



First Congregational United Church of Christ

August 27, 2023



Mother of Moses by Simeon Solomon

13th 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:

Liturgist:

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (Based on Psalm 138)

People who have protested: I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise. On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul.

People who have done justice: All the leaders of the earth shall praise you, O LORD, for great is the glory of your mouth. They shall sing the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD.

People who have loved mercy: For though the LORD is above, they regard the lowly; but the haughty they perceive from far away. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies.

People who have walked humbly with God: You stretch out your hand, and your right hand delivers me. The LORD will fulfill the purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

Opening Hymn Giving our Testimony ([click here](#))

Words of Lament

Merciful God, there are too many unjust laws that harm women, minorities, and the poor. When people are being harmed from withholding health care, proclaiming “Black Lives Matter” or sharing a rainbow flag, or arrested for giving food to the hungry; our leaders who enact and carry these laws out have turned their back on you and your commandment to love our neighbor. RISE UP! Raise up our voices, our actions, and our willingness to do what is right. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Time of Silence

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.

Hands by Jan Weingrad

These are my hands
Through these hands I have come to see the world.
These hands have measured the growth of life
and documented the stalling of time.
They guide my ears to places where I hear
The watch-like beat of tiny hearts.
My hands have felt the hard bony framework of passages
and the softness of muscles
Which will bulge like petals of a rose.
My hands have opened windows to the energy
Of the souls of those I have touched.
They have felt the frigid rigidity
Of steel instruments and the softness of a friend.
There are stories in these hands,
read from the pages of the work of women.
With my hands I felt the power
Of the strength it takes to grow
and release a new spirit.
My hands were born with the knowing of touch.
The journey has added the how and when
and the time to ask for help.

Teaching hand engulfed mine
until they were ready to fly.
My hands are joined in a circle which is
Unbroken through time.
Sometimes my hands do nothing.
Their most important work
will be still with fingers laced
and witness
The “art of doing nothing” has been passed
from one generation to the next.
Mine have been taught by some of the most powerful hands
to watch and wait.
This is perhaps the hardest for
hands born to touch.
If I have nothing else to give to you, let me
teach you how to see with your hands.
How to open the windows of life, and close
the door softly when it is time.
In the darkness
It is your hands that will light the way.
These are my hands.
These are the hands of a midwife.



Passing of the Peace

Hymn #286 Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness ([click here](#))

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture Romans 12:1-8 (New Revised Standard Version)

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. 6 We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; 7 ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; 8 the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

2nd Scripture Exodus 1:8-2:10

8 Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. 9 He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. 10 Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." 11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. 12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. 13 The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, 14 and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 16 "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live." 17 But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. 18 So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" 19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." 20 So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. 21 And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. 22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live."

2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. 2 The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. 3 When she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. 4 His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.



25 The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. 6 When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. 7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" 8 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. 9 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. 10 When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

Children's Message Doing what is right...

Choir Anthem

Message Civil Disobedience goes way back!

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 God, all creatures here below;
Praise God, for all that love has done.
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen*

Closing Hymn #570 We Shall Overcome ([click here](#))

Benediction

Sending Music



Opening Hymn Giving our Testimony

Refrain.

Sharing what God has done for you.
Telling what Jesus done for me.
Believing The Spirit is at work.
Giving our testimony.

1. Long time ago God spoke throughout the land.
Leading the people took them by the hand.
Today in our world God is speaking once again.
Calling us to claim the mighty kingdom.

2. God is present in our hearts and our lives,
So others may know and see with their eyes.
To tell the love of God and Jesus his son.
listen to others our story is one.

3. Tell me your story and I'll tell you mine.
How God changed our world turned the darkness to light.
Jesus come in our moment of need.
As a friend or a mother or a stranger indeed.

4. Joy is ours in the stories we share.
We learn of God's actions believe in God's care.
In Jesus our Christ God's love flows.
In the church and through the Spirit we grow.

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Hymn #286 Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

Refrain.

Spirit, spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness, calling and free,
Spirit, spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the
sea.

1. You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;
And over the eons you called to each thing,
"Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings."

2. You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;
When they were confounded by the idols and lies,
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.

3. You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;
And down in the city you called once again,
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.

4. You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,
from the bondage of sorrows the captives dream dreams;
Our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.
With bold new decisions your people arise.

Words and Tune: James K. Manley, 1978; alt.

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Closing Hymn #570 We Shall Overcome

1. We shall overcome, we shall overcome,
we shall overcome some day;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe
we shall overcome some day.
2. We'll go hand in hand, we'll go hand in hand,
we'll go hand in hand some day;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,
we'll go hand in hand some day.
3. We are not afraid, we are not afraid,
We are not afraid today;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,
we are not afraid today.
4. Our God will see us through, our God will see us through,
our God will see us through some day;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,
our God will see us through some day.
5. The truth shall make us free . . . some day.
6. We shall live in peace . . . some day.

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