



Isaiah 6:1-13

2/9 @ 10am, on-site & online via Zoom

Connect at www.NeedhamUCC.org

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

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Welcome! *No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are invited and welcome here at The Congregational Church of Needham, United Church of Christ.*

Please take a moment to let us know you're here, whether you are an official church member, a frequent guest, or a first-timer. **Scan this QR code with the camera on your phone and follow the link to sign-in.** *There's a paper sign-in sheet in the foyer, if you prefer.*

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. All bathrooms have **changing tables**. **Pre-K children** who are potty trained are welcome to join our elementary Sunday school activities. **Sunday School is usually offered on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month,** unless otherwise announced.

There is Sunday school this Sunday. Children will be invited to follow their teachers downstairs to the classroom following the Time Especially for Children. **Our next Sunday School dates are 2/23 & 3/9**

February 9, 2025

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway. If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway. If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway. The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway. Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway. The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway. People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway. People really need help but may attack you if you do help them. Help people anyway. Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway.

–“Paradoxical Commandments” by Kent M. Keith (1969)

PRELUDE

Offertoire in g minor; by N. Lebègue

Valerie Becker

WELCOME

Rev. John MacIver Gage, *senior minister*

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We come to worship a God we cannot comprehend, in the name of Jesus whom we have never met, drawn by the Spirit we cannot see, believing They are with us now.

Many: Such is our foolishness in faith.

One: We come to hear from a book, words and stories of ancient times not written to us or about us, believing there is fresh wisdom for us here.

Many: Such is our foolishness in faith.

One: We come to dream a world of justice, peace, and compassion that does not exist, to preach it by our actions, build it with our lives, believing it ought to be.

Many: Such is our foolishness in faith.

One: For the message of the manger, cross, and empty tomb are foolish in the eyes of a world possessed by the love of power,

Many: **but we believe that in God's foolish love there is power to liberate, transform, and save.**

All: Let us worship God together in spirit and in truth, in word and in deed.

HYMN *Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty (see below)*

TIME ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN

READING SCRIPTURE *from the Hebrew Prophets, Isaiah 6:1-13*

SERMON *Fool's Errand* Rev. John MacIver Gage

HYMN *Will You Come and Follow Me (The Summons) (see below)*

SHARING OUR PRAYERS ("O God, hear our prayer")

OPEN AND AFFIRMING LITANY OF REDEDICATION

One: Twenty-five years ago, this congregation opened our hearts, did the hard, joyful work of listening, praying, and discerning, and claimed a call from God to be Open to and Affirming of the full inclusion of lesbian and gay folks in church and society. Since then, we have celebrated Pride with our queer kin not just one month a year but every Sunday, every day. And following the movement of the spirit, we have expanded our understanding of Pride to include bisexual, transgender, and nonbinary folks, and we have widened our vision of Pride to see the intersections of other kinds of identity and oppression.

So, on this 25th anniversary, we reaffirm our Open and Affirming commitment:

Many: **Because our Pride cannot be satisfied with rainbow flags.**

One: In this season, with the onslaught of policies and laws aimed at maligning and even criminalizing and erasing queer, trans, and nonbinary people and youth in particular, we are being called to connect with local organizers and get involved in supporting queer justice.

Many: **Because our Pride cannot end with marches.**

One: In this season, as ignorance-fueled hate takes aim at the civil and human rights of our queer and trans kin, we are being called to take steps to educate ourselves, our families, and our communities about queer and trans lives and flourishing.

Many: **Because our Pride cannot stop when the dance party is over.**

One: In this season, as political rhetoric, public statements, and executive orders create and reinforce a culture of anti-queer, anti-trans bullying, discrimination, and violence, we are being called to re-engage the Open and Affirming process to

strengthen the welcome, inclusion, and justice experienced in our church and community.

Many: Because our Pride cannot be limited to the queer and trans communities.

One: In this season, when the powers that be seek to divide and conquer, we are being called to work for justice at the multiple intersections of humanity: liberation for Black, indigenous, and other communities of color; liberation for immigrants; liberation for women; liberation for all, including our oppressors; liberation for the earth.

Many: Because our Pride cannot be complete until God's kin-dom comes.

One: In this season, God is calling us. How will we respond?

ALL: Here we are. Send us.

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.

MUSICAL OFFERING *Sarabande from French Suite in c minor*
by J.S. Bach

Valerie Becker

PARTNERING IN THE GOOD NEWS

SINGING OUR THANKS & PRAISE

Matt Laney

**Do justice, says the One we praise, in loving kindness spend your days,
walk humbly with the living Christ: the way, the truth, our endless life!**

WE ARE BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

POSTLUDE

CHURCH ACTIVITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS: February 9, 2025

We *always* need Sunday School volunteers. Info? childrenandyouth@needhamucc.org
Sign up? <https://shorturl.at/UaLJk>



Give Now for Fire Relief

So many have lost so much in the massive fires across the Los Angeles, California area, including the congregation of Altadena Community Church, UCC (pictured), an Open and Affirming congregation like ours in a historic African-American neighborhood, whose building burned to the ground. **To donate now via PayPal, [click here](#) and select "California Fire Relief" from the drop-down menu**, or send a check to the church office made out to Congregational Church of Needham with "California Fire Relief" in the memo line. *All donations will be sent through our United Church of Christ denominational family disaster relief ministries.*



Next Round of Potluck Suppers

Sunday, 3/2: SIGN UP BY 2/16

Back by popular demand, our next round of small group potluck suppers will be held in members' homes to bring us together and help us get to know one another better in a cozy evening of connection and great food. And this go-round **we're adding a potluck at the church specifically for families with young children with room for them to play safely together. Email Kristin Mollerus (kristin@mollerus.net) by 2/16** with the names of those attending from your household (and whether you're interested in hosting). We'll do the rest to match you with a host home so you can coordinate meal contributions with your group. Looking forward to feasting and fun together!

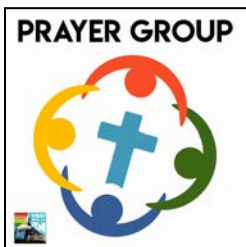


Before Worship Next Sunday, 2/16

Men's Fellowship

3rd Sunday of each month @ 9am, on-site in the Reception Room and via Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/93975548873>

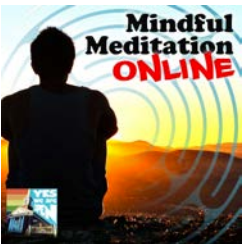
We welcome all men of the church for fellowship and discussion of the day's scripture and sermon focus. Questions? Contact John Baldwin, jsbaldwin@comcast.net or Rob Dunlavey, rob@robd.com



Weekly Prayer Group

Tuesdays @ 12 Noon via Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84372854861>

In church we often talk about prayer as if everybody knows what prayer is. But prayer can look and feel very different for different people in different situations. Above all, prayer is a practice, and practices take practice. Join us as we practice praying together.



Mindful Meditation

Sundays @ 7pm via Zoom ONLY at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/79920727588>

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.

And what does the LORD require of you?

to **ACT** justly

JLTM

&

to **LOVE** mercy

&

Micah 6:8

to **WALK** humbly
with your

God.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! all the saints a - dore thee,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! though the dark - ness hide thee,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!

Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to
 cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y
 though the eye of sin - ful - ness thy glo - ry may not
 All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth and sky and

thee. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! mer - ci - ful and might - y!
 sea; cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim, fall - ing down be - fore thee,
 see, on - ly thou art ho - ly; there is none, be - side thee,
 sea. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! mer - ci - ful and might - y!

God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 who, wert, and art, and ev - er - more shalt be.
 per - fect in pow'r, in love and pu - ri - ty.
 God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

Will You Come and Follow Me (The Summons)



Will you come and fol - low Me if I but call your name?___
 Will you leave your - self be - hind if I but call your name?___
 Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call your name?___
 Will you love the "you" you hide if I but call your name?___
 Lord, your sum - mons ech - oes true when You but call my name. ___



Will you go where you don't know and nev - er be the same?___
 Will you care for cruel and kind and nev - er be the same?___
 Will you set the pris' - ners free and nev - er be the same?___
 Will you quell the fear in - side and nev - er be the same?___
 Let me turn and fol - low You and nev - er be the same?___



Will you let My love be shown, ___ will you let My name be known, ___
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare ___ should your life at - tract or scare? ___
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean ___ and do such as this un - seen, ___
 Will you use the faith you've found ___ to re - shape the world a - round, ___
 In Your com - pa - ny I'll go ___ where Your love and foot - steps show. ___



___ will you let My life be grown in you and you in Me? ___
 ___ Will you let Me an - swer prayer in you and you in Me? ___
 ___ and ad - mit to what I mean in you and you in Me? ___
 ___ through My sight and touch and sound in you and you in Me? ___
 ___ Thus I'll move and live and grow in You and you in me. ___

TUNE: KELVINGROVE; WORDS: J. Bell, 1987