

In Life & in Death, We Belong

2 Corinthians 1:8-11

Join us for worship, including the Sacrament of Baptism

**9/17 @ 10am, LIVE! On-Site & Online**

**Connect at [www.NeedhamUCC.org](http://www.NeedhamUCC.org)**



## **The Congregational Church of Needham, *United Church of Christ***

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Rev. Maddie Foster, *minister for Christian education & youth*

Valerie Becker, *director of music*

Robin Bevilacqua, *church administrator*

Cindy Sullivan, *financial administrator*

Tom Mollerus, *moderator*

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**September 17, 2023**

*May my mind come alive today / To the invisible geography / That invites me to new frontiers, / To break the dead shell of yesterdays, / To risk being disturbed and changed.*

*from "A Morning Offering" by John O'Donohue in To Bless the Space Between Us*

## **GATHERING**

**WELCOME**

Rev. John MacIver Gage, Rev. Maddie Foster

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: As we come to this holy work of worship, let us remember God's good gifts to us in the sign of water:

**Many: Womb to wave, stream to sea, God's love rains down.**

One: In the beginning, God breathed on the waters and stirred up life, the world and all that is in it; from the wet stuff of the earth, God formed us and called us all good.

**Many: Womb to wave, stream to sea, God's love rains down.**

One: When evil threatened to swallow up creation, God sent a flood to wash it away; when the children of God were caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, God parted the waters and brought them over into freedom.

**Many: Womb to wave, stream to sea, God's love rains down.**

One: In the fullness of time, God came to us in Jesus, nurtured in the waters of Mary's womb, baptized by John on Jordan's bank— Jesus, who washes his disciples' feet and offers us living water that will not fail.

**Many: God's love rains down, on just and unjust alike; this is the sign of God's grace toward us all.**

One: Let us pray:

## PRAYER OF PREPARATION

**All: Holy, loving God, we are your children gathered here by baptism with water and the Spirit. Forgive us that we have not lived out this sign better in our lives. Forgetting your promises to us, we have followed you with halting steps. Doubting the goodness of your Good News, we have spent our days splashing in the shallows of your grace. Speak again, O God, and remind us. Call us deeper into life, more fully into the persons you are creating us to be, and more intimately into your embrace and into this community of grace you have prepared for us.**

**As this little one is baptized, remind us that there is nothing we can do to make you love us less, and nothing we can do to make you love us more. They and we are your beloved children always, in the good and strong name of Jesus we pray. Amen.**

## HYMN

*All God's Children, Welcome!*

All God's children, welcome!

Earth is yours to live in;

arms of love support you.

All God's Children, welcome!

All God's children welcome!

Jesus knows and loves you,

and his grace enfolds you.

All God's children, welcome!

All God's children, welcome!

We, the church of Jesus,

we will help your growing.

All God's children, welcome!

All God's children, welcome!

You have much to teach us.

Spirit bless and keep you.

All God's children, welcome!

## **TIME ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN**

Rev. Maddie Foster

## **SHARING THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

with Joseph (Joey) Henry Jaquette

Erin & Dave Jaquette, *parents*;

Bob & Kristin MacCurtain, *godparents*

## **MAKING PROMISES**

**One:** And now to this congregation gathered in the Spirit of Christ, I ask you, what will you promise this child and this family on behalf of the entire Church?

**Many:** **On behalf of the entire church of Jesus Christ, we witness and celebrate this sacrament with you. We affirm God's unshakable love for this child, for you, for us, and for all persons. With God's help, we promise you our prayerful support as we journey together as the Body of Christ, a family in faith.**

## **GREETING THE NEWLY BAPTIZED**

*Hallelujah! (Zimbabwe)*

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

## **READING FROM SCRIPTURE**

*from the Letters of the Early Church, 2 Corinthians 1:8-11*

## SERMON

In Life & in Death, We Belong

Rev. John MacIver Gage

## SHARING OUR PRAYERS (“O God, hear our prayer”)

### THE LORD’S PRAYER

*(using these or whichever words are closest to your own heart)*

**Our Father/Mother in heaven, holy is your name. Your reign come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And 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 kin-dom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

## ANTHEM

*Brother James Air arr. Stan Pethel*

Chancel Choir

The Lord my shepherd, I’ll not want, He makes me down to lie,  
In pastures green; He leadeth me, the quiet waters by.  
My soul the Lord restores again; and me to make he makes,  
Within the paths of righteousness, e’en for His own name’s sake.  
Yea, though I walk through valley dark, I shall not fear my foes,  
Thy rod and staff shall comfort me, wherever I may go.  
A table is prepared for me, and I shall safely go.  
Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me;  
And in God’s house forevermore my dwelling place shall be.

## PARTNERING IN THE GOOD NEWS

### SINGING OUR THANKS AND PRAISE

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise God, all creatures here below!  
Praise God above, you heav’nly hosts;  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!**

## POSTLUDE

*The flowers on the altar today are given to the glory of God  
and in loving memory of Barbara Boyd*



## Kids'N'Church

**Children of all ages are always welcome in worship!**

**Quiet books** and **pew pals** (soft toys) are available in the foyer outside the sanctuary doors. If your family needs a quieter space, our **reception room** has comfy chairs, a big toy box, a pack and play, and a speaker that broadcasts the service. You'll find the reception room by going right

outside the sanctuary, the set of double doors in the elbow of the hall. All bathrooms have **changing tables**. **Pre-K** children who are potty trained are welcome to join our elementary Sunday school activities.

Parents are always welcome to accompany their child at any age. **Sunday School** (for children in older Pre-K through Grade 5) and **Youth Group** (for students in grades 6 through 12) are both offered during our 10am worship service as scheduled. All children and youth remain in the sanctuary with their families to share **communion** (as parents decide), usually on the first Sunday of the month. Have questions about our Children's and Youth Ministries? Check in with Rev. Maddie following the service or email [RevMaddie@NeedhamUCC.org](mailto:RevMaddie@NeedhamUCC.org)



## We Need YOU to Teach Sunday School!

Both our Sunday School and Youth Group programs rely on the help of volunteers to teach and lead! All of the material prep is done in advance by Rev. Maddie and lesson plans are available online to make teaching as straightforward as possible for our volunteers. When you arrive to teach you simply grab the box marked for that Sunday, give everything a once-over, and prepare to welcome kids to the classroom! **Sign up at this link:**

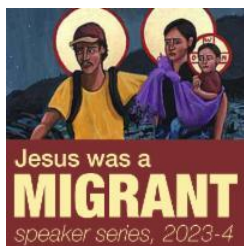
<https://tinyurl.com/CEYouth2324>

## ACTIVITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS: September 17, 2023



### Maui Fire Relief

More than 100 people are known to have died in wildfires on the Hawaiian island of Maui and many more are still missing. In historic Lahaina, 80% of the city is reported to be destroyed, and more than 11,000 people have been evacuated. Our United Church of Christ denomination has a long, complicated, and sometimes painful history in Hawai'i, and there are still many UCC churches there. **Please give generously to help with relief efforts through the Hawaii Conference of the UCC at [www.NeedhamUCC.org/Relief](http://www.NeedhamUCC.org/Relief)**



### *New Speaker Series!*

### Jesus was a Migrant: Issues in Modern American Immigration

The Outreach Committee has planned a series of speakers for 2023-2024 addressing issues in modern American immigration. The first presentation, "Immigration Facts vs Fabrication," with speaker Gerry Rovner, a retired immigration attorney, will take place on Sunday, 9/24 @ 11:11am, on-site & online via Zoom, right after worship.



### Join the Team! Ride for Food

Join the Needham UCC team and Three Squares New England for the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Ride For Food on **October 1, 2023**. The Ride For Food raises money to address food insecurity in New England. Our team has ridden as part of the Needham Community Council since 2016. There are three options: a 25-mile ride, a 50-mile ride and for the most adventurous, a 62-mile (100 km) ride. You can also make your own adventure as part of the "Off the Beaten Path". For more information, contact Rein Verschoor-Kirss at [r.kirss@northeastern.edu](mailto:r.kirss@northeastern.edu).



## Mindful Meditation ONLINE Sundays @ 7pm LIVE! via Zoom

at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88272388482>

What is mindful meditation? *Focusing on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment. Practicing mindfulness involves breathing methods, guided imagery, and other practices to relax the body and mind and help reduce stress.* Join longtime practitioner Sue Findlay and others Sunday evenings online.



## Singers and Chimers Need You!

Help the Choirs and Chimers continue to bring beautiful music to our worship services. You can sing or chime for a season or just for the Christmas Concert. Our annual Christmas Concert of carols and seasonal music is planned for the afternoon of Dec. 3. If interested please contact

Valerie Becker at [musicdirector@needhamucc.org](mailto:musicdirector@needhamucc.org) or Deb Abraham at [debraham@comcast.net](mailto:debraham@comcast.net).