

First Congregational United Church of Christ
July 9, 2023



Photo by Marcus Woodbridge

6th Sunday after Pentecost

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Linda Noble

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Ann Russ

Liturgist: Jenny Delfs

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (based on Psalm 145)

People who like water: Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, their greatness is unsearchable.

People who like soil: On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your faithful shall bless you.

People who like wind: The LORD upholds all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing.

People who like sun: The LORD is just in all their ways, and kind in all their doings. The LORD is near to all who call on them, to all who call on them in truth. The LORD watches over all who love them.

Opening Hymn #292 Breathe on Me, Breath of God

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
fill me with life anew
That I May love the way you love
and do what you would do
2. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
Until with you I will one will,
to do and to endure.
3. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
stir in me one desire:
That every earthly part of me
May glow with holy fire.
4. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
so shall I never die,
But live with you the perfect life
of your eternity.

Words, Edwin Hatch, 1886, Tune Trentham S.M. Robert Jackson, 1894.

Words of Lament

Almighty and merciful God, you have promised not to destroy the world and even put a reminder in the sky for yourself. We, as your children, have taken this dominance of the world to the extreme and are destroying it instead. God, the one who forges new covenants! Give us a sign that we should love and protect the world you created, the world on which we live, and all living things along with the planet on which we live and move and have our being. Amen

Time of Silence

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.

Rainbow Connection by Paul Williams and Kenneth Ascher

Why are there so many
Songs about rainbows
And what's on the other side?
Rainbows are visions
But only illusions
And rainbows have nothing to hide
So we've been told and some choose to believe it
I know they're wrong wait and see
Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection
The lovers, the dreamers and me
Who said that every wish
Would be heard and answered
When wished on the morning star?
Somebody thought of that
And someone believed it
Look what it's done so far
What's so amazing that keeps us stargazing
And what we do think we might see
Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection
The lovers, the dreamers, and me

Passing of the Peace

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture Jeremiah 31:31-37 (New Revised Standard Version)

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

³⁵ Thus says the LORD,
who gives the sun for light by day
and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night,
who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—
the LORD of hosts is his name:

³⁶ If this fixed order were ever to cease from my presence, says the LORD,
then also the offspring of Israel would cease to be a nation before me forever.

³⁷ Thus says the LORD:

If the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will reject all the offspring of Israel because of all they have done,
says the LORD.

2nd Scripture Genesis 9:1-17 (Common English Bible)

⁹ God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fertile, multiply, and fill the earth. ² All of the animals on the earth will fear you and dread you—all the birds in the skies, everything crawling on the ground, and all of the sea’s fish. They are in your power. ³ Everything that lives and moves will be your food. Just as I gave you the green grasses, I now give you everything. ⁴ However, you must not eat meat with its life, its blood, in it.

⁵ I will surely demand your blood for a human life, from every living thing I will demand it. From humans, from a man for his brother, I will demand something for a human life.

⁶ Whoever sheds human blood, by a human his blood will be shed; for in the divine image God made human beings.

⁷ As for you, be fertile and multiply. Populate the earth and multiply in it.” ⁸ God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ “I am now setting up my covenant with you, with your descendants, ¹⁰ and with every living being with you—with the birds, with the large animals, and with all the animals of the earth, leaving the ark with you. ¹¹ I will set up my covenant with you so that never again will all life be cut off by floodwaters. There will never again be a flood to destroy the earth.”

¹² God said, “This is the symbol of the covenant that I am drawing up between me and you and every living thing with you, on behalf of every future generation. ¹³ I have placed my bow in the clouds; it will be the symbol of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember the covenant between me and you and every living being among all the creatures. Floodwaters will never again destroy all creatures. ¹⁶ The bow will be in the clouds, and upon seeing it I will remember the enduring covenant between God and every living being of all the earth’s creatures.” ¹⁷ God said to Noah, “This is the symbol of the covenant that I have set up between me and all creatures on earth.”

Children’s Message Sign of the Covenant

Choir Anthem Oh Had I a Golden Thread

Message Rainbow and Hearts

Musical Reflections

Communion Hymn #347 Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

1. Let us talents and tongues employ,
reaching out with a shout of joy:

Bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

2. Christ is able to make us one,
at his table he set the tone,

teaching people to live to bless, I
love in word and in deed express.

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

3. Jesus calls us in, sends us out
Bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share:
God (Immanuel) everywhere!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Words Fred Kaan, 1975, Tune Linstead L.M. with refrain, Jamaican folk song Adapt. Doreen Potter, 1975
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Communion

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 #564 We Are Not Our Own (vs. 1-4)

1. We are not our own. Earth forms us,
human leaves on nature's growing vine,
Fruit of many generations,
seeds of life divine.
2. We are not alone. Earth names us:
past and present, peoples near and far,
family and friends and strangers
show us who we are.
3. Through a human life God finds us;
Dying, living, love is fully known,
and in bread and wine reminds us:
We are not our own.

4. Therefore let us make thanksgiving,
and with justice, willing and aware,
give to earth, and all things living,
liturgies of care.

Words Brian Wren, Tune YARNTON 8.9.8.5 Brian Wren, 1987, arr. Fred Graham, 1987
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Benediction

Sending Music

