



**NEWTON  
CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**  
God is still speaking,

**An Open and Affirming Congregation**

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

**Virtual Worship • July 12, 2020 • 10:00am  
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**

**Digital Bulletin**

This document is prepared so you can join our Sunday morning live-stream worship via our Facebook page ([facebook.com/NewtonUCC](https://facebook.com/NewtonUCC)) or call in via Zoom (Dial 312-626-6799, when prompted enter Meeting ID: 890 9706 1745 followed by #) or worship on your own at a time convenient for you (visit our Facebook page or website—[uccnewton.org](http://uccnewton.org)).

We are new to online and streaming worship at Congregational UCC and still working on smoothing out a few “hiccups” and technical difficulties. Of course, there is nothing that compares to being physically present with one another in worship, and yet this is what we need to do “love our neighbors” during the current national emergency.

We apologize in advance for any problems that you may encounter in connecting to the service and welcome your feedback on how to improve the virtual worship experience over the coming weeks when we will not be able to worship in our sanctuary.

**PREPARING FOR VIRTUAL WORSHIP**

As you prepare to join in online worship with us, in addition to making whatever technical preparations you need to make, consider how to prepare your personal space for worship:

- Silence your phone and eliminate distractions
- Light a candle or some incense
- Open your Bible or browser to Isaiah 55:10-13
- Position your body in a posture of worship and prayer

*“And you will go out joyfully and be led out in peace;  
the mountains and hills before you will break into cries of joy,  
and all the trees in the countryside will clap their hands.”*  
Isaiah 55:12

## 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

### A HAUDENOSAUNEE “THANKSGIVING” PRAYER (*Words in italics are not meant to be said.*)

**All: *Thanksgiving Address*  
Greetings to the natural world!**

One: *The People*  
Today we have gathered and we see that the cycles of life continue.  
We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony  
with each other and all living things.  
So now, we bring our minds together as one  
as we give greetings and thanks to each other as People.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Earth Mother*  
We are all thankful to our Mother, the Earth,  
for she gives us all that we need for life.  
She supports our feet as we walk about upon her.  
It gives us joy that she continues to care for us  
as she has from the beginning of time.  
To our Mother, we send greetings and thanks.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Waters*  
We give thanks to all the Waters of the world  
for quenching our thirst and providing us with strength.  
Water is life. We know its power in many forms –  
waterfalls and rain, mists and streams, rivers and oceans.  
With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to the spirit of water.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Fish*  
We turn our minds to all the Fish life in the water.  
They were instructed to cleanse and purify the water.  
They also give themselves to us as food.  
We are grateful that we can still find pure water.  
So, we turn now to the Fish and send our greetings and thanks.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

**OPENING HYMN 56 v. 1-2 & 5**     *For the Beauty of the Earth*

Dix

*For the beau-ty of the earth, for the glo-ry of the skies,  
for the love which from our birth o-ver and a-round us lies,  
God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grate-ful praise.*

*For the beau-ty of each hour of the day and of the night,  
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,  
God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grate-ful praise.*

*For your church that ev-er-more lifts our ho-ly hands a-bove,  
of-fering up on ev-ery shore one pure sa-cri-fice of love,  
God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grate-ful praise.*

**THANKSGIVING PRAYER**

One: *The Plants*  
Now we turn toward the vast fields of Plant life.  
As far as the eye can see, the Plants grow, working many wonders.  
They sustain many life forms.  
With our minds gathered together, we give thanks  
and look forward to seeing Plant life for many generations to come.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Food Plants*  
With one mind, we turn to honor and thank  
all the Food Plants we harvest from the garden.  
Since the beginning of time, the grains, vegetables, beans and berries  
have helped the people survive.  
Many other living things draw strength from them too.  
We gather all the Plant Foods together as one and send them a greeting and thanks.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Medicine Herbs*  
Now we turn to all the Medicine herbs of the world.  
From the beginning, they were instructed to take away sickness.  
They are always waiting and ready to heal us.  
We are happy there are still among us those special few  
who remember how to use these plants for healing.  
With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to the Medicines  
and to the keepers of the Medicines.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Animals*  
We gather our minds together to send greetings and thanks  
to all the Animal life in the world.  
They have many things to teach us as people.  
We see them near our homes and in the deep forests.  
We are glad they are still here and we hope that it will always be so.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Trees*  
We now turn our thoughts to the Trees.  
The Earth has many families of Trees who have their own instructions and uses.  
Some provide us with shelter and shade,  
others with fruit, beauty and other useful things.  
Many peoples of the world use a Tree as a symbol of peace and strength.  
With one mind, we greet and thank the Tree life.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Birds*  
We put our minds together as one and thank all the Birds  
who move and fly about over our heads.  
The Creator gave them beautiful songs.  
Each day they remind us to enjoy and appreciate life.  
The Eagle was chosen to be their leader.  
To all the Birds – from the smallest to the largest –  
we send our joyful greetings and thanks.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

## **ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

### **SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE**

One: The peace of God be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

### **HYMN**

*The Spirit in Me*

by Jim Strathdee

***The Spir-it in me greets the Spir-it in you. A-le-lu-ia!  
God's in us, and we're in God. A-le-lu-ia!***

## **A TIME WITH CHILDREN**

### **SCRIPTURE**

*Isaiah 55:10-13*

### **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 Rejoicing World*

Rev. Jessica Petersen

### **PAUSE**

*When in awe of God's cre-a-tion, we view earth from out-er space,  
this mys-te-ri-ous, float-ing mar-bel, strewn with clouds and bathed in grace,  
how can we not pause in won-der, see-ing earth as one and whole?  
As we heal our proud di-vi-sions, may earth's heal-ing be our goal.*

*Blue and tan, with lace clouds swirl-ing, flung in space and cir-cling there,  
ha-bi-tat for myr-iad crea-tures meant for land and sea and air!  
Must we draw our lines of ha-tred mark-ing nat-ion, class, and race?  
God, for-give us, we en-treat you, for all pride of self and place.*

*Liv-ing now, this is the pic-ture we no long-er can de-ny,  
for we see no an-gry bound-aries when our view is from the sky:  
riv-ers, de-serts, for-ests, snow-fields, o-ceans, lakes, and moun-tains too,  
but no fenc-es built for bar-ring you from me or me from you.*

*Now we face the un-known fu-ture, chal-lenged by the work at hand.  
Still the God of all cre-a-tion sum-mons us with one com-mand:  
"Love each oth-er!" Will we do it? "Love each oth-er!" Wars might cease!  
"Love each oth-er!" Jus-tice fol-lows: "Love each oth-er!" There is peace!*

#### THANKSGIVING PRAYER

One: *The Four Winds*

We are all thankful to the powers we know as the Four Winds.  
We hear their voices in the moving air  
as they refresh us and purify the air we breathe.  
They help to bring the change of seasons.  
From the four directions they come, bringing us messages and giving us strength.  
With one mind, we send our greetings and thanks to the Four Winds.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Thunderers*

Now we turn to the west where our Grandfathers, the Thunder Beings, live.  
With lightning and thundering voices,  
they bring with them the water that renews life.  
We bring our minds together as one to send greetings and thanks  
to our Grandfathers, the Thunderers.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Sun*

We now send greetings and thanks to our eldest Brother, the Sun.  
Each day without fail he travels the sky from east to west,  
bringing the light of a new day.  
He is the source of all the fires of life.  
With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Brother, the Sun.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *Grandmother Moon*

We put our minds together and give thanks to our oldest grandmother, the Moon,  
who lights the night-time sky.

She is the leader of women all over the world,

and she governs the movement of the ocean tides.

By her changing face we measure time,

and it is the Moon who watches over the arrival of children here on Earth.

With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Grandmother, the Moon.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Stars*

We give thanks to the Stars who are spread across the sky like jewelry.

We see them in the night, helping the Moon to light the darkness

and bringing dew to the gardens and growing things.

When we travel at night, they guide us home.

With our minds gathered together as one,

we send greetings and thanks to all the Stars.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *The Enlightened Teachers*

We gather our minds to greet and thank the enlightened Teachers  
who have come to help throughout the ages.

When we forget how to live in harmony,

they remind us of the way we were instructed to live as people.

With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to these caring Teachers.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

## INVITATION TO OFFERING

## 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

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.**

## CLOSING HYMN 684

*We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky*     How Can I Keep from Singing

***We can-not own the sun-lit sky, the moon, the wild-flow'rs grow-ing,  
for we are part of all that is with-in life's riv-er flow-ing.  
With o-pen hands re-ceive and share the gifts of God's cre-a-tion,  
that all may have a-bun-dant life in ev-'ry earth-ly na-tion.***

***When bod-ies shiv-er in the night and, wear-y, wait for morn-ing,  
when chil-dren have not bread but tears, and war-horns sound their warn-ing,  
God calls hu-man-i-ty to wake, to join in com-mon la-bor,  
that all may have a-bun-dant life in one-ness with their neigh-bor.***

***God calls hu-man-i-ty to join as part-ners in cre-at-ing  
a fu-ture free from want and fear, life's good-ness cel-e-brat-ing.  
That new world beck-ons from a-far, in-vites our shared en-deav-or,  
that all may have a-bun-dant life and peace en-dure for-ev-er.***

## THANKSGIVING PRAYER

One: *The Creator*

Now we turn our thoughts to the Creator, or Great Spirit,  
and send greetings and thanks for the gifts of Creation.

Everything we need to live a good life is here on this Mother Earth.

For all the love that is still around us, we gather our minds together as one  
and send our choicest words of greetings and thanks to the Creator.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

One: *Closing Words*

We have now arrived at the place where we end our words.

Of all the things we have named, it was not our intention to leave anything out.

If something was forgotten, we leave it to each individual  
to send such greetings and thanks in their own way.

**All: Now our minds are one.**

## BENEDICTION

## POSTLUDE

### Resources:

Each "Thanksgiving Prayer" offered during today's service is a piece of "A Haudenosaunee 'Thanksgiving' Prayer." The entire prayer has simply been divided into four separate pieces. Great thanks and appreciation are given to our Native siblings who have offered such a gift to the rest of the world. The version of the prayer included in today's service can be found at <https://www.firstpeople.us/html/A-Haudenosaunee-Thanksgiving-Prayer.html>.

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