

First United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming
Just Peace Congregation
May 17, 2020, 10:30 a.m.

Prelude

Together

Susan Werner (2007)

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Candle

Gathering Music

This Is the Day

Ronald Krisman

This is the day that God has made; we will re-joice and be glad.

This is the day that God has made; al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

Call to Worship (reading responsively)

One: Dear friends in Christ, peace be with you!

Many: And the Spirit's joy refresh the world!

One: Come in and gather; be at home in God's house,

Many: Where everyone is welcome, and no one turned away!

One: Come in and be glad, for God is very near,

Many: Close as breath, beautiful as song!

One: Let every instrument be tuned for praise,

Many: And melodies well up from grateful hearts!

All: Together, we will praise our God!

Opening Hymn

Morning Has Broken

Bunessan

Morning has broken like the first morning,
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing!
Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the
Word.

Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
Like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness
Of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness where his feet pass.

**Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning
Born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation,
Praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day.**

Time With Children

**God's word is for all God's children; come gather, come gather.
You're never too old for stories; come listen, come listen.**

Baptism and Reception of New Members

Invitation and Introduction of New Members

New Members

Randy and Muriel Hachfeld
Erin Janssens
Susie and Todd Johnson
Elizabeth O'Sullivan
Katharine Powers
Caitlin and Steven Reuter
Stuart and Lisa Sexton

Sponsors

Lois and Ed Langerak
Gretchen and Jim Gillis
Pat and Scott Richardson
Gina Washburn
Richard Crouter
Laura and Brian Turek
Marie Gery

Affirmation of Baptismal Promises

Promises of the Congregation

One: Do you, members and friends of First UCC, promise your friendship and prayers to these companions on our journey of faith? And will you extend to them the heart and hand of Christian love, welcoming them and including them in our shared ministry and life?

Congregation: We do and we will, as disciples of Jesus Christ.

One: Let us join together in the covenant of our congregation:

All: We covenant together with God and with one another,

Trusting in God's continuing guidance,

To seek to understand and do God's will,

To explore the mystery of Christ,

And to witness to God's reconciling love.

Scripture

Romans 12: 9-21

Ed Langerak, reader

Amanda Eastvold and Jan Shoger, image gatherers

Sermon

Rev. Wendy Vander Hart

Hymn

An Echo of the Voice of God

see next page

AN ECHO OF THE VOICE OF GOD

Adam M. L. Tice

WADA TUNE
Sally Ann Morris

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff in 3/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It begins with a melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, B-flat4, and C5. A first ending bracket spans the first two measures, marked with an asterisk (*). The melody continues with a half note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. A second ending bracket spans the last two measures, marked 'Fine'. The lyrics are arranged in three systems, with three numbered vocal parts (1, 2, 3) indicated by vertical lines. The first system of lyrics is: '1. This cry, this groan, this psalm pour - ing; 2. This chant, this hum, this song ris - ing; 3. This hush, this rest, this prayer, soft and'. The second system is: 'out, pour - ing out, an ech - o; up, ris - ing up, an ech - o; still, soft and still, an ech - o'. The third system is: 'of the voice of God.; of the voice of God.; of the voice of God.'. The score ends with a double bar line and the marking 'D.C.' (Da Capo).

** "Swing" eighth notes except where indicated.*

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Sung Call to Prayer

Alleluia!

Alice Parker (1925-)

Pastoral Prayer

Sung Response

Alleluia!

Alice Parker

Prayer of Jesus

You are invited to unmute and speak the words most meaningful to you or follow with the version here:

Erin Janssens

Erin Janssens grew up in Morris, MN, and attended Gustavus Adolphus College in Saint Peter, MN, graduating in 1999 with a degree in Communication Studies. She currently works at Head Start as a Family Advocate. Her daughter, Megan, is a fourth-grader at Sibley Elementary. They moved to Northfield in August 2016 to be closer to Erin's parents, Jim and Gretchen Gillis (who retired to Northfield) and her sister, Lindsey Boser, and her family (who also live in Northfield). They have two dogs, Olivia and Quinn. Erin and Megan enjoy spending time with family and exploring Northfield's local treasures.

Sponsors: Gretchen and Jim Gillis

Susie and Todd Johnson

Todd and Susie were both born and raised in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. They met in kindergarten and have been married for almost 37 years. After practicing law for almost 30 years, Todd started his own virtual business as an independent college counselor, focused on helping students applying to medical school. Susie, with Todd's loving support, returned to college, in her mid-life, for an additional degree in nursing. After practicing as a bedside nurse for 10 years, Susie completed her master's in nursing and joined the St. Olaf Nursing faculty in 2017. Todd and Susie have two grown children: Kelley, who works with Todd and lives in Northeast Minneapolis, and Caitlin. In 2019 Todd and Susie moved to Northfield into a multigenerational house that they built with Caitlin, her husband Steven, and their children Ellis and Poppy. Todd and Susie are excited to join First UCC and look forward to making new friends in Northfield.

Sponsors: Pat and Scott Richardson

Elizabeth O'Sullivan

Elizabeth O'Sullivan raises chickens for meat and eggs about 12 miles west of town. She also works part-time at Laura Baker Services, teaches fitness classes, and attends United Theological Seminary in St. Paul. She eventually hopes to work as a part-time pastor for one of the smaller churches in the area. For almost all of her adult life, Elizabeth has been part of the Religious Society of Friends. Elizabeth lives with her husband, Ian, and they have three children, ages 8, 16 and 18. The family currently has three cats, four dogs and 2750 chickens. As spring moves into summer, the family will add more chickens and 6 hogs.

Sponsor: Gina Washburn

Katharine Powers

Katharine Powers returned to Northfield last year. She was following yet another call to a new chapter in life. A mutual friend invited her to one of the organ concerts at First UCC and everything felt connected.

She has deep roots in Christianity through the Anglican church, but for years has mainly followed an inner journey of private study and meditation. The welcome from First UCC offers a new opportunity to blend her daily spiritual practice into the community. She is professionally retired and yet a lifelong learner especially in cosmology. Her other interests are road biking, musical overtone chanting, and most recently the Pipe Organ!

Sponsor: Richard Crouter

Caitlin and Steven Reuter

Caitlin and Steven Reuter are thrilled to be joining First UCC. They were married in 2016 and are parents to their son Ellis (2) and daughter Poppy (5 months). Steven is employed by the State of Minnesota as an Organizational Health Consultant and Caitlin is an RN but currently is a stay-at-home mom to their kids. Prior to moving to Northfield, they lived in St. Paul and were members at a Presbyterian church in Edina. They are excited to be in their forever home just north of town and look forward to making many connections and memories raising their children in Northfield and being active members at First UCC.

Sponsors: Laura and Brian Turek

Stuart and Lisa Sexton

Stuart and Lisa moved to Northfield last summer from St. Paul when they found their dream home just blocks away from First UCC. Stuart and Lisa were already well acquainted with Northfield and First UCC, however, as Lisa attended St. Olaf College ('12) and Stuart and Lisa got married at First UCC in September 2017! Lisa grew up attending Mayflower United Church of Christ in Minneapolis, just blocks from her childhood home, while Stuart grew up in the country outside of Rochester, attending a Lutheran church with his family during part of his childhood. Lisa is a Clinical Social Worker at The Family Partnership in Minneapolis, and Stuart is a Product Steward at 3M. Lisa and Stuart share their home with an adorable and feisty black and white cat named Paxton. Stuart and Lisa are grateful to have found such a welcoming and loving church community at First UCC and are excited to become members!

Sponsor: Marie Gery

We are so glad you joined us for worship today!

Please remain in the meeting if you would like to briefly check in over Zoom Coffee Hour.

News to Note

Celebrating the Seversons

Members Lynne and John Severson will be moving at the end of this month. We are happy for them in their next adventure, and we are also sad to see them go. Many are eager for the opportunity to

celebrate their presence with us, and to honor their dedication to the church through the years. Please join us for a WFFF-style Zoom gathering at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 20.

We invite you to make your favorite WFFF meal at home as part of the celebration. Will it be tacos, chicken caesar salad, sloppy joes, meatball sandwiches, ham and potatoes, spaghetti pie or something else? No matter what, we will send the Seversons off with our First UCC love. See you there!

First UCC is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting:
Celebration of the Seversons at First UCC
May 20, 2020 05:30 PM Central Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94854797025?pwd=TIh2L1JKTmJ5dEpsVDBNZXhRc0oxUT09>

Meeting ID: 948 5479 7025

Password: 861848

Dial by location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 948 5479 7025

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ajoWRABo5>

Thank You from Pastor Wendy

I am grateful to have received the extravagant welcome we advertise on our website. There is truth in our advertising! For the warm welcome words via email, for the welcome basket at my building, for the greetings as we have encountered each other in grocery or outside, I am grateful. It is wonderful to have finally fully arrived, well, as much as one can arrive in this time. Bless you all for your hospitality!

Strengthen the Church Offering Received at Pentecost

As we celebrate the life of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, we celebrate the ways the Spirit is still moving to create and renew the church.

The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of all settings of the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. This offering embodies the wisdom, "together we grow stronger."

This offering provides the financial resources for the United Church of Christ to be a Spirit-inspired and world-changing Christian movement. STC funds ministry that allows us to benefit from best practices, insights, and innovations across the life of the UCC. Because of our support, new church starts have emerged, congregations have been revitalized, and leadership skills have been enhanced. We will receive the offering in our Pentecost worship on-line on Sunday, May 31.

Meet and Greets with Pastor Wendy

In an on-going effort to join the community of First UCC, Pastor Wendy will be hosting Meet and Greet gatherings on the Zoom platform. The gatherings will include up to four people in addition to Pastor Wendy and will center around two questions to generate conversation. The prompting questions are:

1. Tell us your story of finding First UCC.
2. What are your hopes for First UCC in this time of transition?

To sign up for a time you can go to SignUpGenius by clicking [here](#) and selecting a time that works best for you. Once you have signed up, you will receive an email with the Zoom meeting instructions.

If you cannot access the sign up on-line, please call the church office and leave a message with possible times that work for you. We will match you with a date and the information you need to join the meeting by phone.

Spotlight on Choirs

Senior Choir Spotlight

The ancient Greeks and Romans imagined that the planets sang in harmony together as they traveled in their circuits, even though we couldn't hear them from our lowly position on earth. I've been thinking of this "Music of the Spheres" lately, as all of us continue to be filled with music and eager to share it despite the distances between us and the challenges of being fully heard. Thanks to Zoom, the Senior Choir has been meeting twice a week as usual, and though the technology doesn't allow us all to sing in perfect rhythm with each other, each member of the choir can sing along with me as I sing and play the piano, and we always make time for the important work of simply being together, sharing news, and seeing each other's faces. Thanks to careful planning and social distancing, small groups of musicians have been able to record music at church during the week as well, and while we all look forward to the day when the full choir can provide music in person for the congregation, I'm grateful that we have developed ways to enrich the Sunday services with home-grown music, both live and recorded.

And folks, if you've ever wanted to be part of a musical group but were shy about letting your voice be heard, Zoom choir is just the thing for you; when we sing in rehearsal, everyone is muted (except for me), and no one else can hear you! So please do get in touch if you'd like to sing along or if you have other ideas about how to deepen the musical life of our congregation in these unusual times.

~ Chris Brunelle, Director of Music

Spirit Voices Spotlight

"Where two or three are gathered in my name; I am there, I am there.
And singing all together is the same; as a prayer, as a prayer."

Do you recognize these lyrics to a gathering song that we've sung many times together at First UCC? They point up the challenges churches around the world are experiencing right now, and particularly choirs in those churches. First UCC's Spirit Voices is one of those choirs.

Spirit Voices became a part of our church's life around twenty-five years ago. The choir introduced music from various cultures into our worship; global music, African American, bluegrass. One goal was to introduce music that was accessible to both choir and congregation; music of energy and depth, simple yet compelling, bringing both choir and congregation to a deeper worship experience. The partnership between choir and congregation has been a key component of a Spirit Voices Sunday.

And now? Now it's really hard for any choir to experience that partnership with their congregation, much less have it together in rehearsal. Eric Whitacre has become a master at creating a virtual choir. You can see his work on youtube. As for us, we don't have that technology. We can gather a few people to do some recording- with COVID safety precautions in place, of course. You heard one such recording on April 26, and will hear another one of these next Sundays. We look forward to the time when we can once again gather and sing together as a choir, and have the deep experience of singing in partnership with you, our congregation.

~ Bob Gregory-Bjorklund, Spirit Voices Choir Director

Register Now for the Online Conference Annual Meeting

A short, virtual meeting for voting delegates only will instead be held on June 13 from 10 am to noon via Zoom to attend to essential business of the Conference. Registration for this meeting is now open at this [link](#).

There is no fee for the meeting. If you are a clergy delegate or a lay delegate appointed by your congregation, please register for this Zoom meeting at your earliest convenience, but before Memorial Day as registration for this meeting will close on Monday, May 25, 2020. Once you register, you will receive email information about attending the meeting online.

ISAIAH's Community Resilience Campaign

ISAIAH is launching a campaign to reach hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans to work toward a caring economy, a healthy environment, and a democracy that honors every person's dignity. This vision of the future is only possible if we work together and invest in collective solutions. What can you do?

- Join a Community Resilience/Empower training to learn how to best connect with people in this physically distanced time. Sign up at: <https://isaiahmn.org/events/>
- Send out social media or letters to the editor recognizing that if we all share more fairly, there is enough for everyone. God's love is abundant, and we are called to respond abundantly to our neighbors. Ideas for messages can be found on Isaiah's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ISAIAHMN/>
- Next week is the last week of the legislative session and the MN Senate has not moved on many of our priorities. Please continue to call your senators about rental assistance and voting by mail.

If you would like to be part of local and regional meetings (and aren't already on the Isaiah email lists), please contact Carolyn c.fureslocum@gmail.com, Leota leotagoodney@hotmail.com, or Matt rohn@stolaf.edu.

Invitation to Prayers of Solidarity

During this time of pandemic, we invite you to take a moment of mindfulness or prayer each evening at 7:00 p.m. If it helps, set an alarm on your phone or device for this time each night. Pray for those who are living in isolation at home, or in assisted living, or in other care facilities. Together, at the same time each night, we will be praying in solidarity and hope. If you are isolated at home, or in an assisted living or care facility, we invite you to put a post-it note on your clock so you know that there are people all over the community specifically holding you in their hearts each night.

Giving to the Church

Due to Stay at Home orders and in an effort to slow the spread of Covid-19, we are worshipping online and connecting in small groups virtually. We still need your gifts! You may give electronically by visiting our website and clicking the "[Donate Online Now!](#)" button, under the Giving tab. You may also visit our website [electronic giving authorization form](#) and mailing it to Finance Manager Andrea Pegram at church. Gifts may be mailed First UCC, 300 Union Street. Thank you so much for your continued generosity and support of First UCC's ministries!

Care Ministry Team

A note from the UCC Care Ministry Team:the Care Ministry Team wants to know if you have any needs that can be met by us or members of our congregation. We serve as the extra eyes and ears of the church, so please speak with any member of our Care Team if you or someone you know is in need of extra support--anything from meals, child care, crisis help or weekly check-ins. We can connect you with congregational pastor. Barb Altstaetter 507-645-9786, Barbara Crouter, Amanda Pettis Eastvold, Linda Larson 612-709-6795, Elizabeth O'Sullivan, Bill Poehlmann 507-645-5422, Katharine Powers, Claire Rafferty, Kathy Sandberg, Jan Shoger 507-645-5236, Kellee Tussing, Gina Washburn, Claire Rafferty, Bonnie and Larry Fowler 507-645-6930.