

## The Beloved Community Gathered for Worship

September 1, 2019

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome! It's a joy to worship with you today. Large print bulletins & personal hearing amplifiers are available in the Narthex entry. Caring volunteers & paid staff tend our nursery during worship. Little ones are welcome any time and the service is piped to the Mezzanine.

**PRELUDE**

*Andante in G Minor* by Jiri Antonin Benda

Catherine York

**WELCOME**

The Rev. David Grishaw-Jones

In a quiet moment of reflection and discernment, we prepare our hearts, minds and bodies for worship and celebration.

**\*INVOCATION**

Arrows of Light, come, pierce my soul...  
Pierce my soul, pierce my soul, my soul, my soul!

Breath of the Bright Wind, make us one...  
Make us one, make us one, one people, one planet!

(\* Congregation may stand.)

**\*GATHERING PRAYER**

Hugh Tyler, pulpit assistant

One: Friends of God, Beloved Community:  
The hand of our God is upon her people, and our God is good!

**ALL: We come in holy wonder, in love and praise.  
We gather to rejoice in the goodness of our God.**

One: Disciples of Jesus, Beloved Community:  
Make of yourselves a humble dwelling for the gospel of peace!

**ALL: Lift our hearts, O Christ, and show us the Way.  
Open our eyes, O God, to your mysteries and promise!**

**\* HYMN**

*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

#43 NCH

**CALL TO PRAYER AND CONFESSION**

In a quiet moment, we're invited to reflect on the week past: the nearness of God's grace, opportunities for growth and change, or maybe moments of regret and bewilderment on our many journeys of faith and service.

## **RESPONSE**

I've got peace like a river  
I've got peace like a river  
I've got peace like a river in my soul...

I've got love like an ocean...

I've got joy like a fountain...

## **\*CELEBRATION OF GRACE & FREEDOM**

### **\*THE GREETING OF PEACE**

**\*RESPONSE**                      *From All That Dwell Below the Skies (verse one only)*                      #27 NCH

### **\*OUR COMMITMENT TO DISCIPLESHIP** (in unison)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace! Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Compassionate Teacher, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen!

## **A READING FROM THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES**

Mark 1:1-13

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you

who will prepare your way;

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight!’”

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

## POEM

"Beginners" by Denise Levertov,  
From Candles in Babylon

But we have only begun to love the earth. We have only begun to  
imagine the fullness of life.

*How could we tire of hope!—so much is in the bud.*

How can desire fail?—we have only begun to imagine justice and  
mercy.

*Only begun to envision how it might be to live as siblings  
with beast and flower, not as oppressors.*

Surely our river cannot already be hastening into the sea of nonbeing?

*Surely it cannot drag, in the silt, all that is innocent!*

Not yet, not yet—there is too much broken that must be mended,

*Too much hurt that we have done to each other  
that cannot yet be forgiven.*

We have only begun to know the power that is in us if we would join  
our solitudes in the communion of struggle.

*So much is unfolding that must complete its gesture, so much  
is in the bud.*

## SERMON

***Beginners on the Way***

Dave Grishaw-Jones

## \* HYMN

*Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?*

#539 NCH

## SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

## OUR CHURCH FAMILY PRAYS

## THE LORD'S PRAYER/PRAYER OF JESUS

*Our Father/Creator who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom/Realm 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/Realm, and the power and the glory for ever. Amen.*

## INVITATION TO OFFERING

Gifts of time, talent, and treasure make the mission and ministry we share possible. You  
may use a pew card to note online giving and gifts of service. Thank you.

## OFFERTORY

### \*DOXOLOGY (NCH #782)

To God, all glorious heavenly Light,  
To Christ revealed in earthly night,  
To God the Spirit now we raise  
Our joyful songs of thankful praise.

### \*PSALM 121

Refrain:            Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen!

I lift up my eyes to the hills –  
    from where will my help come?  
My help comes from God,  
    who made heaven and earth. **(R)**

God will not let your foot be moved;  
    God who keeps you will not slumber.  
God who keeps Israel  
    will not slumber nor sleep. **(R)**

God is your keeper;  
    God is your shade at your side.  
The sun shall not strike you by day,  
    nor the moon by night. **(R)**

God will keep you from all evil;  
    God will keep your life.  
God will keep your going out and your coming in  
    from this time on and forever more. **(R)**

### \*SENDING FORTH HYMN

*Amazing Grace*

NCH #547

### \*BENEDICTION

**POSTLUDE**     *Allegretto Grazioso in A Major* by Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach

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