

Worship Service

Prelude:

Centering/Meditation Question:

How is God working within you? Is God calling to do something?

Welcome:

Announcements:

Passing of the peace:

Call to worship: Sunday School

"Liturgist: Come! Hear the call of God.

All: But we are just ordinary folks.

Who will listen?

Liturgist: "I will give you the words.

I will always be with you as you speak
my words of truth and justice and love."¹

All: We gather here to worship you,

to praise you for your loving presence,

and to be strengthened for the calling

you have given us."²

Hymn:

Invocation: Youth Group

O God, in the midst of the bitterness of voices that crush our spirit and
deny our calling. We come to hear your voice of affirmation; we come to

¹ Bases on Jeremiah 1:4-10

² *Worship Elements: January 31, 2016*. December 20, 2015.

www.ministrymatters.com/all.entry/3545/worship-elements-january-31-2016 (accessed January 16, 2017). adapted from the call to worship.

hear your voice calling us to be and do what you have called us to be and do. Let this time of worship energize us for ministry here in this sanctuary, here in our community, here in our world, but most of all, here in us. Amen.³

Children's Anthem: "This little Light of Mine" Children's Choir

Offering: Vern

***Doxology:**

***Prayer of Dedication:**

Pastoral Prayer: Vern

Prayers of Joys and Concerns of the People:

Lord's Prayer: All children and youth will lead

Response:

Scripture Reading: Youth Group/Caroline Griffin?

Jeremiah 1:4-8

⁴Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

⁵"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

⁶Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy."

⁷But the LORD said to me,

"Do not say, 'I am only a boy';
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.

³Joanne Carlson Brown. *Worship Elements: January 31, 2016*. December 20, 2015.
www.ministrymatters.com/all.entry/3545/worship-elements-january-31-2016 (accessed January 16, 2017). Adapted from the opening prayer.

^sDo not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you,
says the LORD.”⁴

Recognition of Seniors: Amie

Mr. Harrison (Harry) Lancaster

Recognition of Volunteers and staff:

Sunday School Assistant: Tina Middleton

Children’s Choir: Cathy Giannetti

Nursery: Kelly Guilbuert , Katie Simons, Dawn McCarthy, Pam Middleton,
Joyce Guild, Kat Wright, Jean Fisk, Jessica Miller, John Miller, Dianne Ordog,
Marcia Weinder, Fred Saunders, Elaine Killough, Natelie Mcdonald,

Pre-K: Diane Osborne, Sandy Saunders, Sue Janson,

1st and 2nd Grade: Jessie Macomber, Jen Turcotte

3rd and 4th Grade: Maria Smith, Joe Ordog

Youth Group: Amanda Iocco and John Brodeur

Reflections:

Amie:

This morning we gather in worship to be present to God’s calling in our lives. Each one of us has been graced with God’s unique calling stirring within us. Each one of us has the deep down yearning in the pit of our soul that drives us to be present to those around us, to the needs of the community and to the world around us. For many of us discerning our call in God’s new era is a bumpy road that is fraught with potholes. To borrow an analogy from The Rev. Dr. Teddy Hickman-Maynard finding our

⁴ Jer. 1:4-8

vocational call in God's New Era is a lot like shopping for new clothes. We all think we know what looks good on us, so we look only for the same thing. But there is that one day you step out of your comfort zone, and try on that outfit that you have walked by a million times, and thought "that will never look good on me," but lo and behold you find it looks amazing on you. The longer you wear it, the more you find it really is you.

For some of us finding our vocational call in God's New Era is much the same. Many of us think we know exactly what we should be doing but it isn't until we step out of our comfort zones that we find our true call. Today as we celebrate all of our volunteers who have chosen to answer their unique vocational call, we also honor a member of our congregation that at the age of 19 stepped out of her comfort zone and began her vocational call of teaching the good news of God's promise and the teaching of our savior Jesus Christ.

Today as we seek to understand our own call we recognize and affirm the gifts and graces Jessie Macomber has brought to the generations of Second Church. For almost 60 years Jessie has nourished our church with patience and love whether teaching Sunday School or cooking for the church fair or the May-day breakfast. Jessie's warmth and kindness has touched all of our lives.

At a young age Jessie stepped out of her comfort zone and into the ministries of teaching and hospitality. It's easy to see the immediate impact Jessie has each week when our first and second graders enter fellowship hall anxious to share what they've learned in Sunday School. But when we look a little further and listen a little harder we see the impact of Jessie's

ministry reaching beyond the youngest among us, and our own four walls. In my own family Jessie has influenced the faith formation of three generations. At holiday fair time you can hear the murmurs out in the community excited to once again get a taste of the famous cinnamon rolls that has made the Second Church fair the place to be first thing in the morning on fair day. And you can always find Jessie checking in with each family at the food 'n friends family café ensure each family member enjoyed their meal, and ready to prepare a PB & J for the pickiest food connoisseurs in room.

When Jessie tried on that out of the box outfit so many years she found herself in the most comfortable, rewarding place she could be, she found her true self, she found God's unique calling in herself. Today we affirm and celebrate Jessie for her years of dedication and ministries in our Church.

At this time I invite Julie Cotsalas, Rev. Dr. Ruth Shaver, and Kat Wright to come forward and share a few words about how they have been blessed to walk with Jessie in various ways throughout her years at Second Church.

Julie Cotsalas: former Christian Education Director

“When Phil and I joined the church in 1984, Jessie was one of the first people we met. She was very active in many areas of the church and busy raising a family of her own. Her gifts and talents to the church are many and varied. Beginning with the May Day breakfast, Jessie is a great planner. Her cinnamon rolls are known throughout the church and our community. I was usually a server or table clearer and always saw those

folks who were waiting for their dozen to take home, after eating their fair share at the breakfast! There was always a table or two of her K-Mart friends!!!

Our church fair and its kitchen activity were also in Jessie's domain. She had her team of helpers, each with their own jobs and recipes in front of them. For many a year, Jessie took a week's vacation from her job at K-Mart to get ready for the day of the fair. Everything was freshly made with recipes saved throughout the years. Yes, Jessie would add a new addition over time, and her daughter, Jennifer, also brought some new ideas – nachos being one of them! On the days leading up to the fair, the aromas from the kitchen would entice any and all who were setting up their tables. On fair days, the addition of Sharmon's chocolate chip cookies would add the final touch.

But I truly believe that Jessie's greatest passion were her first graders in church school. That was her niche. She and I were members of the Christian Education committee, which I was asked to join shortly after joining the church. There was some frustration because we had had a long line of associate ministers whose calling was Christian Education. These wonderful ministers were here at Second Church shorter periods of time and we were losing consistency with our youth and church school programs. As a church, we decided to search for a Director of Christian Education, something rather new in that time. She was instrumental in creating a job description along with my husband, Phil. We worked with the conference to craft a position that would support our youth and children's programs. We felt that this would give us more continuity and

keep our young people a program that we could rely on year after year. I eventually became that person. It was the right time in my life. It was my calling.....Jessie encouraged and supported me as no other person could have. You see, it was a calling in her life as well.

Dedication has always been to our children. Jessie equals dedication. This has happened over decades of time. How many of us have a string easter egg up in our attics that we bring out every Lenten season? How many have parts of a manger that we unfold from tissue paper every Advent AND how many have Angels with hair askew? These are the children (and now the adults) who began their faith journeys here at Second Congregational Church. Did you have Jessie as a church school teacher. STAND UP.

Now I am dating myself.....When Saturday Night Live cast member Dana Carvey introduced “The Church Lady”, my family and friends said, “ That’s you.”

It’s not.....It is Jessie Macomber. She is The Church Lady.”⁵

Rev. Dr. Ruth Shaver: Former Minister of Christian Education and Family Life

“Jessie Macomber is a jewel without price. The generations of people whose lives have been shaped by her care—whether as a Sunday School teacher, a kitchen manager, or the baker of the best cinnamon rolls this side of my great-grandmother’s top secret recipe—continue to be leaders in this church, in the community, and in the churches and communities

⁵ Cotsalas, Julie. "Jessie." Attleboro, January 22, 2016.

where they find themselves if they've moved away. There is a generation of now older youth and young adults in western Pennsylvania whose lives have been shaped by Jessie Macomber and they haven't even met her...but because Jessie played a part in shaping my ministry, those kids won't be the only ones shaped at a remove from her physical presence. Jessie's ministry of teaching gave me courage to try many crafts with young children that I thought they couldn't accomplish until I saw the results of the Christmas angels and the Easter eggs every other year. There was even a time that I seriously contemplated asking Jessie to come to Pennsylvania to show me what I was doing wrong with the Easter egg project, and then I realized that perhaps summer Vacation Bible School in a hot, damp basement was not the ideal venue for working with yarn and glue in hopes of popping the balloon skeleton to reveal the beautiful eggs when the glue was dry. There's a reason Jessie does that in the early spring when the heat is still on!

One of the ways that Jessie shaped my ministry was in her ability to recognize the individuality and particular gifts of each child in her class from year to year. Many sibling pairs, when I asked them to identify their most influential mentors in the faith, named Jessie because she was often the only adult who never confused one sibling with another. I work hard to be able to do that, and though I'm still not perfect at keeping siblings or even cousins completely separate in my head, I'm much better at it now because of Jessie's modeling.

Jessie answered God's call to make her many gifts and skills available for God's purposes, whatever those purposes may be and whenever her talents have been needed. One of those purposes was to teach a new young minister how to better care for people as individuals in the community of faith. I am grateful to have been able to learn from Jessie while I was on staff here and more grateful that she is still here to continue to teach me as I worship with the congregation during this transitional time in my ministerial career. May we all be so faithful and obedient as God calls us to make our whole selves available for God's purposes."⁶

Affirmation of Ministry: ⁷

Introduction:

Sunday School/Evan Tetrault:

Affirmation of ministry is the act whereby a local church of the United Church of Christ recognizes the diverse gifts of its members and celebrates the particular ministry of each person in the life of the church or in various settings in the life of the world.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them.

People:

There are different ways of serving, but the same God is served.

Sunday School/Layla Brodeur:

⁶ Shaver, The Rev. Dr. Ruth. "About Jessie." January 17, 2017.

⁷ *Book of Worship: United Church of Christ*, (Cleveland: United Church of Christ, Local Church Ministries), 1986.49-50.

There are different abilities to perform services, but the same God gives ability to each of us for a particular service.

People:

The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.

Sunday School/Emma Meleo:

Christ is like a single body, which has many parts.

People:

It is still one body even though it is made up of different parts.

Sunday School/Calvin Turcotte?:

If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; If one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.

People:

All of us are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it.

Presentation: ⁸

Amie:

[Jessie Macomber you have] been called by God, in accordance with the faith and order of [Second Congregational Church], To serve among us. [Jessie] has accepted her call And is before us in witness to her willingness to continue to serve.

Laying of Hands:

Pastor:

The laying of hands is the symbolic act whereby the church is every

⁸ *Book of Worship*.434.

age recognizes God's call to ministry in the lives of faithful women and men as asks the Holy Spirit to confer upon them the gifts of ministry.

We lay hands upon you, Jessie Macomber, [for your years of service as teacher and lay leader of our congregation].

Jessie will be asked to sit in a chair. All of the children will be asked to come forward and place a hand on Jessie, followed by any congregants that are able to come forward. Once all hands are placed on Jessie. We will begin the prayer:

People: All the children and youth will lead

Blessed be the works of these hands,

O Holy One.

Blessed be these hands that have touched [our lives].

Blessed be these hands that have nurtured creativity.

Blessed be these hands that have [wiped away tears].

Blessed be these hands that have embraced with passion.

Blessed be these hands that have [planted and tended the seeds of faith].

Blessed be these hands that have [seen moments of frustration].

Blessed be these hands that have [prepared meals for so many].

Blessed be these hands that have become knotty with age.

Blessed be these hands that have reached out and been received.

Blessed be these hands that have [inspired the future].

Blessed be the works of your hands,

Oh Holy One.⁹

Pastor:

May the Holy Spirit strengthen you for your ministry as it continues to take shape in Christ's church and equip you with every thing good to do God's will. Receive authority to continue your ministry as teacher and lay leader in the name of Christ.

People: Amen

Presentation of Gifts: 1 Youth Group member and 1 Sunday school Child

Handmade Stole:

Handmade by Ruth-Alice Ottmar

Signed with a message from every member of the congregation from the youngest among us to the youngest of heart.

Prayer Shall

Handmade by...and the members of the prayer shall ministry

Prayer:

Leader: Youth Group

"Let us pray.

Eternal God,

You have called [Jessie Macomber]

to serve you in the household of faith and in the world,
which you have entrusted to our care and keeping.

Send your Holy Spirit on [Jessie]

That [she] may [continue to] serve among us

⁹ Prayer adapted from Prayer of Blessing the Work of Our Hands. Neu, Diann. *Imaging the World: An Arts and Lectionary Resource: Prayer of Blessing the Work of Our Hands*. Vol. 1. 1994.

With honor and faithfulness.

Help [Jessie] to [continue] to be diligent in her duties

That your church may prosper

In the mission you place before it.

May [her] example prove worthy

For all to us to follow,

As we are united in Christ's ministry,

To the glory of your name."¹⁰

People:

Amen

Hymn:

Benediction: Youth Group (written by Amie K. McCarthy)

Go in peace today knowing that each of us is called by God to do great and wonderful things in this world, in God we find strength to live out our call to be all we have been create to be. May God's affirming voice be strong in presence as you go forth to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in community and in our world. And all God's people said, Amen.

Response:

¹⁰ Prayer adapted from Prayer of Blessing the Work of Our Hands. Neu, Diann. *Imaging the World: An Arts and Lectionary Resource: Prayer of Blessing the Work of Our Hands*. Vol. 1. 1994.