



First Congregational United Church of Christ

July 16, 2023



Story of Ruth By JOHN AUGUST SWANSON

**Who
are my
siblings,
my
family?**

7th Sunday after Pentecost

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Karina Roth

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Carol Winter

Liturgist: Steve Aldrich

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (based on Psalm 66)

People who come from big families: **Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth; sing the glory of their name, give to them glorious praise.**

People who come from small families: **Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds! All the earth worships you, they sing praises to you, sing praises to your name."**

People who have new families: **Come and see what God has done, they is awesome in their deeds among mortals. There we rejoiced in them, who rules forever.**

People who see church as family: **Bless our God, O peoples, let the sound of praise be heard, who has kept us among the living and not let our feet slip.**

Opening Hymn #471 What a Covenant (click [here](#))

Words of Lament

Merciful God, the health of our families is being attacked and legislated against in harming our mothers with restrictions on health care, and harming our children with restrictions on medical, psychological, and emotional care for our trans gendered youth. This cannot stand. Rise UP! Rise up and toss out the laws and attitudes that deny health, and health care, to those in need, our mothers, our women, and trans-children. May these ignorant ideologies, hateful acts, and corrupt legislation soon fade away in the dustbin of historical garbage. In Jesus' name we plea, Amen.

Time of Silence

Blessing of the Earth Words for Blessing the Earth- Canticle of the Creatures

Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

One: All praise be yours, My Lord
through all that you have made.

Many: **And first my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day...**
How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor!
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

All: **All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and Stars;**
In the heavens you have made them, bright and precious and fair.

One: All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air...
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,
So useful, lowly, precious and pure.

Many: **All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,through whom you brighten up the night...**
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our mother,

All: **Who feeds us...and produces various fruits**
With colored flowers and herbs...
Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks,
And serve him with great humility.

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 peacemakers as a Just Peace Church.

Colors of Love

The colors of love are not always red,
Sometimes they're yellow, blue, or green instead.
Love knows no gender or sexual preference,
It's a feeling that needs no explanation or defense.
Queer love is a beautiful thing to behold,
It's a love that's pure and brave and bold.
It's a love that's endured so much hate and fear,
But still, it shines bright and crystal clear.
In the eyes of love, no label can divide,
It's a love that cannot be denied.
For those who live in love outside the norm,
Their love is what makes the world so warm.
Love is love, regardless of who you are,
It's a light that shines brighter than any star.
In a world that can be filled with hate and pain,
Love is what makes us human again.
So here's a love poem for all to hear,
For queer love that's open and sincere.
May it inspire and ignite the flame,
Of love that breaks through any shame.

Passing of the Peace

Hymn #362 When Love is Found (click [here](#))

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture Ruth 1:4-18 (Common English Bible)

4 They took wives for themselves, Moabite women; the name of the first was Orpah and the name of the second was Ruth. And they lived there for about ten years.

5 But both of the sons, Mahlon and Chilion, also died. Only the woman was left, without her two children and without her husband.

6 Then she arose along with her daughters-in-law to return from the field of Moab, because while in the territory of Moab she had heard that the Lord had paid attention to his people by providing food for them. 7 She left the place where she had been, and her two daughters-in-law went with her. They went along the road to return to the land of Judah.

8 Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, "Go, turn back, each of you to the household of your mother. May the Lord deal faithfully with you, just as you have done with the dead and with me. 9 May the Lord provide for you so that you may find security, each woman in the household of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

10 But they replied to her, "No, instead we will return with you, to your people."

11 Naomi replied, "Turn back, my daughters. Why would you go with me? Will there again be sons in my womb, that they would be husbands for you? 12 Turn back, my daughters. Go. I am too old for a husband. If I were to say that I have hope, even if I had a husband tonight, and even more, if I were to bear sons— 13 would you wait until they grew up? Would you refrain from having a husband? No, my daughters. This is more bitter for me than for you, since the Lord's will has come out against me."

14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth stayed with her. 15 Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her people and to her gods. Turn back after your sister-in-law."

16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to abandon you, to turn back from following after you. Wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. 17 Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord do this to me and more so if even death separates me from you." 18 When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her about it.

2nd Scripture Matthew 12:46-50 (New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition)

46 While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers were standing outside, wanting to speak to him. 47 Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." 48 But to the one who had told him this, Jesus replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49 And pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

Children's Message Whoever does the will of God

Choir Anthem

Message Who are my siblings, my family?

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

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Our Time of Giving

Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit, making us one;
Justice and peace under the sun. Amen*

Closing Hymn #391 In the Midst of New Dimensions (click [here](#))

Benediction

Sending Music



Opening Hymn #471 What a Covenant

1. What a covenant, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms.
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting arms

Refrain: Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

2. Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms.
Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, leaning on the everlasting arms.

3. What have I to dread , what have I to fear, leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Savior near, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Words Elisha A. Hoffman, 1187; alt., tune Anthony J. Showalter, 1887

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Hymn #362 When Love is Found

1. When love is found and hope comes home,
sing and be glad that two are one.
When love explodes and fills the sky,
praise God, and share our Maker's joy
2. When love has flowered in trust and care,
build both each day that love may dare
to reach beyond home's warmth and light,
to serve and strive for truth and right.
3. When love is tried as loved ones change,
hold still to hope, though all seems strange,
till ease returns and love grows wise
through listening ears and opened eyes.
4. When love is torn, and trust betrayed,
pray strength to love till torments fade,
till lovers keep no score of wrong,
but hear through pain love's Easter song.
5. Praise God for love, praise God for life,
in age or youth, in calm or strife.
Lift up your hearts! Let love be fed
through death and life in broken bread.

Words Brian Wren 1978; rev. 1992., English Folk Melody., Arr. Jonathan McNair, 1993
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Hymn #391 In the Midst of New Dimensions

1. In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?

Refrain: God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
We your people, ours the journey
now and ever, now and ever, now and ever more.

2. Through the flood of starving people, warring factions and despair,
Who will lift the olive branches? Who will light the flame of care?

3. As we stand a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,
Grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams.

4. We are man and we are woman, all persuasions, old and young,
Each a gift in your creations, each a love song to be sung.

5. Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
May your blazing phoenix spirit resurrect the church again.

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