

Living Table United Church of Christ

September 13, 2020 • Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Gathering Song

“Reignite the Revolution”

Refrain: Reignite the revolution. Reclaim the work that Jesus began. Reignite the revolution.
We know the way to live in this world. There is a way to serve all creation.
We have been called to forge sacred peace. Start to begin again. Start and begin again.

1. When you look at me what do you see? Do you recognize the holy in me or only in you?
Why does the color of my skin make you forget we are sacred kin? Jesus would see me.

Refrain

2. Why does the sound of my voice make fear the easy choice?
Do the clothes I need to wear make me the other to you?
What about my existence fuels such hate in an instant?
Jesus would know me.

Refrain

Bridge: Stop being fooled by fame and fortune. All that glitters is not gold.
Live the unity Jesus’ life undeniably told. Release your fear and let your life be grace extolled.
Reclaim! Reframe! Christian! Reclaim and reframe “Christian.” Get back to love.

3. Jesus broke tradition to improve the human condition.
Reached through social barriers to re-member all forgotten.
Challenged those in power – Rebellion ev’ry hour. Why do we forget?

Refrain

Start to begin again. Start and begin again.

Gathering Words

One: We gather here, seeking holy community.

All: As we gather, may we learn deeper compassion, so we may be more loving.

One: We gather here, seeking God’s grace.

All: As we worship may we learn forgiveness, so we may speak the language of hope to all.

One: As we gather here, we seek the Spirit’s wisdom.

All: As we open ourselves to the Holy One, may we learn to share grace more fully and welcome all in kinship and love.

Gathering Prayer

Liberating God, you set us free from our loneliness by company of another. You deliver us from our selfishness, so we may be of service to others. You break the stronghold of our pride, so we might walk with you in humility. You have shown us the way of forgiveness and love. As we renew our covenant with you and with one another, meet us in this worship time. Teach us how to live together, love together, and serve together, so that those around us might know that you are in their midst. Amen.

Welcome & Announcements

Acknowledging Our Need for God

Gracious God, too often we assume you only matter on Sundays. We see the sins of the world around us and tell ourselves that those sins are not ours. We keep silent when hatred speaks to our neighbors because those words are not our words. We turn from those in need because we have already made our donations for the week. We overlook the proclamations of the government because we have written letters and made phone calls. We sink into ourselves because we feel powerless or afraid or overwhelmed. May we hear your claim on us once more. Speak your words of covenant, that bind us one to another with love and grace, strengthening us for the work that remains before us.

Moments of Silent Reflection

Words of Promise

One: Two or twenty, ten or one hundred, we have gathered as God's people: broken, we are made whole; alone, we are welcomed into a family of faith; forgiven, we are sent to serve.

All: Forgiven, restored, loved. This community, this Living Table, reminds us of God's presence in our lives, of God's grace which makes us new in every moment. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Sharing the Peace

Song of Centering

“Everything New (Bring It On)”

Refrain: Bring it on, everything new, everything different, everything true.

I am ready, for my next thing to do

All I know it's gonna be everything new.

1. I'm through crying
I'm through waiting
I'm through hoping against all hope
I'm through longing for something gone
That'll never return.
Think I've finally learned.

Refrain

2. I'm through grieving.
I'm through dreaming
That the life I had is ever comin' back
No more wishing on someone else's star
That'll never be mine
I think it's time...

Refrain

3. I've survived many times before
Broken heart and slammed the door
I'll be all right, yes I will, once more
Just as I did back then
I'm gonna rise again.

Refrain 2 times

Litany of Covenant Renewal

One: Sometimes we lose our footing on the path God desires for us. We become discouraged in the face of pandemic and of violence in the world, in our nation, in our city, in our neighborhood, in our homes. We get caught up in the frustrations of economics and the measures of success. We lose ourselves in the hatred and fear that can fill our days. In a world such as this, we can often ask: God, what would you have us do?

All: We will open ourselves anew to the workings of the Spirit. We wait for you, Holy One, guide us.

One: We remember Abraham, a person to whom you made yourself known. Like him, we are willing to go out beyond the safety of this sanctuary, not knowing where you will lead us. Yet we trust that you will go before us to guide us.

All: Help us, God, to hear your call above the many conflicting and distracting voices around us. Then encourage us to accept your call to go out and be agents of your love and justice.

One: We remember Deborah who served as a prophet and a judge over the Israelites.

All: By the power of your Holy Spirit, give us wisdom to respond to your call, and like Deborah, to help others discover your amazing love.

One: We remember Paul who sought through his ministry to strengthen the body of Christ so that all its members could work together to serve you.

All: So we, the members and friends of Living Table, seek to witness and to work wherever you have placed us, in love for you, for one another, and for all our neighbors.

One: We remember the woman at the well, who, though unacceptable to some among whom she lived, was called to ministry.

All: Holy God, open our hearts that we may discern in others—and ourselves—the great worth and calling you bestow upon all people, that we may not ignore the world and its needs.

One: We remember and reclaim our part in the covenant of love made in Jesus.

All: We promise, by your grace, to participate in your covenant with us. With your wisdom and guidance, we will continue to work together to be Christ's hands, feet, voice, and heart in the world. Amen.

Thoughts of the People

Living Table's Relational Covenant

1. Speak from your own experience.
2. Speak and listen from your heart.

3. Speak and listen with respect.
4. Allow everyone to speak without interruption.
5. After each person has had a chance to speak, you may speak again.
6. If and when appropriate, hold the conversation in confidence.
7. We will continue to be in conversation even when it is difficult.
8. If you have a need for inner calm, you may call "heart check" for 30 seconds of group silence. If possible, wait until someone has completed speaking so as not to silence anyone.
9. When responding, do not attribute motive to someone's comments.
10. Act and speak out of love for yourself, each other, and the community.
11. We will hold ourselves and each other accountable for our words and actions.

Sacred Reading

Matthew 18:15-20

"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my God in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Message

Covenanting Together
Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe

Song of Reflection

"Make Us One"

Make us one, God, make us one; Holy Spirit, make us one.
Let your love flow so the world will know we are one in you. (*repeat*)

Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer of Jesus

<https://www.manyvoices.org/blog/resource/contemporary-lords-prayer/>

Our Parent, who is among us, blessed be your Creation.

May your reign be a reality here on earth.

May we become more interested in building your kin-dom here and now than in waiting for it to come down from above.

Let us share our bread with those who hunger.

Let us learn to forgive as well as to receive forgiveness.

Help us through the time of temptation, delivering us from all evil.

For ours are the eternal blessings that you pour upon the earth. Amen.

Offering

Offertory

Presentation of Gifts

“Lead Us to Your Table”

Lead us to your table, feed us for the journey, bind us all together, bless us, now we pray.
Lead us to communion, be our hope and vision; we will be your presence in the world today.

Prayer of Dedication

The Great Thanksgiving

One: May the exalted One be with you!

All: And also with you!

One: Open your hearts to the One who knows you by name.

All: We offer ourselves to the One who is always with us.

One: Give thanks to God, all of you, in prayer and song, in silence and service.

All: We sing to the One who calls us to worship.

One: Holy and Honest God:

in establishing all that is beautiful and joyful,
your glory banished chaos
and your goodness warmed all creation.

(...)

Therefore, we join our voices with all your people
in every age, time, and place, who forever sing your praises:

Song of Praise

“You Are Holy”

You are holy, you are whole. You are always evermore than we ever understand.
You are always at hand. Blessed are you, coming near.
Blessed are you, coming here to your church in wine and bread,
raised from soil, raised from dead.

You are holy, you are wholeness; you are present. Let the cosmos praise your name!
Sing hosanna in the highest! Sing hosanna! Sing hosanna evermore! (*repeat*)

We Remember

One: Great Giver of Joy:

(...)“Take and eat. This is my body broken for you.”

All: When we eat this bread, we trust that our brokenness will be made whole, and we promise to be agents of healing in the world.

One: After they had eaten, Jesus took the cup and held it to them saying, “Take and drink, for this is the cup of the new covenant poured out for forgiveness.”

All: When we drink this cup, we accept God’s forgiveness and promise to be agents of hope in the world.

One: Let us pray together:

All: Holy God, pour out your Spirit of welcome on the gifts of bread and cup. As we eat, strengthen us to go out and serve in many neighborhoods. As we drink, nourish us with faith and hope enough to share with those who thirst for goodness and life. We pray in the name of the One at whose table we gather. Amen.

Sharing the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy One, whose covenant of love gives us abundant life, we thank you for joining us together in this community. We thank you for the new and creative ways we can gather to worship you and come to your table. May the bread we eat and the cup we drink renew us and strengthen us for the work of love you set before us. In gratitude we pray. Amen.

Communion Song

“Friend of God”

Who am I that You are mindful of me, That you hear me when I call?
Is it true that You are thinking of me? How you love me, it's amazing.

I am a friend of God. I am a friend of God. I am a friend of God. God calls me friend. (2x)

Who am I that You are mindful of me, That you hear me when I call?
Is it true that You are thinking of me? How you love me, it's amazing.

I am a friend of God. I am a friend of God. I am a friend of God. God calls me friend. (2x)

God Almighty, Lord of glory, You have called me friend.
God Almighty, Lord of glory, You have called me friend.
God Almighty, Lord of glory, You have called me friend.
God Almighty, Lord of glory, You have called me friend.

I am a friend of God. I am a friend of God. I am a friend of God. God calls me friend. (2x)

Words of Sending

One: Go forth now, filled with God's grace.

All: We will be agents of God's peace.

One: Go forth now, with the words that can transform the world.

All: We will go to speak up for those who are not heard.

One: Go forth now, taking the light of God into the world.

All: We will go to be beacons of hope everywhere we go.

Song of Sending

“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 evermore.

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

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 evermore.

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

Refrain

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

Refrain

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

Refrain

Benediction

Contact Us

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