



**A Service to Celebrate the Life of
William Brice Adams**

December 29, 1940 - February 19, 2020

First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, UCC
An Open and Affirming Congregation

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I am the resurrection and the life.

*Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,
and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.*

John 11:25-6

Prelude

You Were Always On My Mind

Willie Nelson

Opening Words of Promise and Welcome

*No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome in this place.*

Call to Worship..... **Psalm 139**

Leader: Where can we go to get away from God's spirit?
Where can we flee from the divine presence?

**People: If I ascend to heaven, you are there.
If I make my life hell, you are there.**

Leader: If I take the wings of the morning
and settle in the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead and hold me fast.

**People: If I allow darkness to cover me
and the light around me becomes as night,
even then your light transforms the darkness to light
and the night is as bright as day.**

Leader: For you know me and love me,
and when I come to the end, I am still with you.

***Opening Hymn**

Amazing Grace

**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.**

**Through many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.**

**When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise, than when we'd first begun.**

Greeting

A Time of Prayer and Unison Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 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.

Scripture Readings

Old Testament 23rd Psalm

New Testament

Epistle I Corinthians 13:1-8a

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

Gospel Luke 15:11-32

Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill

it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

Sermon

The Most Important Thing

Rev. Mark Mendes

A Time of Sharing

Jennifer Adams.....Sharing from a Daughter in law

Alexander Giummo.....A Grandson Remembers

Other Memories, Stories and Sentiments

Anthem by Gary Moreau

I Was There to Hear Your Borneing Cry

Affirmation of Faith [Romans 8]

We believe there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, and we know that in everything God works for good with those who love God, who are called according to God’s purpose. We are sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heights, nor depths, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Commendation

Pastoral Benediction

Postlude

** After the service, everyone is invited back to First Congregational Church for a time of fellowship and a chance to support Bill’s family.*