

First Congregational United Church of Christ
May 8, 2022



Photo by Yura Khomitskyi

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Chandler Litterest

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter:

Liturgist: Bob Carter

Communion Serveres: Bob and Helen Carter

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (Based upon 1st Corinthians 12)

People who work with their hands: **For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, through many, are one body, so it is with Christ.**

People who work with their heads: **For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Asians, Europeans, Africans, Australians, South and North Americans; rich, poor, homeless, jet-setters, and we were all made to drink of the one Spirit.**

People who work with their hearts: **Indeed, the body does not consist of one member, but of many. But God has so arranged the body, giving greater honor to the inferior member, so that there is no dissension within the body.**

People who take time to not work: **But the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.**

Words of Lament

Almighty God, in whose image we are created and in whose world we live, we are being torn apart by hate, greed, and fear. We face great challenges in our world, yet we argue and tussle over who is the greatest, who is richest, and who is the most famous. We ignore the humanity of those against us lest we have to forgive, to help, and to love. Speak, O LORD, speak so that we may hear, that we may understand, that we can do nothing else but listen to your love for all and hear how we are bound together. Amen.

Words of Blessing (Based upon 23rd Psalm)

One: The Lord is my shepherd; I will have no wants.

Many: You make me lie down in green pastures; you lead me beside still waters.

All: You restore my soul. You lead me in rights paths for your name's sake.

One: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me, your rod and your staff – they comfort me.

Many: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

Words of Poetry & Lighting the Candle of Peace

It is a custom in our congregation to light our Peace Candle during worship, as a witness to the Prince of Peace and our communal intention to be peace-makers as a Just Peace Church.

MOTHERS MENDING

by Kim Staffard

*After the tussle—or would you call it
a clash?—we stitch the torn uniforms
you men bring home.*

*Little needle, glint and glide ...
After the cut—or would you call it
a gash?—we stitch the torn skin
you men bring in.*

*Little needle, glint and glide.
Lead this thread to heal and hide ...
After the war—or should we call it
murder—we stitch the shrouds
you men wear now.*

*Little needle, glint and glide.
Lead this thread to heal and hide.
Never ask us to explain
why you left us here in pain.*

Passing of the Peace

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture John 10:22-30

²² The time came for the Festival of Dedication^[a] in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was in the temple, walking in the covered porch named for Solomon. ²⁴ The Jewish opposition circled around him and asked, “How long will you test our patience? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

²⁵ Jesus answered, “I have told you, but you don’t believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, ²⁶ but you don’t believe because you don’t belong to my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice. I know them and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life. They will never die, and no one will snatch them from my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them from my Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

2nd Scripture Revelation 7:9-17

⁹⁻¹² I looked again. I saw a huge crowd, too huge to count. Everyone was there—all nations and tribes, all races and languages. And they were *standing*,

dressed in white robes and waving palm branches, standing before the Throne and the Lamb and heartily singing:

Salvation to our God on his Throne!

Salvation to the Lamb!

All who were standing around the Throne—Angels, Elders, Animals—fell on their faces before the Throne and worshiped God, singing:

Oh, Yes!

The blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving,

The honor and power and strength,

To our God forever and ever and ever!

Oh, Yes!

¹³⁻¹⁴ Just then one of the Elders addressed me: “Who are these dressed in white robes, and where did they come from?” Taken aback, I said, “O Sir, I have no idea—but you must know.”

¹⁴⁻¹⁷ Then he told me, “These are those who come from the great tribulation, and they’ve washed their robes, scrubbed them clean in the blood of the Lamb. That’s why they’re standing before God’s Throne. They serve him day and night in his Temple. The One on the Throne will pitch his tent there for them: no more hunger, no more thirst, no more scorching heat. The Lamb on the Throne will shepherd them, will lead them to spring waters of Life. And God will wipe every last tear from their eyes.”

Children’s Message

The future...

Message A great multitude

Musical Reflections

Joys and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father, Mother 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

Our Time of Giving

Doxology

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Sending Music

Benediction