

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship Celebration
followed by
Special Congregational Meeting

September 13, 2020, 10:30 A.M.



No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

251 Union Ave, Rutherford, NJ 07070

(201) 438-6324

www.rccucc.com

Rev. Ronald E. Verblauw, Pastor
(201) 838-4254

pastorron@rccucc.com

Susan LaFever, Director of Music
Muriel Corradino, Office Administrator

susanlaf@optonline.net
muriel@rccucc.com

WELCOME

Welcome to worship with the Rutherford Congregational Church. We extend you a warm welcome and pray that you will find worship this morning meaningful, your faith renewed and nourished, and that you are inspired to go out and ...

“do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.”

For your benefit, a link to the PDF of this morning’s order of worship is posted on the church’s home page, www.rccucc.com.

Here in this local congregation of the United Church of Christ, now more than ever:

*‘No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome here.’*

Permission to podcast / stream the music in this service obtained from:

CCLI License#650150

ONE LICENSE, License # M-400642. All rights reserved.

IMPORTANT NOTES

For Those Attending In-Person Worship

1. Everyone joining us for in-person worship must sign in.
2. Please use hand sanitizer upon entering the building.
3. Masks are mandatory; without a mask, you will be asked to leave.
4. Temperatures will be scanned prior to admission into the sanctuary. Anyone with a temperature greater than 99.4 F will not be admitted.
5. Sit only in designated pews (marked with green tape).
6. Social distancing is required and will be enforced by the Worship Implementation Team.
7. There will be no singing or in-person responsive readings.
8. No food or beverages will be served at any time.

CENTERING MUSIC

“Petit Canon”
Nadia Boulanger

CALL TO WORSHIP

Adapted from Psalm 103

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

One: Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God’s holy name.

**All: Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and let us not forget all God’s benefits -**

One: forgiving all our sins and iniquities,

All: healing all our diseases of body, mind, and spirit,

One: redeeming our life from the Pit,

All: crowning us with steadfast love and mercy.

One: Have compassion on us this morning, Holy One,
as we gather to praise your name, and seek your presence.

**All: We remember that we are dust,
that our days are like grass and like the flowers of the field,
time, like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away.**

One: But your love, O God, your love is steadfast,
your love is from everlasting to everlasting!

**All: Let us hear your voice this morning,
let us feel your steadfast love enfolding us,
that we may keep covenant with you all our days.**

One: Bless the Lord, all God’s works, in all places of God’s dominion.

All: Bless the Lord, O my soul!

HYMN

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”
Tune: *St. Anne*
The New Century Hymnal (25)

[Music: Susan LaFever will play the hymn through once.]

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure;

Sufficient is your arm alone, and our defense is sure.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist]

**Jesus, our teacher and friend,
we have not listened for your word
amid the clamor of words that surround us.
We are more pleased to repeat familiar tunes
than to listen for new melodies and different harmonies.
We try harder to defend what we think we know
than to reach for that which is beyond our grasp.
Slow to trust, afraid of the unknown,
we are cautious to hear and do your will.
We pray for ears to hear the cries of our neighbors
and for hearts which resonate with your Spirit.
Silence us and instruct us until we learn anew
to sing the songs of faith, hope, and love.
Amen.**

HYMN

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”
Tune: *St. Anne*
The New Century Hymnal (25)

[Music: Susan LaFever will play the hymn through once.]

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.

READING FROM PSALMS

Psalm 103 (NRSV)

Thanksgiving for God’s Goodness
Of David.

- 1 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.
- 2 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits –
- 3 who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
- 4 who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
- 5 who satisfies you with good as long as you live
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- 6 The Lord works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
- 7 He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
- 8 The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- 9 He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger forever.
- 10 He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
- 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
- 12 as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
- 13 As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.
- 14 For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.
- 15 As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;
- 16 for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
- 17 But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting
on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's children,

18 to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.

19 The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.

20 Bless the Lord, O you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his bidding,
obedient to his spoken word.

21 Bless the Lord, all his hosts,
his ministers that do his will.

22 Bless the Lord, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

SERMON

“Counting our Days”
Rev. Ronald E. Verblaauw

HYMN

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”
Tune: *St. Anne*
The New Century Hymnal (25)

[Music: Susan LaFever will play the hymn through once.]

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten, as a dream fades at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Still be our God while troubles last, and our eternal home!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys & Concerns
Pastoral Prayer

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

One: Timeless and eternal God,

you have been our dwelling place for generations.

These walls have witnessed life's ebbs and flows:

**All: Babies baptized, children confirmed,
couples married, lives celebrated.**

One: Though we might imagine this place as timeless as you,
we face the hard reality that this place is not you.
As this congregation meets to contemplate together
and vote on its future as the body of Christ:

**All: Open our ears to hear a new song.
Open our eyes to see new possibilities.
Open our hearts to new expressions of love.**

One: May our discussions and our voting
remain faithful to the lessons Jesus taught.

**All: Grant that by your presence among us at this time,
we will listen before speaking,
and when we speak, to speak in love.**

**We pray that our decision today
will make Jesus real beyond the walls of this church.
As our ministry takes on new shape and direction,
we pray that it will continue the story of Jesus
begun so long ago.**

One: All our prayers and petitions we bring before you
in the name of Jesus the Christ,
who taught us to pray, saying:

Prayer of Our Savior

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

A TIME OF OFFERING

Music

“Psalm 130”
Antonio Salieri

Prayer of Dedication

**Almighty God,
receive these gifts that we offer with grateful hearts
and use our lives for the ministry of your Son, Jesus Christ,
in whose name we pray. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“Abide with Me”
Tune: *Eventide*
The New Century Hymnal (99)

[Music: Susan LaFever will play the hymn through once.]

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The shadows deepen, Lord, with me abide;
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

I need your presence every passing hour;
I need your grace to foil the tempter's power.
Give me your love my guide and stay to be.
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

I fear no foe, with you at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness;
Where is death's sting? where, grave your victory?
I triumph still if you abide with me.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

[Open for announcements from the congregation.]

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Hymn to Joy”

arr. Paul Manz

Resources used in preparation of this week's liturgy and the devotional materials following were:

Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi, Eds., *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship, Updated*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2012).

Kimberly Bracken Long, Ed., *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 2*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014).

Rev. David Schoen, Ed., *Facing Your Church's Uncertain Future: Helpful Practices for Courageous Conversations & Faithful Decisions*, (Cleveland: United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund, 2018).

The New Century Hymnal, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1995).

Litany for Passing the Peace

We cannot touch just now,
not yet.

We cannot shake, embrace, slap each other on the back, or kiss,
not yet.

We cannot move around the space,
up and down the aisles,
jostle each other,
trip over kids,
reach down the pew to greet
the elderly gent who can't get up,
scan for the couple who came last week,
hope this raucous time will go on and on -
or pray that it won't, and the organist will cut it off
with the intro to the next hymn - we can't,
not yet.

But the peace that passes understanding
is not like a virus.
It doesn't need contact to infect.
It's like the Spirit and the wind:
*it goes wherever it wills,
wherever we send it.*

Through webs and nets and wires,
it googles and zooms to everyone whose heart needs peace,
and to every place there is no peace.
And we will share it now:
the peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!

Joys & Concerns
Sunday, September 6, 2020

Prayer Concerns-

- Alycia Desmond asked for prayers and safety for teachers and students as they return to the “new yet unchartered” school year. Her concern for herself is not enough PPE and just scared on what lies ahead.
- Pastor Ron asked for prayers for
 - Cat Desmond as she lays her Dad to rest on Wednesday.
 - Remember those areas ravaged by natural disaster in Iowa, Gulf Coast, and California; nature is giving us a call to take care of God’s creation.
 - Remember the families of those in the military as we celebrate Labor Day. May we pray for those who have served our country, and those who served and did not return home.
 - Prayers for our Congregation as we will vote on the future of RCC next Sunday, September 13; asking God’s guidance on the journey
- Elizabeth Jimenez asked for prayers
 - for Pastor Ron as he begins a new journey; he will be missed;
 - for the children returning to school;
 - prayers as she begins a new life journey.

Thanksgivings -

- Carol Marshall enjoyed the telling of RCC’s story through pictures and music prepared by Manny, and sung by Manny, Andrea Long, and Susan LaFever. It was very touching!
- Alycia Dammers shared the joy that Rae Fisher and Evelyn Perez are engaged.

May we remember and pray for the health and concerns of:

Catherine (Cat) Desmond
Carin Fougner
Carol MacPhail
Autumn O’Shea

Nora Esposito
Monica Fisher
Ruth Simpson
Chuck & Eileen Eastham

The DiNapoli Family

God, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For the week of Sunday, Sep 06, 2020

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Giving Revenues (Pledged Income, Member Gifts, Non-Member/Misc. Gifts, and Open Plate):			
For Sunday, 09/06/20:	\$ 1,655	\$ 662	\$ (994)
YTD Giving Revenues as of 09/06/20:	59,580	71,798	12,218
YTD All Other Revenues as of 09/06/20:	31,088	15,741	(15,347)
	<u>90,668</u>	<u>87,539</u>	(3,129)
Anticipated annual deficit per approved budget:			<u>(23,344)</u>
			<u>(26,473)</u>
\$ Gifts In Kind This Week:		0.00	
\$ YTD Gifts In Kind, as of 09/06/2020:		1,474.14	
Attendance 09/06/2020:		<u>Streamed</u>	
Attendance Average:		<u>50</u>	