

Online Gathering for Worship  
Cottage Grove and Junction City United Methodist Churches  
June 21, 2020

“Telling Stories and Hard Conversations”

**Prelude** “Our God” (Micah Stampley)

**Words of Welcome**

Today, let us continue to explore the Path of Jesus for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in our lives and in our families, as we come to God in worship.

**Opening Song** “Woke Up This Morning with My Mind Stayed on Jesus” (Tamesha Pruett)

**Call to Worship** (from Luke 4:18-19)

Leader: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

**People: He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind,**

To release the oppressed,

**To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."**

These words, in the mouth and actions of Jesus, turned the world upside down.

**What world-turning news do you have for us these days?**

What impossible-seeming things will you make happen?

**ALL: Holy Spirit, come. Show us the Way.**

**Song** “We Are Called” by David Haas

Opening to the Spirit's Instruction

**Scripture Readings** Ephesians 2:11-22 Liturgist

So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision”—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands -

- <sup>12</sup>remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup>But now in

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Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. <sup>15</sup> He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. <sup>17</sup> So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; <sup>18</sup> for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. <sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. <sup>21</sup> In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; <sup>22</sup> in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.  
*May God's Spirit speak to us today through these words of Scripture and the message shared this day.*

Song "God of Justice" by Tim Hughes

Sermon "Telling Stories and Having Hard Conversations" Pastor  
Craig, Anthony Peterson

*Tony's TEDx Antioch Talk can be found on YouTube at  
<<https://youtu.be/u5GCetbP7Fg>>.*

## Confession

### Congregational Confession

Liturgist: Let us open our hearts and speak these truths to the One in whom we live, move, and have our being:

**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

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We have found it difficult and uncomfortable to talk about race and racism in our communities, so we have avoided being challenged by having the hard conversation.

**We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

We have divided ourselves according to arbitrary categories, and failed to see the full humanity of all persons, especially those with whom we disagree the most, and those whose skin color, language, or religion differs from ours.

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

**Moment of reflection**

**Pardon and Freeing from Bondage (from Psalm 103:8,10-12)**

Liturgist: The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

**All: Free us, O Lord, from the ways of tyranny, power over others, and the use of others for our own personal ends. Speak to our hearts each day, that we may adopt the Ways of Jesus. Amen.**

**Song**                    “Amazing Grace” Soweto Gospel Choir

**Prayers for Our World and One Another**

Let us enter now into a time of prayer for one another and for our world. We will do what is called a Bidding Prayer. I will open, and then I will bid your prayers based around various categories. During the silence after each category is bid, I invite you to add your own prayers, either aloud or in silence. I will then close with a prayer, then the Lord’s Prayer. Let us be in prayer.

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Let us pray now for all who are ill, in hospital or at home, especially those affected by cancer or COVID-19.

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Let us pray now for all medical and emergency services personnel who are responding to the best of their abilities with the resources that they have at hand.

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Let us pray now for all those who are hungry or food insecure, and for all community and religious efforts to provide food and shelter.

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Let us pray for the leaders of nations around the world, not only regarding their response to this pandemic, but also that they may do everything possible to assure the health and welfare of their citizens.

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Let us pray for our friends, family, and neighbors for their health and well-being.

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Let us also express our thanks to God for the expressions of love and caring that we have witnessed in our families, communities, and world.

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Let us express our gratitude for life and the myriad things that gladden our hearts.

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These prayers, spoken aloud or in silence, we lift into the universal embrace of the One who is Love, and we make them in the name of the One who showed us what Love looks like in the flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, and we now join our voices in the prayer he taught us, saying:

**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**

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**us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen**

**Prayer Response**     **“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me” (Sharon Irving)**

**Blessing 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 (adapted)**

**Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.**

**Greet one another with holy letters, cards, phone calls, email messages. All the saints greet you.**

**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.**

**Closing Song**     **“Celtic Blessing”**

**Closing Credits**