

Peace United Church of Christ
October 11, 2026
Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
10:30am



Woven Bird, Tree, and Flower Motif, William Morris

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www.peaceucc.org
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Prelude

Angel from Montgomery, John Prine

Welcome and Announcements

Ringling of the Bells

Choral Call to Worship

***Come and remember who you are here
Do this to remember who I am
Come and remember you belong here
All belong here***

*Call to Worship

Praise the Lord! Give thanks to God,
God is good, God's steadfast love endures forever.
Who can proclaim all God's redemptive acts?
Who can declare all God's mighty deeds?
Happy are those who observe justice and do righteousness.
God is good, God's steadfast love endures forever!

*Song

Great Is Your Faithfulness

#423, New Century Hymnal

***Great is your faithfulness, O God, Creator,
with you no shadow of turning we see.
You do not change, your compassions they fail not;
all of your goodness forever will be.***

Refrain:

***Great is your faithfulness!
Great is your faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed your hand has provided,
Great is your faithfulness, God, unto me!***

***Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
to your great faithfulness, mercy, and love.***

Refrain:

***Pardon for sin and a peace so enduring,
your own dear presence to cheer and to guide.
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine with ten thousand beside.***

Refrain:

*Prayer of Confession

O God, our strength and our redeemer, we confess that we do not always trust your true, good name. We worship what is not you. We trust other names. We reject your invitation into discipleship and belonging.

Forgive us and grant us your peace, that we might trust and follow only you. Amen.

*Assurance of Forgiveness

Let us proclaim the good news:

God's grace is for each one of us, each day. Through Christ we are forgiven and set free for new life. Thanks be to God!

*Passing of the Peace

Story for All Ages

Amanda McElray Hunter

Sending the Children

***Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
Gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Immanuel) everywhere!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around:
loaves abound!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around:
loaves abound!***

Hebrew Bible Reading

Genesis 18

Phyllis Messenger, reader

paraphrase from *The Book of Belonging*, Mariko Clark

Sweat dripped from the women's faces as they hurried around the tent, baking and stirring, occasionally stopping to glower at each other. Silver-haired Sarah was hunched in bitterness. The younger woman, called Hagar, was stiff with protectiveness. There was no time to untangle the feelings because three strangers had arrived at their camp that morning, and the women were busy preparing a welcome meal. *Slice! Stir! Scoop!* The two women worked in sizzling silence, so many sharp words unsaid between them.

Sarah had not always been this way, sharp and biting. The Sarah that had followed Abraham from their homeland into a new adventure had been soft and hopeful. *A family. A family of our own!* she had marveled, full of anticipation. But a year passed, then five, then ten, and God's good promises started to feel like a distant, teasing dream. Despair is easier than hope, control is easier than trust, so Sarah grasped for God's gifts with a harmful plan of her own: "You might as well marry Hagar! Start this new

family with her!" she had shouted when she shoved the young woman toward Abraham.

Oh, the fear, the doubts, the untrue names Sarah had trusted. They rippled out in hurt and harm as she found a way to reach for the family she wanted. Her plan worked—sort of. Abraham's new wife had a son. They named him Ishmael and loved him dearly. But Sarah was left on the outside, watching their family form. *Slice! Stir! Scoop!*

As the women worked, one of the stranger's voices floated into the tent, saying, "I'll return next year and your wife Sarah will have a son!" Sarah froze, silver and silent. *A son? Me? After all this time?* And she couldn't help it—she laughed, sharp and bitter. But God knew everything Sarah's laugh held: disbelief, despair, and a feeble hope. "Why did you laugh? Is anything too marvelous for me?" came God's voice. Sarah wrestled with God's words. As her belly grew, fear and mistrust battled with her joy.

The year drew to a close, and Sarah gave birth to her son. They named him Isaac, which means laughter. And this time, Sarah's laugh was light and soft. She had trusted many names, but on this one she and God agreed: Sarah was a mother.

Choir Anthem *Come to the Water*, John Foley

Hebrew Bible Reading Exodus 32:1-14

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron and said to him, "Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters and bring them to me." So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. He took these from them, formed them in a mold, and cast an image of a calf, and they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it, and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord." They rose early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being, and the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to revel.

The Lord said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!'" The Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. Now let me alone so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, and of you I will make a great nation."

But Moses implored God and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that God brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember Sarah and Abraham, Rebecca and Isaac, and Leah and Rachel and Jacob, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.' " And God changed God's mind about the disaster that God had planned to bring on God's people.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis

Song

Prayer Song

#27, Praise & Worship

***Merciful God soften our hearts
Open us up to your Will
Wash us in Your Love, show us the Way
Humbly to serve You still.***

***Mother, Daughter, Sister God
Please help us follow Your Way
Give us direction, vision to see
In Your Holy Name we pray.***

Community Prayers and Pastoral Prayer

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.

Prayer Song reprise

Offertory

Ghosts in the Graveyard, Jeff Black

*Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above ye heavenly host,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen!**

*Prayer of Dedication

*Closing Song *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* #25, New Century Hymnal

***Our God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:***

***Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is your arm alone, and our defense is sure.***

***Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.***

***A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.***

***Time, like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten, as a dream fades at the opening day.***

***Our God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Still be our God while troubles last, and our eternal home!***

*Benediction

*Postlude

Assisting in Today's Service:

Musicians: Ron Deters, Ian Connell, Bud Trnka, John Bankson, and Matt Prois
Warren Post and Pam Kramer, Ushers

Peace United Church of Christ Staff

Alex Nelson – Livestream Technician

Amanda McElray Hunter – Children, Youth and Small Group Coordinator

Bri Dornbush – Office Coordinator

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis – Pastor

Carrie Kelsey – Kitchen Manager

Dan Shepard – Maintenance

Jim Pospisil – Music Director

Rev. Laurie Crelly – Pastoral Care Chaplain

Mali Lorenz – Bookkeeper

Rachel Burnett – Business Manager

Sophia Farell – Soundboard Technician



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Today's Forum: Faith in Democracy

In the midst of divisive rhetoric and threats to our civil rights, there is a role for faith communities to play. Join this Sunday to hear about what's ahead this fall, including a Souls to the Polls event, an election night prayer vigil, and other ways for us to show up as nonpartisan people of faith to protect our democracy.

Queer Connections Board Game Night Monday, October 12 at 6:30pm in the Fireside Room

Queer Connections is a LGBTQIA Social Group for all ages open to all. Join us for board games and making new connections. Queer Connections will be meeting October 12 at 6:30pm in the Fireside Room.

New Member Orientation, Sunday, October 18, 11:45am in the Fireside Room

We welcome all who are interested in learning more about Peace, what we believe, how we engage the community, and how we're structured to join us for one of these orientation sessions. Join us on October 18 at 11:45am in the Fireside Room where we will provide a light lunch. If you need childcare for any of the orientation classes please email Bri ASAP. Please RSVP to Bri in the church office via email or phone (office@peaceucc.org or 218-724-3637). Just popping in is great too. Looking forward to meeting with you! New members will be received into the church on November 1. Save the date if you are interested in joining Peace.

Volunteer Opportunity: English as a Second Language Tutor

Be an ESL tutor and help someone learn English. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:00–6:30pm. Classes will be held at the Building for Women, 32 E. 1st Street, Duluth. Classes begin October 27 and will use curriculum provided by ISD 709. To volunteer, follow these two steps: 1) Fill out a volunteer form online. Go to <https://dae.isd709.org/about-us/volunteers>. Check the box on the form that says English Language at the YWCA. 2) Send an email to Caroline Roth at the following address: programintern@ywcaduluth.org. Give her your name and contact information and tell her you filled out the Duluth Adult Education Form. Please follow both steps to insure that your form gets proper attention!

No Children & Youth Programs or Soup Supper Wednesday, October 14

No Soup Supper or Children & Youth Programs next Wednesday, October 14 due to MEA Weekend. Please join us the following Wednesday.

Fall Fest Stewardship & Capital Campaign Kick-Off Extravaganza & 4th Annual Chili Cook-Off October 25 from 11:30am–1:30pm

Join us for this family friendly event celebrating all things Stewardship & Capital Campaign and all things autumnal, with carnival games, a cakewalk, arts and crafts, good things to eat, and our 4th Annual Chili Cook Off! Last year our first-place winners were Lisa, Ross, and Sabine Feikema. Who will it be this year? The winner receives a ribbon! Look for a link to register for the Cook-Off in Peace's weekly email. Wear your Halloween Costume (non-violent imagery only please)! This year we are collecting gently used costumes to contribute to the Damiano

Center's Kids Costume Drive, so bring all those costumes that your kiddos have outgrown!

Women's Retreat: October 23–25

All female-identifying folk at Peace Church are invited to a retreat at Eagle Lodge at Clearwater Forest Presbyterian Camp in Deerwood, MN. Programs are still being planned but are sure to include time in the outdoors, reflection, and relaxation. Accommodations are disability-accessible and you are welcome to stay for one or two nights. Interested? Email the office (office@peaceucc.org) for the sign-up form.

Next Sunday, October 18 Forum: Human Rights in Guatemala

Peace Church members JT Haines and Maria Corradi Haines traveled to Guatemala with a group from Creekside UCC in Minneapolis this past spring. They will share about their experience around the following question: Guatemala has been brutalized by US-led Western corporate capitalism for decades (and centuries): Why is it important for us to know and think about this? Photos, storytelling, and a robust question and answer time will feature in this conversation.

This Week's Schedule

Monday, October 12

6:30pm Queer Connections Game Night in the Fireside Room

7:00pm Boy Scouts in the Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, October 13

6:00pm Property Team Meeting in the Staff Lounge and Zoom

Wednesday, October 14

8:30am Chum Breakfast Making in the Kitchen

1:00pm History Team Meeting in the History Room

3:30pm Finance Committee Meeting in the Staff Lounge and Zoom

5:45pm Bible Study in the Fireside Room and Zoom

6:15pm Choir in the Sanctuary

NO Soup Supper or Children & Youth Programs – MEA Weekend

Thursday, October 15

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

6:00pm Sanctuary Schools Meeting in the Fireside Room

Sunday, October 18

8:30am Worship with Holy Communion. Sermon by Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis

9:30am Self-Serve Coffee in the Narthex

9:30am Forum: Human Rights in Guatemala in the Fireside Room

10:00am Childcare Available in the Nursery

10:30am Worship with Sermon by Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis. Children's Church with Amanda McElray Hunter.

11:30am Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall

11:30am Liturgies for Resisting Empire Book Group in the Music Room

11:30am New Member Orientation in the Fireside Room