

ORDER OF VIRTUAL WORSHIP

May 2, 2021

10:00 A.M.

Welcome to Worship at the virtual Ellington Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ. We're happy to have you with us this morning.

Our Church Mission Statement

*To be a dynamic and nurturing community
called by God's grace
to know Christ and make Him known
through worship, love, and service.*

Adopted September 15, 2019



FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

HOLY COMMUNION



WELCOME

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Jesus cares for us, protects us, and nourishes our spiritual hunger.

All: Jesus is manna and life-giving water for us.

One: Jesus sweetens our lives and refreshes our souls with love.

All: Jesus is the life-giving Vine.

One: Jesus, we give thanks for your life, your death for us, and we thank God for your Resurrection.

All: We are an Easter people! Let us worship God!

Adapted from: I Hunger and I Thirst #409 Chalice Hymnal, WORDS: John S. B. Monsell, 1866, alt., MUSIC: Maria Tiddeman, 1875, alt. // CCLI# 1326969

HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #426

The Voice of Jesus Calls His People

¹ *The voice of Jesus calls his people,
"Come to my table and be fed!"*

*For those who come to him believing,
he is the Wine, he is the Bread.
All who are lost, or bear great burdens,
all who need comfort or release,
come where the presence of Christ Jesus
will nourish us with rest and peace.*

² *Children and elders, men and women,
whatever color, race or tongue,
in Jesus find themselves united,
in him a home where they belong.
We hear your loving voice, O Jesus,*

*we long, we hunger to be fed;
in joy we gather at the table
where you are Wine, and you are Bread.*

WORDS and MUSIC: Joy F. Patterson, 1993 © 1994 Hope Publishing Co // CCLI #1326969

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: Eternal God, we confess that we have not always lived for you. You have invited us into new life through communion with you, yet we have sometimes closed our hearts against that invitation. You have shown us the way to love, yet we have too often chosen the path of uncaring. You have called us to the ministry of reconciliation, yet often we find ourselves tempted to turn away from others. We ask that you release us from the bonds of self-centeredness and make us more open to your loving ways and transformation. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

LITANY OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

One: Let us love one another; for love is of God.

All: When we love one another, God abides in us.

One: God was made manifest to us when God sent Jesus, the Christ into the world.

All: When we love one another, God abides in us.

One: God loves us infinitely and unconditionally; God sent Jesus to be the payment for our sins.

All: When we love one another, God abides in us. God's love transforms us and makes us whole. In God's love, our sins are forgiven.

ENGAGING THE WORD

FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS Psalm 22:25-31 (NLT)

ALL:

²⁵ I will praise you in the great assembly.

I will fulfill my vows in the presence of those who worship you.

²⁶ The poor will eat and be satisfied.

All who seek the LORD will praise him.

Their hearts will rejoice with everlasting joy.

²⁷ The whole earth will acknowledge the LORD and return to him.

All the families of the nations will bow down before him.

²⁸ For royal power belongs to the LORD.

He rules all the nations.

²⁹ Let the rich of the earth feast and worship.

**Bow before him, all who are mortal,
all whose lives will end as dust.**

³⁰ Our children will also serve him.

Future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord.

³¹ His righteous acts will be told to those not yet born.

They will hear about everything he has done.

ANTHEM

Beethoven

Ode to Joy

Andrew Banks ~ piano solo

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

26-28 Later God's angel spoke to Philip: "At noon today I want you to walk over to that desolate road that goes from Jerusalem down to Gaza." He got up and went. He met an Ethiopian eunuch coming down the road. The eunuch had been on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was returning to Ethiopia, where he was minister in charge of all the finances of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was riding in a chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah.

29-30 The Spirit told Philip, "Climb into the chariot." Running up alongside, Philip heard the eunuch reading Isaiah and asked, "Do you understand what you're reading?"

31-33 He answered, "How can I without some help?" and invited Philip into the chariot with him. The passage he was reading was this:

As a sheep led to slaughter,
and quiet as a lamb being sheared,
He was silent, saying nothing.
He was mocked and put down, never got a fair trial.
But who now can count his kin
since he's been taken from the earth?

34-35 The eunuch said, "Tell me, who is the prophet talking about: himself or some other?" Philip grabbed his chance. Using this passage as his text, he preached Jesus to him.

36-39 As they continued down the road, they came to a stream of water. The eunuch said, "Here's water. Why can't I be baptized?" He ordered the chariot to stop. They both went down to the water, and Philip baptized him on the spot. When they

came up out of the water, the Spirit of God suddenly took Philip off, and that was the last the eunuch saw of him. But he didn't mind. He had what he'd come for and went on down the road as happy as he could be.

⁴⁰ Philip showed up in Azotus and continued north, preaching the Message in all the villages along that route until he arrived at Caesarea.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 15:1-8 (NLT)

15 “I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³ You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

⁵ “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. ⁷ But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! ⁸ When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

MESSAGE

Rev. Joanne Myer

“Part of Something Alive and Growing”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE

Chalice Hymnal #682

God's Love for All People

*Eternal God whose image lies in the hearts of all people,
We live among peoples whose ways are different from ours,
whose faiths are foreign to us,
whose tongues are unintelligible to us.*

*Help us to remember that you love all people with your great
love,*

*that all religion is an attempt to respond to you,
that the yearnings of other hearts are much like our own
and are known to you.*

*Help us to recognize you in the words of truth,
the things of beauty,
the actions of love about us.*

*We pray through Christ,
who is a stranger to no one land more than another,
and to every land no less than to another.*

World Council of Churches, Vancouver Assembly, 1983; Reprinted by permission of the World Council of Churches // CCLI# 1326969

SILENT MEDITATION

PASTORAL PRAYER and THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

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.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*Our church welcomes to communion people of all ages
who desire to follow Jesus Christ and grow in faith.*

All are invited to prepare communion elements in their home (loaf of bread, dinner roll, croissant, slice of bread, etc., and glass of orange or grape juice, wine or water, etc.).

INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

All: Eternal God, we thank you for loving the world into existence and sustaining all of life by your goodness. With gratitude we recall that you revealed yourself through prophets and teachers and most fully in the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus, our Savior. We give you thanks that through the power of your Spirit, and by communion with you, we are able to know afresh the joy of Christ's living presence, the strength to face every circumstance of life, and the knowledge that nothing can ever separate us from your love. Amen.

GOING WITH THE WORD

HYMN OF DEDICATION

Chalice Hymnal #638

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

¹ *In the bulb there is a flower;
in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise:
butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.*

² *There's a song in every silence,
seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness
bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future;
what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.*

WORDS and MUSIC: Natalie Sleeth, 1986 © 1986 Hope Publishing Co. // CCLI #1326969

BENEDICTION

This week, let us trust God to guide us on our journey.
Nothing will shake our hope and confidence because God sends us out with love and blessings. Amen.

