



A Way Not Our Own...

*First Church of Christ (UCC), Suffield
Second Baptist Church (ABC), Suffield
Rocky Hill Congregational Church (UCC)*

Lenten Journey Together at Home

February 24, 2021

PRELUDE

Sanctuary

WELCOME

Three Church Welcome

We are glad you are worshipping at Home with us! When we gather together for worship, we are entering into a larger story. We yearn for the Holy Spirit to enter into our spaces and illuminate our magnificent God as we seek to follow in the ways of Jesus the Christ.

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Diann H. Bailey & David Figliuzzi

One: God of our hearts...here we are!

All: We've come with thirsty hearts, praying that your Word will satisfy us.

One: We come with aching hearts, praying for good news to comfort us.

All: We come with overflowing hearts, praying for a chance to share your love.

One: You, who know our hearts and hear our prayers,

All: be with us now in this hour of worship. Amen.

PSALM 42

The Rev. Nada Sellers

As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.

My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.

When shall I come and behold
the face of God?

My tears have been my food
day and night,

while people say to me continually,
'Where is your God?'

These things I remember,
as I pour out my soul:

how I went with the throng,
and led them in procession to the house of God,
with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,
a multitude keeping festival.

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,

my help and my God.

My soul is cast down within me;
therefore I remember you
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon,
from Mount Mizar.

Deep calls to deep
at the thunder of your cataracts;
all your waves and your billows
have gone over me.

By day the Lord commands his steadfast love,
and at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

I say to God, my rock,
'Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because the enemy oppresses me?'
As with a deadly wound in my body,
my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me continually,
'Where is your God?'

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.

HYMN

UNISON OPENING PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER (Debts)

David Figliuzzi

Eternal defender of the poor and sad, hear our prayers for all who suffer.

For those who are refugees, exiles from home, because of the cruelty of enemies or the vagaries of nature.

For those who are starving and whose tears are their only food.

For those who are desperate for a drink, and who thirst for life-giving water.

For those who are sad and troubled, whose hearts break for want of hope.

For those whose faith is weak, who feel that God has abandoned them.

Protector of the weak, be with all who need you today.

May they know that they are not forgotten.

Let now pray the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples...

.....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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.

SUNG RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 43

Rev. Rachael Fisher

*Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause
against an ungodly people;*

*from those who are deceitful and unjust
deliver me!*

For you are the God in whom I take refuge;

*why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because of the oppression of the enemy?
O send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling.
Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy;
and I will praise you with the harp,
O God, my God.
Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.*

GIFT OF MUSIC

MEDITATION

A Holy Thirst

The Rev. Diann H. Bailey

CONTEMPORARY SACRED READING

David Figliuzzi

God, my soul is sad.
My heart is hopeless.
I'm frowning within and without.
But I know the cure.
The crack in my heart can be mended by you.
The thirst in my throat can be quenched by you.
How refreshing you are!
I spend a few minutes in worship
and you replace everything that is missing.
You rehydrate my heart.
You replenish my spirit.
So I'm telling my soul, "Cheer up!"
I'm counseling my heart, "Have hope!"
For you, my God, are all I need and more

REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY/PRAYER PRACTICE *Water Prayer*

The Rev. Diann Bailey

Take a large bowl and fill it with water. Find a rock, a shell, a bead, a button and place it near the water

- Observe water's many qualities. It can be liquid, solid or vapor. I often compare the Trinity to H₂O. It has three properties that are different but the same. Water, Ice and Steam. Three-in-One and One-in-Three.
- Think of the many ways we need water. It is necessary for life. We must drink water. We use water to cook. We bathe with water. We clean with water. We water our plants. We offer water to our animals. We can play in water. We can soak in water.
- Dip your hand in the bowl of water. Let it run through your hands. See how it goes through your fingers. Imagine a warm summer day, with the rain pouring down upon you and how refreshing this can feel. It can be down-right rejuvenating. We remember that we can never escape God's love.
- Place an item in the water and see how the water envelopes it; like God's love surrounds us.

- And water can be powerful. Rushing water can move rocks and stones and even riverbanks. Such strength is God's love for us.

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. Diann H. Bailey

Holy God, as a deer pants for your living water, so do we. This past year, we have thirsted in many ways, in loneliness and in too much time together, in concern and fear of getting sick, of missing loved one and missing routines. Quench our thirst with your love, show us how to be content with where we are right now, knowing that you are with us in the valleys and in the mountaintops. Your love is all-powerful and it allows us to do things we can never imagine. You were with us yesterday, you are with us today, and we have no doubt you will be with us tomorrow. We pray all these things in the hope and confidence of Jesus the Christ. Amen

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE/MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Works Cited

Call to Worship: Carol Penner. Posted on the *Leading in Worship* blog. <http://carolpenner.typepad.com/leadinginworship/>

Opening Prayer: Rev. Adam J. Dillon, and posted on the Church of Scotland's **Starters for Sunday** website. <http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/>

Contemporary Sacred Scripture: Chris Altrock, and posted on **True North**. <http://chrisaltrock.com/2011/08/prayer-from-psalm-42/>