



Southport Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

524 Pequot Avenue

Southport, Connecticut 06890

office@southportucc.org

Rev. Paul Whitmore, Senior Minister

Rev. Laura Whitmore, Associate Minister

THE SUNDAY SERVICE OF WORSHIP

April 25, 2021, at ten o'clock

PRELUDE

“Larghetto” *Rocherolle*

“Allegretto from Symphony III” *Brahms*

Meredith Moore, French Horn and Elaine DeGrood, Piano

WELCOME

Ali Kralovec-Kirchherr, Student Minister

HYMN

“For The Beauty Of The Earth”

**For the beauty of the earth, For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth, Over and around us lies,
Lord of all, to thee we raise, This our hymn grateful praise.**

**For the beauty of each hour, Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, Sun and moon, and stars of light,
Lord of all, to thee we raise, This our hymn grateful praise.**

**For the joy of ear and eye, For the heart and mind's delight,
For the mystic harmony, Linking sense to sound and sight,
Lord of all, to thee we raise, This our hymn of grateful praise.**

**For the Joy of human love, Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above, For all gentle thoughts and mild,
Lord of all, to thee we raise, This our hymn grateful praise. Amen.**

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Julie Center, Student Minister

Leader: The Psalmist said: “I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the living God.”

People: **Here, in the house of the living God, we set aside the hurried pace of our lives and let our hearts be glad!**

Leader: This is the place to savor God’s grace...

People: **And once again, feel the hum of God’s creation in our hearts, our minds, and our bodies.**

Leader: This is the time to treasure our God-given lives...

People: **And once again, give our thanks and praise.**

Leader: This is the day to begin again...

People: **And once again, worship God in reverence and joy; in prayer and thanksgiving; in quiet and in song.** *(Adapted from Psalm 121)*

THE INVOCATION & LORD’S PRAYER *(Trespases)*

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

PASTORAL PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

To give towards your **2021 Stewardship Pledge Contribution**, please text the following:

To: **73256** Message: **Sptccgiving Pledge \$**___

To give to the **Sunday Offering**, please text the following:

To: **73256** Message: **Sptccgiving Plate \$**___

To give **online**, please click **here** to be taken to our website.

To **mail** us your offering or pledge, please send a check to:
Southport Congregational Church, PO Box 366, Southport, CT 06890

Thank you!

OFFERTORY

“Give Me Jesus” *arr. Hayes*

Shannon Doyle, Soloist

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*Loving God of all life, all hope, all opportunity and all generosity –
you give us everything we have in this life. And with our gratitude,
we share our abundant gifts from you with your greater family in need.
May you bless these gifts that they may express your Spirit, and our love. Amen.*

SCRIPTURE

See Insert

SERMON

“CHRIST VS. CHRISTIANITY, PART II”

Rev. Paul Whitmore

HYMN

“Lord Of All Hopefulness”

**Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust ever child-like, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.**

**Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labors, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.**

**Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day. Amen.**

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

“A Gaelic Blessing”

Senior Choir

POSTLUDE

“O Spirit All Embracing” *Holst*

Meredith Moore, French Horn and Elaine DeGrood, Piano

WELCOME BACK TO IN-PERSON WORSHIP! We are thrilled to be worshipping together again!
Please remember to observe social distancing guidelines and wear masks at all times, thank you.

RESERVATIONS FOR IN-PERSON are required in advance for all in-person worship services.
RESERVATIONS CAN BE MADE by TELEPHONE ONLY PLEASE – by calling the church office at 203-255-1594, during regular business hours between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday.

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO BE A PART OF AN ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL Join us this **Wednesday, April 28 at 7:30 p.m.** As our **Student Minister, Ali Kralovec-Kirchherr** progresses towards ordination, SCC will play a vital role in hosting, what is known as, an Ecclesiastical Council. This is the larger church body's chance to ask Ali questions about her vision of ministry, her theology, and what she would do in given situations. Ali will share her ordination paper, which is something akin to a PhD dissertation defense, so bring your questions and don't hold back!

THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given by Robin Marshlow, celebrating the newest addition to her family, Brooke Elizabeth Bly, born April 12, 2021.

WE THANK THIS WEEK'S LIVESTREAM TEAM Trevor Uhl, Hannah Kleinbeck and Ella Conopask for their help with the livestreaming of today's service!

USHERING AND GREETING YOU TODAY are Deacons Leah Davis, Sadhana Joliet, Jeffrey Earls and Joe Pezzimenti.

CONFIRMATION WEEKEND IS NEXT WEEKEND: On **May 1st at 5:00 p.m.** Our Confirmands will be presenting their Faith Statements - this is a wonderful look into the minds of our teens and their faith development and to hear how their faith impacts their lives. **May 2nd at 10:00 a.m.** We will celebrate the Rite of Confirmation, including the laying on of hands, as we welcome these youth into our Church Family as members.

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CHRIST vs. CHRISTIANITY – SCRIPTURE & STUDY GUIDE

April 25, 2021

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SURRENDERING OUR WILL & OUR POINT OF VIEW TO GOD'S
a.k.a., **RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

John 3:30

John the Baptist, referring to Christ, articulates the right (healthy) relationship between a Savior or Messiah vs. a follower (and in regard to himself as a powerful prophet, called by God), John said: **He (Christ) must increase, but I must decrease.** (It's all about Him!)

Matthew 26:39

Jesus, sublimating his will and human desires to the will of God, said: **"...nevertheless, not what I will, but what You (God) will."**

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SOME OF JESUS' FUNDAMENTALS  
TO WHICH EVERY PERSON WHO "BELIEVES" IN HIM MUST SURRENDER & ADHERE:

Matthew 22:37,39

**Love the Lord your God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.  
And...**Love your neighbor as yourself.**

John 15:12

This is my commandment, that you **love one another as I have loved you.**

Matthew 25:40

Whatever you do to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you do to me.

Matthew 7:21

**Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven,**  
**But ONLY the One Who DOES** the will of my Father in heaven.

1 John 4:7,8,21

Let us love one another, for love comes from God...  
**Whoever does not love does not know God, because GOD IS LOVE.**

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JESUS' UNWAIVERING POSTURE OF NON-VIOLENCE:

Romans 12:19

Never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God...

SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF HOW TO BEHAVE WITHOUT VIOLENCE, EVEN WHEN REJECTED

In Luke 10 below, even with those who outright reject Christ and his message there is not even a hint of violence. Any violence to "defend" his name or honor, or in "support" of him is not acting in his name.

Luke 10:5-11 [Jesus instructed his disciples:]

“When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you.

Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you...

When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you...

But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you.’

JESUS IS CLEAR – VIOLENCE IS NOT JUSTIFIED EVEN WHEN JESUS HIMSELF IS ARRESTED

Luke 22:47-51

...the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them...Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

When Jesus’ followers saw what was going to happen, they said, **“Lord, should we strike with our swords?”**

And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.

But Jesus answered, “No more of this!” And he touched the man’s ear and healed him.

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**JESUS IS CLEAR – ANY ACT OF EVEN HATRED, OR EVEN JUDGMENTALISM, IS NOT JUSTIFIED – THEREFORE, IS NOT “CHRISTIAN.”**

1 John 4:20,21

Jesus said: **Whoever *claims* to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar.**

**Anyone who loves God *must also* love their brother and sister.**

Matthew 7:1-3

**Do not judge others, so that you may not be judged...**

Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?

John 8:7

Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.

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EXAMPLE of - IDENTITY THEFT and ABUSE OF GOD –
Co-opting God’s identity to justify or promote your own agenda.

JESUS SAYS: Matthew 6:12 Forgive us our trespasses As *We Forgive Those Who Trespass against us...*

- VS. -

ABUSE AND IDENTITY THEFT OF GOD (Co-opting God’s Identity for one’s own ends):



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## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE THROUGH JESUS

Even if a THOUGHT, BELIEF, THEOLOGY, or even "LAW" is in the Bible,  
but it is NOT IN AGREEMENT WITH JESUS,  
that thought, belief, theology or even "law" CANNOT BE RECOGNIZED as being "CHRISTIAN."

EXAMPLES:

Regarding the SABBATH – JESUS' POSITION is that **doing the loving thing** (Jesus' "Law of Love") SUPERSEDES & OVERRIDES a PREVIOUS BIBLICAL LAW, even honoring the Sabbath which is one of the 10 COMMANDMENTS.

JESUS' LAW OF LOVE – OVERRIDING THE SABBATH LAW (One of the 10 COMMANDMENTS)

Mark 3:1-6 (also see Luke 13:10-16; Mark 2:23)

Jesus entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. And [the Pharisees] watched him, to see whether he would heal him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him.

Jesus said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come here." And he said to [the Pharisees], "Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent.

And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

The Pharisees went out, and immediately held counsel...against him, how to destroy him.

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JESUS' "LAW OF LOVE" - OVERRIDING OLD TESTAMENT (KOSHER) FOOD LAWS

Luke 10:5-11 (as above)

"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.'...

Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you...eat what is offered to you.

JESUS GIVES MANY EXAMPLES of HOW HIS NEW "LAW OF LOVE" SUPERSEDES PREVIOUSLY UNDERSTOOD OLD TESTAMENT BELIEFS and UNDERSTANDINGS OF GOD.

HE INTERPRETS THE OLD TESTAMENT THROUGH HIMSELF.

THEREFORE, WE NEED TO INTERPRET THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND ALL OF SCRIPTURE – THROUGH CHRIST.

JESUS' "LAW OF LOVE" – OVERRIDING/REINTERPRETING MANY OLD TESTAMENT LAWS

Matthew 5:17-48 – Jesus' *New Testimony, Law or Testament*

21. *You have heard that it was said* to the men of old, (Old Testament) 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' 22 *But I say to you...*

27 *You have heard that it was said,* (Old Testament) 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 *But I say to you...*

31 *It was also said,* 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' 32 *But I say to you...*

33 *Again you have heard that it was said* to the men of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' 34 *But I say to you...*

33 Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' 34 But I say to you...

43 You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44 But I say to you, Love your enemies...

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Accordingly, **NO PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE, EVEN the NEW TESTAMENT, CAN OVERRIDE THE "WORD"/LAW/WAY OF LOVE OF CHRIST HIMSELF.** For a Christian, **ALL** SCRIPTURE can **ONLY** be UNDERSTOOD THROUGH the LENS/WORDS & ACTIONS of CHRIST.

EXAMPLES:

of some **NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE** whose THEOLOGY and BELIEF is **NOT IN AGREEMENT with JESUS' "LAW OF LOVE,"** and ***therefore,*** NEEDS to be UNDERSTOOD (**REJECTED**) as SUCH. (i.e., *You have heard it said...but I say to you...*)

**REGARDING SLAVES** - The Apostle Paul wrote:

Ephesians 6:5,9

Slaves, be obedient to those who are your earthly masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as to Christ....

**WIVES SUBSERVIENT to HUSBANDS** - (**This is NOT Jesus' understanding or how he lived his "law of love" with women.** Therefore, through the lens/words and actions of Christ - this particular understanding of Paul must be rejected, through Jesus' "law of love" that he consistently expressed and lived. Jesus always lifted up, fully respected and revered women.

Ephesians 5:22-25,28,29

Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord.

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HOW to READ the BIBLE THROUGH the LENS OF CHRIST

