



*Hope Congregational Church
United Church of Christ*

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WORSHIP CELEBRATION

Reign of Christ/Thanksgiving Sunday

November 20, 2022

10:00 a.m.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

INTROIT “As a Fire Is Meant for Burning” (verse 1) No. 551

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 46

One: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

All: Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,

One: though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

All: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

One: God is in the midst of dawn’s city, it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.

All: Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations he has brought on the earth.

One: He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.

All: “Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth.” The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

*HYMN “Gather Us In” No. 649

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Are you in love with God? Do you show it in your words, your thoughts, your actions? Are you in love with your neighbor? Do they know this by your presence, your grace, your friendship? Or are you so obsessed with yourself, that you have no time, no room, no pity for others, or for God? Let us confess the limits we place on our love, so we might be filled with God’s limitless mercy, as we pray...

**If you are able to do so comfortably, please stand.*

From Rev. Bob Nolan

Hello Friends,

I am happy to introduce/reintroduce myself to all of you! I am honored to be with you on November 20th's worship!

Born in Syracuse, NY, I spent the first half of my life in central NY State, moving to RI in 1986. During that time, after moving to RI, I had been a single parent until marrying Sandy and blending our two families for a total of 7 children. Five of our combined children live in RI and 2 live in Arizona. We have 8 grandchildren in total, ranging in age from 11 years to 6 months old. They are the joy of our lives! I spent much of the last 40 years discerning my call. I guess Moses and I have that in common, wandering through life for that period (LOL). My day work has historically been as finance director for many for-profit and, more recently, non-profit organizations. Meanwhile, for over 50 years, I have been the music minister in a variety of worship settings, committing myself to the UCC in 1996.

In 2013, I finally answered God's call and attended seminary at Andover Newton Theological School, finishing my educational requirements in 2016 (while still working all of the above), and was ordained on a call to be the Associate Pastor at Woodridge Congregational UCC on September 25, 2016, where I was already their music minister for a number of years. Since 2019, I have been a supply preacher in a number of RI UCC churches, while taking on the CFO role of the former RICUCC, joining the board and finance committee of the new SNEUCC, and continuing to manage the legacy RICUCC health insurance group as a member of the historic RICUCC board.

Blessings and thanks for your kind invitation,

Rev. Bob

SCRIPTURE READING Colossians 1:11-20

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, so that you may have all endurance and patience, joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

SERMON “Imagining God” Rev. Bob Nolan

*HYMN “Christ Is the Truth, the Way” Insert

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Prayer Requests and Pastoral Prayer
The Lord’s Prayer (Unison)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us This day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen!

Prayer Response “Let the Church Say Amen”

Let the church say amen, Let the church say amen,
Altogether, let the church say amen.

DELIGHTING IN GIVING

(The offering plates are at the back of the sanctuary.)

Invitation to Present Our Offerings

Offertory “Highest Praises, Honor and Glory”

*Doxology “Give Thanks” No. 359

*Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

Holy God, may these gifts be blessed in their use, given freely to those in need, and minister to everyone we meet in Jesus Christ. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN “Hidden Christ, Alive Forever” Insert

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION - We invite you to sing with us:

*Now may the God of love fill you with joy and peace in believing.
May you abound in all joy, may you abound in all hope.
By the power of the spirit, the spirit of God,
The spirit of God be with you.*

GUEST PASTOR - Rev. Robert Nolan
MUSIC DIRECTOR - Kim Kuda
DEACON & LAY READER - Cora Rose
MUSIC TEAM - Andrew Foster, Sangho Nam, Kim Kuda

NEWS AND NOTES

1. A very special welcome this morning to our guest pastor, **Rev. Bob Nolan**, as he is **candidating for the position of the settled pastor of Hope Church**. Please see his biography on the opposite page.
2. There will be a **coffee hour after worship** this morning. Please join us for this time of fellowship.
3. Following our coffee hour, we will have our annual **Hanging of the Greens**, making our church building ready for the **Advent season**. Please consider staying to help us with the task. Thank you in advance.
4. The **“Get Crafty”** group meets every **Thursday from 6:30-8:00 p.m.** Please bring your own crafts to work on as we enjoy fellowship with one another. Leave your stress at home! Everyone is welcome!
5. Don't forget that **“SCRIP” gift cards** are still available to use instead of cash or credit card at your favorite retailer.
6. Don't forget your used clothing for the **St. Pauly shed**.
7. **In light of the contagions with the emerging strains of Covid, we are encouraging people to wear masks, even if vaccinated, during worship.** Everyone will also be expected to sign in on our contact list.

If you are unable to attend the regular worship service of Hope Church in person on any given Sunday, the following is the information needed to livestream the service on YouTube or any time after and to get the Sunday bulletin to follow along with the service. A link to this week's livestream service and bulletin as well as those from past weeks is available at: hopecongre.org/?page_id=90. You can click on the "plus" mark for that week.

All: They may not be beaten down or lying by the road, but there are people we pass by, Watching God. Some are family and friends we take so much for granted we cannot see how we have stripped them of our love and compassion. Others are neighbors: who have been left half-dead by crushing work; who have fallen into the hands of despair; who have been abandoned by all those who walked on by them. Many are strangers, people we don't know, but quickly judge: they are weak, or poor, or the enemy, or because they remind us of who we once were, or could become. Rescue us from the power of our sins, Righteous One of all generations. Pour out your justice on us, rather than your judgement, that we would be moved with pity, and spurred to action; that we would hear of the hope that is ours, and share it with our sisters and brothers; that we would shower mercy on all we meet, even as we have received forgiveness for our sins through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

One: Children of the Most High: you are forgiven and brought into the kingdom. Be filled with spiritual wisdom, lead lives worthy of your inheritance, bear fruit in all you say and do and think.

All: God has rescued us and redeemed us from our sins, setting aside judgment to shower us with mercy. We will go and do likewise. Thanks be to God. Amen.

*GLORIA PATRI

No. 734

A TIME FOR CHILDREN

PASSING THE PEACE

One: God calls us to create a community which welcomes all: to care and love unconditionally, to free us and create a welcome for all. May the Peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

One: Let's share that welcome with each other, that Love!