

Welcome to Niskayuna Reformed Church
February 20, 2022
Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
Rev. Rett Zabriskie

Preparation for Worship

Christ unmask the powers of our current culture that seep into our modes of thinking, our ways of believing, and our methods of behaving. Clearly, the American church has become porous and has let into its fellowship and theology the idols of isolation and the sin of ideological tribalism that break the One Christ into numerous little christs. So, the fellowship is no longer one, the gospel becomes a trademark, and the persuasiveness of the story of our union with Christ and with one another is run first through the filter of "where do you stand on sexuality?" instead of where do you stand on the issue of whether or not God can be mine and I could be God's both now and forever? Jason Elder

The Approach to God

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Welcome and announcements.

The Prelude: The Love of God

Lehman

Introit

Votum: Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Amen

The Call to Worship: *(Psalm 37)*

Leader: Better is a little that the righteous person has than the abundance of many wicked.

People: For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the LORD upholds the righteous.

Leader: I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.

People: They are ever giving liberally and lending, and their children become a blessing.

Leader: Depart from evil, and do good; so you shall abide forever.

The Junior Sermon

Gospel Lesson:

Luke 6:27-38

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon: "Identity Politics"

A Prayer for Blessing upon the Word

The Response of God's People

Offering

Offertory Lead Me Lord Wesley

*Hymn My Hope is Built on Nothing Less 368

The Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

The 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 our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

* Hymn Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah 339

*The Benediction

Benediction Response

The Postlude: I Will Extol Thee, O Lord Costa

*Please stand if you are able.

Announcements

Reverend Rett Zabriskie will now be acting as our interim minister. Rev. Zabriskie will be in the pastor's office Thursday mornings from 9-10:30. Otherwise, any time the American flag is flying outside the parsonage, you are welcome to stop over and come right in! You can reach him by calling his cell at 201.819.7629. To help Rev. Zabriskie learn our names, we ask that you wear your name tags on Sundays. If you need a name tag, please contact Ellen.

Consistent with the NYS decision to lift the mask mandate for businesses effective 2/10/22, NRC will no longer require masking during church services and fellowship opportunities. While wearing a mask is voluntary for all who are fully vaccinated, it is recommended that you continue masking if you are not fully vaccinated. We will continue to monitor NYS data and recommendations made by the CDC and NYS DOH to prevent further COVID outbreaks. We encourage congregants to manage their health responsibly and to consider the health of their fellow members and community by using your best judgment to stay home if you are feeling ill. We thank you for your patience and continuing care for each other.

The **Guardian House** on Route 50 in Ballston Spa is a place where military veteran women find rescue from homelessness. The home houses up to 11 women veterans at a time. They come from various military backgrounds, and the stories that forced them into homelessness range from sexual assault trauma, to substance abuse to deep depression. The center helps them with all kinds of services, whether to bring them to the Veterans Affairs hospital for medical care, find an apartment, apply for a job or complete higher education. The goal is to eventually help these women rely on their own strengths. (<https://www.vchcny.org/veterans-housing-programs/transitional-housing-programs>) The NRC Women's Fellowship Group has learned that the home is currently in need of **pillows, pillowcases, paper towels and laundry-related items such as dryer sheets, fabric softeners, laundry tablets, stain removers** and such. We will be collecting these items through **February 27**. If you would like to help, you may place your donations in the marked plastic bin on the lower level of the Education Building. We thank you in advance for your generosity and compassion.

The YWCA of NorthEastern New York's (Schenectady) domestic violence program offers safe shelter and other related services to victims of domestic violence. NRC's **Women's Fellowship Group** is once again sewing pillowcases and providing pillows to the shelter for these women. If you would

like to help, we would welcome your contribution of standard-sized pillowcases (self-made or purchased in a finished size of 20x26") and/or new standard-sized pillows. You will find a drop-off bin in the foyer on the lower level of the Education Building. End date for collection will be **Sunday, February 27**, after which the items will be delivered to the YWCA on Washington Ave. in Schenectady. For more information about the program, please visit the WYCA website at: <https://www.ywca-neny.org/dv/>

The February Mission will benefit the Schenectady City Mission. The City Mission exists to meet the needs of the hungry and homeless in our community. The Mission's ongoing goal is to provide "not only HELP for today, HOPE for tomorrow. In 2021, the City Mission provided 27,223 nights of shelter, 159,343 meals, 1,200 weekend backpack meals, job training through the Schenectady Works Programs, free medical clinics and well as community picnics. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Many of our guests of the Schenectady Food Pantry have requested personal care items such as toothpaste and deodorant for all genders. These items can be expensive and are often the most requested by our food pantry guests when they visit. We try to care for each family the best we can when it comes to these requested items. If you can help, please put any donations in the blue buckets by door in Fellowship Hall. Thank you for your continued support of the pantry. Parents with infants and small children are reminded of the room behind the balcony with an audio system to hear the worship service if needed.

Scripture

Genesis 45:3-15

Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here,

but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰ You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.' ¹² And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

1 Corinthians 15:35-58

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" ³⁶ Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. ³⁹ Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. ⁴⁰ There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. ⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

⁴² So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is^[a] from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will^[b] also bear the image of the man of heaven.

⁵⁰ What I am saying, brothers and sisters,^[c] is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die,^[d] but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will

sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵ “Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?”

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved,^[a] be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Luke 6:27-38

“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return.^[a] Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

³⁷ “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”