

**Peace United Church of Christ
April 28th, 2024**

**Fifth Sunday of Easter
Confirmation Sunday
10:30am**



A Choice, Lauren Wright Pittman

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Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Ringling of the Bells

*Call to Worship

We gather together to show love.

We gather together.

We gather together to practice gratitude.

We gather together.

We gather together to celebrate kindness.

We gather together.

We gather together to embrace joy.

We gather together. Thanks be to God!

*Song

Joy to the World

#132 NCH

***Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
let earth its praises bring;
Let every heart prepare Christ room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.***

***Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.***

***Christ rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
The glories of God's righteousness
and wonders of God's love,
and wonders of God's love,
and wonders, wonders of God's love.***

*Prayer of Confession & Words of Assurance

Let us confess our sins together, trusting in God's love for us.

God, forgive us for not being present for the people we love. Help us to work on being present for all the people who have been in our lives and all the people who will come into it. Forgive us for the ways we hurt others, and grant us the strength to ask for their forgiveness.

Family of God, we believe these words to be true: We love because God first loved us. God's message lights our path, and God helps us to let go of our regrets and sins. Glory be to God!

*Passing of the Peace

Story for All Ages

Amanda McElray Hunter & Confirmands

Sending the Children

***Goodbye sweet children, it's time to leave this place,
May our love hold you all with grace.
Our hearts go with you 'til you come back to this place.
So we bid you goodbye, goodbye, goodbye.***

Contemporary Reading

excerpt from *Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder's Meditations on Hope and Courage* by Steven Charleston

We will walk together through this lonely stretch of road, all of us who have come this far into the valley of shadows. We will not be afraid or anxious, for we have one another. We have our shared strength, our common wisdom, and our collective memory to help us through whatever may come. We have the quiet counsel of our elders and the boundless energy of our young ones. We have the depth of faith of many courageous hearts. We have the resilience and experience of all those among us who have passed this way before. And when the going gets hard, we have a thousand voices to sing, singing as we go along the twisted path toward higher ground, where the shadows will be far behind us.

Special Music

Scripture Readings

Exodus 3:1-12
pg 48 NRSV

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then God said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." God said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" God said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."

Luke 10:25-37
pg 67 New Testament NRSV

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

May these words be to us our light and our life. **Thanks be to God.**

Choir Anthem

Ave Maria, Franz Biebl

Sermon

Song

These Footsteps

#15 P&W

***Follow in these footsteps
cast your burden down
breathe like it's your last breath
pray without a sound
offer up your best gift
pass it all around.
Follow in these footsteps
walk on holy ground.***

***Jump into the river
feel the current's pull
let it overtake you
let it make you full
when you reach the ocean
big and wild and blue.
Listen to the waves speak
love is calling you.***

***You are called my daughter
You are called my son
come up through the water
know that we are one
offer up your best gift
pass it all around.
Follow in these footsteps
walk on holy ground.***

Rite of Confirmation & Reception of New Members

Words of Introduction

Blessing from Parents

Questions for Those Being Confirmed

Questions for New Members

Blessing

UCC Statement of Faith

#885 NCH

**We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit,
God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God,
and to your deeds we testify:
You call the worlds into being,
create persons in your own image,
and set before each one the ways of life and death.
You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness
and sin.
You judge people and nations by your righteous will
declared through prophets and apostles.
In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and
risen Savior,
you have come to us
and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to yourself.
You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,**

**binding in covenant faithful people of all ages,
tongues, and races.**

**You call us into your church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be your servants in the service of others,
to proclaim the gospel to all the world
and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.**

**You promise to all who trust you
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
your presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in your realm which has no end.**

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

Congregational Welcome and Prayer

Let us, as members and friends of Peace United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our shared calling:

We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together as pilgrims, walking in the way of Jesus.

People of God, let us pray for these young people :

Gracious God, we give you thanks for each young person here today. Increase in them the gifts of your Holy Spirit. Grant each of them love for others, joy in serving you, peace in disagreement, patience in suffering, kindness toward all people, goodness in evil times, faithfulness in temptation, gentleness in the face of opposition, and self-control in all things. Strengthen them for the ways you call them to serve others. This we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Community Prayers and the Prayer of Jesus

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Offertory

Kind and Generous, Natalie Merchant

*Doxology

**Praise God, whose image we all bear;
Praise Christ, whose mercy we all share;
Praise Spirit, making justice grow—
One God from whom all blessings flow!**

*Prayer of Dedication

*Closing Song

This Little Light of Mine

#524 NCH

***This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, (oh let it shine.)***

Everywhere I go...

All through the night...

*Benediction

*Postlude

2024 Confirmands:

Sophia Farell, Bergen Hubley, Cai Karstens, Callan Pfau, Henry Schwensohn, Seiji Sudoh,
Elise Westbrook and Noah Westrum

Assisting in Today's Service:

Cai Karstens, Sophia Farrell, Tres Commer, Ian Connell,
Carrie Kelsey, Cyndi Brown, Musicians
Pam Kramer, Laurie Berner and Julie Flotten, Ushers
Cindy Macaulay, Greeter

Peace United Church of Christ

April 28th, 2024

New Member Orientation

If you are a friend of the church or a new visitor, please plan on staying today for a New Member Orientation. Our first session will be about our spiritual journeys and includes a church tour. Our second session on May 5th gives more details about peace Church, the UCC, and becoming a member. There will be a light lunch provided and childcare provided upon request. Children are also welcome to attend.

Next Sunday's Forum: MN Conference UCC Outdoor Ministries

Rev. Kevin Brown, Associate Conference Minister of Faith Formation for Children & Youth, will provide a time for Q&A about the MN Conference UCC's hopes and plans for the future of Outdoor Ministries here. Ideas welcome! This is not just about camps for kids - though that's certainly part of it - it's about opportunities for people of all ages to experience God in creation and connection.

Property Team Work Day, May 9th 5:30-8:00pm.

This evening involves tree planting! Bring your shovel and gloves and help us bring new life to the grounds. There will be additional small inside projects for handy- and no-so-handy alike! Please join us, the last couple of work days have really been fun! Contact Stacey Stark (stacey.stark@gmail.com) or Bri for more information.

2nd Saturday Volunteer Event: Gardening for Chum May 11th 9 AM - noon!

Let's bring spring to the Chum building! We're calling on volunteers to join us for a day of flower planting to brighten our surroundings. No prior experience is necessary! Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just eager to get your hands dirty, everyone is welcome to join in the fun. It's a fantastic opportunity to bond with fellow volunteers and make a positive impact on our community. If you have gardening equipment such as gloves, small shovels, or garden forks, please bring them along with you. Let's make this planting day a blooming success!

Weekly Calendar

Monday, April 29th

5:00pm Making Meaning out of Malignancy in the Fireside Room and Zoom

Wednesday, May 1st

8:45am CHUM Breakfast Making in the Kitchen

5:15pm SOU/Peace Working Group in the Staff Lounge and Zoom

6:00pm Youth Group in the Fellowship Hall

6:00pm Bible Study in the Fireside Room and Zoom

6:15pm Choir in the Sanctuary

Thursday, May 2nd

8:00am Men's Breakfast at Perkins on London Rd

Saturday, May 4th

12:15pm CHUM High Tea at Our Savior's Lutheran Church

Sunday, May 5th

8:30am Worship with **Holy Communion. Sermon** by **Rev. Kevin Brown**

9:30am Self-Serve Coffee in the Narthex

9:30am Forum: MN Conference UCC Outdoor Ministries with Kevin Brown in the Fireside Room

10:30am Worship with **Holy Communion. Sermon** by **Rev. Kevin Brown. Children's Church** with **Amanda McElray Hunter.**

11:30am New Member Orientation in the Fireside Room

11:30am Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall

Minnesota Conference UCC Faith Formation & Outdoor Ministries Needs Your Input!

Please help the Minnesota Conference better support and equip your local congregation's ministry. The Conference needs to hear from you as we assess and reimagine our Faith Formation and Outdoor Ministries.

Here is one way to help!

Take the survey! Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts and experiences with us. Whether you have participated in several Conference events and gatherings or have never participated, we need to hear from YOU!

To participate, simply click on the QR Code



Please be part of a Listening Session on Sunday, May 5th, after the 10:30 am service. Kevin Brown, Associate Conference Minister of Faith Formation for Children & Youth will be joining us at Peace for a conversation to assess the effectiveness of the UCC's programs and identify areas for improvement. Refreshments are provided! We are looking for 10 participants to join us and give feedback on adult, children and youth programming.

Contact Amanda at amanda@peaceucc.org for more details and to join the listening session!

A significant yearly budget is dedicated to the development of programs that will support your local church. Please share your thoughts and experiences with us. Your input is vital!

