

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Drea Pecor

Leader: O God, with faces touched by the light of a new day,
and hearts warmed by our prayers and praises,
we come before you to pray for the needs of our world.

We raise those who are struggling with illness,
with despair over their lives, or with
the breakdown of relationships.

All: May the light of Christ shine upon them.

Leader: We bring those places in our world
where war, violence, poverty and need
are the experiences of everyday life.

All: May the light of Christ shine upon them.

Leader: We hold in our hearts the pain
of those suffering violence, bereavement, or conflict.

All: May the light of Christ shine upon them.

Leader: We bring ourselves, the private struggles,
the heart's yearnings, the hidden dreams,
the unfulfilled potential.

All: May the light of Christ shine upon us. AMEN

PRAYER RESPONSE

Faith of our Fathers

Bell Choir

by Henri F. Nemy and James G. Walton, arr. by Krug

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*SENDING CHARGE (based on 1 Thessalonians 5:13-22) David Anderegg

Let us go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; Let us hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; Let us strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor everyone; Let us love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; May the blessing of God and the Holy Spirit, be with the Church always. Amen.

*HYMN

Blessed Be the Tie That Binds

See page 7

Verse 1

2223 They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love



1. We are one in the Spir-it, we are one in the Lord,
 2. We will walk with each oth-er, we will walk hand in hand,
 3. We will work with each oth-er, we will work side by side,
 4. All praise to the Fa-ther, from whom all things come,



we are one in the Spir-it, we are one in the Lord,
 we will walk with each oth-er, we will walk hand in hand,
 we will work with each oth-er, we will work side by side,
 and all praise to Christ Je-sus, God's on - ly Son,



and we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re-stored:
 and to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land:
 and we'll guard hu-man dig - ni - ty and save hu-man pride:
 and all praise to the Spir - it, who makes us one:

Refrain



And they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love, by our



love; yes, they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love. _____

WORDS: Peter Scholtes (John 13:34-35; Eph. 4:4-6)
 MUSIC: Peter Scholtes

ST. BRENDAN'S
 76.76.86 with Refrain

Eph. 2:13-22; 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 3:11

Samuel J. Stone, 1866; alt.

1 The church's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ our Lord;
 2 E - lect from ev - ery na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
 3 'Mid toil and trib - u - la - tion, and tu - mult of our war,
 4 Yet we on earth have un - ion with God, the Three-in - One,

we are Christ's new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the word;
 one char - ter of sal - va - tion, one God, one faith, one birth,
 we wait the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for - ev - er - more;
 and mys - tic sweet com - mu - nion with those whose rest is won.

From heaven Christ came and sought us in love to set us free;
 One name to - geth - er bless - ing, one ho - ly food we share,
 Till with the vi - sion glo - rious, our long - ing eyes are blessed,
 O hap - py ones and ho - ly! God, give us grace that we,

with pre - cious blood Christ bought us for all e - ter - ni - ty.
 to one hope we are press - ing, at one in work and prayer.
 and the great church vic - to - rious shall be the church at rest.
 like them, the meek and low - ly, may live e - ter - nal - ly.

Like the writings of Ambrose many centuries earlier, this hymn was born out of a doctrinal dispute. The young priest Samuel J. Stone composed twelve hymns on the articles of the Apostles' Creed in support of those reacting against nontraditional views of biblical scholarship. This hymn is based on article nine, "the holy Catholic Church."

Tune: AURELIA 7.6.7.6.D.
 Samuel S. Wesley, 1864

Community of Christ

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Shirley Erena Murray, 1985

1 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, who make the Cross your own,
 2 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, look past the church's door
 3 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, through whom the word must sound—
 4 When men-ace melts a - way, so shall God's will be done,

live out your creed and risk your life for God a - lone:
 and see the ref - u - gee, the hun - gry, and the poor.
 cry out for jus - tice and for peace the whole world 'round:
 the cli - mate of the world be peace and Christ its Sun;

The God who wears your face, to whom all worlds be - long,
 Take hands with the op - pressed, the job - less in your street,
 Dis - arm the powers that war and all that can de - stroy,
 Our cur - ren - cy be love and kind - li - ness our law,

whose chil - dren are of ev - ery race and ev - ery song.
 take towel and wa - ter, that you wash your neigh - bor's feet.
 turn bombs to bread, and tears of an - guish in - to joy.
 our food and faith be shared as one for ev - er - more.

Shirley Erena Murray has grown up within the Ecumenical Movement and addresses related themes such as Christian unity and social justice in her hymnody. This text was first sung at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

Tune: LEONI 6.6.8.4.D.
 Traditional Hebrew melody
 Adapt. Meyer Lyon, 1770

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

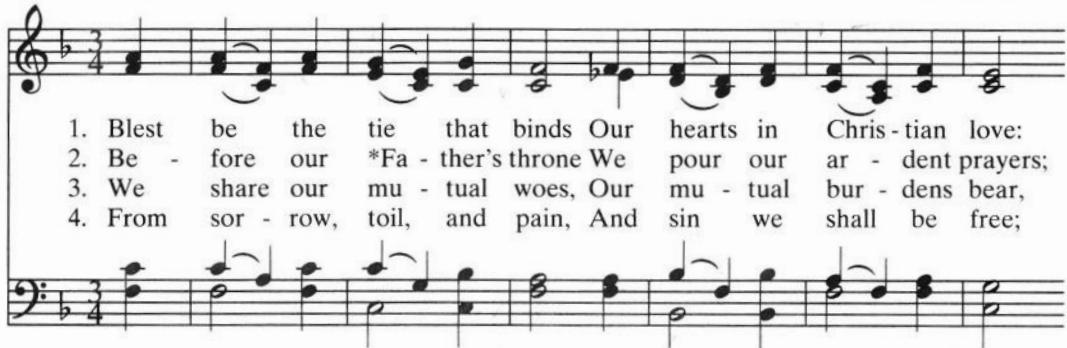
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DENNIS SM

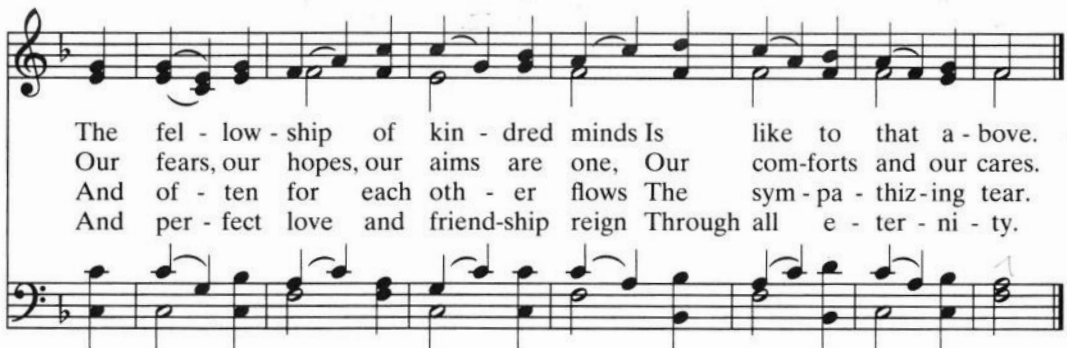
John Fawcett, 1782

Johann Georg Nägeli (1773–1836)

Arr. Lowell Mason, 1845



1. Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Chris-tian love;
2. Be - fore our *Fa - ther's throne We pour our ar - dent prayers;
3. We share our mu - tual woes, Our mu - tual bur - dens bear,
4. From sor - row, toil, and pain, And sin we shall be free;



The fel - low - ship of kin - dred minds Is like to that a - bove.
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, Our com-forts and our cares.
And of - ten for each oth - er flows The sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
And per - fect love and friend-ship reign Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Hymns, Psalms, & Spiritual Songs (1990)

Music Notes ~ Peter Frost

John Fawcett (1739-1817) wrote the words to "Blest Be the Tie that Binds" in 1782. This hymn has become one of the most popular closing hymns of all time. Fawcett served a rural church in Wainsgate, England. Albert Bailey, a hymnologist described Fawcett's parish as a "a straggling group of houses on the top of a barren hill." This was probably an apt description of many rural parishes at the time. Bailey also describes the congregation as follows: "The people were all farmers and shepherds, poor as Job's turkey; an uncouth lot whose speech one could hardly understand, unable to read or write; most of them pagans cursed with vice and ignorance and wild tempers."

News and Announcements

All Church Birthday Party

Come celebrate our birthdays after church on **May 5!** Potluck signup in the JE room, on Breeze, or by calling the church office. Last initial A-G please bring main dish, H-P side dish, Q-Z salad. Our theme is The Four Seasons: spring (March 20-June 20), summer (June 21- September 21), fall (September 22- December 20) and winter (December 21-March 19). Sit with your friends born in your season. Join the seasonal song competition. Eat Cake! Seasonal attire encouraged.

Active Prayer of Thanksgiving

Sunday, May 5 We will revive the practice of bringing food or money for a local pantry as an act of gratitude after

receiving communion. We encourage you to bring non-perishable food items/ toiletries and/or money for food (cash or check) on May 5 for the People's Pantry in Great Barrington.

Suggested food/toiletry items: canned/ dried beans, peanut or other nut butters, breakfast cereals/rolled oats, canned fruit/vegetables/soups/tuna/ salmon/ chicken, brown rice/quinoa/other grains, white or whole grain pasta, pasta sauce, white or whole grain flour, cornmeal, condiments, cooking oil, coffee, tea, shampoo, soap, toothpaste, paper towels. To contribute by check, make payable to First Congregational Church, memo line: People's Pantry.

Welcome! We are Open and Affirming, which means that we invite persons of every sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, racial and cultural identity, age, physical ability, economic circumstance, faith background and family structure to share fully in the ministry, leadership and fellowship of this congregation's life in Christ.

As followers of Christ and committed to Isaiah's charge to "maintain justice and do what is right," we acknowledge with gratitude and humility that we are learning, speaking, gathering, and worshiping on the ancestral homelands of the Mohican people, who are the indigenous peoples of this land. Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.

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