

**Peace United Church of Christ
July 7th, 2024
9:30am**



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Prelude *Trio for violin, horn, and piano*, Johannes Brahms, op. 40

Welcome and Announcements

Ringing 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

I Sing the Mighty Power of God

#12 NCH

I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise,

That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies.

I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;

The moon shines full at God's command, and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of our God that filled the earth with food;

God formed the creatures with a word, and then pronounced them good.

Oh, how your wonders are displayed, where'er I turn my eye:

If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky!

On earth there's not a plant or flower but makes your glory known.

The clouds arise and spread their showers by order from your throne.

All life is but a gift from you and ever in your care;

Wherever people gather, you, O God, are present there.

*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

Contemporary Reading

Once the World was Perfect, Joy Harjo

Betty Greene, reader

Once the world was perfect, and we were happy in that world.

Then we took it for granted.

Discontent began a small rumble in the earthly mind.

Then Doubt pushed through with its spiked head.

And once Doubt ruptured the web,

All manner of demon thoughts

Jumped through -

We destroyed the world we had been given

For inspiration, for life -

Each stone of jealousy, each stone

Of fear, greed, envy, and hatred, put out the light.

No one was without a stone in his or her hand.

There we were,

Right back where we had started.

We were bumping into each other
In the dark.
And now we had no place to live, since we didn't know
How to live with each other.
Then one of the stumbling ones took pity on another
And shared a blanket.
A spark of kindness made a light.
The light made an opening in the darkness.
Everyone worked together to make a ladder.
A Wind Clan person climbed out first into the next world,
And then the other clans, the children of those clans, their children,
And their children, all the way through time -
To now, into this morning light to you.

Scripture Reading

Esther 1:1-2:17

see insert

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

Special Music

Deb Rausch, horn,
Lian Ojakangas, violin

Sermon

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis

Song

My Life Flows On in Endless Song

#476 NCH

***My life flows on in endless song; above earth's lamentation,
I hear the sweet, though far off hymn that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul- how can I keep from singing?***

***What though my joys and comforts die? My Savior still is living.
What though the shadows gather 'round? A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that Rock I'm clinging;
Since Love commands both heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?***

***When tyrants tremble, sick with fear, and hear their death knells ringing;
When friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing?
In prison cell and dungeon vile our thoughts to them are winging;
When friends by shame are undefiled, how can I keep from singing?***

***I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue above it;
And day by day this pathway smooths, since first I learned to love it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing;
All things are mine since I am Christ's- how can I keep from singing?***

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

*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

Sacrament of Holy Communion

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing the Bread and Cup

(In the United Church of Christ all are welcome to participate in Communion. Gluten free crackers are on the tray and we use non-alcoholic grape juice.)

Prayer

*Closing Song

Let There Be Peace on Earth

#26 P&W

***Let there be peace on Earth,
and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on Earth,
the peace that was meant to be.
With God our Creator, family all are we.
Let me walk with my family in perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me.
Let this be the moment now.
With every step I take,
let this be my solemn vow.
Take each moment and
live each moment with peace eternally.
Let there be peace on Earth,
and let it begin with me.***

*Benediction

*Postlude

Assisting in Today's Service:

Cindy Macaulay, Greeter
Ellen Shelton, Cyndi Brown, Ushers

Peace United Church of Christ Staff

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis - Pastor

Jim Pospisil - Music Director

Rachel Obed - Business Manager

Mali Lorenz - Bookkeeper

Bri Dornbush - Office Coordinator

Dan Shepard - Maintenance

Alex Nelson – Livestream Technician

Sophia Farell – Soundboard Technician

Amanda McElray Hunter - Children, Youth and Small Group Coordinator

Carrie Kelsey – Kitchen Manager