

First Congregational United Church of Christ

June 18, 2023



Photo by Jørgen Håland

Sunday after Pentecost

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Linda Noble

Peace Candle Lighter: Nancy Starr

Liturgist: Bruce Tyler

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (Based on Psalm 116)

***People who:* I love the LORD, because my voice and supplications were heard. Because God incline their ear to me, therefore I will call upon God as long as I live.**

***People who:* What shall I return to the LORD for all the generosity toward me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.**

***People who:* I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all people. Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of God's faithful ones.**

***People who:* O LORD, I am your servant, you have loosed my bonds. I will offer you thanksgiving and call on your Holy name. Praise the LORD!**

Opening Hymn – Sharing our Testimony

Chorus: Sharing what God has done for you. Telling what Jesus done for me. Believing The Spirit is at work. Giving our testimony.

1. Long time ago God Spoke throughout the land. Leading the people took them by the hand. Today in our world God is speaking once again.
2. God is present in our hearts and our lives, So others may know and see with their eyes. To tell the love of God and Jesus his son.
3. Tell me your story and I'll tell you mine. How God changed our world turned the darkness to light. Jesus comes in our moment of need. As a friend or a mother or a stranger indeed.
4. Joy is ours in the stories we share. We learn of God's actions believe in God's care. In Jesus our Christ God's loves flows. In the church and through the Spirit we grow.

Words and Music, Rev. Enno K. Limvere.

Words of Lament

Merciful God, too many people cling to our security and comfort to risk being vulnerable and open to new ideas. We cling to the things that make us safe, rather than putting all in your hands. Too many people are left on the outside looking in because our country believes in haves and have-nots. Rise up, O Worker of Justice, and shake up our hearts, minds, and structures to make sure all are fed, all are welcomed, and all have a place to find community. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Time of Silence

Blessing of the Earth

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 peacemakers as a Just Peace Church.

This is Baaad by Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Predators are waiting for you,
Prosecutors are there too,
Persecutors are all the rage,
In this instant media age.

Response is all about fight or flight,
Things in the dark, out in daylight,
You can't defend yourself, but you try,
Your words twisted, made into lies.

Love does not matter, fam'ly neither,
Compassion is weak, says the deceiver,
Be innocent, as little doves,
The wolves are circling, vultures above.

Our goal is not to beat them at their game,
Our goal isn't to make sure they feel shame,
Our goal is to heal and share the good news,
Bring peace, and wipe off our shoes.

Passing of the Peace

Hymn #293 Sweet, Sweet Spirit

1. There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord; there are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord.
2. There are blessings you cannot receive till you know that Spirit's fullness and believe; you're the one to profit when you say, "I am going to stay with Jesus all the way."

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Scripture Reading Matthew 9:35-10:23 (Common English Bible)

³⁵ Jesus traveled among all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, announcing the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were troubled and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The size of the harvest is bigger than you can imagine, but there are few workers. ³⁸ Therefore, plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers for his harvest."

¹⁰ He called his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits to throw them out and to heal every disease and every sickness. ² Here are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, who is called Peter; and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee; and John his brother; ³ Philip; and Bartholomew; Thomas; and Matthew the tax

collector; James the son of Alphaeus; and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Cananaean; and Judas, who betrayed Jesus.

⁵ Jesus sent these twelve out and commanded them, “Don’t go among the Gentiles or into a Samaritan city. ⁶ Go instead to the lost sheep, the people of Israel. ⁷ As you go, make this announcement: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with skin diseases, and throw out demons. You received without having to pay. Therefore, give without demanding payment. ⁹ Workers deserve to be fed, so don’t gather gold or silver or copper coins for your money belts to take on your trips. ¹⁰ Don’t take a backpack for the road or two shirts or sandals or a walking stick. ¹¹ Whatever city or village you go into, find somebody in it who is worthy and stay there until you go on your way. ¹² When you go into a house, say, ‘Peace!’ ¹³ If the house is worthy, give it your blessing of peace. But if the house isn’t worthy, take back your blessing. ¹⁴ If anyone refuses to welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet as you leave that house or city. ¹⁵ I assure you that it will be more bearable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on Judgment Day than it will be for that city.

¹⁶ “Look, I’m sending you as sheep among wolves. Therefore, be wise as snakes and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Watch out for people—because they will hand you over to councils and they will beat you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ They will haul you in front of governors and even kings because of me so that you may give your testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ Whenever they hand you over, don’t worry about how to speak or what you will say, because what you can say will be given to you at that moment. ²⁰ You aren’t doing the talking, but the Spirit of my Father is doing the talking through you. ²¹ Brothers and sisters will hand each other over to be executed.

A father will turn his child in. Children will defy their parents and have them executed. ²² Everyone will hate you on account of my name. But whoever stands firm until the end will be saved. ²³ Whenever they harass you in one city, escape to the next, because I assure that you will not go through all the cities of Israel before the Human One comes.

Children’s Message What do we do?

Choir Anthem

Message Sent out like sheep.

Musical Reflections

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

Our Father, Mother God, 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 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

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Our Time of Giving

Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit, making us one;
Justice and peace under the sun. Amen*

Closing Hymn #50 I Sing the Praise of Love Almighty

1. I sing the praise of Love almighty, which shines revealed in Jesus' face. I offer up all that delights me, all mean desires, each fond embrace, Turn from myself, in pure devotion, and eager plunge in love's vast ocean.
2. How loving kind you are, how gentle, how your heart reaches after mine! My heart responds in elemental sympathy, beating perfect time. This mutual love, this strong attraction, I know no other satisfaction.
3. Secure my heart and all my being, in you, my Savior, crucified. You gave your life to work my healing, bleeding for me, you groaned and died. Beloved Jesus, my salvation, you have, through love, restored creation.
4. May my heart bear the deep impression of love that Jesus shares with me, My life become a pure expression of all that Christian love can be: Each word, each act, a bright reflection of joy in Love's own resurrection.

Transl. Madeleine Forell Marshall, 1993.

Benediction

Sending Music

