

First Congregational United Church of Christ
August 14, 2022



Photo by Sam Schooler

10th Sunday after Pentecost

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Francie Beaster

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Sandy Stover

Liturgist: Nancy Starr

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (Based on 1 Corinthians 13:1-8)

*People who like diverse yards: **If I speak in the tongues of humans and of angels but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but do not have love, I am nothing.***

*People who like manicured lawns: **If I give away all my possessions and if I hand over my body so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.***

*People who like fire pits: **Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth.***

*People who like lawn ornaments: **Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.***

Words of Lament

Merciful and Mighty God, the world is too focused on who is the best, who has the most, and who is the biggest threat. We allow ourselves to be swayed by popularity, envy, and fear. To not follow the crowd is to be branded out-of-touch or weird or a heretic. Rise up, O God, and scatter these props of illusions. Scour our thoughts and our hearts, that we may see clearly compassion, generosity, and justice, are the foundation of your kingdom, and this world created by You. Help us, O God, and protect all your children and all of creation. Amen.

Words of Blessing (Based on Psalm 80)

One: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin, and Manasseh.

Many: You brought a vine out of Egypt; you led your people and planted it. It took deep roots and filled the land. The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches.

All: You sent out its branches to the sea, and its shoots to the River. Turn again, O God of hosts, look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine, the stock that your right hand planted.

One: But let your right hand be upon the one at your right hand.

Many: Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.

All: Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, and we will be renewed.

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.

The Peace Of Wild Things

*When despair grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting for their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.*

Wendell Berry

Passing of the Peace

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture Hebrews 11:29-12:2 (Common English Bible)

²⁹ By faith they crossed the Red Sea as if they were on dry land, but when the Egyptians tried it, they were drowned.

³⁰ By faith Jericho's walls fell after the people marched around them for seven days.

³¹ By faith Rahab the tavern-owner wasn't killed with the disobedient because she welcomed the spies in peace.

³² What more can I say? I would run out of time if I told you about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. ³³ Through faith they conquered kingdoms, brought about justice, realized promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ put out raging fires, escaped from the edge of the sword, found strength in weakness, were mighty in war, and routed foreign armies. ³⁵ Women received back their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured and refused to be released so they could gain a better resurrection.

³⁶ But others experienced public shame by being taunted and whipped; they were even put in chains and in prison. ³⁷ They were stoned to death, they were cut in two, and they died by being murdered with swords. They went around wearing the skins of sheep and goats, needy, oppressed, and mistreated. ³⁸ The world didn't deserve them. They wandered around in deserts, mountains, caves, and holes in the ground.

³⁹ All these people didn't receive what was promised, though they were given approval for their faith. ⁴⁰ God provided something better for us so they wouldn't be made perfect without us.

12 So then, with endurance, let's also run the race that is laid out in front of us, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let's throw off any extra baggage, get rid of the sin that trips us up, ² and fix our eyes on Jesus, faith's pioneer and perfecter. He endured the cross, ignoring the shame, for the sake of the joy that was laid out in front of him, and sat down at the right side of God's throne.

Children's Message You are supported

Message Great Cloud of Witnesses

Musical Reflections

Communion

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

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done;

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Benediction

Sending Music