

ORDER OF VIRTUAL WORSHIP

September 26, 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



EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

AMERICAN INDIAN MINISTRY SUNDAY

WELCOME

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The God of New Beginnings has called us to this place.

All: **Even in the cold and snow of winter, spring always
comes when everything blossoms forth.**

One: We come to celebrate the new life that is always ours as
God's faithful people.

All: **We shall sing our songs of hope and praise. Let us
worship God!**

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
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UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: God of Strength and Courage, our lives are empty when we do not follow your recipe for the correct way to live. When we are unrighteous, our lives are just an illusion as we go through the motions of everyday living. We boast of our good deeds and flaunt righteous behavior, but our good deeds are sometimes conceived in arrogance and born from conceit. Forgive our deception and the damage it causes. By

your mercy, please forgive us, and through Christ Jesus, we ask you to make us free. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Hear again these beautiful words of assurance from Hebrews 9:18 & 24. Christ is "the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from ... transgressions. ...For Christ ... entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf." Through this loving promise, our sins are forgiven. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI

Chalice Hymnal #35

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever-shall be,
world with-out end. A-men. A-men.*

ENGAGING THE WORD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE

Psalm 124 (CEB)

If the LORD hadn't been for us—

let Israel now repeat!—

² if the LORD hadn't been for us,
when those people attacked us

³ then they would have swallowed us up whole
with their rage burning against us!

⁴ Then the waters would have drowned us;

- the torrent would have come over our necks;^[a]
- ⁵ then the raging waters would have come over our necks!
- ⁶ Bless the LORD
because he didn't hand us over
like food for our enemies' teeth!
- ⁷ We escaped like a bird from the hunters' trap;
the trap was broken so we escaped!
- ⁸ Our help is in the name of the LORD,
the maker of heaven and earth.

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22 (CEB)

⁷ When the king and Haman came in for the banquet with Queen Esther, ² the king said to her, "This is the second day we've met for wine. What is your wish, Queen Esther? I'll give it to you. And what do you want? I'll do anything—even give you half the kingdom."

³ Queen Esther answered, "If I please the king, and if the king wishes, give me my life—that's my wish—and the lives of my people too. That's my desire. ⁴ We have been sold—I and my people—to be wiped out, killed, and destroyed. If we simply had been sold as male and female slaves, I would have said nothing. But no enemy can compensate the king for this kind of damage."

⁵ King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is this person, and where is he? Who would dare do such a thing?"

⁶ Esther replied, "A man who hates, an enemy—this wicked Haman!" Haman was overcome with terror in the presence of the king and queen.

⁹ Harbona, one of the eunuchs serving the king, said, “Sir, look! There’s the stake that Haman made for Mordecai, the man who spoke up and did something good for the king. It’s standing at Haman’s house—seventy-five feet high.”

“Impale him on it!” the king ordered. ¹⁰ So they impaled Haman on the very pole that he had set up for Mordecai, and the king’s anger went away.

²⁰ Mordecai wrote these things down and sent letters to all the Jews in all the provinces, both near and far, of King Ahasuerus. ²¹ He made it a rule that Jews keep the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar as special days each and every year. ²² They are the days on which the Jews finally put to rest the troubles with their enemies. The month is the one when everything turned around for them from sadness to joy, and from sad, loud crying to a holiday. They are to make them days of feasts and joyous events, days to send food gifts to each other and money gifts to the poor.

MESSAGE

Rev. Joanne Myer

“Esther: A Vignette”
(*Based on Chapters 1 – 10*)

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE

Chalice Hymnal #572

Take Time to Be Holy

¹ *Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord;
abide in him always, and feed on his word.
Make friends of God's children; help those who are weak;
forgetting in nothing God's blessing to seek.*

WORDS: W. D. Longstaff, 1882 MUSIC: George C. Stebbins, 1890 // 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.

VIRTUAL OFFERING

Sentence

DOXOLOGY

Chalice Hymnal #46

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. A-men.*

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All: God who creates us, Christ who redeems us, Holy Spirit who fills us with wondrous gifts, we come, blessed Trinity, with our time, talents, and treasures – our offerings to you. Please accept them and help us to use these gifts to further your work here on earth. We ask you to grant that they may enlighten a corner of darkness and need and bring the truth of your love to those seeking freedom from bondage. Amen.

GOING WITH THE WORD

HYMN OF DEDICATION

Chalice Hymnal #717

Let All Things Now Living

¹ *Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving to God our Creator triumphantly raise; who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us, by guiding us on to the end of our days. God's banners are o'er us, pure light goes before us, a pillar of fire shining forth in the night: till shadows have vanished, all fearfulness banished, as forward we travel from light into Light.*

² *By law God enforces. The stars in their courses, the sun in its orbit obediently shine; the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains, the depths of the ocean proclaim God divine. We, too, should be voicing our love and rejoicing with glad adoration, a song let us raise: till all things now living unite in thanksgiving, to God in the highest, hosanna and praise.*

WORDS: Katherine K. Davis, 1939, alt. MUSIC: Welsh folk melody; desc. Katherine K. Davis, 1939 Words and desc. © 1939, 1966, ECS Publishing, harm. © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, used by permission of Augsburg Fortress // CCLI #1326969

RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION

Adapted from Chalice Hymnal #717

One: We are blessed by God who is pure Light and Love.

All: We shall raise a song of Thanksgiving to God our Creator as we live into God's Way.

One: Let's notice God's beauty all around us.

All: We shall sing songs of rejoicing and Thanksgiving to God for hills and oceans, sun and stars. Our praises to God. Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE Chalice Hymnal #434

God Be with You Till We Meet Again

*¹ God be with you till we meet a-gain;
lov-ing coun-sels guide, up-hold you,
with a shep-herd's care en-fold you:
God be with you till we meet a-gain.*

