

Year W Listening to voices of women, girls, & the divine feminine in the Bible

Love Song of Songs



Song of Songs 4:9-15

2/5 @ 10am, LIVE! On-Site & Online
Connect at www.NeedhamUCC.org



The Song of songs. Day by Elena Kotliarke

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

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

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February 5, 2023

PRELUDE

Voluntary in C by A. Thomas
Valerie Becker, *organ*

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Gathered in this place,

Many: we are the body of Christ.

One: The hands and feet, the eyes and ears,

Many: the heart and lungs—all the parts of the whole,

One: our bodies, participating in this miraculous body.

Many: Together we are a body that worships,

One: who sings, who works,

Many: who rests, who rejoices.

One: that grieves and rages, a body who loves,

**Many: a body, our bodies, who embody the wonder of the
divine, made flesh.**

One: We are the body of Christ,

Many: Gathered in this place.

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

HYMN

As We Gather at Your Table (see below)

ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN

Rev. Maddie Foster

READING FROM SCRIPTURE

from the Wisdom Literature of the Hebrew Bible
Song of Songs 4:9-15

SERMON

“Love Song of Songs”
Rev. John MacIver Gage

ANTHEM

At the Table of Our God by D. Wagner
Chancel Choir

*At the table of the world, some have plenty, some have none.
At the table of our God, all are plentifully fed.
Blow us by your spirit to love! Blow us by your spirit to care!
Hurricane and breath, hurricane and breath,
fill us with a vision of love.*

*At the table of the world, some have honor, some have scorn.
At the table of our God, all are welcomed and renewed.
Blow us by your spirit to love! Blow us by your spirit to care!
Hurricane and breath, hurricane and breath,
fill us with a vision of love.*

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 kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION* *(together, using whatever food & drink you have on hand if participating online)*

** For our celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion / The Eucharist / The Lord’s Supper today, those present in the sanctuary who wish to partake will be invited to come forward down the center aisle to receive a piece of gluten-free bread from a Deacon (who will be masked) and take for themselves a serving of*

juice (pre-set in a compostable cup). As always, all bread is gluten-free and all juice is non-alcoholic and ALL ARE INVITED. You do not need to be a member of this congregation or any congregation, but simply desire to receive this blessing in your life. Come, friends, taste and see the goodness of God!

HYMN DURING COMMUNION

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ (see below)

PARTNERING IN THE GOOD NEWS

SINGING OUR THANKS & PRAISE

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Praise God, all creatures here below!

Praise God above, you heavenly hosts—

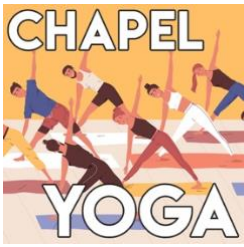
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

The flowers on the altar today are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Meta Hopkins by her family.

NOTE FROM THE OFFICE: While we work to fill the vacant church office manager position, our longtime financial administrator, Cindy Sullivan will assist us by picking up some extra hours. The office will be open reduced hours in the interim: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays @ 8am-2pm and Thursdays @ 8am-12noon. *As always, it's best to email or call ahead if you need to come by.*



Chapel Yoga THURS @ 9am through 2/23

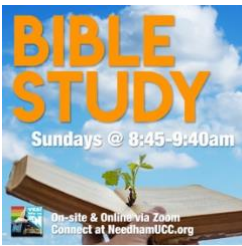
One of the best things any of us can do for our physical, mental, and spiritual health is find ways to reaffirm the living connection between our body, mind, and soul. And yoga is a great way to do that.

Our own **Carol Oberle, a trained yoga instructor**, will help us kick off the new year leading a **50m yoga class for 8 weeks on Thursdays @ 9am in the chapel**. This beautiful space we now share with the Charles River Ballet is perfect for yoga with the gorgeous winter light pouring in. **This class is free to church members and their guests.** *Participants will need bring a yoga mat and be prepared to leave your shoes and water bottles in the hallway before entering*



Mindful Meditation ONLINE Sundays @ 7pm LIVE! via Zoom at <http://zoom.us/j/907548568>

What is mindful meditation? *It's a type of meditation in which you focus 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.* Who couldn't use more of that? Join longtime practitioner Sue Findlay and others Sunday evenings online via Zoom.



NEW! Bible Study

Sundays @ 8:45-9:40am beginning 2/5

**On-site in the Reception Room at church & online
via Zoom @ <http://zoom.us/j/907548568>**

Our current Year W project, listening for the voices of women, girls, and the divine feminine in the scriptures is the perfect opportunity/excuse to do some Bible study together. Join us to reflect together on each Sunday's Bible passages for preaching, listening for what tradition, scholarship, and the insight of the Spirit has to say to us today.

As We Gather at Your Table

As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence;
let our hearts and minds be stirred.

Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet
how to make Love's vict'ry known.

Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you,
bringing peace where there is strife.

Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image in the world you died to save.

Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome
those who had been last and least.

There no more will envy bind us nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy.

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

Let us talents and tongues employ,
reaching out with a shout of joy:
Bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

*Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around:
loaves abound!*

*Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around:
loaves abound!*

Christ is able to make us one, at the table he sets the tone,
teaching people to live to bless, love in word and in deed express.

REFRAIN

Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Immanuel) ev'rywhere!

REFRAIN