

SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

March 17 and 20, 2021



*“What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life?
The world would split open.”*

~ Muriel Rukeyser



Gathering as the Body of Christ.

CENTERING SONG

“WOMAN IN THE NIGHT (ST. 1-3)”

UMH 274

Woman in the night, spent from giving birth,
guard our precious light; peace is on the earth!
Come and join the song, women, children, men;
Jesus makes us free to live again!

Woman in the crowd, creeping up behind,
touching is allowed; seek and you will find!
Come and join the song, women, children, men;
Jesus makes us free to live again!

Woman at the well, question the Messiah;
find your friends and tell; drink your heart's desire.
Come and join the song, women, children, men;
Jesus makes us free to live again!

GREETINGS

PRESIDER

CALL TO WORSHIP

If your clothes are fine and you got lots of gold rings, you're welcome here.

If your clothes are dirty and you don't have a place to sleep, you're welcome here.

If you're feeling alone and you have no one you can call a friend, you're welcome here.

If your soul aches and you need a healing balm, you're welcome here.

If you're filled with anxiety and you seek peace, you're welcome here.

Come into this house to give thanksgiving and praise to the One who knows each of us by name.

OPENING HYMN

“THE OPEN TABLE”

MARK A. MILLER

Come, oh come, come to the Table.
Gather 'round, come without fear.
Known by name, here at the table, this table.
Welcome here, to the table of love.

Circle round, let's join together.
Share your joys, and bring your tears.
Strength and hope found at the table, this table,
Welcome here, to the table of love.

God is love. Love is creating
Something new, right here, right now.
We're children of God, here at this table, this table,
Welcome here, to the table of love.

CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PRESIDER READS REGULAR FONT; ASSEMBLY READS TEXT IN BOLD, WITH MICROPHONES MUTED.

Let us join our voices together in a prayer of confession:
Merciful God, whenever we seek you, love is what we find.

But you do not always find the same when you seek us.

Love is patient, **but often we are impatient.**

Love is kind, **but often we are rude.**

Love is not envious, **but we often covet.**

Love does not insist on its own way, **but we often do just that.**

Love does not rejoice in wrongdoing, **but we often celebrate violence.**

Love never ends, **and yet we do not always seek your love as our ultimate purpose.**

Help us, loving God, **to shed our sin and reflect the light of your love.**

Guide us that we might have faith in your presence, that we might hope in your providence, and, above all, that we might live with your love as our muse. **Amen.**

Hear the good news:

Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us.

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.

The old life has gone; a new life has begun. Thanks be to God!

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

You are invited to pass the peace to each other by waving or by typing in the chat function in Zoom.

Peace be with you! **And also with you!**

Let us share this peace with one another.

Service of the Word

POEM

“STILL I RISE”

BY MAYA ANGELOU

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise, I rise, I rise.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

O God, beautifully Divine, in you are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Open our eyes that we may see the wonders of your Word; and give us grace that we may clearly understand and freely choose the way of your wisdom; through Christ our Lord. Amen

SCRIPTURE READING

MARK 7:24-30

NRSV

A reading from the Gospel of Mark, chapter 7, verses 24 through 30

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a

Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Hear what God is saying to the people. **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

SARA SNOWDEN (3/17), LATIFAH GRIFFIN (3/20)

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

We come together to give you honor and praise.
We ask that you would help us to draw close to you.

Creator, hear us

Please come and speak your words of wisdom into our lives.
Help us to embrace one another, our similarities, our differences, our concerns and
our joys.

Redeemer, hear us

We long for your touch on our lives, that we might be your hands and feet to the world.
Inspire our hearts, heal our wounds, bring your peace into our worries and your hope
into our disappointments.

Sustainer, hear us

Come Lord and weave your love into our fellowship together, that we may overflow
with grace and allow your truth to light up our lives anew.

Amen.

Service of the Table

OFFERTORY SONG

“MOTHERING GOD, YOU GAVE ME BIRTH”

NCH 467

**Mothering God, you gave me birth in the bright morning of this world.
Creator, Source of every breath, you are my rain, my wind, my sun;
you are my rain, my wind, my sun.**

**Mothering Christ, you took my form, offering me your food of light,
Grain of life, and grape of love, your very body for my peace;
your very body for my peace.**

**Mothering Spirit, nurturing One, in arms of patience hold me close,
so that in faith I root and grown until I flower, until I know;
until I flower, until I know.**

Those who have requested an ecumenical prayer of blessing will now be placed in a breakout room with the preacher.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Holy One be with you

And also with you

Open your hearts to the One who is Love

We open our hearts to you, O God

Let us give thanks to God who takes risks for love

For the courage of the Holy that lives in us, we give thanks

Throughout history, O God, we have struggled to remember who we are. When forces of evil work to shape our understanding of you, ourselves, and one another, we get lost. We hide parts of ourselves. We keep the things that make us vulnerable buried deep. We cling to security and safety. We turn from meaningful connection with one another. We take cover under the patterns of our culture.

But you have created us for so much more.

In Jesus we saw a life lived in all its potential.

Life that is abundant, life that is collective, life that is tender and full.

But we saw, also, in him, what can happen to a life when power and norms are exchanged for truth, collective justice, and integrity. And so we wonder.

If we live true to our authentic selves, will we be condemned?

In proclaiming truths that confront unjust power, do we stand a chance of survival?
How will it go for us, if we are willing to risk everything for love?

You have never promised us safety, but you have shown us what is possible.
The Spirit brings new life even to places of death.
Jesus, knowing the dangers ahead, kept proclaiming his truth.
There was nothing worth his silence, not even his life.
And so he turned to community for companionship in the struggle.

On the night of his arrest, he gathered around table with his companions.
He took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples and said,
"This is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

He did the same with the cup after the supper, saying,
"This cup that is poured out is the new covenant."

In Jesus, God came out to the world, challenging systems and norms. And though
great violence was done and unfathomable loss was felt, Love presses on still
today, transforming life after life.

And so we pray, pour out your Spirit on this bread and this cup. Through these gifts, fill
our hearts with courage to live boldly for one another, proclaiming the truths that set
us free. Blessed be this meal of hope. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us join our voices in thanksgiving.

God, we give you thanks for the invitation to your Table. No matter who we are, no matter our struggles or regrets, we are never turned away. Like all the gifts you give us, may we never be content to keeping them to ourselves. May this meal compel us to invite others - especially those who are turned away from the tables of their families, their churches, their communities - to our own tables, overflowing with love and nourishment abundant. Amen.

Going Forth as the Body of Christ

CLOSING SONG

“RISE”

ARIANNE ABELA

1. I ___ will rise with all ___ my daugh-ters, I ___ will rise a-gainst my foes. I ___ will
 2. I ___ will rise for re-li-gious free-dom, for a rich di-ver-si-ty, I ___ will

rise with all the moth-ers, I ___ will car-ry all their woes. I ___ will
 rise for all the wear-y, for ___ each lone-ly re-fu-gee. I ___ will

rise to fight for free-dom, I ___ will rise, though faced with fears. I ___ will
 work for all ___ our wom-en who ___ de-serve ___ e-equal pay, I ___ will

1. rise a-gainst all ha-tred while my eyes are veiled in tears. - wait a bet-ter day. Sis-ters,
 work for all our chil-dren who a -

2.

REFRAIN:

Oh, ___ stand with ___ me. Rise up ___ hand in hand.

Oh, ___ stand with ___ me. We ___ will rise to ___ spread love a-cross this

1. bit-ter land. 2, 3. bit-ter land. Repeat refrain

ENDING:

I ___ will rise.

3. I will rise for love and justice that we may see a better day,
 I will rise in peace and service for our world in disarray,
 I will rise with all my brothers for all those who cannot stand,
 I will rise with all our fathers who have lost a home and land.
4. I will rise to build up bridges for this broken world we see,
 I will tear down walls between us that divide you and me.
 Brothers, (* skip to Refrain)

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BENEDICTION

SENDING & POSTLUDE

“RISE”

(REPRISE)

Go and search diligently where God resides,
 And pay homage to all in whom the Spirit lives.

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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Charles_Verlat_-_Jeune_fille_de_Bethlehem.jpg.

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Call to Worship: Rev. Susan A. Blain, United Church of Christ, 2014, <https://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/year-c/p/pentecost-sundays-after-2.html>, accessed July 23, 2020.

Poem: Maya Angelou, "Still I Rise" from *And Still I Rise: A Book of Poems*. Copyright © 1978 by Maya Angelou.

Prayer of Illumination: Caldwell Presbyterian Church, "Prayers for Illumination (for Scripture Readers),"

<http://www.caldwellpresby.org/docs/resources/Prayers%20for%20Illumination.pdf>

Prayer of the Community: Original prayer by: https://www.lords-prayer-words.com/family/prayers_for_women.html, accessed July 23, 2020, edited by LTS Chapel Team.

Offertory Song: "Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth" Music by Jonathan McNair and Copyright 1994 Pilgrim Press., Words by Jean Janzen and Copyright 1991 by the Author. Text based on the writings of Julian of Norwich. Used by permission.

Communion Liturgy: *Enfleshed*, "LGBTQ-related: Communion (4)," <https://enfleshed.com/pages/lgbtq-related>, accessed July 21, 2020.

Sending Song: "Rise" by Arianne Abela. Licensed for free non-commercial use. Sung by Marvin Ridge High School Choir, Dareion Malone, director | Mark Johanson, piano | Jordan Martin, guitar | Connor Knox, percussion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luWDgudpA0c>

**The worship planning team creates all other parts of the liturgy except where noted.*

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THE WORSHIP TEAM SEEKS:

To serve the universal church of our Creator.
To minister to the unique and diverse needs of the seminary community.
To foster an expansive culture of worship that values difference and challenges the normative.