

**Peace United Church of Christ
July 14th, 2024
9:30am**



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Welcome and Announcements

Ringling of the Bells

*Call to Worship

We gather in community, united by God's love.

We share a sacred story.

We gather with a mosaic of beliefs, experiences, and identities.

We share a sacred story.

We gather at different places on our journey.

We share a sacred story.

Through story, song, and sharing, let us worship God!

*Song

Down to the River to Pray

#36 P&W

As I went down in the river to pray

Studying about that good ol' way

And who shall wear the starry crown?

Good Lord show me the way

O sisters let's go down, let's go down, come on down

O sisters let's go down, down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray

Studying about that good ol' way

And who shall wear the robe & crown?

Good Lord show me the way

O brothers let's go down, let's go down, come on down

Come on brothers, let's go down, down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray

Studying about that good ol' way

And who shall wear the starry crown?

Good Lord show me the way

O fathers let's go down, let's go down, come on down

O fathers let's go down, down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray

Studying about that good ol' way

And who shall wear the robe and crown?

Good Lord show me the way

O mothers let's go down, let's go down, come on down,

Come on mothers, let's go down, down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray

Studying about that good ol' way

And who shall wear the starry crown?

Good Lord show me the way

O sinners, let's go down, let's go down, come on down

O sinners, let's go down, down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray

Studying about that good ol' way

And who shall wear the robe and crown?

Good Lord show me the way

*Prayer of Confession

God of all creation, you weave our stories together in a complex tapestry of beauty and pain, despair and hope, one human family seeking love and light together. But too often, we seek easy answers. We deny perspectives we cannot understand, and we seek validation for our own worldview. Grant us the strength to abide with discomfort, the courage to open our hearts to new possibilities, and the generosity to give and receive the practices of Beloved Community. Amen.

*Assurance of Forgiveness

Friends, God loves us and there is nothing we can do about it.
God does not love us because of what we have done or left undone.
God loves us simply because we are.
And God's love endures forever. Amen.

*Passing of the Peace

Story for All Ages

Baptism & New Members

Covenantal Questions

(to the newly baptized)

We are grateful for the people, prayer, and experience that has brought you here to be baptized. Is it your desire now to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, Mother of us all? Will you follow Jesus as you understand his teachings, as best as you are able? **I will.**

(to new members) We are grateful that you have found your way to Peace Church. We are grateful to those communities where you have been cared for and nurtured in Christian faith. Is it your desire now to continue your spiritual journey here at Peace Church? Will you join us in praising God, following in the way of Jesus, and building the Beloved Community? Will you share your gifts with us? Will you pray with and for us? Will you support the work of this congregation? **We will.**

(to the congregation) We are grateful for this opportunity to welcome these new members of our congregation. Do you promise to welcome them, to be open to what they bring, and to care for them? Will you pray for and with them? Will you learn from them even as they learn from you? **We will.**

Congregational Response

We welcome you with joy into the covenantal life of this church. We promise you our friendship and support as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together in God's love.

Greeting Song

Peace Like a River

Scripture Reading

Daniel 3:8-25
The Message

Monica Liddle, reader

Just then, some Babylonian fortunetellers stepped up and accused the Jews. They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "Long live the king! You gave strict orders, O king, that when the big band started playing, everyone had to fall to their knees and worship the gold statue, and whoever did not go to their knees and worship it had to be pitched into a roaring furnace. Well, there are some Jews here - Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego - whom you have placed in high positions in the province of Babylon. These men are ignoring you, O king. They don't respect your gods and they won't worship the gold statue you set up."

Furious, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brought in. When the men were brought in, Nebuchadnezzar asked, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you don't respect my gods and refuse to worship the gold statue that I have set up? I'm giving you a second chance - but from now on, when the big band strikes up you must go to your knees and worship the statue I have made. If you don't worship it, you will be pitched into a roaring furnace, no questions asked. Who is the god who can rescue you from my power?"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, "Your threat means nothing to us. If you throw us in the fire, the God we serve can rescue us from your roaring furnace and anything else you might cook up, O king. But even if he doesn't, it wouldn't make a bit of difference, O king. We still wouldn't serve your gods or worship the gold statue you set up."

Nebuchadnezzar, his face purple with anger, cut off Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace fired up seven times hotter than usual. He ordered some strong men from the army to tie them up, hands and feet, and throw them into the roaring furnace. Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abednego, bound hand and foot, fully dressed from head to toe, were pitched into the roaring fire. Because the king was in such a hurry and the furnace was so hot, flames from the furnace killed the men who carried Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to it, while the fire raged around Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Suddenly King Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in alarm and said, "Didn't we throw three men, bound hand and foot, into the fire?"

"That's right, O king," they said.

"But look!" he said. "I see four men, walking around freely in the fire, completely unharmed! And the fourth man looks like a son of the gods!"

May these words be to us our light and our life. **Thanks be to God.**

Special Music

Sermon

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis

Song

In All Our Living

#499 NCH

***Pues si vivimos, para Dios vivimos
y si morimos, para Dios morimos.
Sea que vivamos o que muramos,
somos del buen Dios, somos del buen Dios.***

***God sent Christ Jesus to be our shalom,
to show us mercy and healing love;
So in our living, and in our dying,
Christ is our shalom; Christ is our shalom.***

***In all our living, we belong to God;
and in our dying, we are still with God;
So, whether living, or whether dying,
we belong to God; we belong to God.***

Community Prayers and the Prayer of Jesus

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Offertory

Better Times Will Come, Janis Ian

Jo Johnson and Cathy Ameal

*Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above ye heavenly host,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen.**

*Prayer of Dedication

*Closing Song

We Are Marching in the Light of God

#526 NCH

Siyahamba, ekukanyen' kwenkos', (repeat)

We are marching in the light of God, (repeat)

*Benediction

*Postlude

Assisting in Today's Service:

Laurie Berner, Pam Kramer, Tom and Monica Liddle, Ushers

Diane Swanoski, Bud and Amelia Trnka, Greeters

Pam Kramer, Connie Schwegman, Warren and Beth Post, Coffee Hour Volunteers

Carrie Kelsey, Sophia Farrell, Mike Swanoski, Ian Connell, Tres Commer
and Cyndi Brown, Tent Band