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

The people were full of anticipation wondering in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah. John answered them all by saying, "I am baptizing you in water, but someone is coming who is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not fit to untie! This One will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire. A winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear the threshing floor and gather the wheat into the granary, but the chaff will be burnt in unquenchable fire."

When all the people were baptized, Jesus also came to be baptized. And while Jesus was praying, the skies opened and the Holy Spirit descended on the Anointed One in visible form, like a dove. A voice from heaven said, "You are my Own, my Beloved. On you my favor rests."

Acts 8: 14-17

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down to these people and prayed that they would receive the Holy Spirit. She had not yet come down upon any of them, since they had only been baptized in the name of Jesus. Upon arriving the pair laid hands on the Samaritans and they received the Holy Spirit.

SERMON

WOW! Now what?

HYMN NO. 430 (Worship and Rejoice Hymnal)

Be Not Afraid

You shall cross the barren desert, but you shall not die of thirst. You shall wander far in safety though you do not know the way. You shall speak your words in foreign lands and all will understand. You shall see the face of God and live. Be not afraid. I go before you always. Come follow me, and I will give you rest.

Be not afraid. I go before you always. Come follow me, and I will give you rest.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Silent Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

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.

VENTURING OUT INTO THE WORLD

*RECESSIONAL HYMN NO. 18

Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer

Guide me, O my great Redeemer, pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but you are mighty; hold me with your powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, feed me now and evermore, feed me now and evermore.

*ANNOUNCEMENTS

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

All: By your Spirit, Almighty God, Grant us
Love for others,
Joy in serving you,
Peace in disagreement,
Patience in suffering,
Kindness toward all people,
Goodness in evil times,
Faithfulness in temptation,
Gentleness in the face of opposition,
Self-control in all things.

Then strengthen us for ministry in your name. Amen.

*FOLLOWING THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

Go in Peace

Kenneth E. White

Go in peace, and the peace of God be with you this day.

Go in peace, and the peace of God be with you always.

Celebrate and share the joy! Celebrate new life!

Go in peace, and the peace of God be with you always.

*POSTLUDE

Adagio cantabile from 'Pathetique sonata'

Ludwig van Beethoven

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Scripture Readings from The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation