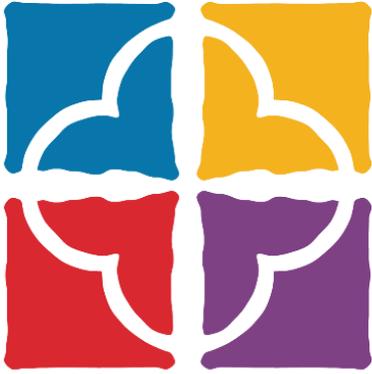


THE CHURCH ON THE AVENUE



**ST. JOHN**

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

# OPEN AND AFFIRMING SUNDAY

“We pledge to welcome people of all races, ages, abilities, ethnicities, socio-economic levels, sexual orientations and gender identities into the full life and ministry of the church.”

*-from St. John ONA Statement,  
adopted Nov. 2003*

Third Sunday After Pentecost - June 26, 2022

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## Welcome Y'all!

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here.

**Masks are required when you enter, move about, or sing in the Church house.  
Masks are optional when you are seated in a pew and physically distanced.**

As a courtesy to others silence your phone.

Assistive listening devices are available in the back.

Offering plates are in the front and rear of the Church.

Visit the Welcome Table, located in the back, to learn more about St. John Church.

## Gathering Music & Lighting Candles (10:20a)

Steve Milloy, piano; Bennett Draper, Acolyte

“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” -*Spiritual, arr. John Carter*

“Allemande (from Suite in A Major)” -*Georg Philipp Telemann*

“Lord, I Lift Your Name on High (with Doxology)” -*arr. Carol Tornquist*

## Welcome, Call to Worship, & Opening Prayer (10:30a) Keith M. Haithcock

One: The Spirit descends like a dove, bringing peace to unite the world in a just and caring community.

**All: The Spirit comes like a breath, bringing life to renew the people of God.**

One: The Spirit spreads like fire, bringing energy for witnessing to the love of God.

**All: Blessed are you, Adonai Our God, who has made us your partner in daily completing the tasks of our own formation.**

**Blessed are you, Adonai Our God, Sovereign of the universe, who allows us to be open about our lives, see beyond gender, and blesses us with myriad affections to share with our loved ones.**

One: Spirit of God, come to us and transform our lives by your power.

All: Amen.

**Opening Hymn** (Rise in body or spirit.)

“All Are Welcome”

Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live.  
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace.  
Here the love of Christ shall end division:  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true.  
Where all God’s children dare to seek to dream God’s reign anew.  
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God’s grace;  
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus;  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat;  
A banquet hall on holy ground, where peace and justice meet.  
Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space,  
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us;  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone.  
To heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they’ve known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger bears the image of God’s face,  
Let us bring an end to fear and danger:  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard  
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace.  
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

## Opening Our Lives to God

Keith M. Haithcock

One: Let us confess our sin, trusting in God's grace.

**All: We have promised to live as your people, God.**

**Yet, we confess that we fail you and one another.**

**We do not honor one another as we should.**

**As the body of Christ, we are often disjointed and clumsy.**

**We do not work together as one to your glory.**

**We refuse your cry for help in the voices of the poor and hungry.**

**We have not been faithful to the trust you have placed in us.**

*Silence is kept.*

**Merciful God, receive us as we are, and forgive us.**

**Encourage us with your love that we may commit ourselves anew to live as those who belong to you; through the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## Assurance of Grace

One: Hear the good news:

**All: In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus,  
we learn that God's love has no bounds.**

One: In Christ we are forgiven and are empowered to begin anew.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

## Song of New Life and Action

“Make Us One”

Make us one, Lord, make us one, Holy Spirit, make us one.

Let your love flow so the world will know we are one in you. *(Repeat)*

## Praying Together

Keith M. Haithcock

*“Blessed are you, our God, Sovereign of the universe, who formed the human body with skill, creating the body’s many pathways and openings. It is well known before your throne of glory that if one of them be wrongly opened or closed, it would be impossible to endure and stand before you.*

*May the day come when it is also well known that if just one unique body within your creation is not allowed to make its distinctive beauty manifest in the world, it is impossible for all of your creation to thrive and rise each day joyfully before you.*

*Blessed are you, Source of all life and form, who implanted within us the ability to form ourselves – molding, changing, transitioning, and adorning our bodies – so that the fullness of our many genders, the abundance of our desires, and the diversity of our souls can be revealed.”*

## 2 Kings 2.1-2, 6-14

Jeff Draper

When YHWH was about take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here. YHWH is sending me to Bethel.”

“As YHWH lives, and you live,” said Elisha, “I will not leave you.”

So they departed together for Bethel.

Then Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here. YHWH is sending me to the Jordan.”

“As YHWH lives and as you live,” said Elisha, “I will not leave you.”

So the two of them walked on. Fifty disciples of prophets stood off at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha stopped at the Jordan. Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry land.

Once across, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?”

Elisha replied, “Let me inherit two-thirds of your spirit.”

“You ask a difficult thing,” Elijah said. “If you see me when I am taken from you, my spirit will be yours—otherwise not.”

As they were walking along and chatting with each other, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw this and cried out, “My father! My father! The Chariot and cavalry of Israel! And Elisha saw nothing more. Then he took hold of his clothes and tore them apart.

Elisha picked up the cloak that had fallen from Elijah and went back and stood there on the bank of the Jordan. Then he struck the water with Elijah’s cloak, and said, “Where is YHWH, the God of Elijah?” As he struck the water, it divided to the right and to the left, and he crossed over the river.

One: Here ends the reading inspired by God.

May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Sermon

Sue Jelinek, Chaplain in Residence

“PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES”

## Affirmation of Love

“Love Wins” -*Alden Solovy*

Keith M. Haithcock

One: One day, the words “coming out” will sound strange,  
Oppression based on gender or orientation will be a memory,  
History to honor and remember:

**All: The pain of hiding, repressing, denying,  
Honoring the triumphs of those who fought to be free,  
Remembering the violence of hatred that cost lives.**

One: When love wins,  
When love wins at long last,

**All: “Love your neighbor as yourself” will be as natural as breathing.**

One: One day, love will win every heart,  
Love will win every soul,  
Fear will vanish like smoke,  
And tenderness for all will fill our hearts.

**All: Love wins. In the end,  
Love wins.  
Man for man,  
Woman for woman,  
Woman for man,  
Men for women,  
All genders,  
All orientations,  
All true expressions of heart.**

One: Let this come speedily in our day!

**All: A tribute to the many  
And the diverse gifts from heaven.  
A tribute to love deep and true,  
Each of us for one another.**

## Ministry of Music

“God Will Make a Way” -*Don Moen, arr. Mark Hayes*

Jennie Malone

## **An Invitation to the Offering**

Jeff Draper

Being generous is a conscious decision from the heart to do something with what you have. Christians believe that God calls people to be generous with what God has given to them. It is a sign of trust in God, that there will be enough for everyone, so share it. Being generous isn't always about money, we can be generous in so many other practical ways.

Proverbs 3:27-28 says, Never walk away from someone who deserves help; your hand is God's hand for that person. Don't tell your neighbor "Maybe some other time" or "Try me tomorrow" when the money's right there in your pocket.

Offering plates are available at both the front and back of the Church. You may place your offering there as you leave. May God bless you as you give your gifts of time, talent, and treasure generously to continue this ministry of justice, diversity, and inclusion. A beacon of hope and inspiration.

## **Unison Offering Prayer**

**All good gifts around us come from you, O God.  
You have given us life and new life in Christ.  
As you have given us gifts,  
so we offer our gifts  
that we may be gifts to one another,  
even as Jesus so taught and lived. Amen.**

## **Closing Song, 391** (Rise in body or spirit.)

"In the Midst of New Dimensions"

## **Send Out** (Rise in body or spirit.)

Keith M. Haithcock

## **A Singing Response**

"Trees of the Field"  
(\* \* denotes claps) Isaiah 55.12

everyone singing

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;  
The mountains and the hills will break forth before you.  
There'll be shouts of joy, and all the trees of the field will clap will clap their hands.

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands, \* \*  
The trees of the field will clap their hands, \* \*  
The trees of the field will clap their hands. \* \* While you go out with joy.

## Stay Connected at St. John Church!

For more information about St. John Church go to: [www.StJohnChurch.net](http://www.StJohnChurch.net).

To receive *The e-Weekly* or Prayer List, email [Office@StJohnChurch.net](mailto:Office@StJohnChurch.net).

To meet with the Pastor call: 859.261.2066, ext.202; email [Pastor@StJohnChurch.net](mailto:Pastor@StJohnChurch.net).

To make a prayer request for the Prayer List, email [PrayerList@StJohnChurch.net](mailto:PrayerList@StJohnChurch.net).

No online connection? Call the office at 859.261.2066, ext. 201.

Office hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:00am to 4:00pm.

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**Preface** quote from St. John Church Open and Affirming statement, adopted by the congregation November 2003; **Call to Worship** from the *Book of Worship* © 1986 United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership, p.502; **Opening Prayer** from *Where Pride Dwells: Celebration of LGBTQ Jewish Life and Ritual*, edited Rabbi Denise L. Eger, CCAR Press, 2020, p.19 (by Rabbi Elliot Kukla), and p.148 (by Martin Rawlings-Fein); **Opening Song** "All Are Welcome" words and music by Marty Haugen, Tune: TWO OAKS, © 1994 GIA Publications, Inc.; from *Shaping Sanctuary: Proclaiming God's Grace in an Inclusive Church*, edited by Kelly Turnery, ©2000 by Reconciling Congregation Program; **Opening Our Lives to God / Assurance of Grace** from the *Book of Worship* © 1986 United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership, p.506-507; **Song of New Life and Action** "Make Us One" by Carol Cymbala from *Songs for Praise and Worship*, p.137. ©1991 arr. © 1992 Word Music (a div. of WORD, INC.) / Carol Joy Music (ASCAP); **Praying Together** by Keith M. Haitcock using portions of *Blessing for Many Genders* by Rabbi Elliot Kukla, from *Where Pride Dwells: Celebration of LGBTQ Jewish Life and Ritual*, edited Rabbi Denise L. Eger, CCAR Press, 2020, p.19; **2 Kings 2.1-2, 6-14** from *The Inclusive Bible* © 2007 by *Priests for Equality*; **An Affirmation of Love** "Love Wins" by Alden Solovy, from *Where Pride Dwells: Celebration of LGBTQ Jewish Life and Ritual*, edited Rabbi Denise L. Eger, CCAR Press, 2020, p.156-157; **An Invitation to the Offering** from Faith at Home, The Church of England; **Unison Offering Prayer** from the *Book of Worship* © 1986 United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership, p.551; **A Singing Response** "Trees of the Field" from *Worship His Majesty*, p.211 © 1975 Lillenas Pub. Co.

# Today after Worship

Be sure to bring a sack lunch.

THE CHURCH ON THE AVENUE



**ST. JOHN**

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, June 26, 2022

Everyone is invited

12:15p to 2pm after worship

Bring a sack lunch

**Ignite 2022  
Evaluation &  
Plan for 2023**

Callahan Center

322 Van Voast Ave, Bellevue



**In person or on Zoom – see link below.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81225378529>

Meeting ID: 812 2537 8529

Dial in at 12:15p using either of these phone numbers and follow prompts

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)