

Trinity-Grace United Church
November 12th, 2023
24th Sunday after Pentecost
Ordinary Time
Diwali Begins
(Hindu, Jain, Sikh)
International Week for Restorative Justice Begins

If we hear a parable and think, 'I really like that' or, worse, fail to take any challenge, we are not listening well enough.

--Amy-Jill Levine

Presider: Janice Guthrie

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CANDLE LIGHTING

INTROIT: Day by Day “

(Sing/sign 3 times)

Day by day, day by day,
O dear God, three things we pray:
To see you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
follow you more nearly,
day by day.

GATHERING PRAYER

(One/All)

God calls each one of us to praise and prayer, to song and silence,

God calls us to worship.

Christ calls each one of us to hearing and healing, to service and solidarity.

Christ calls us to love.

The Spirit calls each one of us to advocacy and action, to service and solidarity.

The Spirit calls us to justice.

You who open doors and dismantle barriers, open our hearts to praise you, that we may live the full truth of who we are, that we may live as neighbours and friends, no longer strangers and enemies.

Open our hearts to the transforming power of your love, that we may forgive and reconcile, making peace and learning war no more, that we may be your people, one body in one Spirit, to tell your grace to all the world. Amen.

HYMN: "Summoned by the God Who Made Us" (Tune: Nettleton, VU 559)

Summoned by the God who made us rich in our diversity,
gathered in the name of Jesus, richer still in unity.

Refrain:

Let us bring the gifts that differ and, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being, one in faith and love and praise.

Radiant risen from the water, robed in holiness and light,
ev'ry person in God's image, ev'ry person God's delight.

Refrain

Trust the Goodness of creation; trust the Spirit strong within.
Dare to dream the vision promised sprung from seed of what has been.

Refrain

Bring the hopes of ev'ry nation, bring the art of ev'ry race.
Weave a song of peace and justice; let it sound through time and space.

Refrain

Draw together at one table all the human family;
Shape a circle ever wider and a people ever free.
Refrain

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

(All)

Sacred Spirit, we offer you our frailty: our anger and pain, our pride and insecurity and greed, all that causes us to turn against one another, all that leads us into war. Renew our hearts, that we may live into being the world of which the prophets spoke, where swords become shovels, and spears become rakes and hoes; where nations cease their fighting and no longer learn the ways of war; where all people tend their gardens in safety and peace. To you we offer our silent lament for lives lost and damaged by the ravages of war, and habitat polluted by violence. Amen.

(Silence is held)

A WORD OF GRACE

(One)

Hear the words of Jesus as they come to us through John:

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.

I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled;

do not let them be afraid.”

Let us remind one another that Christ holds us in peace, no matter what tumult and trouble the world throws at us. Let us greet one another with peace and in peace.

SHARING PEACE

One: May the peace of Christ be with you all!

All: And also with you!

We take a moment to greet each other and share a sign of peace

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

(One)

Speak to us, living God,
As you have spoken to our ancestors:
 through the voices of your prophets,
 the breath of your Spirit,
 and the life of your Son,
so that we may live according to your word,
 following the example of Jesus Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 25: 1-13

Today's reading from Matthew comes from a section of the gospel in which Jesus responds to questions from the disciples about when the reign of God will arrive. Much of this material probably comes from Matthew rather than from Jesus; it deals with concerns of the early church rather than matters relating to the first disciples. The message of the text is judgemental in tone, and contradicts other parables and teachings of Jesus. So let us listen with open ears and discerning hearts to hear a word from God in these human words. Where can we find a word of grace amidst these words of judgement?

“At that time, the reign of heaven will be likened to ten young women who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were morons, and five were prudent. The morons took their lamps, but didn't take any oil with them; the prudent took flasks of oil as well as their lamps. The bridegroom was delayed, and everyone became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight there was a shout, 'Look! The bridegroom! Let's go out to meet him!' At that time, all the young women got up and prepared their lamps. The morons said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.' But the prudent replied, 'No! There might not be enough for you and for us; you'd better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' While they went to buy it, the bridegroom arrived, and those who were ready accompanied him into the wedding banquet, and the door was closed. Later, the other young women came back, calling out, 'Sir! Sir! Open the door for us.' He responded, 'I tell you truly, I don't recognize you.' Be mindful, therefore, because you don't know the day or the hour.”

One: For the living word of God in scripture,

and among us, and within us:

All: Thanks be to God!

EXPLORING THE WORD

RESPONDING

HYMN: "Give me oil in my lamp" (SFAGP 130)

1. Give me oil in my lamp, keep it burning,
give me oil in my lamp, I pray;
give me oil in my lamp, keep it burning,
keep it burning 'til the break of day.

Refrain:

Sing hosannah! Sing hosannah!
Sing hosannah to the Servant King.
Sing hosannah! Sing hosannah!
Sing hosannah, let us sing!

2. Give us joy in our hearts, keep us praising...
3. Give us peace in our hearts, keep us loving...
4. Give us love in our hearts, keep us serving

During the hymn, the offering box is brought forward

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

*Trinity-Grace is grateful for the many ways
we are gifted and called to contribute to God's mission
through this faith community.*

Prayer of Dedication

(All)

Gracious One, with gratitude for all your gifts us, we bring our offerings to you. May they bring your justice, your healing, your peace, and your life to all

your creatures and all your creation. Amen.

CONNECTING IN COMMUNITY

We share announcements, insights, joys & concerns.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Prayers of gratitude and of concern for our community, world and those we know.

THE PRAYER OF THE DISCIPLES (The Lord's Prayer)

Giver of all life, whose presence is holy,
may you come first in our hearts.

May all Creation become your community of grace,
and your desire be fulfilled throughout the earth,
as it is in your own heart.

Sustain us with the breath of life moment by moment.

Forgive us, and give us the gift of forgiveness.

Lead us past our temptations,

and save us from the power of the evil that would ensnare us.

For all that is, and all power, and all glory, come from you,
now and forever. Amen.

HYMN: "Draw the Circle Wide" (MV 145)

Refrain:

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.

Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

God the still-point of the circle, 'round whom all creation turns;
nothing lost, but held forever, in God's gracious arms *Refrain.*

Let our hearts touch far horizons, so encompass great and small;
let our loving know no borders, faithful to God's call. *Refrain*

Let the dreams we dream be larger, than we've ever dreamed before;

let the dream of Christ be in us, open every door. *Refrain*

The Christ candle is extinguished.

SENDING & BLESSING

We are simply asked
to make gentle our bruised world
to be compassionate of all
including ourselves
then with the time left over
to repeat the ancient tale and
go the way of God's foolish ones.

(Peter Byrne, S.J. Adapted)

As our worship concludes, our prayers rise as we sing:

AMEN: "Sing Amen" (VU 431)

Sing 2 times

Amen, we praise your name, O God
Amen, we praise your name, O God
Amen, Amen! Amen, Amen!
Amen, we praise your name, O God!

POSTLUDE