

United Church of Christ

2 Old Dominion Road, Blooming Grove, NY 10914



WORSHIP SERVICE

19th Sunday after Pentecost

World Communion Sunday

October 3, 2021

- 10:30 a.m. -

The Rev. Dr. Linda U. Barnes – Pastor

Janiece Kohler – Minister of Music

Christian Fletcher – Liturgist

ORDER OF WORSHIP

October 3, 2021 - 10:30 a.m.

World Communion Sunday

Cover photo credit: Elsa Cameron

BLOOMING GROVE

GREETING (& Announcements)

PRELUDE – “This is My Father’s World” (J. Purifoy, arr.)

CALL TO WORSHIP

We were created in relationship and for relationship.

We are created for community!

God knew it was not right for us to be alone.

We are created for community!

Through Jesus Christ, God entered into human relationship with us.

We are created for community!

We rejoice in our unity with all humanity.

We are created for community!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Rev. Barnes

Loving God, we praise and thank you for all your gifts: a beautiful planet, caring families and friends, a chance every new day to learn and grow and respond to your love for us all. Bless our worship today and help us grow in faith, understanding, and willingness to do your work in our world. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God-made-flesh, bone of our bone, we confess that we think we can go it alone, that we try to do it all, that in doing so we neglect the gifts you have given us, the relationships you created us for.

Jesus Christ, you who lived in a human body, call us into community. Remind us that, in you, we are one. Awaken in us a respect for one another and celebrate with us the diversity within that unity. May it be so now and forever.

(Silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. The one who created us also redeems and forgives us. Be at peace with God! Be at peace with creation! Be at peace with each other! Be at peace with yourselves!

Thanks be to God.

THE PEACE OF CHRIST

May the powerful peace of Christ be with you, now and always.

And also with you.

RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 8

Christian Fletcher

O God, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,

to silence the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars that you have established;

what are human beings that you are mindful of them,

mortals that you care for them?

Yet you have made them a little lower than God,

and crowned them with glory and honor.

You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;

you have put all things under their feet,

all sheep and oxen, also the beasts of the field,

the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

O God, our Sovereign,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

MEDITATION (Music) - “Jesus Loves Me” (P. Hamm, arr.)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Christian Fletcher

Sovereign God, you make us for each other, to live in loving community as friends, as sons and daughters, sisters and brothers, wives and husbands, partners and companions. Teach us to choose love when it is committed and devoted; teach us like little children to wonder and to trust so that our loving may reflect the image of Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Christian Fletcher & Rev. Barnes

Genesis 2:18-24 – Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is

bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.” Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12 – Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. But someone has testified somewhere, “What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them? You have made them for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned them with glory and honor, subjecting all things under their feet.”

Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, “I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”

Mark 10:2-16 – Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.” But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this,

he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

SERMON – “Created for Community”

Rev. Barnes

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

HYMN – “O How Glorious, Full of Wonder” (NCH #558)

- 1. O how glorious, full of wonder
is your name o’er all the earth,
God, who wrought creation’s splendor,
bringing suns and stars to birth!
Rapt in reverence we adore you,
marveling at your mystic ways.
Humbly now we bow before you,
lifting up our hearts in praise.**
- 2. When we see your lights of heaven,
moon and stars, your power displayed,
who are we that you should love us,
creatures that your hand has made?
Born of earth, yet full of yearning,
mixture strange of good and ill,
from your ways so often turning,
yet your love does seek us still.**
- 3. You have set us in communion
with the wonders of your hand,
made us fly with eagle pinion,
pilgrims over sea and land.**

Soaring spire and ruined city,
these our hopes and failures show.
Teach us more of human pity,
that we in your image grow.

4. O how wondrous, O how glorious
is your name in every land,
God, whose purpose shines before us
toward the goal that you have planned!
Yours the will our hearts and seeking,
conscious of our human need.
Spirit in our spirit speaking,
make us yours, O God, indeed.

CALL TO OFFERING

Rev. Barnes

In communion with one another, let us share what we have received, knowing that we are one flesh with all humanity. Thank you for the generosity within us that comes from you. Fill us with the hope of your love.

We dedicate offerings given online through the church's website (www.bgucc.org), placed on the offering plate near the door, or mailed to the church (PO Box 101, Blooming Grove, NY 10914). We give thanks to God for each contribution.

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy God, receive these gifts and use them by the power of your Spirit to spread your love throughout the world. Embolden our church to imagine and believe that another world is possible. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

- Invitation
- Prayer of Consecration
- Words of Institution
- Breaking Bread and Sharing the Cup
- Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us give thanks to God in union with each other, with Christians everywhere, and with the suffering ones in whom we daily meet the Living Christ.

Thank you, God, for life in the spirit of Jesus: for gladness in this bread and cup, for love that cannot die, for peace the world cannot give, for joy in the company of friends, for the glory of creation, and for the mission of justice. Give us the gifts of this Holy Communion:

oneness of heart, love for neighbors, forgiveness of enemies, the will to serve you every day, and life that never ends. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

POSTLUDE – “Psalm 8” (J. Carter, arr.)

*O God, your name is awesome!
Your power is amazing!
Your creation is wonderful...beyond understanding.
When I think about who you are
and what you have done
and how small I am,
I wonder why you love me
and yet I know you do.
I know you love and care for all of us.
O God, you are an awesome God!*

Psalm 8 paraphrase by Mary Kay Beall

CHARGE & BLESSING

Rev. Barnes

As you leave this sacred space, live out your connection with one another, knowing that all humanity is bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, one world communion. And may the peace of Christ be with you, now and always. Amen.

PARTING HYMN – “God Be with You” (NCH #81 ver. 1, no refrain)

God be with you till we meet again;
By good counsel guide, uphold you,
With a shepherd's care enfold you:
God be with you till we meet again. Amen.
