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Facebook: Bethel United Church of Christ – Kansas City
Bethel United Church of Christ Bulletin
Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost
STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY
November 8, 2020

*"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God;
everyone who loves is born of God and knows God."*

1John 4:7

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

"Love in Action"

Gary Pierson

GATHERING SONG

"Lord Most High"

Bethel Praise Team

CALL TO WORSHIP *(responsive)*

God has given us this beautiful earth and all that grows upon it.

Thanks be to God.

God has given us love so we can love others.

Thanks be to God.

God has gathered us into a community of care and worship.

We are beloved and we celebrate three great loves:

Love of children; love of neighbor; love of creation.

Thanks be to God.

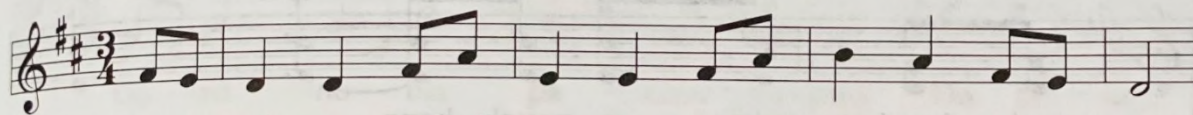
PRAYER OF INVOCATION *(unison)*

Beloved God, we thank you for all the gifts you have given us: our lives, our loved ones, all that we have and all that we are. Most of all, we thank you for Jesus, the perfect steward of your gifts, showing that complete trust in you is needed and that giving of ourselves is something we must always strive to do. Be among us today, calling us to share your love with the world. Grant us wisdom as you guide us in our giving. Amen.

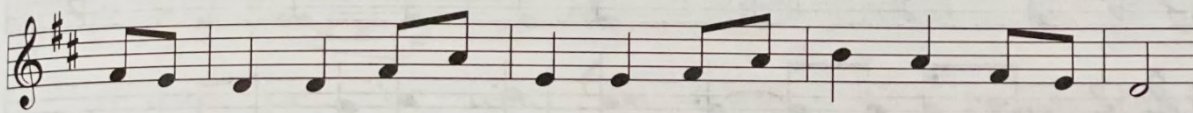
OPENING HYMN#294

"Here We Gather As God's People"

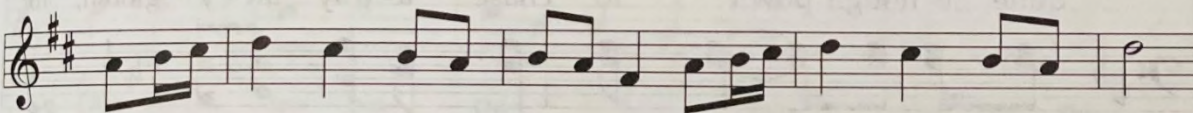
Here We Gather as God's People 294



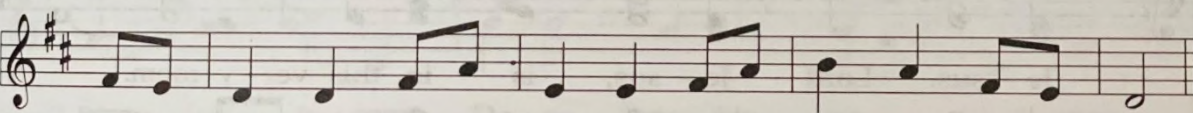
Here we gath - er as God's peo - ple with our friends from far and near;



let our voic - es sound with prais - es know - ing Christ has called us here.



Now we seek and greet each oth - er, now in joy ap - proach our friends.



Here we min - gle, bound to - geth - er as to all our love ex - tends.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Merciful God, we confess that we have not been your servant people. We have not been as loving, caring, and sharing as we should. We have been weak in standing for justice, slow to show kindness, quick to anger and to us hurtful words. We have not shared our gifts of time, talent and treasure as we should. We pray, O God, that you do not give up on us. Forgive, heal and transform us into your image. In the name of Christ Jesus we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE#305

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"

305 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing, Lord, send your spir - it
in this place; Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace. grace!

1 (optional) Final

The musical notation is for a hymn in 2/2 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It features a treble and bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes. The piece concludes with a 'Final' section.

OUR SACRED STORIES

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-15

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac; “Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

Matthew 25:1-13

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE
SPECIAL MUSIC

"Decision Time"
"I Will Sing"

Bethel Praise Team

MESSAGE

"Tending God's Light"

Rev. Karen Aitkens

HYMN#244

"Loving Spirit"

THE HOLY SPIRIT
244 Loving Spirit

1. Lov - ing Spir - it, lov - ing Spir - it, you have cho - sen me to be -
 2. Like a moth - er you en - fold me, hold my life with - in your own,
 3. Like a fa - ther you pro - tect me, teach me the dis - cern - ing eye,
 4. Friend and lov - er, in your close - ness I am known and held and blessed:

you have drawn me to your won - der, you have set your sign on me.
 feed me with your ver - y bod - y, form me of your flesh and bone.
 hoist me up up - on your shoul - der, let me see the world from high.
 in your prom - ise is my com - fort, in your pres - ence I may rest.

GATHERING OF PLEDGE CARDS AND TIME AND TALENT SHEETS FOR 2021

(You may bring your pledge cards and Time and Talent sheets forward and place them in the basket. You can still return them by filling out the forms online or e-mailing them to Bethel. Thanks to all for sharing your Time, Talent and Treasure!)

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

RESPONSE#306

"Hear Our Prayer, O Lord"

Hear our prayer, O Lord,
 Hear our prayer, O Lord,
 Incline your ear to us,
 And grant us your peace. Amen.

OFFERING OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Invitation

Offertory *"Lord Be Glorified"*

arr. Mark Hayes

Chad Willis, piano

Prayer of Dedication

CLOSING HYMN#324

"Your Words to Me Are Life and Health"

Your Words to Me Are Life and Health 324

1. Your words to me are life and health; pour strength in - to my soul;
 2. Your words to me are light and truth; from day to day they show
 3. Your words to me are full of joy, of beau - ty, peace, and grace;
 4. Your words you have ful - filled on earth, your - self, the liv - ing Word;

en - a - ble, guide, and teach my heart to reach its per - fect goal!
 their wis - dom, pass - ing earth - ly lore, as in their truth I grow.
 from them I learn your bless - ed will, through them I see your face.
 with - in my heart your im - age print in clear - est lines, O Lord.

WORDS: George Currie Martin, c. 1920, alt.
 MUSIC: Thomas Este's *Whole Book of Psalms*, 1592

WINCHESTER OLD
 CM

COMMISSION/BENEDICTION "Preparation for Giving" (responsive)

The world says: "Be sure you get what's coming to you."

The WORD says: "Life doesn't consist of what you possess."

(Lk. 12:15)

The world says: "Spend and accumulate goods."

The WORD says: "Give and you will develop character."

(Phil. 4:17)

The world says: "Wealth is a person's security."

The WORD says: "Refuge in God is our security."

(Is. 57:20)

The world says: "You deserve the best."

The WORD says: "God deserves the best."

(Mal. 1:6-14)

The world says: "Give so that you may obtain favor from others."

The WORD says: "Give because you have received favor from God."

(Lk. 12:48b)

The world says: "Seek your own gratification."

The WORD says: "Offer to God your gratitude."

(Col. 3:16)

POSTLUDE "All Creatures of Our God and King" arr. Mark Hayes Chad Willis, Piano



Beloved, Love in Action

"Do your little bit of good where you are. It's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." — Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Love is a verb. Not simply a feeling or thought. Grounded in God's love for us, we are called to act, to love. 1 John 4:11 puts it this way, "Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another." We take seemingly small actions to live out God's love. Here's the beautiful thing: together in community, we can change the world.

In 2019, Magnolia United Church of Christ in Seattle, WA, held its inaugural Community in Action Sunday. Determining that 'church in action' was a key to their vitality, instead of holding church worship as on a typical Sunday, they were love in action. Participating in five diverse service projects, the congregants restored habitat at a local park, made blankets for children, helped at their local animal shelter, tended an elder garden at the Native American cultural center, and cleaned up and cleared brush at a homeless encampment.

While average worship attendance runs about 50, that Sunday, over 150 people took part.



After participating in their service projects, the congregants gathered. The Reverend Marci Scott-Weis, Magnolia UCC minister, commented on her service: "It was messy, chaotic, oozing in vitality and a whole lot of fun to be the church that morning." She continued, "one girl said to me, 'That was so much fun, can we do church every week like this?'"

With such positive responses, Magnolia UCC held its second annual Community in 2020. "It was such an amazing morning seeing folks from our congregation and from our community join together to help our neighbors," Scott-Weis said. "It was fun, crazy busy, church at its best."

How can you put your love into action? Who would want to join you in that work? How can you have fun doing it? Love is a verb indeed. Our church can be God's love through our serving and giving. Can you pledge to take part and live God's love?

WEEKLY GIVING IF THE PERCENTAGE IS (Rounded to the nearest dollar)

Annual Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%	15%
16,000	1,333	308	6.00	12.00	18.00	25.00	31.00	46.00
20,000	1,667	385	8.00	15.00	23.00	31.00	39.00	58.00
25,000	2,083	481	10.00	19.00	29.00	38.00	48.00	72.00
30,000	2,500	577	12.00	23.00	35.00	46.00	58.00	87.00
35,000	2,917	673	13.00	27.00	40.00	54.00	67.00	101
40,000	3,333	769	15.00	31.00	46.00	62.00	77.00	115
45,000	3,750	865	17.00	35.00	52.00	69.00	87.00	130
50,000	4,167	962	19.00	38.00	58.00	77.00	96.00	144
60,000	5,000	1,154	23.00	46.00	69.00	92.00	115	173
75,000	6,250	1,442	29.00	58.00	87.00	115	144	216
100,000	8,333	1,923	38.00	77.00	115	154	192	288
125,000	10,417	2,404	48.00	96.00	144	192	240	361

