

Visions United Church

January 22, 2023

There is no act too small, no act too bold. The history of social change is the history of millions of actions, small and large, coming together at critical points to create a power that governments cannot suppress.

- Howard Zinn, The Historic Unfulfilled Promise (2012)

GATHERING TOGETHER

Welcome

Gathering

As we gather for worship, we acknowledge that we live and work and worship on lands that are, by law, the unceded territory of the Wabanaki peoples predominantly the Mi'kmaq and the Wolastoqiyik. May we live in peace and friendship the it's peoples.

Candle-lighting

One: Peace we are called to live be with You!

All: And also with you!

Sharing our WOW moments

Call to Worship:

Here in this place, there are no foreigners, no come-from-aways, no strangers
for all are welcome in this holy space, this sacred time.

Here in this worship, in this community, there is only acceptance,
for love is the language of faith.

Here in our lives, there are no divisions,
for God dwells in each of us.

Come, let us worship in unity and love.

Gathering Prayer

Hymn: VU #409 Morning Has Broken

Words: Eleanor Farjeon ©1931 Music: Gaelic Melody,
All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONE LICENSE A -720804

LISTENING FOR TRUTH

Theme Conversation

Division of wealth.

The riches 10 percent earn 52 percent of the worlds income.... going to illustrate with potato chips or popcorn.

Reading: Ruth 3:1-18

Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, 'My daughter, I need to seek some security for you, so that it may be well with you. Now here is our kinsman Boaz, with whose young women you have been working. See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing-floor. Now wash and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing-floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, observe the place where he lies; then, go and uncover his feet and lie down; and he will tell you what to do.' She said to her, 'All that you tell me I will do.'

So, she went down to the threshing-floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her. When Boaz had eaten and drunk, and he was in a contented mood, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came quietly and uncovered his feet, and lay down. At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and there, lying at his feet, was a woman! He said, 'Who are you?' And she answered, 'I am Ruth, your servant; spread your cloak over your servant, for you are next-of-kin.' He said, 'May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter; this last instance of your loyalty is better than the first; you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not be afraid; I will do for you all that you ask, for all the assembly of my people know that you are a worthy woman. But now, though it is true that I am a near kinsman, there is another kinsman more closely related than I. Remain this night, and in the morning, if he will act as next-of-kin for you, good; let him do so. If he is not willing to act as next-of-kin for you, then, as the Lord lives, I will act as next-of-kin for you. Lie down until the morning.'

So, she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before one person could recognize another; for he said, 'It must not be known that the woman came to the threshing-floor.' Then he said, 'Bring the cloak you are wearing and hold it out.' So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley, and put it on her back; then he went into the city. She came to her mother-in-law, who said, 'How did things go with you, my daughter?' Then she told her all that the man had done for her, saying, 'He gave me these six measures of barley, for he said, "Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed." ' She replied, 'Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.'

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message That annoying Call to Seek Justice

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn: VU #227 For the Fruit of All Creation

Words: Fred Pratt Green ©1970
Music: Welsh folk Melody ca. 1784
Words Copyright ©1970 Hope Publishing
All rights reserved. *Reprinted under ONE LICENSE A -720804*

How Can I Give?

Offertory Dedication Hymn:

VU #542 We Give You But Your Own

Words: William Walsham How
Music: Johann Balthasar Konig 1738
All rights reserved. *Reprinted under ONE LICENSE A -720804*

Prayer of Dedication (Unison):

We offer to you, O God, all that we are. We offer our heart; fill it with your love. We offer our arms; embrace a world in need of healing. We offer our gifts; use them to build your kingdom. Bless all that we are and all that we bring and help us to live into our commitments.

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

Hymn: VU #676 God, Make us Servants of your Peace

Words: St. Francis of Assisi ca. 1220
Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley 1872
Words copyright © 1969 Selah Publishing Co. Inc
All rights reserved. *Reprinted under ONE LICENSE A -720804*

SENDING FORTH

Commissioning & Benediction (Responsive):

Though we part ways, we carry with us a call to embrace a world in need.

We will walk this road with those whom God sends our way.

Their pain will be our pain;

their joy, our joy.

As you have been blessed, go now and be a blessing to others.

We live and serve in devotion to God,

in partnership with Christ,

inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Go now in peace.

Choral Closing: MV #216 Wherever You May Go (vs 2)

Words and Music: David Kai, 1996 copyright ©1996 by David Kai
All rights reserved. *Reprinted under ONE LICENSE A -720804*

Closing Music: