



"We witnessed his greatness with our own eyes."

2 Peter 1:16-21

7th Sunday After Epiphany

First United Church of Christ, Northfield

An Open and Affirming, Just Peace,
Immigrant Welcoming Congregation

February 19, 2023 – 10:30 a.m.

Welcome to worship! Are you visiting us today? We invite you to fill out our [virtual visitor card](#).

Prelude

In the Stillness of This Hour

Dan Damon (2013)

In the stillness of this hour, drawn again by grace,
God of mercy, God of love, here we seek your face.
We have wandered lost and lonely, living out our days,
But your spirit calls us back, bids us pray and praise.
In the stillness of this hour, move us through our pain.
God of healing, God of joy, touch our hearts again.
Show us how to love each other as we live our days.
Draw us always back to you, till our lives are praise.

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering Music

Where Two or Three are Gathered

Bruce Harding (2002)

Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there, I am there.

Call to Worship

Adapted from Steve Garnaas-Holmes

One: Jesus transfigured on a mountaintop is a moment of wonder;
wonder how Jesus shines. How life just shines.

**Many: The glory of God spills out of things,
leaks out of every container, even people.**

One: Being alive is beyond explanation,
grace is odd, love doesn't make sense

**Many: and God is inexplicable— a real, absolute, true mystery.
Not a puzzle: a mystery.**

One: Sometimes faith is just awe. The willingness to be bedazzled,
to look at life and go, "Wow."
Let this story be weird. Let life be amazing.

Many: Let God be more than we can grasp. Our faith needn't be much more

than grateful, gob-smacked wonder. Amen.

Opening Hymn *Every Time I Feel the Spirit* #282 (African-American spiritual)

Refrain: Every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray.
Yes, every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray.

Upon the mountain my God spoke, out of God's mouth came fire and smoke.

Looked all around me; looked so fine; I asked my God if all were mine.

Refrain.

Oh, Jordan river, chilly and cold, it chills the body not the soul.

There's only one train on this track; it runs to heaven, then right back.

Refrain.

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.

Statement of Commitment: Racial Justice Covenant

As members of the First United Church of Christ of Northfield, we covenant with God and each other to engage in the work of racial justice to unmask, dismantle and eradicate racism from our society. We make this commitment knowing we are fallible people in a fractured world. Our actions will include building an anti-racist community through confronting our own racism, owning our racist history, and repenting of our role in systemic racism; fostering existing and new relationships to work toward racial equity; committing resources to racial justice; and listening to, trusting, and valuing the experiences of the people most impacted by racism. Our commitment to this covenant rests on our belief that God envisions a world in which people are treated with equality and dignity.

Anthem

I Love My God Who Heard My Cry Richard Smallwood (1975)

I love my God who heard my cry and pitied every groan.
Long as I live, while troubles rise, I'll hasten to God's throne.

Scripture 2 Peter 1:16-21 Carol Rutz

Sermon Rev. Lauren Baske Davis

Prayer Hymn *Steal Away* #599 (African-American spiritual)

Refrain: Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus.
Steal away, steal away home, I ain't got long to stay here.

I hear God calling, God calls me by the thunder,
The trumpet sounds within-a my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here. *Refrain.*

Green trees are bending, poor sinner stands a-trembling,
The trumpet sounds within-a my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here. *Refrain.*

The Prayers *(All joining worship online are invited to share prayers with the congregation by using the chat function at any point during this time.)*

Prayer Response *We Do Not Know How to Pray* Erik Routley (1917-1982)

One: All:

We do not know how to pray as we ought,

but the spir-it of
God in - ter - cedes for us with sighs too deep for words.

Prayer of Jesus

You are invited to speak the words most meaningful to you, or follow with this version:

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.

Sharing Our Gifts

Offertory

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder African-American spiritual

(Choir sings)

We are climbing Jacob's ladder, bearers of the cross.
Every round goes higher, higher, bearers of the cross.
Rise, shine, give God glory, bearers of the cross.

(Congregation joins)

We are dancing Sarah's circle, sisters, brothers all.
Here we seek and find our story, sisters, brothers all.
Every round a generation, sisters, brothers all.
On and on the circle's moving, sisters, brothers all.

Prayer of Thanks

Sometimes the wonder of your presence leaves us speechless, Holy One.
When all we can say is “Wow,” let it be enough. Bless, take, and use the gifts
of our lives, our response to your awe-inspiring presence in the world. Amen.

Hymn of Sending

Glory, Glory Hallelujah #2 (African-American spiritual)
(verses 1-3, 6)

Verse 1: Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down.
Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down.

Verse 2: I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burdens down.
I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burdens down. *Refrain.*

Verse 3: Feel like shouting “Hallelujah!” since I laid my burdens down.
Feel like shouting “Hallelujah!” since I laid my burdens down. *Refrain.*

Verse 6: Every round goes higher and higher, since I laid my burdens down.
Every round goes higher and higher, since I laid my burdens down. *Refrain.*

Benediction

Postlude

Argentinian Song

Carlos Guastavino (1975)

We're so glad you worshiped here today!

Please join us for coffee and conversation in the Assembly Room after worship.

Thanks to this week's leaders:

Ushers: Scott Richardson, Muriel Hachfield, Mary Savina, Elise Eslinger, Joan
Higinbotham

Digital Greeter: Margit Johnson

Trumpet: Marty Hodel

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This Week at First UCC:

Sunday, February 19

9:15 a.m. Faith Formation (Big Room)

10:30 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary)

11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour (Assembly Room)

6:00 p.m. Evening Gathering Worship (Sanctuary)

Monday, February 20

12:00 p.m. Red Cross Blood Drive (Assembly Room)

Wednesday, February 22

5:30 p.m. WFFF (Assembly Room)

6:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Worship (Sanctuary)

7:00 p.m. Senior Choir (Sanctuary)

Sunday, February 26

9:15 a.m. Faith Formation (Big Room)

10:30 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary)

11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour (Assembly Room)

11:45 a.m. BLA Discussion

6:00 p.m. Evening Gathering Worship (Sanctuary)

Meals on Wheels (MoW) Volunteers Needed for Delivery March 6-18

Each route will take less than an hour to deliver. Instructions will be given to new drivers. If you are willing to volunteer for this important ministry please [sign up here](#) or email Annie Kramer at anniekramer@charter.net. Thank you!

Exploring the History of Our Church on Dakota Land - Discussion

Members and friends of the First UCC are invited to join with the Beyond the Land Acknowledgement Group in the Big Room on February 16th from 11:45-12:45 to explore the history of our church on Dakota Land. We ask that you read [this booklet](#) prepared by Dick Crouter as a stimulus toward discussion. Participants are urged to read and ponder the questions raised by this booklet prior to the discussion.

A Note on Musical Reparations

Music is a gift from God, one that we share freely and gratefully with each other. We are also enriched in our worship by the gift of music that others have created, and our church thanks and supports those composers by paying royalties (through the organization

OneLicense) for the copyrighted music that is included in our services. But some music has never led to financial support for those who created it, and First UCC began last year to join other predominantly white churches in addressing this problem, which is rooted in the racial history of our country.

African-American spirituals are a fundamental presence in our worship. But though we may not know the identities of the Black men and women who created this music, none of them were ever compensated for their creations, just as the enslaved individuals upon whose work our country was founded were not paid for their forced labor. As a form of musical reparations, then, our church pays for our use of African-American spirituals. Our payments are meant to ensure direct support for local Black musicians and are thus being sent to Sound of Blackness, the multiple Grammy-winning ensemble based in the Twin Cities. We will continue to support them with future payments for our use of spirituals in worship.

Musical reparations are only one step on the path towards racial justice, but it is a step I am glad our church is taking. Let's keep walking and singing together.

Chris Brunelle, Director of Music

A Drumming Invitation

Bob Gregory-Bjorklund invites middle-schoolers through adults to come drum! He'll teach you songs he's learned from his teacher, Sowah Mensah, a master drummer from Ghana who teaches at Macalester College. We'll drum Sunday, March 5th, 9:15-10am in the Northfield Daycare Center space, which is located underneath the Assembly Room. To reserve a drum, please contact Bob at worshiparts@firstucc.org or Jami Reister at reisterroost@gmail.com. We have drums for 14 participants.

Chronicle Moving to Wednesdays

Over the course of the pandemic, The Chronicle newsletter moved to Thursdays, but is back to its original Wednesday publication. Please note this change and email your articles to the office at church@firstucc.org by Tuesdays at 2 p.m. Thanks!

A Note from ISAIAH

Join Northfield community members of all faiths on a trip to the state capitol on Wednesday, March 8th from 8-12pm. We'll talk to our legislators Representative Kristi Pursell and Senator Bill Lieske about ISAIAH's agenda of caring for all. [Click here](#) to register and learn more.

Welcome to Worship at First UCC!

We are an Open and Affirming, Just Peace, Immigrant Welcoming Congregation.

Wherever you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome here!

We especially welcome all who are visiting this morning. Please let us know you're here by sharing your information in a welcome pad.

Worship Information

First UCC worships at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays. Worship is also live-streamed each week on Zoom and YouTube. Whether you are joining us in person or online, we are glad to have you here!

Giving to the Church

Thank you for your continued generosity and support of First UCC's ministry. You may give online by visiting firstucc.org and clicking on the "Give" button, or you may place your gift in the offering plate, or send in your gifts via mail.

News & Announcements

Keep up to date with all of the latest news and upcoming events! Subscribe to The Chronicle, First UCC's weekly e-newsletter, at firstucc.org, and find First UCC on Facebook and Instagram. Past issues of The Chronicle are available at firstucc.org.

First UCC Leadership & Staff

Ministers: All the people

Moderator: Gary Carlson

Senior Minister: Rev. Cindy Maddox

Associate Minister: Rev. Lauren Baske Davis

Director of Music: Chris Brunelle

Organist: Theo Wee

Spirit Voices Director & Arts Coordinator: Bob Gregory-Bjorklund

Office Manager & Director of Communications: Kate Kvasnak

Finance Manager: Pippa Younger

Sexton: Mark Fischer

Audio Visual Technician: Brynn Artley