



"Thus says God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live."

Ezekiel 37:5

Fifth Sunday in Lent
First United Church of Christ, Northfield
An Open and Affirming, Just Peace,
Immigrant Welcoming Congregation

March 26, 2023 – 10:30 a.m.

Welcome to worship! Are you visiting us today? We invite you to fill out our [Virtual Visitor Card](#).

Prelude

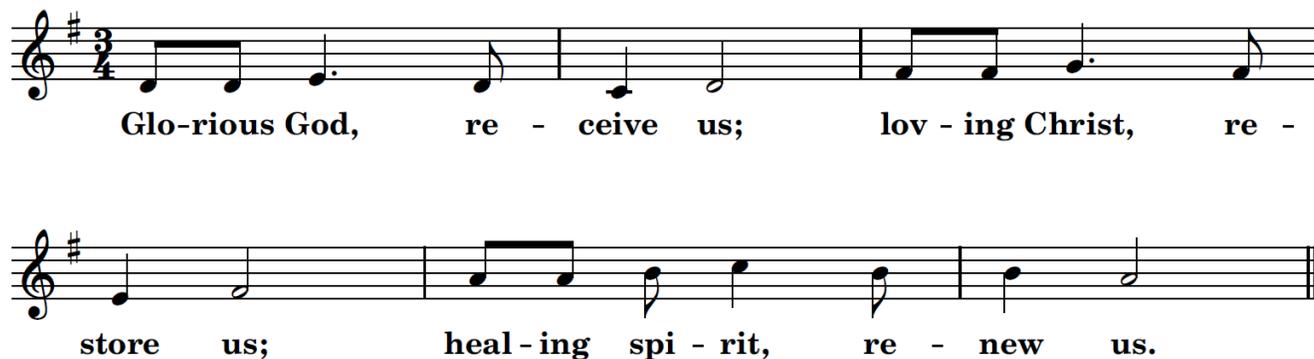
The Father's Contemplation Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)
(from *Twenty Contemplations of the Infant Jesus*)

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering Music

Glorious God

Alice Parker (1925-)



Glo-rious God, re - ceive us; lov - ing Christ, re -
store us; heal - ing spi - rit, re - new us.

Call to Worship

One: Have you ever felt washed up, brittle, worn-down to the bone?

Many: Have you ever felt grief lie heavy on your back?

One: Have you ever felt like hope was out of reach?

Many: Have you ever wondered, *Can these bones live?*

One: If you have, then you are in the right place, for this is God's house.

Many: Hope lives here.

One: So, come. Rest your weary bones. Enter and rejoice.

Opening Hymn

Enter, Rejoice, and Come In

#73 (Enter, Rejoice)

Verse 1: Enter, rejoice, and come in.

Enter, rejoice, and come in.

Today will be a joyful day;

enter, rejoice, and come in.

Verse 2: Open yourself to the song.

Open yourself to the song.

Today will be a joyful day;

enter, rejoice, and come in.

Verse 3: Open your hearts everyone.

Open your hearts everyone.

Today will be a joyful day;

enter, rejoice, and come in.

Verse 4: Don't be afraid of some change.

Don't be afraid of some change.

Today will be a joyful day;

enter, rejoice, and come in.

Verse 5: Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Enter, rejoice and come in.

Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice, and come in.

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.**

Prayer of Confession

Creator God, bad news is often so loud. In the midst of gun violence, hunger, melting ice caps, and anxiety, it often feels like suffering has a microphone. Forgive us when we focus on the bad news instead of making room for your good news. Forgive us when we focus on the dry bones of despair instead of the living breath that you provide. Rush through our hearts and lives like a mighty wind. Speak to us in your still, small voice, and let it be loud enough to speak to the sorrow of the day.

Words of Assurance

One: Family of faith, hear and believe this good news: There is a grace to God's love that is bigger than we can imagine. No matter what we did or didn't do yesterday, the slate is wiped clean. Today, we are made new. Join me in saying:

Many: **We belong to God. We are held in God's love. We are made new. Amen.**

Anthem

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

Robert Jackson (1894)

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.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
Stir in me one desire:
That every earthly part of me
May glow with holy fire.

Scripture

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Bob Gregory-Bjorklund

Sermon

The Awakening Spirit

Rev. Dr. Molly T. Marshall

Prayer Hymn

Shadow and Substance

#398 (Twilight)

Verse 1: Shadow and substance,
wonder and mystery,
spell-binding spinner of atoms and earth;
Soul of the cosmos, person and energy,
source of our being: we sing of your worth.

Verse 2: We are your image,
formed in community;

sisters and brothers of Adam and Eve.
You gave us color, custom and history;
teach us to honor what others receive.

Verse 3: Naming the nameless Spirit of unity,
scanning the heavens for signs of your care;
God of the ages, give us humility;
guide us to mystical union in prayer.

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

Kyrie Eleison

#751

The melody of this chant, now associated with the Russian Orthodox tradition, has been traced to tenth-century Ukraine.

Prayer of Jesus

You are invited to speak the words most meaningful to you, or follow with this version written by Will Henslin, one of our confirmation students:

Dear Lord in heaven, we honor you. We have an interest in your world. We thank you for food, water, and shelter. We thank you for forgiving our mistakes. We thank you for protecting us through trials and struggles. We honor you for creating our world. Amen.

Sharing Our Gifts

Offertory

We've Come This Far by Faith

Albert Goodson (1965)

We've come this far by faith,
Leaning on the Lord,
Trusting in God's holy word;
She's never failed me yet.
Oh, can't turn around,
We've come this far by faith.

Prayer of Thanks

Generous God, creator, redeemer, sustainer, at your table we present this money, symbol of the work you have given us to do. Use it, use us, in the service of your world. Amen.

Hymn of Sending

Let it Breathe on Me

#288 (Breathe on Me)

V 1: Let it breathe on me,
let it breathe on me,
let the breath of the Spirit breathe on me.
Let it breathe on me, let it breathe on me,
let the breath of God now breathe on me.

V 2: While I'm working, God,
in your vineyard here,

I cannot serve without you near;
O come, blessed Spirit, so close to me
that I may feel you breathe on me.

V 3: When the pathway, God, I cannot see,
when the way is hard, O breathe on me;
Give me grace to know when you are near,
then, I pray, O Spirit, breathe on me.

Benediction

Postlude

French Suite in E Major: Gigue

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

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, Linda Larson, Mary Savina, Carol Rutz, Dean Paxton

Digital Greeter: Shawn Nuebel

Scripture Reader: Bob Gregory-Bjorklund

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Liturgy written by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Moyers, Mike. *Hallelujah*, from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.
<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57147>. Original source: Mike Moyers,
<https://www.mikemoyersfineart.com/>.

This Week at First UCC:

Sunday, March 26

10:30 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary)
11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour
6:00 p.m. Evening Gathering Worship

Tuesday, March 28

6:30 p.m. Bells rehearsal

Wednesday, March 29

7:00 p.m. Senior Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, April 2

10:30 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary)
11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour
6:00 p.m. Evening Gathering Worship

A Note from ISAIAH

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." - Matthew 6:21. The first bill passed and signed this year reconciled state and federal tax codes producing a tax cut. The Governor's proposed budget adds \$5.4 Billion in rebates, tax credits and cuts while meeting a wealth of needs that would result in a 25% drop in childhood poverty. Write to your state Senator and Representative and ask them to end false narratives about the need for greater tax cuts and give-backs given the recent surplus. Questions about legislation or voicing your views? Email isaiah@firstucc.org.

Northfielder Supporting Neighbors Fund at \$0: Call for Donations

The Fund was formed by members of the Northfield faith communities to help meet the needs of local immigrants, particularly for legal services. Currently there is a \$0 balance in the fund and the needs of local immigrants have not diminished. Please consider donating if you are able to meet this urgent need. You can donate at communityactioncenter.org/donate.

Request from ONA

ONA is looking for parishioners who would be willing to contribute to a project and conversation about gender and transgender issues. Those who are willing are asked to make a 2-minute video talking about their definition of gender and how gender has shaped the way they live in the world. Video submissions are due to church@firstucc.org by March 30. For more information please contact Kathy Sandberg at ksandberg315@outlook.com or see The Chronicle.

Guest Preacher Today, March 26

We are honored to welcome the Rev. Dr. Molly T. Marshall to our pulpit this week! She is the President of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. See this week's edition of The Chronicle to learn more about her.

Pride in the Park Fundraiser: Auction Items Needed

Pride in the Park is holding its first fundraiser of the season on April 12 at Imminent Brewing. The committee is looking for donations of goods, gifts, or services for the silent auction. (Think gift cards, theater tickets, vacations, or gift baskets.) If you would like to donate something for the silent auction, please email prideintheparknorthfield@gmail.com with the subject line "AUCTION," and include the name of the donor, the item or service to be donated, and the monetary value of that item or service. The Pride in the Park committee will respond to confirm and discuss pickup. Items/offers must be received by April 5 at the latest to get things ready for the April 12 event.

Coffee Hour Volunteers and Coordinator Needed

Volunteer hosts are needed for Coffee Hour! Volunteering is easy to do, and orientation will be provided for those who are new to Coffee Hour hosting. Interested? Sign up to host via our website, www.firstucc.org. (Go to "About" then to "Members and Friends" to find the link.) First UCC is also looking for a volunteer to serve as the Coffee Hour coordinator. If you are interested, please contact church@firstucc.org.

Holy Week Schedule

4/2: Palm Sunday - 10:30 a.m.
Sunday morning worship

4/6: Maundy Thursday - 6:30 p.m.
Service with choir and communion.

4/7: Good Friday - 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
A come-and-go worship experience in the sanctuary
connecting the Passion story with justice issues in our world.

4/9: Easter Sunday
8:30 a.m. Sanctuary worship;
10:30 a.m. Sanctuary and online worship

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

Give to the Flower Power Fund!



Thanks to your generous gifts, the Flower Power fund at First UCC is used to purchase plants and flowers to beautify the worship space throughout the year. You can give to the Flower Power fund in honor or in memory of a loved one, either for a specific occasion (such as Easter), or to be used as needed. Cost per plant is \$20.

You may fill out this form, and return with a check to the church office, or place both in the offering plate. Please make out checks to First UCC, and put "Flower Power" in the memo line.

I am giving a gift to the Flower Power fund, designated as follows:

\$_____ to be used for purchases when needed

\$_____ to be used at Easter

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

Given By (your name as it should be printed in the bulletin):

Your Name: _____

Your Email: _____