

Sunday, June 9th Worship Service

Prelude

Call To Worship¹

One: From many lands, we gather as a people. With diverse homelands, backgrounds, and experiences shaping who we are today:

Many: Out of many, we are one.

One: Of different ages and abilities, we gather as a people. Wearing different clothing, filling different roles, speaking many languages, singing different songs:

Many: Out of many, we are one.

One: With diverse hopes and dreams, we gather as a people. Of different personality types and interests, with multiple ministries and callings:

Many: Out of many, we are one.

One: Each carrying within us many voices, we gather as a people, holding happiness alongside hurt, often in the same moment. Inside every one of us, a crowd of ideas, feelings, and questions:

Many: Out of many, we are one.

One: In Christ, we come together and find a deeper unity. People of God, come and worship, that out of many, all may be one!

Many: Come to worship our God!

Opening Hymn/Song (From your own hymnal)

Unison Prayer of Confession²

Many:

**God, we confess that sometimes we close windows
against the fresh air of new ideas,
against the noise of other people's worries
against the winds of change.**

**God, we confess that we often draw the curtains
against people who are different,
against world news or community concerns.**

¹ Rev. Audrey deCoursey is ordained in the Church of the Brethren. She has served in congregational and hospital ministry in Elgin, Illinois, and Portland, Oregon. She is currently the pastor of a new online church, the Living Stream Church of the Brethren.

² Maren C. Tirabassi on page 123 of Before the Amen (Pilgrim Press, 2007)

**Forgive us our insulation in our own homes,
our shuttered churches,
the security systems on our hearts.
Open up our lives. Amen.**

Assurance of Grace

One: Forgiveness is the threshold. First, we look out, then we are sent out...
Thanks be to God.

Continuing Testament

Rebirth³

Change comes
Sweeping
Like the winds of hurricanes
Flooding waters rising high
taking with them
doubt
fear

In the midst of change
my heart races
my pulse a staccato beat
my feet cemented
fear a reckoning
not to be forgotten
nothing to hold on to
I sink into the water
I am carried on the winds

I am lifted
carried on the highs
of harsh winds
tumbling into heights
unknown

³ Karen Georgia Thompson, 22 February 2017, Lakewood, OH

spiraling into newness
I am reborn.

I am new
there is a vision
for this time and space
I rest
renewed
I am in this present
I am in this newness
full of Spirit
I am free

Scripture Reading

John 17:21-23 (NRSVUE)⁴

21 that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **22** The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, **23** I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Sermon

Music: Anthem (If you have one)

Communion⁵

The Invitation to the Table

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He was always the guest. In the homes of Peter and Jairus, Martha, and Mary, Joanna and Susanna, he was always the guest. At the meal tables of the wealthy where he pled the case of the poor, he was always the guest. Upsetting polite company befriending isolated people, welcoming the stranger, he was always the guest.

But here, at this table, he is the host. Those who wish to serve him must first be served by him, those who want to follow him must first be fed by him, those who would wash his feet must first let him make them clean. For this is the table where God intends us to be nourished; this is the time when Christ can make us new. So come, you who hunger and thirst for a deeper faith, for a better life, for a fairer world. Jesus Christ, who has sat at our tables, now invites us to be guest at his.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

One: Eternal God—God of our ancestors, God of our Savior Jesus Christ, and our God— we witness to your mighty acts and saving love.

You called the worlds into being.

You breathed the breath of life into your creation.

You raised humankind from the dust and fashioned us in your own image.

You claimed us as beloved and have never been less than that in your sight.

One: Even in the times when we turned from you and chased after gods of our own making, you sought us out and called us back into right relationship with you.

No matter how far we wander, in holy love you enter into the chaos of the journey to bring us home.

We witness to your creative power and your steadfast devotion as we sing our thanks and praise:

(Sanctus if used)

Holy God, we are witnesses to your relentless grace. When the distance between us had grown too great, you entered fully into creation to redeem what you had made.

In Jesus of Nazareth you came to us—bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh—and shared our common lot.

Through his teachings and example, through his death and resurrection, you conquered sin and death and reconciled creation to yourself.

Redeeming God, we are witnesses of your Holy Spirit.

You have sent us into the world to voice give to your love and power as made known in Jesus Christ. You gift us with his Spirit's presence that empowers us to be the Church:

sharing the hope of your life-giving life,
meeting the challenges of our world with justice and courage,
serving others with the strength of your compassion,
witnessing to your word and work in our midst.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you, gracious God, now and always. Amen.

(Inspired the UCC's Statement of Faith...written by Rebecca Hoover)

The Words of Institution⁶

What we do here, we do in imitation of what Christ first did. To his followers in every age, Jesus gave an example and command rooted in the experience he shared with his disciples in an upstairs room in Jerusalem.

On the night on which he was betrayed, and as they were sitting at a meal, Jesus took a piece of bread and broke it. He gave it to the disciples saying, 'This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me.'

⁶ Ibid.

Later, after they had eaten, he took a cup and said, ‘This cup is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death. Drink this all of you, to remember me.’

So now we do as Jesus did.

We take this bread and this cup, the produce of the earth and fruit of human labor. In these Jesus has promised to be present; through these, Christ can make us whole.

The Prayer of Consecration⁷

One: We pray, Holy God, for the fullness of your Spirit to bless this moment where your people come together at this table graced with bread and cup. Transform these ordinary provisions into extraordinary gifts of your sustaining grace. Through sharing in this meal, we ask we may be drawn more deeply into relationship with you and may receive the vision to glimpse how we are to be your body today. All praise and glory in the highest heaven be yours, Almighty God, now and always. Amen.

Distribution of Communion -

The Prayer of Thanksgiving⁸

Many: Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior’s presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ’s body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

Closing Hymn: In Christ there is no East or West, NCH #394

Benediction

Lessons⁹

⁷ Hoover, Rebecca

⁸ UCC Book of Worship

⁹ Karen Georgia Thompson, 3 December 2020, 7:16, Olmsted Township, OH

we come into this world
ready

we come knowing
we come with purpose
we are
ready

knowing is of the self
knowledge of our power
awareness of the wisdom
traveling with us
instinct aligning our journey

purpose is present
the peace that we are
we are courageous
we are open
we are a part of the Universe

we encounter a world
unaccepting
our opinions grate
our certainty wavers
we lose purpose

we hide our gifts
the pain of living
like water flowing changing rock
wears us down
tearing us at the core

we are ready
our aches and pains
a sign of restlessness
calling us back

to brilliance

the weariness in our spirits
a reminder
purpose awaits
pulling at our center
willing us to remember

we came
into this world ready
we are enough
we are brilliant
we are ready

Postlude: