



# First Central Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## EASTER SEASON THEME: ABIDING LOVE

May 9, 2021

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Celebrating Jim Harmon's 51<sup>st</sup> Ordination Anniversary

**Prelude**

Resurrection Meditation

**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**

Yvette Polinsky, liturgist

God speaks to the heart,  
**Offering compassion and hope.**  
God enlivens the mind,  
**Inviting curiosity and wonder.**  
God awakens all spirits,  
**Fostering sacred connection.**  
God nurtures our strength,  
**Creating unimagined possibilities.**  
God calls the whole world,  
**Inspiring extravagant love.**

**\*Processional Hymn**

Called as Partners in Christ's Service

11-11-76  
5-4-97

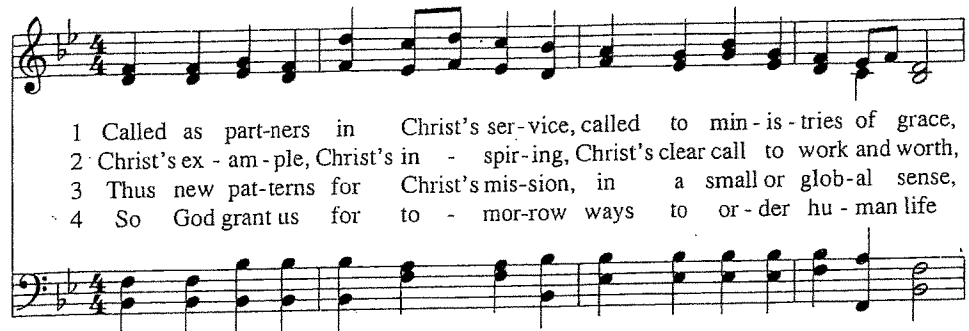
DISCIPLESHIP

# Called as Partners in Christ's Service

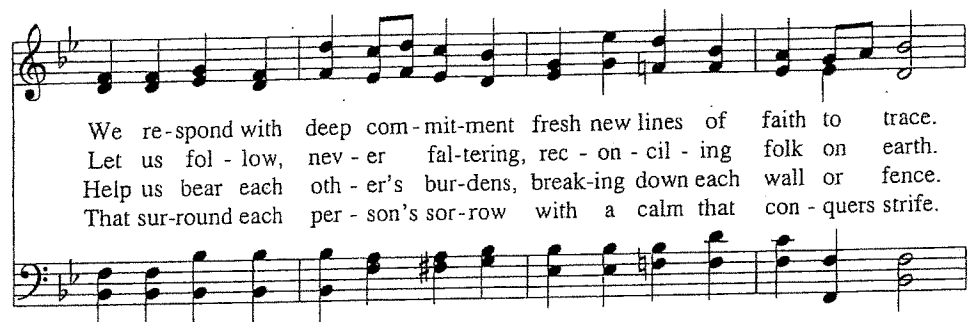
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Jane Parker Huber, 1981

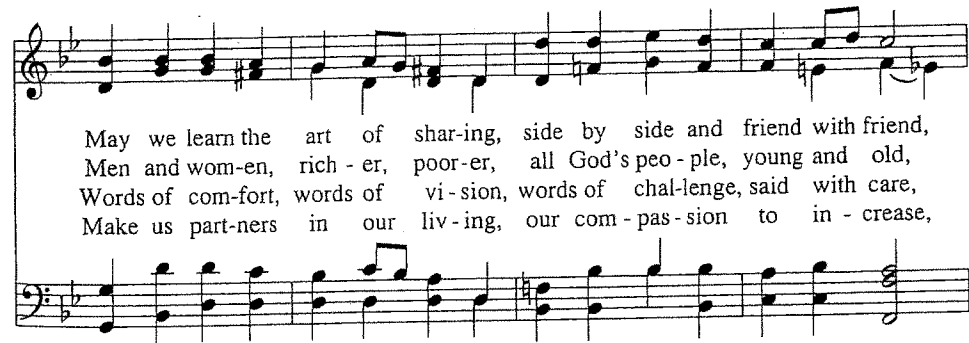
John 15:12-17; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 2:14-22



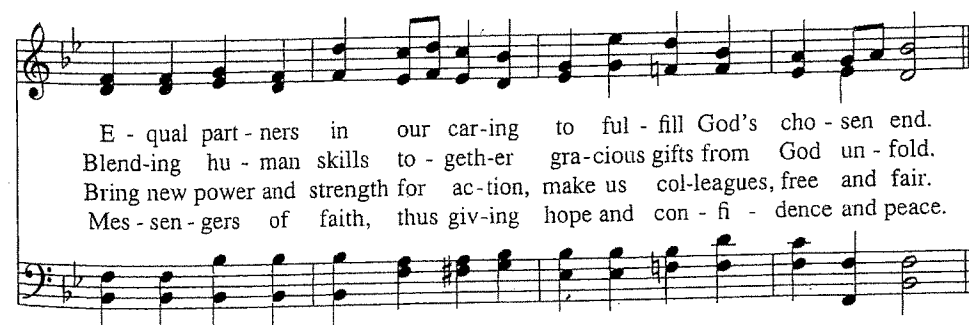
1 Called as part-ners in Christ's ser-vice, called to min-is-tries of grace,  
2 Christ's ex-am-ple, Christ's in-spir-ing, Christ's clear call to work and worth,  
3 Thus new pat-terns for Christ's mis-sion, in a small or glob-al sense,  
4 So God grant us for to-mor-row ways to or-der hu-man life



We re-pond with deep com-mit-ment fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
Let us fol-low, nev-er fal-tering, rec-on-cil-ing folk on earth.  
Help us bear each oth-er's bur-dens, break-ing down each wall or fence.  
That sur-round each per-son's sor-row with a calm that con-quers strife.



May we learn the art of shar-ing, side by side and friend with friend,  
Men and wom-en, rich-er, poor-er, all God's peo-ple, young and old,  
Words of com-fort, words of vi-sion, words of chal-lenge, said with care,  
Make us part-ners in our liv-ing, our com-pas-sion to in-crease,



E - qual part - ners in our car - ing to ful - fill God's cho - sen end.  
Blend - ing hu - man skills to - geth - er gra - cious gifts from God un - fold.  
Bring new power and strength for ac - tion, make us col - leagues, free and fair.  
Mes - sen - gers of faith, thus giv - ing hope and con - fi - dence and peace.

## **\*Invocation**

Creating Spirit, we join with the chorus of all of creation to celebrate your wondrous deeds. Fill us with your joy and train our ears for harmony, so that we may contribute to the world you are already creating. All this we pray in the name of Jesus, who revealed what is possible through love. 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.

## **Conversation with the Children**

### **Lessons**

1 Samuel 3:1-19, Acts 9:1-22

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.**

### **Sermon**

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Pulpit

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

## **Musical Interlude**

### **\*Prayer of Confession**

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

Unwavering God, we keep asking what is it that you most want us to do with our lives. You offer the same answer every time—Love one another as I have loved you. We confess that our love for others is not always what we hope it would be. We can be quick to judge and slow to offer grace. We can be swift to anger and resistant to making amends. We can be prone to suspicion and resistant to building trust. When we hear your call, we are sometimes hesitant because it means we must change. Unwavering God, hear our struggles and forgive us, we pray. Amen.

### **\* Assurance of Forgiveness**

Friends, hear the good news. God's love is so extravagant and inclusive that it knows no bounds. It transcends borders and speaks a universal language. Abide in that love. Find joy in that love. Be renewed by that love. Replicate that love in the world.

## 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

Elevation #16

*Bouma*

## \*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

Generous God, we offer you the fruits of our time, talents, and resources. We celebrate all that we have been given. May these offerings nourish and strengthen the community to grow spiritually, emotionally, and physically. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

## \*Recessional Hymn

You Are Called to Tell the Story

REGENT SQUARE

You are called to tell the story, passing words of life along, then to blend your voice with others as you sing the sacred song. Christ be known in all our singing, filling all with songs of love.

You are called to teach the rhythm of the dance that never ends, then to move within the circle, hand in hand with strangers, friends. Christ be known in all our dancing, touching all with hands of love.

You are called to set the table, blessing bread as Jesus blessed, then to come with thirst and hunger, needing care like all the rest. Christ be known in all our sharing, feeding all with signs of love.

May the One whose love is broader than the measure of all space give us words to sing the story, move among us in this place. Christ be known in all our living, filling all with gifts of love.

## \*Benediction

## **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**

Holy Manna

### **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

**May 9, 2021**

**Prayers:** for *Susan Dolezal* and *Sandy Lee* and their families, whose mother *Maryhelen Graul*, died this week.

**Joys:** *Dr. Phil Smith*, awarded the *J.G. Elliott Award* by the University of Nebraska Medical Center for making UNMC a leader in biopreparedness.

**Happy Birthday this week:** to *Grant Switzer, Ashley Villatoro, Mike Godfrey, and Barb Dietrich*.

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

**Celebration:** of *Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon's* 50+1 anniversary of his ordination! Join us on the patio after worship (weather permitting).

### Activities for the Coming Week, May 10 – May 15

*Lectionary Readings: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; Psalm 1; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19.*

- Monday:** Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m.  
Eves, 7 p.m., patio at First Central
- Tuesday:** Council, 7 p.m., Zoom
- 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:** Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### Sunday, May 16

- Worship:** 10:30 a.m. on FaceBook Live, YouTube, or in person.  
Graduate Recognition during worship

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

