

**First United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming
Just Peace Congregation
November 22, 2020, 10:30 a.m.**

Prelude *Prelude in C Major, BWV 545* J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Testimony and Welcome Mary Carlson

Announcements and Lighting of the Candle

Gathering Music *One Foot* Melanie DeMore (2017)
via YouTube

Call to Worship Ana Gobledale, adapted

One: Spirit of Community,

Many: Thank you for Church that brings strangers together.

One: Spirit of Truth,

Many: Thank you for messages that open our ears and minds.

One: Spirit of Trust,

Many: Thank you for familiar words of prayer that provide solid grounding for yet another day.

One: Spirit of Delight,

Many: Thank you for the questions of children.

One: Spirit of Power,

Many: Thank you for others with whom to work for justice and peace, so together we can make a difference in our world.

One: Spirit of Love,

Many: Thank you for this community we call Church that defies death and promises companions along this journey of life.

Opening Hymn *Come, Ye Thankful People, Come* St. George's Windsor

**Come, ye thankful people, come;
Raise the song of harvest home.
All is safely gathered in
Ere the winter storms begin.
God our maker doth provide
For our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come,
Raise the song of harvest home.**

**All the world is God's own field,
Fruit unto God's praise to yield,
Wheat and tares together sown,
Unto joy or sorrow grown.
First the blade and then the ear,
Then the full corn shall appear;
God of harvest, grant that we
Wholesome grain and pure may be.**

**Even so, Lord, quickly come
To thy final harvest home;
Gather all thy people in,
Free from sorrow, free from sin.
There forever purified
In thy presence to abide;
Come with all thy angels, come,
Raise the glorious harvest home.**

Time With Children

**Let the children come unto me, for theirs is the realm of God.
All who believe must become like a child; theirs is the realm of God.**

Scripture

Acts 16: 9 - 15

Don Barry

Sermon

Rev. Wendy Vander Hart

Hymn

When We Thank God
(see next page)

WHEN WE THANK GOD

Adam M. L. Tice

HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING
Robert Lowry, 1826–1899, alt.



1. When we thank God for love we share, a
2. When we thank God for farms and fields, for
3. Give thanks for God's a - bun - dant grace, poured



gift be - yond all meas - ure; for home and com - fort,
crops and crea - tures grow - ing, for gifts of soil that
out on ev - 'ry na - tion— re - li - gion, cul - ture,



food and care; for life, a ho - ly treas - ure;
la - bor yields, a har - vest o - ver - flow - ing;
class, and race; each, part of one cre - a - tion.



who feeds the ones who miss the feast? Who
do we re - store the earth God gives and
In grat - i - tude for count - less ways God



seeks the lost and bro - ken? Who hears the cries from
tend the lands that nour - ish, in har - mo - ny with
bless - es all things liv - ing, let ev - 'ry tongue re -



last and least, the prayers their hearts have spo - ken?
all that lives so heav - en's peace will flour - ish?
joyce and praise the source of our thanks - giv - ing.

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RECEPTION OF A NEW MEMBER

Invitation

Minister:

Today we celebrate again a new and renewed church community as we welcome a neighbor into the membership of our congregation. We will now spotlight Rich Graves who joins First United Church of Christ today.

Introduction of the Candidate

The Candidate, Rich Graves, and his sponsor, Beth Kallestad, are introduced by the Pastors.

Covenant of Membership

Minister: By your baptism, you were made one with us in the body of Christ the church. Today we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith, which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith that has been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your presence now in the life of First UCC.

Minister: Do you place your trust in the way of Jesus Christ?

Candidate: I do.

Minister: Do you promise to be Christ's disciple, to resist oppression, to show love and justice, to be Christ in the world as best you are able?

Candidate: I promise, with the help of God.

Minister: And do you promise to participate in the life, ministry, and mission of First UCC as we worship God, care for one another, study and learn together, and work for justice and peace?

Candidate: I do.

Minister: (*Addressing the congregation*) 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 siblings of Jesus our Christ.

Minister: Let us all join in the covenant of our congregation.

All: We covenant together with God and 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.

Minister: *Offers a prayer of thanks and blessing over the newly welcomed member. Congregation offers blessing hands.*

All: Amen.

Sung Call to Prayer

One: As your spirit moved upon the waters,

All: God, let your spirit move in us.

Pastoral Prayer

Response

One: As your spirit moved upon the waters,

All: God, let your spirit move in us.

Prayer of Jesus

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

Our 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Offertory

Air

Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

Prayer of Thanks

Gracious God, you have blessed us, with so many good things. May these gifts from us be used to open doors of welcome, for all people, so they, too, may experience the joy of abundance, and unity. Amen.

Hymn of Sending

For the Fruit of All Creation

Ar Hyd Y Nos

**For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For God's gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping,
Silent growth while we are sleeping,
Future needs in earth's safekeeping, thanks be to God.**

**In the just reward of labor, God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbor, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
For the hungry and despairing,
In the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.**

**For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
For the truths that still confound us,
Most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.**

Benediction

Postlude

Now Thank We All our God

Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)

We are so glad you joined us for worship today!
We will gather in Breakout Rooms for conversation and community following the Postlude.

News to Note

If you are new to First UCC, welcome!

Have you just begun joining us for online worship? Please consider filling out this [“virtual visitor card”](#) so that we might reach out and connect with you about this community. Questions? Please contact Pastor Wendy or Pastor Lauren.

ASL Interpretation is offered 2 and 4th Sundays

To access the ASL Interpreter, please pin the video of Mary Jo Cristofaro.

We Welcome Our New Member- Rich Graves

Rich, a divorced Eagle Scout, was baptized at the new strip mall St James Catholic Church in Del Mar, CA and confirmed in their then brand-new building in Solana Beach. In 1997 he instructed agents of the BfV (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution), the RCMP, CSIS, Toronto street cops, etc, on investigating online harassment by hate groups. His dog is named in part after a Harry friend (RIP) who, like the members of Monty Python, was inducted into the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II. On his mother's side of the family, he has noted Congregationalist womanizer Henry Ward Beecher, and on his father's, minor French royalty. He enjoys biking with or without his children, Aurelia (12, Middle School, in UCC and Northfield Youth Choirs for a few years) and Alistair (7, Prairie Creek School) and teaching them about cooking, hacking, history, defense against the black arts in information security, and morality.

Sponsor: Beth Kallestad

Neighbors In Need Offering

First UCC participates in five special offerings received by the national United Church of Christ. Neighbors in Need, one of the five, is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the [Council for American Indian Ministry](#) (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. You can learn more by watching [this video](#). Many of you may have already donated to Neighbors in Need as part of your Estimate of Giving commitment – thank you. For those who wish, you can send a check with “Neighbors in Need” in the memo line or click here [to donate](#). Today is the last day to make a gift.

“LOVE your neighbor” Signs

If you'd like a “LOVE your neighbor*” sign, there are about 20 signs available on the church steps. Come pick one up for your yard! While you're there, don't forget to write something you're grateful for on our “links of gratitude” paper chain!

Advent Drive-In Blessing Wednesday, Dec. 2, 5:00-6:00pm

In lieu of ZFFF this month, and as a way to build a monthly Touchstone Event on the church property, we will hold an Advent Drive-in Blessing on Wednesday, December 2, from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

We invite you to drive into the church parking lot, approaching it heading south on Union from 3rd to 4th streets. A U-shaped path will be created where at the bottom of the driveway you will receive an Advent Devotional booklet to guide you through the season. Continuing on the path, you will then receive a blessing for your Advent journey. Please wear a mask and remain in your cars, and the Pastors will be compassionately distanced.

Please register for this event so we can save trees in our copying. [You can go here to register](#). If you cannot make the event and would like a devotional booklet, please call the church office to request one, 507-645-7532.

Faith Formation Family Service Projects Nov. 22-29

Faith Formation service projects in this season can be done from your own home! We can still make a difference while we stay home to keep everyone safe. This week we have two service ideas: one centered on our November Thankfulness theme, and a bonus one to get ready for Advent!

1. **Thankfulness:** Collect unopened food, diapers, or feminine hygiene products and give them this week to the Community Action Center (CAC) Food Shelf out of gratefulness for everything you have, while also recognizing that not everyone has what they need.
2. **Advent:** Remember how many people put hearts or stuffed animals in their windows at the beginning of the pandemic? The season of Advent begins next week! (Advent is the 4 week season leading up to Christmas.) Each week of Advent has a different theme: hope, peace, joy, love (in that order). Get 4 pieces of paper, and put one Advent word on each paper in big, colorful letters. Each Sunday, hang an Advent word in a window in your home to inspire people walking or driving by. Start on November 29 by hanging HOPE in your window, then add to it in following weeks.

International Day of Solidarity Nov. 29

Northfielders for Justice in Palestine/Israel calls attention to the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on November 29, which this year happens to be on a Sunday. In 1977 The UN General Assembly called for this day to be observed annually. It marks the anniversary of resolution 181 in 1947, which advocated for the partition of Palestine into two states. This year the Kairos Palestine coalition is issuing a Cry for Hope, a call for decisive action that it believes relates to the integrity of our Christian faith. Here is a link that provides information and enables you to sign the Call for Hope and provides avenues for action: <https://www.cryforhope.org>. If you have questions about this, please contact Ed Langerak (langerak@stolaf.edu) or Fred Rogers (fred@gladespring20.us).

Spaces Available to Join Connect Groups

Please click [here](#) to register for upcoming Connect opportunities! Connect is a small group opportunity open to all in the First UCC community. Through personal reflection and sharing with one another in a warm, supportive setting, we will learn more about ourselves, our relationship with the Holy Spirit, and

each other. As well, we will explore and share the expectation, wonder, and joy of the Advent and Christmas season.

1) Searching for Sunday Book Study Group facilitated by Bill Poehlmann. This book, by Rachel Held Evans, tells the author's story of a search for a more authentic Christianity from her Southern, evangelical church onwards. This group meets via Zoom on Sunday mornings at 9:00am. There is room for three more participants.

2) Connect Group facilitated by Judy Bond and held on Zoom, Wednesdays at 5:00-6:00 p.m. from December 2 through January 6. There is room for six more participants.

3) Connect Group facilitated by Erin Barnett and held on Zoom, Wednesdays at 7:00-8:00 p.m. from December 2 through January 27 (no December 23). There is room for six more participants.

Caste Books Study Now Expands to Two Groups!

Sue Evans is looking for people interested in joining a seven session discussion of Isabel Wilkerson's new and extremely important book: Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents. Due to a great response to this study, there will now be two sections offered. Sue's group will meet 1st and 3rd Thursday afternoons from 3-5 PM beginning November 19. Hans Muessig has agreed to facilitate a second group meeting 2nd and 4th Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 PM beginning November 24th. Each group will be limited to 16 participants and the book can be found locally at Content Books. All participants should read Part 1 for the first session. Please email Sue (susancevans@charter.net) if you are interested in participating in **either** group. Space is limited, so act quickly to secure your spot.

Brave Conversations on White Privilege Discussion Group

This group, co-sponsored by Carleton College's Office of the Chaplain and First United Church of Christ, will use a curriculum designed to invite individuals to engage in safe, meaningful, substantive, and bold conversations on race. This group will meet on Zoom for six Thursdays, 5:30-7:00pm, beginning January 21. This group is intended for white people or those with a proximity to whiteness. Faculty, staff and students are welcome, along with First UCC members. Attendance at the first session is mandatory, and participants must commit to attending at least five out of six sessions. Please use this [link](#) to sign-up, and/or direct questions to: hcampbell@carleton.edu.

2020-21 Children's Faith Formation Monthly Schedule:

1st Sunday: faith formation bags for pick up, introducing the theme of the month

2nd Sunday: Holy Moly video on the month's theme, followed by kids' conversation, 9:00-9:15 a.m. (Zoom link will be provided.)

3rd Sunday: Music with Chris Brunelle, 9:00-9:15 a.m. (Zoom link will be provided.)

4th Sunday: a family service opportunity. Report back on the service opportunity via questions posted on the First UCC Facebook page! Make sure you "Like" the page [here](#).

5th Sunday (if applicable): a special, surprise guest will share their favorite story.

Drop-In Pastor Office Hours

Pastors Lauren and Wendy are available for drop-in office hours in the Assembly Room at the church. You may use the Office Entrance to enter the building and find the Pastors ready to chat. Dress warmly as we may choose to sit outside. Here is the schedule, if these times do not work please reach out to find an alternate time:

- Pastor Lauren – Wednesdays from 3 – 5 p.m.
- Pastor Wendy – Thursdays from 3 – 5 p.m.

Giving to the Church

In this time of pandemic, we are worshiping 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 and complete the [electronic giving authorization form](#) and mailing it to Finance Manager Andrea Pegram at church. Gifts may be mailed to First UCC, 300 Union Street, Northfield, MN 55057. 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: WE ARE HERE FOR YOU! Please know that 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, rides, deliveries of essential needs (groceries, meds, etc.), or weekly check-ins. We can connect you with congregational support. You can also continue to check in with the pastors. Our team is: Barb Altstaetter (507-645-9786); Barbara Crouter (507-645-6592); Linda Larson (612-709-6795); Elizabeth O'Sullivan (507-321-1221); Bill Poehlmann (507-645-5422); Katharine Powers (651-492-5488); Kathy Sandberg (507-210-2219); Jan Shoger (507-645-5236); Kellee Tussing (952-210-4028); Gina Washburn (507-210-8270); Bonnie and Larry Fowler (507-645-6930).