

First Congregational United Church of Christ
May 29, 2022



Photo by Olga Subach

7th Sunday of Easter

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Chandler Litterest

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Ann Russ

Liturgist: 1) Kathyann Travis

2) Nancy Starr

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (Based upon 4:3-9)

People who know something: Listen! A Sower went out to sow. And as they sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up.

People who know themselves: Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth. And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.

People who know nothing: Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.

People who know love: Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold. Let anyone with ears to hear, listen!

Words of Lament

Compassionate God, more children have died this week, more minorities have been terrorized this month, genocide is being carried out across the ocean, violence acted out with the gun continues to rip through our society and world. Tear down this idol of security and power in our nation and all nations. Our thoughts are confounded. We are running out of prayers. We have shed too many tears. Rise up, O God of Justice, create in our hearts and our world the real kingdom. The one where the lion lays down with the lamb, the one where there is war no more, no more tears or sorrow. Move in our lives that we may move in our nation to prevent the next mass shooting. Move all nations and their leaders to break this cycle of violence. Move, Mighty God, move us now. Amen.

Words of Blessing (Based on Psalm 97)

One: The LORD is the leader! Let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!

Many: The heavens proclaim the LORD's righteousness; and all peoples behold glory.

All: All worshipers of images are put to shame, those who make they boast in worthless idols.

One: For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth, you are exalted far above all gods.

Many: The LORD loves those who hate evil; God guards the lives of the faithful.

All: Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, and give thanks to God's holy name!

Words of Poetry & Lighting the Candle of Peace

It is a custom in our congregation to light our Peace Candle during worship, as a witness to the Prince of Peace and our communal intention to be peace-makers as a Just Peace Church.

By Rosario Murillo

*I'm going to plant a heart in the earth
Water it with love from a vein
I'm going to praise it with the push of muscle
And care for it in the sound of all dimensions.
I'm going to leave a heart in the earth
So it may grow and flower
A heart that throbs with longing
That adores everything green
That will be strength and nourishment for birds
That will be the sap of plants and mountains.*

Passing of the Peace

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture Acts 16:16-34 (NRSV)

¹⁶ One day as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a female slave who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you^[a] the way of salvation." ¹⁸ She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

¹⁹ But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. ²⁰ When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men, these Jews, are disturbing our city ²¹ and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us, being Romans, to adopt or observe." ²² The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. ²³ After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. ²⁴ Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was an earthquake so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. ²⁷ When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But

²Paul shouted in a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” ²⁹ The jailer^[b] called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ Then he brought them outside and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ They answered, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” ³² They spoke the word of the Lord^[c] to him and to all who were in his house. ³³ At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. ³⁴ He brought them up into the house and set food before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

2nd Scripture John 17:20-26 (Common English Bible)

²⁰ “I’m not praying only for them but also for those who believe in me because of their word. ²¹ I pray they will be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. I pray that they also will be in us, so that the world will believe that you sent me. ²² I’ve given them the glory that you gave me so that they can be one just as we are one. ²³ I’m in them and you are in me so that they will be made perfectly one. Then the world will know that you sent me and that you have loved them just as you loved me.

²⁴ “Father, I want those you gave me to be with me where I am. Then they can see my glory, which you gave me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

²⁵ “Righteous Father, even the world didn’t know you, but I’ve known you, and these believers know that you sent me. ²⁶ I’ve made your name known to them and will continue to make it known so that your love for me will be in them, and I myself will be in them.”

Children’s Message “That they may all be one...”

Message Pester the Pastor

Musical Reflections

Joys and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, Mother God, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. The 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

Our Time of Giving

Doxology

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Sending Music

Benediction