

***No matter who you are***

***or where you are on life’s journey,***

***you are welcome here.***

6 September 2020 10:00am

***“Leaning Into God”***

**Welcome** Rev. Dr. Ginger Brasher-Cunningham

**Gathering:**

We open our hearts, our hands, and our minds. We breathe in the breath of God, and breathe out the love of God, and we continue in worship.

**Anthem:** Mi Shebeirach by Debbie Friedman

*Mi shebeirach avoteinu, m'kor hab'racha l'imoteinu*

[May the One who blessed our fathers, the source of blessing for our mothers]

May the source of strength, who blessed the ones before us,

help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing, and let us say, Amen.

*Mi shebeirach imoteinu, m'kor habrachah l'avoteinu*

[May the One who blessed our mothers, the source of blessing for our fathers]

bless those in need of healing with *r'fuah sh'leimah*, [complete healing]

The renewal of body, the renewal of spirit, And let us say, Amen

MI SHEBEIRACH Words and Music: Debbie Friedman; Drorah Setel

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**Prayer and The Lord’s Prayer:**

**In the kinship of faith, we pray for . . . Susan B., on the death of her stepfather; Peter P., and family on the death of his cousin Vincent; Dut M., and Anyikor A. and family on the death of her brother, Natali; Tom P., and family on the death of Elizabeth; Jennifer W. and family on the death of her mother, Judy; Janice N. & family on the death of her mother, Rita; Patti M., and family, on the death of Steve; Berdella Z; Tim B., friend of the Ramseys; all who have lost beloved pets; Carin S.,** **Cindy M.; Barbara & Chip Gorman; Jackie & frank; parents who cannot visit their children and grandchildren; those awaiting diagnosis; those suffering from the virus, those who are grieving; all those struggling with difficult diagnoses; family and friends of those who have completed suicide and those contemplating suicide; those living with chronic diseases, dementia and cancer, and their families; those living with domestic violence; families dealing with addictions; those who suffer; and for peace and health for all.**

**Our Father *(or Creator)*, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom *(kin-dom)* come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom *(kin-dom)*, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Service of Installation for the Reverend Jake Miles Joseph**

**Covenant with First Church minister:**

Rev. Dr. Ginger Brasher-Cunningham, Chair of Church and Ministry, New Haven East Consociation of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ

Jake, servant of God, I invite you to come forward as a sign of your acceptance of the call to the office of Minister of Faith Formation at First Congregational Church of Guilford. Seeing that, by the grace of God, you have been called to ordained ministry and that First Congregational Church of Guilford has been led to call you as Minister of Faith Formation, are you willing to covenant with members of this congregation and the New Haven East Consociation?

**Clergy:**

Jake: I am willing and I promise to serve this church faithfully, teaching and preaching the word of God, administering the sacraments, and fulfilling a pastoral office according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

**Covenant with First Congregation parishioners**:

Stephen Dudley, Chair, Church Council

Members of First Congregational Church of Guilford, United Church of Christ, will you please rise - on your feet, or in your hearts - and prayerfully affirm your covenant with your Minister of Faith Formation?

**\*We, the members and friends of First Congregational Church, Guilford, receive Jake as our Minister of Faith Formation, promising to gracefully labor with him in the ministry of the gospel.**

**We will pray for him, encourage him, as well as engage him in mutual respect, and support. We gather with him and with the United Church of Christ as a sign of our mutual ministry, living life as Jesus taught: embracing relationship over doctrine, and trusting that death does not conquer love.**

*(Please remain standing)*

**Covenant with Consociation members:** Rev. Dr. Ginger Brasher-Cunningham

Members of the New Haven East Consociation, that is, visitors from the Consociation and members and friends of First Church, will you please rise – in body or in spirit - and affirm your covenant with First Congregational Church of Guilford and its Minister of Faith Formation?

**\*We, the members of the New Haven East Consociation of the United Church of Christ, gather with you, the people and the Minister of Faith Formation of First Congregational Church, Guilford, as a sign of our covenant, and in celebration of our mutual ministry in Christ’s name.**

**Charge to Minister, Congregation, and Consociation**

Rev. Dr. Ginger Brasher-Cunningham

**Prayer of Installation:** Director of Children and Youth Ministries Judi Wallace and Deacon Co-Chair Jean Gresham

God of Hope, God of Peace, you have called each of us to serve you in the universal church as teachers, prophets, artists, neighbors, partners, and community.

You have called out your servant Jake to the service of Jesus Christ in this place. Bless him, we pray, as he leads and ministers to and with the people you have placed in his care.

Be with him in classrooms, in homes, in the streets of neighboring cities, in this sanctuary as he works and risks to represent you.

Grant him courage for bearing your Word that burns with power and justice.

Grant him joy in delivering your healing love.

Grant him the grace to present your prophecy, and your comfort.

Grant him strength to refuse conformity to the destructive powers of our world.

Grant him resilience in teaching to love you first of all,

to love neighbor as self, to do justice,

love kindness, and walk humbly with you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on Jake, on the people of First Church, Guilford, and on all the churches of the New Haven East Consociation, that we may serve in mutual ministry with all faithfulness, hope, diligence, love, and courage.

Make us all freshly aware of the challenge of your call. Give us courage to live into that call and forgive our stumbling when we dare to act in your name.

Open us anew to the wonder of your still-speaking voice so that we may be steadfast in our service, generous in our giving and courageous in our commitments, recognizing that we are diverse and yet all one in you, and you in us, as we serve together with faithfulness, creativity and joy. In celebration and in hope we pray, Amen.

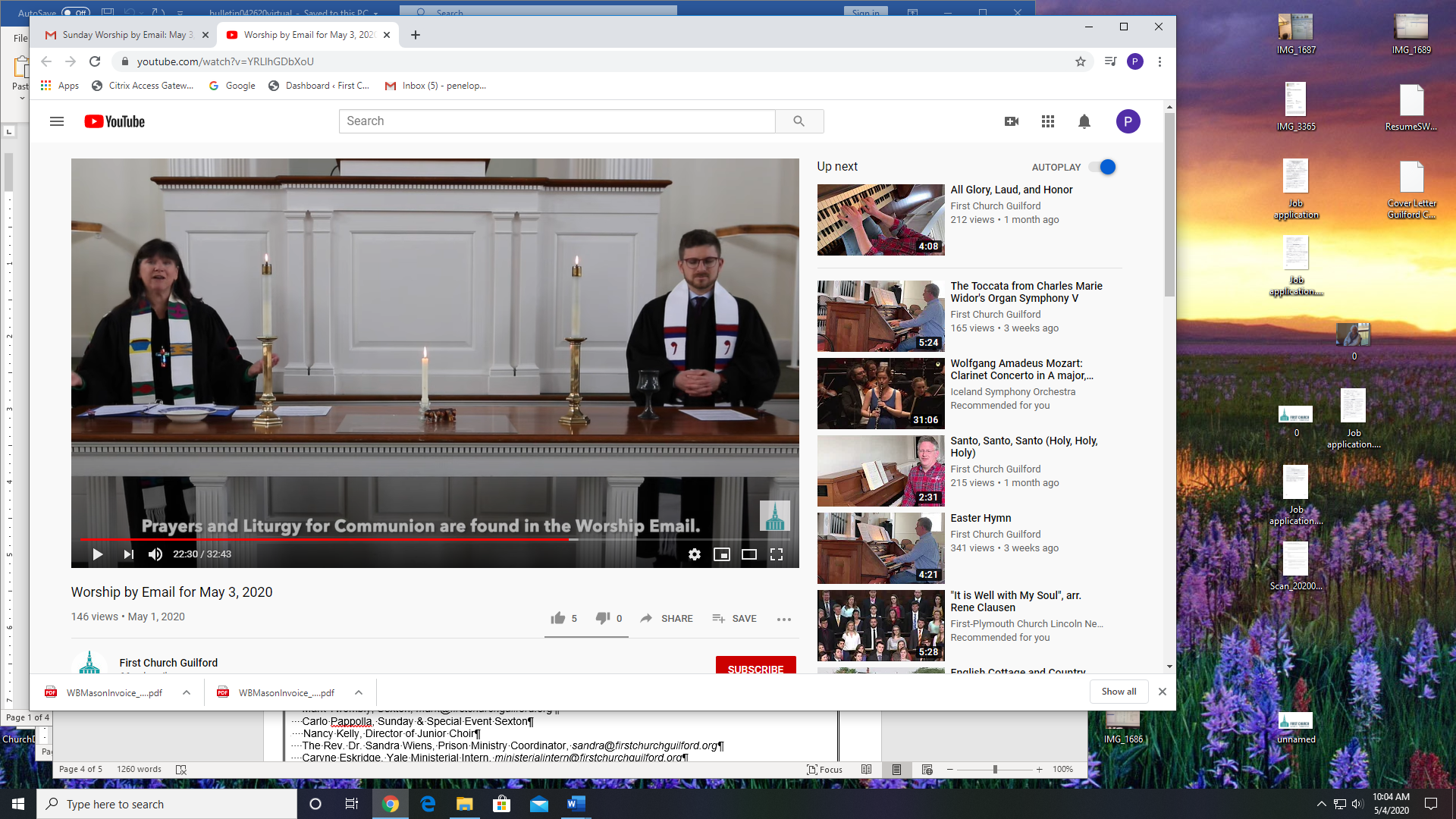
**Declaration:** Rev. Dr. Brasher-Cunningham

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the New Haven East Consociation of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, I declare you duly installed as Minister of Faith Formation of First Congregational Church of Guilford. May God’s peace and guidance be with you!

**Scripture:** Philippians 4: 4 -13

**Sermon:** “Misery and Miracles” Rev. Ron Patterson

**Invitation to Communion:**



Leader: God be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: We give you thanks, O God, for being the giver of insight and understanding, the author of light and hope, and the beginning of grace and love.

**People: We come to the table in gratitude and with a spirit of humility.**

Leader: With those from the south and north, east and west, sages of old and prophets of today,

**People: we gather as people seeking justice, desiring unity, practicing love through physical distancing and in spiritual connecting.**

Leader: We share this feast at the table of inclusivity and declare together:

**All: In the cross, Jesus was your presence of unending love and in the empty tomb the bright light of life. With the generations- past, present and future-**

**we proclaim grace and hope of life eternal.**

**Communion Prayer**

**Sharing of Bread and Cup –** *please use bread and juice you have at home.*

**Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving**:

**Eternal Spirit, as this once-scattered grain was gathered to become one loaf, so may all your people be woven together by your grace and peace. As this fruit was brought forth from the vine, so may we go forth in your love, planting fields of compassion that harvest mercy and justice. Amen.**

**Offertory**

**Doxology:** ***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;***

***Praise God, all creatures here below;***

***Praise God, for all that love has done;***

***Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.***

*(You are welcome to sing your preferred version of the Doxology.)*

**Commission/Benediction**

**Closing Hymn:** The Old, Old Path

text: Vida Elizabeth Smith (1865-1945); tune: Mary Audentia Smith Anderson (1872-1963)

There's an old, old path Where the sun shines through

Life's dark storm clouds From its home of blue.

*In this old, old path made strangely sweet*

*By the touch divine of His blessed feet.*

Find the old, old path, 'Twill be ever new,

For the Savior walks All the way with you, *In this old, old path . . .*

In this old, old path, Are my friends most dear,

And I walk with them, With the angels near, *In this old, old path . . .*

'Tis an old, old path, Shadowed vales between,

Yet I fearless walk With the Nazarene, *In this old, old path . . .*

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**Passing the Peace and Fellowship Hour:** Please continue our spirit of worship and reach out to a few people to say hello and exchange the peace of Christ.

**Clergy Phone Hours:**The clergy are available by phone - 203-453-5249: Ginger (ext. 204) Tues., 9-11am; Jake (ext. 205) Wed., 2-4pm.

**In-Person Worship Begins!** To keep to a maximum of 70 people in the Sanctuary, we are inviting groups of people to attend on specific Sundays so that everyone who wishes will have the opportunity to worship at least once in the first 8 weeks. All health recommendations will be followed: temperature-taking, requiring masks, physical distancing, hand-sanitizing, as well as documentation of those who are attending for contact-tracing. If you are not healthy, we will lovingly ask you to return home to care for yourself. The service will continue to be available online for those not attending in-person worship. **Please RSVP to the Church Office to reserve a seat worship by the Wednesday before.**

***Please stay home if: you do not feel well the morning of the service or***

***you have recently traveled to states on CT's current travel advisory or have***

***been exposed to a confirmed COVID positive.***

***All worship attendees will receive by email or post a letter confirming their attendance, and will give guidelines for Sunday morning.*** Worship has been designed around these important guidelines to protect you, our ministers, and the volunteers who will help us. Please read the letter as it will help orient you to our new style of in-person worship in the Sanctuary.

**Sept. 13:** Senior Adults (those 70 years & older)

**Sept. 20:** Families with children up through the 4th grade

**Sept. 27:** Families with children 5th grade through college, Music, Trustees

**Oct. 4:** Persons who have experienced the death of a loved one during the past three years, Deaconess/Visitors, and Deacons

**Oct. 11:** Church Council, Business Committee, and those who have not attended yet

**Oct. 18:** Stewardship Committee, Community & Global Justice Board, all Garden Teams, Harvest Fair Committee, and Nominating Committee

**Oct. 25:** Finance, Women’s Fellowship & Outreach, HR, PF, and any other committees.

**Please submit prayer requests** to include in the worship bulletin by Wednesday by calling 203-453-5249.  To respect privacy, we ask for first names and non-sensitive prayers only please. Please contact the clergy with sensitive non-worship-ready prayer requests.

**Welcome to First Congregational Church!**

We are thankful that you are worshiping with us, and we hope that you have found inspiration and fellowship. If we can be of service to you, please contact one of us:

The Rev. Dr. Ginger Brasher-Cunningham, Lead Minister, [ginger@firstchurchguilford.org](mailto:ginger@firstchurchguilford.org)

The Rev. Jake Miles Joseph, Minister of Faith Formation, [jake@firstchurchguilford.org](mailto:jake@firstchurchguilford.org)

William C. Speed, Director of Music Ministries, [bill@firstchurchguilford.org](mailto:bill@firstchurchguilford.org)

Judi Wallace, Director of Children and Youth, [judi@firstchurchguilford.org](mailto:judi@firstchurchguilford.org)

Penelope Rebuzzini, Office Manager, [office@firstchurchguilford.org](mailto:office@firstchurchguilford.org)

Annemarie Alexa, Bookkeeper/Data Manager, [financeoffice@firstchurchguilford.org](mailto:financeoffice@firstchurchguilford.org)

Mark Twombly, Sexton, [mark@firstchurchguilford.org](mailto:mark@firstchurchguilford.org)

Carlo Pappolla, Sunday & Special Event Sexton

The Rev. Dr. Sandra Wiens, Coord, Prison & Re-entry Min.,[sandra@firstchurchguilford.org](mailto:sandra@firstchurchguilford.org)

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