



An Open and Affirming Congregation

*No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

**September 27, 2020 • 10:00am
17th Sunday after Pentecost
Farewell Worship Service**

*Then God said to Moses,
"This is the land I swore to Sarah and Abraham, to Rebecca and Isaac,
to Leah, Rachel, and Jacob that I would give to their descendants.
I have let you feast your eyes upon it, but you will not cross over."
Deuteronomy 34:4*

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

REMEMBERING WHO WE ARE

- One: As we prepare ourselves to join together in worship,
let us remind ourselves who we are
as members and friends of Congregational United Church of Christ.
- All: We are a community of God's beloved
dedicated to following the teachings of Jesus as we live our faith
by loving and serving all of God's creation
and striving for justice and peace
throughout our community, our nation, and the world.**

THE BREATH OF GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

- One: In the community of God, everyone is welcome.
**All: Whatever your race, your age, your sexual orientation,
here you are welcome.**
- One: In the community of God, everyone is valued.
**All: Whatever your native tongue, your faith tradition, your gender identity,
here you are valued.**
- One: In the community of God, everyone is loved.
**All: Whatever your level of education, your ability or disability,
your immigration status, here you are loved.**
- One: In the community of God, everyone is important.
**All: Whatever your political party, your country of origin,
your socio-economic status, here you are important.**
- One: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are God's beautiful, gifted, beloved ones.
**All: With all of our differences, with all of our similarities,
we gather here as the community of God. Together let us worship.**

*God is here! As we your peo-ple meet to of-fer praise and prayer,
may we find in full-er mea-sure what it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world a-round us, all our var-ied skills and arts
wait the com-ing of the Spir-it in-to o-pen minds and hearts.*

*Here are sym-bols to re-mind us of our life-long need of grace;
here are table, fount, and pul-pit; here the cross has cen-tral place.
Here in hon-es-ty of preach-ing, here in si-lence, as in speech,
here, in new-ness and re-new-al, God the Spir-it comes to each.*

*Here our chil-dren find a wel-come in the Shep-herd's flock and fold;
here as bread and wine are tak-en, Christ sus-tains us, as of old.
Here the ser-vants of the Ser-vant seek in wor-ship to ex-plore
what it means in dai-ly liv-ing to be-lieve and to a-dore.*

*God of all, of church, cre-a-tion, in an age of change and doubt
keep us faith-ful to the gos-pel; help us work your pur-pose out.
Here, in this day's ded-i-ca-tion, all we have to give, re-ceive;
we, who can-not live with-out you, we a-dore you! We be-lieve!*

WE MUST, WE WILL DO MORE LITANY

One: As long as we continue to imprison, detain, and deport more people than any other country in the world;
as long as the racial wealth gap continues to widen;
as long as voter suppression and racist gerrymandering determines the outcomes of our elections;

All: We must do MORE.

One: As long as "essential" workers are paid poverty wages;
as long as people in this country continue to be underinsured and uninsured;
as long as 250,000 people die each year from poverty and related causes in the wealthiest nation in the world;

All: We must do MORE.

One: As long as the United States continues to wage endless wars around the globe;
as long as guns flow freely into the hands of any who want them and riddle our schools, our houses of worship, our shopping centers with bullets;
as long as police violence continues to snuff out the lives of those they are sworn to protect, Black lives in particular;

All: We must do MORE.

One: As long as wildfires blaze uncontrollably and storms become increasingly severe and erratic due to human-caused climate change;
as long as species continue to go extinct at an unprecedented rate threatening the continuity of all creation;
as long as pollutants continue to be pumped into our waterways and atmosphere and fill our land as sacred indigenous grounds are desecrated;

All: We must do MORE.

One: As long as White Christian nationalism determines
the so-called morality of this country;
as long as empty platitudes seemingly exempt those in places of power
from making real policy changes;
as long as corporate profits are prioritized over caring for our people and our planet;

All: We must do MORE.

One: Our faith calls us, challenges us, and inspires us
to Mobilize, Organize, Register, and Educate people
for a moral movement that votes.
Having heard the call loud and clear,
let us join together now in proclaiming our commitment to do MORE.

Until Black lives matter;
until the rights of First Nation, indigenous, and native people
are protected and honored; until immigrants are protected
and treated as invaluable members of our communities;

All: We will do MORE.

One: Until quality health care is guaranteed for all;
until decent, affordable housing is available to all our people;
until every resident of this country is paid a living wage;

All: We will do MORE.

One: Until quality, equitable, and diverse public education is available to all;
until all have secure access to safe water and utilities;
until debts that cannot be paid are relieved;

All: We will do MORE.

One: Until our communities and our southern border are demilitarized;
until the culture and economy of war is replaced by a culture and economy of peace;
until police violence and mass incarceration cease;

All: We will do MORE.

One: Until voting is truly a right; until the practice of profiteering off of crisis is ended;
until welfare is redefined as a right, not a burden;

All: We will do MORE.

One: Until climate change is declared and treated as a national emergency;
until everybody is in and nobody is out;
until the leadership of the poor, low-income and most impacted by these crises
is prioritized and centered;

All: We will do MORE.

One: As God as our witness, as our ancestors as our witness,
as all of creation as our witness;

All: We will do MORE.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE

(Share a sign of peace by honking your horn and/or making the sign of peace out of your windows.)

One: The peace of God be with you.

All: And also with you.

A TIME WITH CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, the headland of Pisgah which faces Jericho, and God showed him all the land—Gilead as far as Dan, all of Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, the Negev, and the stretch of valley of Jericho, the city of palms, and as far as Zoar. Then God said to Moses, “This is the land I swore to Sarah and Abraham, to Rebecca and Isaac, to Leah, Rachel, and Jacob that I would give to their descendants. I have let you feast your eyes upon it, but you will not cross over.”

So there in the land of Moab, Moses the servant of God died as God decreed, and he was buried in the valley opposite Beth Peor in the land of Moab, but to this day no one knows the exact burial place. Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyesight was strong, and he was still quite vigorous. For thirty days the Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab, until they had completed the period of grief and mourning.

Now Joshua ben-Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. And the Israelites gave him their obedience, carrying out the order God had given to Moses.

Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom God knew face to face. There was no equal to all the signs and wonders our God caused Moses to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all of Pharaoh’s officials and the whole land. How might the hand and how terrifying the displays of power that Moses wielded in the sight of all Israel!

GLORIA PATRI

Greatorex

***Glo-ry to the Cre-a-tor, the Christ, the Ho-ly Spir-it, Three-in-One;
as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men. A-men.***

SERMON

A View from the Mountain Top

Rev. Jessica Petersen-Mutai

PAUSE

HYMN 465

We Are Called to Follow Jesus

We Are Called

***When the pain of the world sur-rounds us and fills us with des-pair,
when search-ing just con-founds us with false hopes ev-‘ry-where,
when lives are starved for mean-ing and des-ti-ny is bare,
we are called to fol-low Je-sus and let God’s heal-ing flow through us.***

***We see with fear and trem-bling our ach-ing world in need,
con-fess-ing to each oth-er our waste-ful-ness and greed.
May we with stead-fast car-ing the hun-gry chil-dren feed.
We are called to fol-low Je-sus and let God’s jus-tice flow through us.***

***The church is a ho-ly ves-sel the liv-ing wa-ters fill
to nour-ish all its peo-ple God’s pur-pose to ful-fill.
May we with hum-ble cour-age be o-pen to God’s will.
We are called to fol-low Je-sus and let God’s Spir-it flow through us.***

***We praise you for our jour-ney and you’re a-bun-dant grace,
your sav-ing word that guid-ed a strug-gling hu-man race.
O God with all cre-a-tion, your fu-ture we em-brace.
We are called to fol-low Je-sus and let God’s chang-es flow through us.
We are call-ed to fol-low Je-sus and let God’s chang-es flow through us.***

Recognition of the End

Rev. Colton:

On September 12th, 2011, Congregational United Church of Christ called the Reverend Jessica Petersen to serve as Pastor.

Rev. Petersen-Mutai:

I thank Congregational United Church of Christ, its members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown me these last nine years. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the way my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

People:

**We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere.
We express our gratitude for your time among us.
We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes.
Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.**

Rev. Petersen-Mutai:

I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

Vows of Release

Rev. Colton:

Do you, the members and friends of Congregational United Church of Christ, release the Reverend Jessica Petersen-Mutai from the duties of Pastor? If so, please say, "We release you, with the help of God."

People:

We release you, with the help of God.

Rev. Colton:

Do you offer your encouragement for her ministry soon to begin as Senior Minister of First United Church in Bloomington, Indiana? If so, please say, "We offer our encouragement, with the help of God."

People:

We offer our encouragement, with the help of God.

Rev. Colton:

Do you, Jessica, release the members and friends of Congregational United Church of Christ from turning to you and depending on you?

Rev. Petersen-Mutai:

I do, with the help of God.

Rev. Colton:

Do you, Jessica, offer your encouragement for the continued ministry of Congregational UCC and on the relationship with another who will come to serve?

Rev. Petersen-Mutai:

I do, with the help of God.

Rev. Colton:

On behalf of the Central Association of the Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness, and release. The member churches of our association and conference hold each of you in prayer. We pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service. Let the people say, "Thanks be to God."

People:

Thanks be to God!

Prayer for the Future

One: Let us pray.

All: God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories but move in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other, in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

*(*Options for "Father" include "Mother," "Creator," "Parent.")*

**Our Father* who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO OFFERING

(Financial offerings will be received at the close of the service. As you are driving out of the worship space, you are welcome to drop your offering into the basket provided while remaining in your vehicle.)

OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY

Lasst Uns Erfreuen

***Praise God from whom all bles-sings flow,
praise God all crea-tures here be-low. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
Praise God for all that love has done,
Cre-a-tor, Christ, and Spir-it, One. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!***

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GIVING AND SHARING OF SYMBOLS

CLOSING HYMN 434

God Be with You Till We Meet Again

God Be with You

God be with you till we meet a-gain;

lov-ing coun-sels guide, up-hold you, with a shep-herd's care en-fold you:

God be with you till we meet again.

***Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Je-sus' feet;
till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.***

God be with you till we meet a-gain;

un-seen wings, pro-tect-ing, hide you, dai-ly man-na still pro-vide you:

God be with you till we meet again.

***Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Je-sus' feet;
till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.***

God be with you till we meet a-gain;

when life's per-ils thick con-found you, put un-fail-ing arms a-round you:

God be with you till we meet again.

***Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Je-sus' feet;
till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.***

God be with you till we meet a-gain;

Keep love's ban-ner float-ing o'er you, smite death's threat-ening wave be-fore you:

God be with you till we meet again.

***Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Je-sus' feet;
till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.***

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

FAREWELL

(All are welcome to share words of farewell with Rev. Petersen-Mutai as you leave the worship space. Please remain in your vehicles in order to help maintain physical distancing.)

Worship Leaders

Rev. Jessica Petersen-Mutai, Pastor

Bev Thomas, Organist

Jane Ann Cotton, Interim Moderator

Norm Van Klompenburg, Member of the Central Association Committee on Ministry

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