

RUTHERFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ

251 Union Ave, Rutherford, NJ 07070

(201) 438-6324

www.rccucc.com

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

World Communion Sunday

October 2, 2016

10:30 A.M.

For those of you unfamiliar with our worship service, please note:

- We invite your active participation in word or song where noted in **bold type**.
- Please stand in body or spirit at the *.
- The sanctuary is equipped for us to provide you with **hearing-assist devices** if they would be helpful during our worship celebration. Please see Fred Dammers, seated at the soundboard located in the left rear corner of the sanctuary, for assistance.
- **'Check-in' on Facebook** and let everyone know you are here at worship!

*This is **World Communion Sunday**, a day when we consciously gather with followers around the planet to take in the bread and cup of life and liberation. We worship, acknowledging the brokenness and hope that exists around the world and proclaim that the death-dealing ways of the powers-that-be are not the ways of God and Jesus, the radical one from Nazareth.*

Our texts today focus on the suffering and injustice, beauty and hope of community. Habakkuk reveals the resistance and persistence needed in a life of faith. That even if justice never seems to prevail, we are called to be watch-posts, paying attention to how God's word and vision is revealed so that it may be read and lived out.

On this World Communion Sunday, we hold together the tension of lament and suffering, hope and justice. This morning's liturgy creates space for us to feel connected to the Church throughout the world while naming the suffering and beauty on the planet, God's One Body.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

"Song 13"

P. Whitlock

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Come.

Let us be God's community.

Come with love.

The steadfast love of God never ceases.

Come with curiosity.

We are one body, one planet, one Church.

Come with hope.
As we gather with the bread and the cup, justice is served.
Let us worship.

INVOCATION

John W. Howell

O God, as we worship, make yourself known to us. If we have doubts, help us not to fear them but, rather, help us to find your presence in the ache of our uncertainty. If we have questions, relieve us of the burning need always to find answers, and help us to understand that in the darkness of things unknown it is easier to discover a flicker of light. If we have pain, help us to sense that you can always heal, though not always protect. If we have joy, help us to share it. Help us to see that joy feels best not bottled up but poured out like baptism water on all who are here, and that in the flow of joy expressed is the flow of your spirit whom we invite, just now. Amen.

* HYMN

#391 – In the Midst of New Dimensions
(vv. 1-3)

New Dimensions

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God,
we confess that the world suffers because of our sin.
We use power against others for our own benefit.
We misuse the natural resources of the earth
in carelessness and greed.
By our habits and apathies,
others are subjected to desolation, even despair.
Forgive us for making enemies and exiles
of those you call us to love and serve.
Forgive us for laying waste to the landscape of creation.
Forgive us for being complicit in causing others to grieve
and to wander without rest.
We wait on you, O God.
We hope in you.
You alone can restore all things, even us.
We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Lamentations 3:21-24

But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, [God's] mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in [God]."
Thanks be to God!

GLORIA

(#759) - *Gloria Patri*

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.

PASSING THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 (NRSV)

1:1 The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

The Prophet's Complaint

2 O Lord, how long shall I cry for help,
and you will not listen?
Or cry to you "Violence!"
and you will not save?
3 Why do you make me see wrongdoing
and look at trouble?
Destruction and violence are before me;
strife and contention arise.
4 So the law becomes slack
and justice never prevails.
The wicked surround the righteous —
therefore judgment comes forth perverted.

God's Reply to the Prophet's Complaint

2:1 I will stand at my watchpost,
and station myself on the rampart;
I will keep watch to see what he will say to me,
and what he will answer concerning my complaint.
2 Then the Lord answered me and said:
Write the vision;
make it plain on tablets,
so that a runner may read it.
3 For there is still a vision for the appointed time;
it speaks of the end, and does not lie.
If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
it will surely come, it will not delay.
4 Look at the proud!
Their spirit is not right in them,
but the righteous live by their faith.

SERMON

Rev. Ronald E. Verblauw

HYMN

#366 – God of Our Life

Sandon

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

OFFERTORY

Invitation

Anthem

“Love Has Broken Down the Wall”
RCC Singers

Mark A. Miller

* Response

Old Hundredth

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter;
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

* Dedicatory Prayer

**Gracious God, you are good news for a weary world.
You are hope for people in despair, and you are home to exiles.
Accept, we pray, the offerings we bring this day.
Use them according to your own purpose and grace.
In Christ’s name we ask it. Amen.**

AN ORDER FOR COMMUNION

INVITATION

Friends,

what we are about to do is to celebrate the Joyful Feast of the people of God.

**When we are able, with the Holy One,
to experience the vision of love for God’s Global Village here on earth –
then all of creation will come as equal companions to sit at this table.**

In the meantime, you and I are invited to eat and drink,
to be nourished and renewed for the ongoing work of justice,
embracing mercy and walking humbly with God.

This is an open table, all are welcome, no exceptions.

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Holy One, One of many names and faces,
we thank you for how the light came out of darkness,
for the division of the waters and dry land,
for creating the whole planet up and through the cosmos

and calling it sacred.

**We thank you for creating us in your image,
to live connected with love,
for the gift of life, speech, and movement
and freedom to live in Your Way.**

Moses revealed your vision in commandments.
Your prophets unleashed cries for justice when your planet's beauty was violated.

**Through long generations we have ebbed and flowed
with suffering and sorrow, healing and renewal.
In the most beautiful and oppressive of times,
You still called us beloved.**

You are full of wonder and awe, O God.
Your ways are just and prophetic.
With all of creation in all times and places,
with our brothers and sisters around your planet
we lift our voices to you as one:

**Holy, holy, holy, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy God, Creator of milk and honey, of wheat and grapes,
this table has over time been a symbol of restoration and community,
a call to remembrance.

Draw us into thanksgiving for the gift of receiving your holy welcome
and the powerful memory of the justice work
of the radical rabbi from Nazareth, Jesus.

**We share bread and wine from your global planet,
symbolizing the suffering and beauty,
and the need for freedom on every mountain,
in every river, on land, and sea, in village,
farm land, town and city.**

[Presentation of breads]

As we consume the bread and cup of community,
root us firmly in your vision of justice,
intended for Your One Body.
Let its flavor move us to a commitment

to share such welcome and hospitality
with all who live and breathe on your planet.

**As we drink the cup and consume the bread,
may your Spirit be with us,
enlivening us with courage and hope
to join together in the sacred work
of restoring your planet.**

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

**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 sins, as we forgive those that sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

(By Intinction)

Come to the Table of Grace
Let Us Break Bread Together

Barbara Hamm
African-American Spiritual

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**As one body, we lament with those who lament.
We hope with those who hope.
We live with suffering. We live with beauty.
Let us go from this table as a renewed community,
doing the radical work of Jesus that calls us
to live justice-making lives of faith.
We are followers of God's Way.
We give thanks!**

HYMN OF PARTING Make Me A Channel of Your Peace Fred Dammers, Guitar

**Make me a channel of your peace, where there is hatred let me bring your love;
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord; and where there's doubt, true faith in you.
Make me a channel of your peace, where there's despair in life let me bring hope,
Where there is darkness only light, and where there's sadness ever joy.
O Master, grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love with all my soul.
Make me a channel of your peace. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
In giving to all men that we receive, and in dying that we're born to eternal life.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Praise God Ye Sons of Men”

J. Walther

The following resources were used in preparing this morning’s liturgy:

Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship, Updated, Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi, Editors, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2012).

Feasting on the Word Worship Companion, Copyright 2013. Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press.

Beauty and Suffering: God’s Holy Planet, A Service of Holy Communion for World Communion Sunday, was written by the Rev. Ashley Goff, an ordained UCC minister serving at Church of the Pilgrims (PCUSA), Washington, DC.

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