



# First Central Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## EASTER SEASON THEME: ABIDING LOVE

April 25, 2021

Climate Change Sabbath

**Prelude**

Albumblätter

*Dvořák*

**Welcome and Announcements**

Rev. Katie Miller

**\*Greeting and Passing of the Peace**

*"The Peace of God be with you."*

*In Unison:* **Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

*\* Let us rise in body or spirit.*

**Call to Worship**

Jennifer Forbes Baily, liturgist

God, we gather in the midst of your creation, to build each other up in the faith you have given us. We come from isolated lives and self-centered living seeking community, so that together we might be kept safe in God's love.

**God we come, not alone but as part of your community.**

Rescue us from the tumult of our busy lives. Open our eyes to see you. Bind us together as we breathe your quiet presence.

**God we come, not alone but as part of your community.**

Shelter us in your community--Christ before us and behind us, Holy Spirit deep within us.

**God we come, not alone but as part of your community.**

**\*Processional Hymn**

Praise to the Living God

GOD

8

Praise to the Living God

Ps. 84:1-2

Curtis Beach, 1966; alt.

1 Praise to the liv - ing God, the God of love and light, Whose  
 2 Praise to the liv - ing God, from whom all things de - rive, Whose  
 3 Praise to the liv - ing God, who knows our joy and pain, Who  
 4 Praise to the liv - ing God, a - round, with - in, a - bove, Be -

word brought forth the myr - iad suns and set the worlds in flight;  
 Spir - it formed up - on this sphere the first faint seeds of life;  
 shares with us our com - mon life, the sa - cred and pro - fane.  
 yond the grasp of hu - man mind, but whom we know as love.

Whose in - fi - nite de - sign, which we but dim - ly see, Per -  
 Who caused them to e - volve, un - wit - ting, toward God's goal, Till  
 God toils wher - e'er we toil, in home and mart and mill; And  
 In these tu - mul - tuous days, so full of hope and strife, May

vades all na - ture, mak - ing all a cos - mic u - ni - ty.  
 hu - man-kind stood on the earth, as liv - ing, think - ing souls.  
 deep with - in the hu - man heart God leads us for - ward still.  
 we bear wit - ness to the Way, O Source and Goal of life.

Curtis Beach, born into a family of several generations of ministers, was educated at Harvard University, the Boston University School of Theology, and the University of Southern California. A minister in the United Church of Christ, Beach

Tune: DIADEMATA S.M.D.  
 George J. Elvey, 1868

Copyright 1966 by the estate of Curtis Beach

## **\*Invocation**

God of all Creation, at the beginning of time you placed a mandate on humankind to be stewards of Creation--to replenish and nurture all generations with what you have made. We kneel today amid that same Creation--a world that is, in many ways, more splendid than ever--but, in too many ways, scarred beyond recognition. Turn us from our unmindfulness. Help our faith be light. Help us to renew the world that supports us, so that we may once more know your Creation. Amen.

## **\*Gloria**

*Black Hymnal, No. 759*

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

## **Baptism of Rosemary Mina Lowndes**

Statement about Baptism

Questions to the Family

Congregational Assent

We who witness and celebrate this sacrament of baptism, on behalf of the whole Church, promise love, support, and care to Rosemary as she lives and grows on her faith journey.

The Act of Baptism

The Prayer for the Baptized

We give you thanks, O Holy One, Mother and Father of us all, Rosemary and for your love of her acknowledged here today in water and spirit. Embrace us all as your daughters and sons. Give to Rosemary strength for life's journey, courage in time of suffering, the joy of faith, the freedom of love, and the hope of new life, through Jesus Christ, who makes us one. Amen.

## **Conversation with the Children**

### **Epistle Lesson**

1 John 3:16-24

For the Word of God in scripture,  
For the Word of God within us,  
For the Word of God among us,  
**Thanks be to God.**

## Musical Interlude

### \*Prayer of Confession

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

God, you created our planet, the birds, fish, and other animals and you saw all that you had created and called it good. God of life, you also formed us, the human family to be your co-regents in ruling over the works of your hands, and to act compassionately and gently to all forms of life.

**Remind us, O God, and help us to change.**

We confess that we often forget that we are utterly dependent upon you and interdependent with the rest of your creation. We confess that instead of acting compassionately and gently, we have instead over-used and abused creation, forgetting that our lifestyles impact others around the globe.

**Forgive us, O God, and help us to change.**

We confess that we have not done enough to protect our planet. We confess that we have failed to insist that our government act urgently and swiftly on climate. We confess that we, as consumers, have not held companies accountable for their reckless pollution and carbon consumption, nor have we worked hard enough to limit our own consumption and pollution.

**Forgive us, O God, and help us to change.**

God of wisdom, help us understand that whatever we do to the web of life we do to ourselves.

God of power, help us acknowledge that we must act now and wake up to our moral obligation to the future of the planet, which you have entrusted to our hands.

**Forgive us O God, and help us to change.**

### \*Words of Assurance

God is the Creator, Shaper and Sustainer of all life, who offers us forgiveness and grace, redeeming us and all creation. Receive God's love for who you are, even as today your eyes are opened to the ways you can participate in God's healing and hope for our planet. God is even now changing us into who God would have us to be. Let us rejoice.

## Prayers

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## Offertory

Intermezzo

*Brahms*

### \*Hymn of Dedication

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit,  
Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

### \*Offertory Prayer

You have created all that is--skies and planets, oceans and dry land. Your spirit is honored as we live with integrity toward all life. Shape us to be stewards in your image, that all may be safe and nurtured under our watchful care, in the name of Jesus Christ who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for all eternity. Amen.

### \*Recessional Hymn

We Plant a Grain of Mustard Seed

SERVICE

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We Plant a Grain of Mustard Seed

*Matt. 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19;  
John 13:34-35; 15:12-17*

*Mary Bryan Matney, 1990*

1 We plant a grain of mus - tard seed, and in our faith we find  
 2 Our ac - tions, more than words, de - fine how love's ex - am - ple feeds  
 3 When stooped to lend a help - ing hand, we find a touch that heals,  
 4 Make love our pur - pose, love our aim, for love en - dures all things,

the proof of God is love, in - deed, which blos - soms from its kind;  
 a great - er love, for love di - vine bursts' forth from small - est seeds;  
 for love in - vest - ed will ex - pand to bear the fruit love yields;  
 and choos - ing love our lives will claim the peace for - give - ness brings;

the proof of God is love, in - deed, which blos - soms from its kind.  
 a great - er love, for love di - vine bursts forth from small - est seeds.  
 for love in - vest - ed will ex - pand to bear the fruit love yields.  
 and choos - ing love our lives will claim the peace for - give - ness brings.

5 So may our new be - gin - nings prove,  
 like liv - ing bread and wine,  
 that through our com - mon hu - man love  
 we taste what is di - vine;  
 that through our com - mon hu - man love  
 we taste what is di - vine.

6 Our lives will be ful - filled and blessed  
 if through the seeds we've sown  
 and by the love that we pro - fess  
 the love of Christ is known;  
 and by the love that we pro - fess  
 the love of Christ is known.

## **\*Benediction**

You were made for this earth, and this earth was made for you.  
Go forth to love and serve it, knowing in your deepest heart  
that you are blessed from the beginning of time.

## **Benediction Response**

*Bouma*

May you hear laughter in the wind. May you see hope in the light.  
May you find courage in your faith. May you know joy in your God.

## **Postlude**

Scherzo

*Schumann*

### **Open & Affirming Statement**

In our ongoing quest for hearts that open, minds that understand,  
and lives that serve, we welcome into our fellowship, membership, leadership, and employment,  
all people, regardless of abilities, race, gender, sexual orientation, or any God-given characteristic.

## Announcements

**April 25, 2021**

**Prayers:** *Dorothy Rydberg*, now recuperating at home; *Helen Sawtell*, hospitalized at Methodist.

**Happy Birthday this week:** to *Stephanie Cameron, Norma Le Clerc, Margaret Hole, Mara Martinez, Sebastian Cich, Carol Soukup*, and *Barb MacNaughtin*.

**Baptism:** During worship we will celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism for *Rosemary Mina Lowndes*, child of *Justin & Bethany Lowndes*. Sponsors are *Vince Lowndes* and *Kaylee Barber*.

**FirstKids:** Memorial Hall following the Conversation with the Children. Masks required.

### Activities for the Coming Week, April 26 – May 1

*Lectionary Readings: Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8.*

**Monday:** Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m.

**Wednesday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Choir, 7 p.m., Zoom

Vespers, 8 p.m., FaceBook Live

**Thursday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**Friday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**Saturday:** All ages hike with Katie. 10 a.m. Bring a sack lunch. Location TBD.

Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### Sunday, May 2

**Worship:** 10:30 a.m. on FaceBook Live, YouTube, or in person.

**Fifty-year Members:** recognized during worship.

*Want to donate electronically? Please scan the QR code.*

