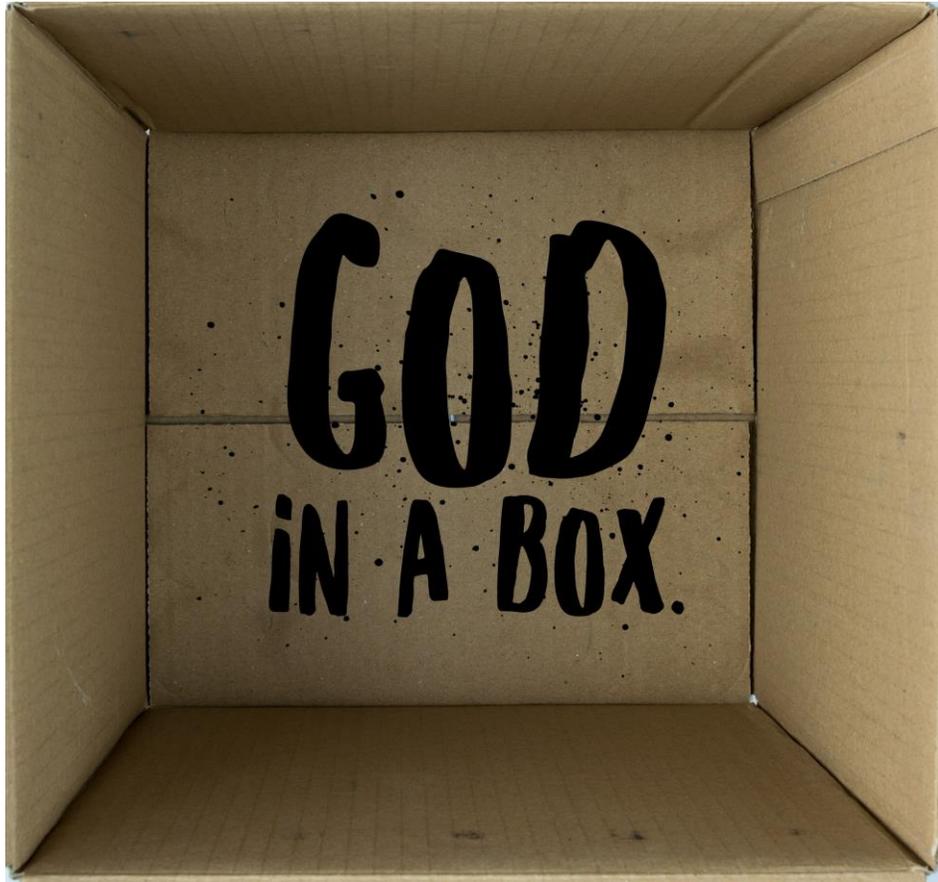


God in a Box

September 12, 2021 – 10 a.m. – **Worship, Word, & Watermelon**
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Order of Worship



Sunday Worship online

*Outdoor worship is on NFCC's Facebook page only.
Indoor worship is on NFCC's Facebook page and Zoom.*

Preparing for Worship

*For outdoor worship, please bring a chair and your coffee.
For indoor worship, please bring your mask.*

Ministering to Us Today

*Rev. Christina Williams and Chris Polloni, Deacon, will be leading us in worship today.
We are grateful to Babette Bach and Sarah Bach for providing the music,
and to our technical staff for the day. Thank you for ministering to us in these ways.*

MEDITATION

“God is always bigger than the boxes we build for God, so we shouldn’t waste too much time protecting the boxes.” –Richard Rohr

WE GATHER

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING WORDS

Pastor: And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you. **C: And also with you.**

PRELUDE

“Praeludium, Opus 87, No. 1”

Simon Sechter

CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Isaiah 40:1-11)

Chris Polloni, Deacon

L: The God who speaks comfort to us—

All: Calls us here.

L: The God who addresses us with tenderness—

All: Meets us here.

L: The God who guides us with gentleness—

All: Cares for us here.

L: We come to prepare a way for the Lord.

All: We come to ready ourselves for the transformation of our lives.

L: For the glory of the Lord will be revealed,

All: And all people will see it.

SONG FOR THE SEASON OF PENTECOST

“Lord, Prepare Me”

GTG #701

You are invited to sing quietly with a mask on.

Lord, Prepare Me / Haz de mí, Dios

Lord, pre - pare me to be a sanc - tu - ar - y, pure and
 Haz de mí, Dios, hoy, un san - tua - rio vi - vo; pu - ro y

ho - ly, tried and true. With thanks - giv - ing, I'll be a
 san - to, fiel a ti. Dan - do gra - cias, se - ré por

liv - ing sanc - tu - ar - y for you. you.
 siem - pre tu san - tua - rio, has - ta el fin. fin.

To repeat / Para repetir | Last time / Última vez

Text: John Thompson, b.1950, and Randy Scruggs, b.1953, © 1982, Full Armor Music Publishing Co.; tr. by Gerardo Oberman, b.1965, © 2019, GIA Publications, Inc.
 Tune: SANCTUARY, Irregular; John Thompson, b.1950, and Randy Scruggs, b.1953, © 1982, Full Armor Music Publishing Co.; arr. by Nylea L. Butler-Moore, b.1960, © 2013, Full Armor Music Publishing Co.

UNISON OPENING PRAYER

Chris Polloni, Deacon

Holy One, we bow our hearts before you. Strengthen us in our innermost being and dwell in our hearts through faith. May we be rooted and grounded in Christ, whose love is beyond all knowledge. Help us comprehend even the smallest part of the beautiful mystery of your grace, love, and intentions for our world. Grant that we may experience the fullness of your presence with us. Amen.

OPENING HYMN

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

NCH #1

You are invited to sing quietly with a mask on.

GOD

1

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Water C. Smith, 1867; alt. *1 Tim. 1:17; Ps. 36:6*

1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
 2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
 3 Your life is life - giv - ing— to both great and small;
 4 So per - feet your glo - ry, so bril - liant your light.

in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
 not want - ing, not wast - ing, but rul - ing in might;
 in all life you're liv - ing, the true life of all;
 your an - gels a - dore you, all veil - ing their sight;

Most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
 Your jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove,
 We blas - som and flour - ish as leaves and as flowers,
 All praise we now ren - der as your an - gels do;

al - might - y, vic - to - rious, your great name we praise,
 your clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love,
 then with - er and per - ish— but naught dims your powers,
 in awe at the splen - dor of light hid - ing you.

WE PROCLAIM

GOSPEL READING – Job 38, 39, & 41 (excerpts) – God Answers Job

Chris Polloni, Deacon

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind: “Who is this counsel by words without knowledge?” “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its

bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together, and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?"

"Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place, so that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it? It is changed like clay under the seal, and it is dyed like a garment. Light is withheld from the wicked, and their uplifted arm is broken."

"Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you observe the calving of the deer? Can you number the months that they fulfill, and do you know the time when they give birth, when they crouch to give birth to their offspring, and are delivered of their young?"

"Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars, and spreads its wings toward the south? Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes its nest on high? It lives on the rock and makes its home in the fastness of the rocky crag. From there it spies the prey; its eyes see it from far away." Then Job answered the Lord, "See I am of small account; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once, and I will not answer."

EPISTLE READING – Ephesians 3:14-20 – *Paul's Prayer for the Ephesians* Rev. Christina Williams

... I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine...

L: The liberating Word of God, for the people of God. **All: Thanks be to God.**

TIME FOR ALL AGES

"God in a Box"

Our skit today is presented by Lisa Allen, Sarah Bach, and Chris Polloni.

ANTHEM

"The Gift of Love"

English melody, adapted by Hal H. Hopson

Soloist: Sarah Bach

WE RESPOND

JOYS & CONCERNS

For those online, you are invited to write the names of those you wish to lift in prayer and those joys you want to celebrate in the comments section. After a name(s) is spoken or when the pastor reads the names online, you are invited to respond, "O Lord, hear our prayer."

PASTORAL PRAYER

Today we pause to remember the lives lost on this 20th anniversary of September 11, 2001.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day of our daily bread, and forgive us of 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 and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessing flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love had done:
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

UNISON OFFERTORY PRAYER

Holy God, you both call us and confront us: the gifts we bring are only a small part of the multitude we receive from you. In the depth of our being, we know that in calling us, you seek our faith, our willingness, our conviction, and our very hearts. In gratitude, we offer our whole being to follow Jesus—bringing his hope and healing wherever we go. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

WE GO FORTH

CLOSING HYMN

“God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens”

NCH #556

You are invited to sing quietly with a mask on.

STEWARDSHIP AND CREATION

God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens 556

Catherine Cameron, 1967

Gen. 5:1-2; Isa. 42:5-9

1 God, who stretched the span - gled heav - ens in - fi - nite in time and place.
2 We have ven - tured worlds un - dreamed of since the child-hood of our race;
3 As each far hor - i - zon beck - ons, may it chal-lenge us a - new,

Flung the suns in burn - ing ra - diance through the si - lent fields of space;
Known the ec - sta - sy of wing - ing through un - trav - eled realms of space;
Chil - dren of cre - a - tive pur - pose, serv - ing oth - ers, hon - oring you.

We, your chil - dren, in your like - ness, share in - ven - tive powers with you;
Probed the se - crets of the at - om, yield - ing un - i - mag - ined power.
May our dreams prove rich with prom - ise, each en - deav - or, well be - gun;

Great Cre - a - tor, still cre - a - ting, show us what we yet may do.
Fac - ing us with life's de - struc - tion or our most tri - um - phant hour.
Great Cre - a - tor, give us guid - ance till our goals and yours are one.

SENDING

May you know the richness and fullness of God's grace.
May you experience every dimension of Christ's love.
May you know the Spirit dwells within you through faith.
To the Holy One,
whose power works within us
to accomplish more than we could ask
or imagine or comprehend,
be glory forever and ever! Amen.

POSTLUDE

"Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"

Austrian hymn, F. J. Haydn



**The altar flowers today are given from her garden by Pam Polloni
in loving memory of her parents.**