

THE CHURCH ON THE AVENUE



ST. JOHN
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

JUNETEENTH

Then Our God said, "I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt; I have heard their cries under those who oppress them; I have felt their sufferings. The cry of the children of Israel has reached me,..."

-Exodus 3.6, 9 (The Inclusive Bible)

Second Sunday After Pentecost
June 19, 2022

Welcome!

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

"Steal Away" -*Spiritual, arr. Lloyd Larson*

"The Monk (*from Portraits in Jazz*)" -*Valerie Capers*

"You Are the Sunshine of My Life" -*Stevie Wonder, arr. Tom Roed*

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

Opening Hymn, 572 (Rise in body or spirit.) "When Israel Was in Egypt's Land"

Opening Our Lives to God

Lonnie Fields

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

**All: Almighty God, Source of all that is, Giver of every good gift:
You create all people in your image
and call us to love one another as you love us.
We confess that we have failed to honor you
in the great diversity of the human family.
We have desired to live in freedom,
while building walls between ourselves and others.
We have longed to be known and accepted for who we are,
while making judgements of others based on the color of skin,
or the shape of features, or the varieties of human experience.
We have tried to love our neighbors individually
while yet benefitting from systems that hold
those same neighbors in oppression. Forgive us, Holy God.
Give us eyes to see you as you are revealed in all people.
Strengthen us for the work of reconciliation rooted in love.
Restore us in your image, to be beloved community, united in our
diversity, even as you are one with Christ and the Spirit. 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 (everyone singing)

"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)*

Mission Moment

Strengthen the Church

Dale Clark

This special mission offering will be received during the month of June.

Prayers of the People

Sue Jelinek

One: Let us pray for the well-being of the church,
the world, and all in need, saying, we pray...

All: May we accept the call to be bearers of peace...

...One: As Jesus modeled for us, we pray...

**ALL: Loving God, in whom is heaven, may your name be honored everywhere.
May your kin-dom come. May the desire of your heart
for the world be done, in us, by us and through us.
Give us the bread we need for each day. Forgive us. Enable us to
forgive others. Keep us from all anxiety and fear.
For you reign in the power that comes from love
which is your glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Sermon

“REALIZE – REPENT – REUNITE!”

Keith M. Haithcock

Jeremiah 34.8-22

- 8-10 GOD delivered a Message to Jeremiah after King Zedekiah made a covenant with the people of Jerusalem to decree freedom to the slaves who were Hebrews, both men and women. The covenant stipulated that no one in Judah would own a fellow Jew as a slave. All the leaders and people who had signed the covenant set free the slaves, men and women alike.
- 11 But a little while later, they reneged on the covenant, broke their promise and forced their former slaves to become slaves again.
- 12-14 Then Jeremiah received this Message from GOD: “GOD, the God of Israel, says, ‘I made a covenant with your ancestors when I delivered them out of their slavery in Egypt. At the time I made it clear: “At the end of seven years, each of you must free any fellow Hebrew who has had to sell himself to you. After he has served six years, set him free.” But your ancestors totally ignored me.
- 15-16 “And now, *you*—what have you done? First you turned back to the right way and did the right thing, decreeing freedom for your brothers and sisters—and you made it official in a solemn covenant in my Temple. And then you turned right around and broke your word, making a mockery of both me and the covenant, and made them all slaves again, these men and women you’d just set free. You forced them back into slavery.
- 17-20 “So here is what I, GOD, have to say: You have not obeyed me and set your brothers and sisters free. Here is what I’m going to do: I’m going to set *you* free—GOD’s Decree—free to get killed in war or by disease or by starvation. I’ll make you a spectacle of horror. People all over the world will take one look at you and shudder. Everyone who violated my covenant, who didn’t do what was solemnly promised in the covenant ceremony when they split the young bull into two halves and walked between them, all those people that day who walked between the two halves of the bull—leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, palace officials, priests, and all

the rest of the people—I'm handing the lot of them over to their enemies who are out to kill them. Their dead bodies will be carrion food for vultures and stray dogs.

21-22“As for Zedekiah king of Judah and his palace staff, I'll also hand them over to their enemies, who are out to kill them. The army of the king of Babylon has pulled back for a time, but not for long, for I'm going to issue orders that will bring them back to this city. They'll attack and take it and burn it to the ground. The surrounding cities of Judah will fare no better. I'll turn them into ghost towns, unlivable and un-lived in.” GOD'S Decree.

Ministry of Music “Healing River” -Fred Hellerman, arr. Mark Hayes Jennie Malone

An Invitation to the Offering Lonnie Fields

Every time we come to the moment of offering, it's a defining moment.
There is an inner struggle between self-interest and generosity,
a pull between fear of the future and belief in God's providence.

Unison Offering Prayer

**We give our offering this morning, O God,
stepping out in faith down the road of grace.
We do this together, as your people,
called and sent to be a blessing for all the world.
In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.**

Closing Song, 474 (Rise in body or spirit.) “I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me”

Send Out (Rise in body or spirit.) Keith M. Haithcock

A Singing Response “Trees of the Field” Song Leader and congregation
(* * denotes claps) Isaiah 55.12

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.

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