

**MAY 25, 2025**  
**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
**JOHN 14:27**  
**"PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU"**



**St. John United Church of Christ**

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Rev. Rosemary Captain

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**Liturgy – Rev. ellie hutchinson**

**Ushers –**

(NCH) New Century Hymnal CCLI LICENSE #11164431

\*Please stand if comfortably able.

Respond with words in bold print.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER CONCERNS:**

**THE BELL IS RUNG:**

**PRELUDE: "Jesus Shall Reign" Dorothy Well**

**PENNIES FOR MISSION: Strengthen the Church**

**\*RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

One: God, strengthen our faith

**ALL: by firing up our imaginations**

One: Because we know the Holy Creator works through us

**ALL: So we can begin to stitch back together our community!**

One: Powerful images are not empty or without meaning

**ALL: but true symbols that guide us to probe this war-filled world.**

One: Isn't this why God gave us an imagination anyway?

**ALL: So we can look with the eyes of faith beyond surface impressions**

One: to see what is really going on in our world

**ALL: in order to recreate new worlds of flourishing for all!**

**\*INVOCATION:**

Liberating God, the imagination for what you want out of your people has been found and sprinkled throughout our Holy Scriptures and experienced in our own lives.

The hard message of a clear lesson in this book is that God has searching eyes on corruption and those who openly participate. Let us rest in that. Give us wisdom to allow the creative symbolism and storytelling of our scripture to guide us in what needs to be done to discern the presence of this harm and then to remember joy and to embody love, peace and gratitude on this day and all the hard days ahead. Amen.

**\*OPENING HYMN: 571 “O God of Love, O God of Peace”**

**\*PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE:**  
**God of the Other, we say to you that we cannot remember the last time we listened, truly listened to the Other and sought understanding, let alone see the childlike glory in another’s spirit. We come forward to say that starting today, we change by becoming more present in our interactions with all of your creation and we hold no judgement and cast no shame on someone trying to exist in this cold complicated and beautiful world.**

**\*WORDS OF GRACE:**

We are indeed a Beloved Community capable of working towards collective flourishing for it is bright as crystal flowing from the throne of God. We are the light and let

us shine brightly as we accompany others to abundance and collective freedom.

**\*GLORIA:**

**Glory to the Creator, and the Christ and the Spirit so near. As it was from the start so it shall be forever, One God always here. (repeat twice)**  
**(end) One God always here. One God always here.**

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: Acts 16:9-15**

<sup>9</sup> A vision of a man from Macedonia came to Paul during the night. He stood urging Paul, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” <sup>10</sup> Immediately after he saw the vision, we prepared to leave for the province of Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

Lydia’s conversion

<sup>11</sup> We sailed from Troas straight for Samothrace and came to Neapolis the following day. <sup>12</sup> From there we went to Philippi, a city of Macedonia’s first district and a Roman colony. We stayed in that city several days. <sup>13</sup> On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the riverbank, where we thought there might be a place for prayer. We sat down and began to talk with the women who had gathered. <sup>14</sup> One of those women was Lydia, a Gentile God-worshipper from the city of Thyatira, a dealer in purple cloth. As she listened, the Lord enabled

her to embrace Paul's message.<sup>15</sup> Once she and her household were baptized, she urged, "Now that you have decided that I am a believer in the Lord, come and stay in my house." And she persuaded us.

### **RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 67    Page 663**

#### **\*GOSPEL: John 14:22-29**

<sup>22</sup> Judas (not Judas Iscariot) asked, "Lord, why are you about to reveal yourself to us and not to the world?"

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, "Whoever loves me will keep my word. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.<sup>24</sup> Whoever doesn't love me doesn't keep my words. The word that you hear isn't mine. It is the word of the Father who sent me.

<sup>25</sup> "I have spoken these things to you while I am with you.<sup>26</sup> The Companion,<sup>[a]</sup> the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I told you.

<sup>27</sup> "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I give to you not as the world gives. Don't be troubled or afraid.<sup>28</sup> You have heard me tell you, 'I'm going away and returning to you.' If you loved me, you would be happy that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than me.<sup>29</sup> I have told you before it happens so that when it happens you will believe.

#### **MESSAGE: "Recipe for Peace"**

Let's pretend that you received an invitation to be a contestant on the Great British Bake Off on television. The show invites amateur bakers to compete with others on how they bake cakes, cookies, biscuits, and delicious desserts. Only those who have not gone to official "cooking school" are invited to compete. So where have these contestants learned to bake. Most of the learned from their mothers, grandmothers, aunts, or maybe their family owned a bakery and they watched as children.

My favorite challenge that these contestants are asked to bake involve the judges giving the contestants only a partial recipe. None of them have the full recipe to bake the same dish. The recipe might be missing, how long to bake it, what temperature, how long to knead the dough or let it rest, or some other important part of the recipe to make the results perfect.

So, how are they going to manage this? Well, perhaps they have made the dessert before or at least tried a full recipe some other time and they recall the details. Or maybe they learned to bake from watching their mothers, grandmothers, aunts, etc. Or maybe they guess from their experience baking something else. In our gospel lesson the "good" Judas asks Jesus a similar question. He says, "Master, how will it be that you will

show yourself to us and not to the world?” At this stage of their listening to Jesus, the disciples still don’t have all that they need to spread the good news. Jesus has a vision, but the disciples have only a partial view of this recipe for peace and love.

This part of the Gospel of John, from 14:22-31, is practically the whole “cook-book” for the disciples and us to follow to bring in the kingdom of God. However, it is not complete, just as the partial recipe to the contestants in the baking contest.

Jesus says, “if you love me, keep my word.” He says, “I’m giving you my own peace which is different than the world gives. Don’t be troubled or fearful.” “Be glad that I’m going to my father who is greater than I.” “All this is happening so that the world may know that I love the father, and that I’m doing what the father has told me to do.” God the father is acting like the mother, grandmother, or aunt, who teaches others how to bake perfect bread.

Jesus’ “cook-book” has an addendum, some tips to make you the best evangelist you can be. A helper called the Holy Spirit; the one the father will send in Jesus’ name. The Holy Spirit will teach you everything and bring back to your mind everything Jesus has said to you.

The next chapter of the Gospel of John gives us more important lessons from Jesus including an image of the “true vine.” I invite you to read on.

In the meantime, good baking and remember that Jesus is the bread of life. There’s no such thing as over baked or under needed. Let it rise! Amen.

### **SPECIAL MUSIC: “Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart” Video**

#### **PASTORAL PRAYER:**

Spirit of God, pour God’s love into our hearts so that we may pray for others as we pray for ourselves. Grant to your church the faith that can move mountains, the trust that the old can be made new, and the love that includes those whom others have abandoned. Grant to all your people wisdom and courage to share their faith with those who live in doubt or anger and despair.

May all those on our prayer list feel your calm presence in their lives as they battle illness, pain, depression, loneliness, addiction, mental illness.

Supreme Ruler over all, at every level give our leaders prudence and the strength to maintain order and good government. Bless all who work to increase employment and those who serve the unemployed. In Jesus name we pray. . .

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

### **PRAYER RESPONSE: 769**

Hear our prayer, O God, Hear our prayer, O God.  
Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

### **INVITATION TO GENEROSITY:**

We honor the many ways your book guides us to be witnesses in the world towards justice. Let us give generously with our time and our resources so that through our relationships with all we can become a new world and a new people.

### **OFFERTORY: "Walking with the Master"**

Louise E. Stairs

#### **\*DOXOLOGY:**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit One. Amen.

#### **\*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION:**

Still speaking God, we are witness to who Jesus is –  
from antiquity to modernity. Faithfully, we experience a  
grace that renews and enlivens us. Bless our offerings  
so others can be witness to the ways we live into your

word so that our communities may be refreshed and  
restored. Amen.

#### **\*CLOSING HYMN: 575 "O For a World"**

#### **\*BENEDICTION:**

Let us go forth knowing that our spiritual and religious journey as Christians begins with one word, one name, one person: Jesus. Now let us be an example of what that means so others can witness our compassion and solidarity to the weeping, to the joyful, and to those we don't share common ideologies so that all might be refreshed in body and in spirit.

#### **\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE:**

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"

#### **THE BELL IS RUNG:**

**POSTLUDE: "Chorus of Praise" Randolph Johnston**