

Bethel United Church of Christ
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
July 26, 2020

"We believe in dreams and visions. We believe in old people running and children leading. We believe in the Kingdom of God within us. We believe in Love."

Ann Weems, Reaching for Rainbows

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SONG *"Rise Up and Praise"* Jason Fleener & Bethel Musicians

CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)

God, sometimes we get confused and lose our way.

Even when we know you are always there.

You have created us for a reason.

Give us direction and purpose as we find our way.

Challenge us when we are willing to settle for our own small plans and dreams.

Call us to become more than we are.

We come today like Jacob with a part to play in the story of faith.

INVOCATION (*unison*)

God, maker of all things, be with us today as we hear of dreams and visions. Help us use our imaginations as we worship. Create in us a heart of wonder and awe as we figure out just what you are calling us to do. Remind us that you have made each of us unique inside and out. Remind us that we were created to make your world a better place. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

OPENING HYMN#18 *"All People that on Earth Do Dwell"*

All People That on Earth Do Dwell

1. All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, sing
 2. Know that there is one God, in - deed, who
 3. En - ter the sa - cred gates with praise, with
 4. Pro - claim a - gain that God is good, whose

out your faith with cheer - ful voice; de - light in God whose
 fash - ions us with - out our aid, who claims us, gives us
 joy ap - proach the tem - ple walls. Ex - tol and bless our
 mer - cy is for - ev - er sure, whose truth at all times

praise you tell, whose pres - ence calls you to re - joice.
 all we need, whose ten - der care will nev - er fade.
 God al - ways as peo - ple whom the Spir - it calls.
 firm - ly stood, and shall from age to age en - dure.

WORDS: William Kethe, 1561, alt.
 MUSIC: Louis Bourgeois, 1551

OLD HUNDREDTH
 LM

Alt. tune: OLD HUNDREDTH (altered rhythm)

OUR SACRED STORY

Genesis 28:10-22

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the LORD stood beside him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the

earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one tenth to you."

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Hope of the Nations"

Jason & Musicians

MESSAGE

"Dreams and Blessings"

Rev. Karen J. Aitkens

BETHEL'S WELCOMING/INCLUSIVE STATEMENT

The Bethel UCC Welcoming Statement

Bethel United Church of Christ recognizes that God's commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself" contains no exceptions. This fact was often displayed during Jesus' ministry by his association with people from a variety of backgrounds, faith traditions and social classes. Following Christ's example, we commit to model actions and expressions of openness and understanding; offering justice, healing, and wholeness of life for all people.

No matter who – no matter what – no matter where we are on life's journey – notwithstanding gender, race, age, physical or mental capabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, economic status, education, marital status, faith background, nationality, or life experiences – we all belong to God and to one worldwide community of faith. The members of Bethel United Church of Christ joyfully and unequivocally welcome all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of participation in our congregation.

Come experience our extravagant welcome and help us build a brighter future for all through the healing and unconditional nature of God's love.

***HYMN#575**

"Come and Find the Quiet Center"

Come and Find the Quiet Center

Unison F B \flat C7

1. Come and find the qui - et cen - ter in the crowd - ed life we
 2. Si - lence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the
 3. In the Spir - it let us trav - el, o - pen to each oth - er's

F F B \flat

lead, find the room for hope to en - ter, find the
 pace, God it is who speaks and names us, knows our
 pain, let our loves and fears un - rav - el, cel - e -

C7 F Am7

frame where we are freed: clear the cha - os and the
 be - ing, touch - es base, mak - ing space with - in our
 brate the space we gain: there's a place for deep - est

Dm Am7 Dm Am7 B \flat (C7)

clut - ter, clear our eyes, that we can see all the
 think - ing, lift - ing shades to show the sun, rais - ing
 dream - ing, there's a time for heart to care, in the

F B \flat C7 F

things that real - ly mat - ter, be at peace, and sim - ply be.
 cour - age when we're shrink - ing, find - ing scope for faith be - gun.
 Spir - it's live - ly schem - ing there is al - ways room to spare!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/LORD'S PRAYER (*forgive us our sins....*)

OFFERING OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Invitation

Offertory

Response #46

"My Lord What a Morning"

Bethel Recorders

Praise God from whom all grace flows forth!

Praise Life, all creatures here on earth!

Praise Light who guides us on our way!

Praise Love who forms us day by day!

*Prayer of Dedication

CLOSING SONG#530

"I've Got Peace Like a River"

I've Got Peace Like a River 530

1. I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a
2. I've got joy like a foun - tain, I've got joy like a
3. I've got love like an o - cean, I've got love like an

riv - er, I've got peace like a riv - er in my
foun - tain, I've got joy like a foun - tain in my
o - cean, I've got love like an o - cean in my

soul. I've got riv - er in my soul.
soul. I've got foun - tain in my soul.
soul. I've got o - cean in my soul.

The image shows a musical score for the song "I've Got Peace Like a River" (number 530). It features three verses of lyrics and piano accompaniment. The score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first system contains the first three verses. The second system contains the continuation of the first verse and the start of the second and third verses. The third system contains the continuation of the second and third verses. The piano accompaniment is written in the bass clef and provides harmonic support for the vocal lines.

COMMISSION & BENEDICTION

Children of God, open yourselves to dreams and visions.

We will go out into God's abundance and tell the story of a Christ who claims each one of us and calls us to tell the story of faith and hope.

We are the inheritors of God's grace and love. Let us dream and live like we know it. And let the people say,
Alleluia! Amen.

POSTLUDE

"Back to Church Again"

Jason Fleener