



**NEWTON
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**
God is still speaking,

An Open and Affirming Congregation

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

**Virtual Worship • July 5, 2020 • 10:00am
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**

Digital Bulletin

This document is prepared so you can join our Sunday morning live-stream worship via our Facebook page (facebook.com/NewtonUCC) or call in via Zoom (Dial 312-626-6799, when prompted enter Meeting ID: 624 681 423 followed by #) or worship on your own at a time convenient for you (visit our Facebook page or website—uccnewton.org).

We are new to online and streaming worship at Congregational UCC and still working on smoothing out a few “hiccups” and technical difficulties. Of course, there is nothing that compares to being physically present with one another in worship, and yet this is what we need to do “love our neighbors” during the current national emergency.

We apologize in advance for any problems that you may encounter in connecting to the service and welcome your feedback on how to improve the virtual worship experience over the coming weeks when we will not be able to worship in our sanctuary.

PREPARING FOR VIRTUAL WORSHIP

As you prepare to join in online worship with us, in addition to making whatever technical preparations you need to make, consider how to prepare your personal space for worship:

- Prepare a piece of bread or a cracker and a small glass of grape juice or wine (if you do not have these items on hand, you may use any “nibble” and “sip” that is convenient for you)
- Silence your phone and eliminate distractions
- Light a candle or some incense
- Open your Bible or browser to Zechariah 9:9-12
- Position your body in a posture of worship and prayer

*“The ruler will proclaim peace for the nations;
the empire stretching from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth.”
Zechariah 9:10b*

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

REMEMBERING WHO WE ARE

One: As we prepare ourselves to join together in worship,
let us remind ourselves who we are
as members and friends of Congregational United Church of Christ.

**All: We are a community of God’s beloved
dedicated to following the teachings of Jesus as we live our faith
by loving and serving all of God’s creation
and striving for justice and peace
throughout our community, our nation, and the world.**

THE BREATH OF GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP (from *Psalms 145:8-14, 21*)

One: O God, you are gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.

All: O God, you are good to all and compassionate toward all your creatures.

One: All your creatures praise you, Most High, and your holy people will bless you.

All: They will tell of the glory of your reign and speak of your strength.

One: You make known to all humankind your mighty acts
and the glorious splendor of your reign.

**All: Your reign is a reign for all ages,
and your dominion endures from generation to generation.**

One: You lift up those who are falling and raise up those who are oppressed.

**All: May our mouths speak your praise, O God,
and may all creation bless your holy Name forever and ever! Amen.**

OPENING HYMN 573 TNCH

Lead On, Eternal Sovereign

Lancashire

*Lead on e-ter-nal Sov-ereign, we fol-low in your way;
loud rings your cry for jus-tice, your call for peace this day:
Through prayer-ful prep-a-ra-tion, your grace will make us strong,
to car-ry on the strug-gle to tri-umph o-ver wrong.*

*Lead on e-ter-nal Sov-ereign, we fol-low not with fear,
for in each hu-man con-flict your words of strength we hear:
That when we serve with glad-ness, you will not let us fall,
our trust is in your prom-ise that love will con-quer all.*

*Lead on e-ter-nal Sov-ereign, till sin’s fierce war shall cease,
and all your saints to-geth-er will sing a hymn of peace;
Then all in your do-min-ion will live with hearts set free,
to love and serve each oth-er for all e-ter-ni-ty.*

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND RECONCILIATION

One: On this holiday weekend, O God, as we celebrate liberation from British colonialism, we yearn for this nation yet to become the nation it proclaims to be— a nation that promotes life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for each and for all. Life continues to be cut short by a virus as individuals shirk the guidance of health experts proclaiming their right to liberty surpasses others' rights to live. Liberty remains caged and chained as racism holds us all captive to systems and institutions, policies and procedures, thoughts and ideas that degrade and dehumanize People of Color while elevating and advantaging those who are white. And, happiness seems a pipe dream as many turn to opioids and other substances to escape the general malaise that plagues this nation.

(silent prayer and reflection)

Yet we persist in hope—
hope that a just, equitable political order can yet be established in this nation.

All: **On this holiday weekend, O God, empower us, inspire us, and challenge us to engage in the personal and communal work necessary to bring the greatest ideals of this nation into reality: promoting and protecting the life, liberty, and well-being of each and all especially those who have been struggling to breathe, fighting to be free, and on the brink of hopelessness and despair for far, far too long. We pray in the name of Jesus, who came to set us free. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE

One: The peace of God be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

HYMN

The Spirit in Me

by Jim Strathdee

***The Spir-it in me greets the Spir-it in you. A-le-lu-ia!
God's in us, and we're in God. A-le-lu-ia!***

A TIME WITH CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE

Zechariah 9:9-12

GLORIA PATRI

Greatorex

***Glo-ry to the Cre-a-tor, the Christ, the Ho-ly Spir-it, Three-in-One;
as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now and ever shall be,
world with-out end. A-men. A-men.***

SERMON

Hope Persists

Rev. Jessica Petersen

PAUSE

(What did you hear yourself saying as you were listening to the presentation of the scripture and the sermon? How is God speaking to you today?)

*For the heal-ing of the na-tions, God, we pray with one ac-cord;
for a just and e-qual shar-ing of the things that earth af-fords;
to a life of love in ac-tion help us rise and pledge our word, (pledge our word)
help us rise and pledge our word.*

*Lead us for-ward in-to free-dom; from de-spair your world re-lease,
that, re-deemed from war and ha-tred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and good-ness fear will die and hope in-crease, (hope in-crease)
fear will die and hope in-crease.*

*All that kills a-bun-dant liv-ing, let it from the earth be banned;
pride of sta-tus, race, or school-ing, dog-mas that ob-scure your plan.
In our com-mon quest for jus-tice may we hal-low life's brief span, (life's brief span)
may we hal-low life's brief span.*

*You, Cre-a-tor God, have writ-ten your great name on hu-man-kind;
for our grow-ing in your like-ness bring the life of Christ to mind,
that by our re-sponse and ser-vice earth its des-ti-ny may find, (may find)
earth its des-ti-ny may find.*

HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Swing wide the doors your hearts.

All: We open them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to our amazing God.

All: It is right and good to give God thanks and praise.

One: We thank you, O God, and we praise you
for you have provided for all the worlds that ever were or will be
by giving yourself to them, to us in love.
If we go to the heights of the mountains,
or if we make the grave our bed, you are with us.
If we go to the depths of the sea, your right hand holds us fast.
We thank you for your ever-abiding presence that infuses all of creation.

All: We thank you, O God, and we praise you.

One: We thank you, Loving Spirit, for your teachers, your preachers,
your prophets, your messengers who proclaimed your way of love and justice,
who dared to persist in hope and trust in your promises
even as their subjugation and oppression grew unbearable,
who continue to call us to live according to your way
amidst the challenges and trials of this day.

All: We thank you, O God, and we praise you.

One: We thank you for Jesus, who shows us most fully who you are:
a God of love, a God of justice, a God of peace.

Through his words and through his actions,
he has shown us what it looks like to live fully, faithfully, and authentically
as a human member of your creation.

We thank you that you stamped his death,
his state-sanctioned execution with victory
and that Life, not Death, that Love, not Fear, is the final and enduring word.

All: We thank you, O God, and we praise you.

One: We thank you for your life-giving spirit that calls us to come together as the church,
to follow in the way of Jesus, to show forth your love, to establish justice,
that all might share equitably the good gifts of your creation,
to co-create with you and one another the just world for which you long.

All: We thank you, O God, and we praise you.

One: As we now prepare to come to your table,
we recall that story of our tradition so rich with meaning.
On the night of his arrest, Jesus took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.
In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This is the cup of the new covenant poured out in my blood for you and for many.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.
We ask now that you bless this bread and this cup,
and bless those of us gathered to share this meal at your table of grace,
that we might be nourished by that same unbounded love
and driven by that same desire for justice
that sustained and vindicated our crucified and risen savior.
We pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray...

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (**Options for "Father" include "Mother," "Creator," "Parent."*)

Our Father* 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.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE CUP

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER (unison)

**We thank you, O God, for the gift of your table,
for the gift of your relentless love that liberates us and unites us
and guides us even through our greatest struggles.
Held in the safety and security of your love,
empower us and inspire us to live faithfully and love fearlessly
as we join together to establish your just realm here and now. Amen.**

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY

Lasst Uns Erfreuen

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
praise God all creatures here below. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
Praise God for all that love has done,
Cre-a-tor, Christ, and Spir-it, One. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN 722

This Is My Song

Finlandia

*This is my song, O God of all the na-tions,
a song of peace for lands a-far and mine.
This is my home, the coun-try where my heart is;
here are my hopes, my dreams, my ho-ly shrine;
but oth-er hearts in oth-er lands are beat-ing
with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.*

*My coun-try's skies are blu-er than the o-cean,
and sun-light beams on clo-ver-leaf and pine;
but oth-er lands have sun-light too, and clo-ver,
and skies are ev-ery-where as blue as mine.
O hear my song, O God of all the na-tions,
a song of peace for their land and for mine.*

*This is my prayer, O Rul-er of all na-tions:
let your reign come; on earth your will be done.
In peace may all earth's peo-ple draw to-geth-er,
and hearts u-nit-ed learn to live as one.
O hear my prayer, O God of all the na-tions,
my-self I give you, let your will be done.*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

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