

JUNE 30, 2024 10 AM
SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
UCC OPEN AND AFFIRMING SUNDAY



ST. JOHN
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Rev. Rosemary Captain

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Liturgy – Rev. Roberto Ochoa

Ushers –

(NCH) New Century Hymnal - CCLI LICENSE #11164431

*Please stand if comfortably able
and respond with words in bold print

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER CONCERNS:

PRELUDE: “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”
William Croft

PENNIES FOR MISSION: Emmaus Homes and Ministries

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Adapted from Psalm 130

Leader: Out of the depths we cry to you, O Holy One.
God, hear our voices! Let your ears be attentive to the
voice of our supplications!

People: If you, O God, should mark iniquities, who
could stand? But there is forgiveness with you, so that
you may be revered.

We wait for the Divine One; our soul waits, and in the
Word we hope; our soul waits for the Holy One more
than those who watch for the morning.

**O creation, hope in the Creator! For with the Holy One
there is steadfast love, and with God there is great
power to redeem.**

**ALL: It is the Creator who will redeem creation from all
its imperfections.**

***INVOCATION:**

Dear precious God, be upon us this day in our worship
and praise. Strengthen our faith in the inclusive and
loving teachings of Christ and may the Holy Spirit be
our guide as we pray and discern our gathering as your

church to be the disciples of God's realm in the world today. We pray this in the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN: 506**

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

***PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE:**

Pastoral Leader: As we gather in worship, let us take this moment to consider our needs for healing, transformation, and forgiveness. I invite you to quietly reflect on our need for grace.

People: Dear God, the creator of all things based on love. You created us in your image of love and there have been times we have fallen short of that love, not only to you but to each other and all of creation. I ask for your forgiveness and from you, present today, my siblings, sisters and brothers in Christ. I thank you for the comforting strength and compassion of the Holy Spirit to do better in bringing love and grace and all I do. In Jesus' me I pray. Amen.

***WORDS OF GRACE:**

As Jesus taught those were healed from their brokenness through their faith—we also believe, and therefore we also declare in the affirming knowledge that when we turn to God with our shortcomings, we

are renewed in God's Love by the grace of Christ. Amen.

***GLORIA:**

**Glory to the Creator, and the Christ and the Spirit so near. As it was from the start so it shall be forever, One God always here. (repeat twice)
(end) One God always here. One God always here.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON: 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27

From "The Message"

1 ¹⁻² Shortly after Saul died, David returned to Ziklag from his rout of the Amalekites. Three days later a man showed up unannounced from Saul's army camp.

²⁻³ Disheveled and obviously in mourning, he fell to his knees in respect before David. David asked, "What brings you here?" He answered, "I've just escaped from the camp of Israel."

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ Then David sang this lament over Saul and his son Jonathan, and gave orders that everyone in Judah learn it by heart. Yes, it's even inscribed in The Book of Jashar.

¹⁹⁻²¹ Oh, oh, Gazelles of Israel, struck down on your hills,
the mighty warriors—fallen, fallen!
Don't announce it in the city of Gath,
don't post the news in the streets of Ashkelon.
Don't give those coarse Philistine girls
one more excuse for a drunken party!

No more dew or rain for you, hills of Gilboa,
and not a drop from springs and wells,
For there the warriors' shields were dragged through
the mud,

Saul's shield left there to rot.

²² Jonathan's bow was bold—
the bigger they were the harder they fell.

Saul's sword was fearless—
once out of the scabbard, nothing could stop it.

²³ Saul and Jonathan—beloved, beautiful!
Together in life, together in death.

Swifter than plummeting eagles,
stronger than proud lions.

²⁴⁻²⁵ Women of Israel, weep for Saul.

He dressed you in finest cottons and silks,
spared no expense in making you elegant.

The mighty warriors—fallen, fallen
in the middle of the fight!

Jonathan—struck down on your hills!

²⁶ O my dear brother Jonathan,
I'm crushed by your death.

Your friendship was a miracle-wonder,
love far exceeding anything I've known—
or ever hope to know.

²⁷ The mighty warriors—fallen, fallen.
And the arms of war broken to bits.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 130 Page 709-710

EPISTLE LESSON: 2 Corinthians 8:7-15

⁷ Be the best in this work of grace in the same way that you are the best in everything, such as faith, speech, knowledge, total commitment, and the love we inspired in you. ⁸ I'm not giving an order, but by mentioning the commitment of others, I'm trying to prove the authenticity of your love also. ⁹ You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Although he was rich, he became poor for your sakes, so that you could become rich through his poverty.

¹⁰ I'm giving you my opinion about this. It's to your advantage to do this, since you not only started to do it last year but you wanted to do it too. ¹¹ Now finish the job as well so that you finish it with as much enthusiasm as you started, given what you can afford. ¹² A gift is appreciated because of what a person can afford, not because of what that person can't afford, if it's apparent that it's done willingly. ¹³ It isn't that we want others to have financial ease and you financial difficulties, but it's a matter of equality. ¹⁴ At the present moment, your surplus can fill their deficit so that in the future their surplus can fill your deficit. In this way there is equality. ¹⁵ As it is written, *The one who gathered more didn't have too much, and the one who gathered less didn't have too little.*

***GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 5:21-43**

Jesus heals two people

²¹ Jesus crossed the lake again, and on the other side a large crowd gathered around him on the shore. ²² Jairus, one of the synagogue leaders, came forward. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet ²³ and pleaded with him, “My daughter is about to die. Please, come and place your hands on her so that she can be healed and live.” ²⁴ So Jesus went with him.

A swarm of people were following Jesus, crowding in on him. ²⁵ A woman was there who had been bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a lot under the care of many doctors, and had spent everything she had without getting any better. In fact, she had gotten worse. ²⁷ Because she had heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his clothes. ²⁸ She was thinking, If I can just touch his clothes, I’ll be healed. ²⁹ Her bleeding stopped immediately, and she sensed in her body that her illness had been healed.

³⁰ At that very moment, Jesus recognized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched my clothes?”

³¹ His disciples said to him, “Don’t you see the crowd pressing against you? Yet you ask, ‘Who touched me?’” ³² But Jesus looked around carefully to see who had done it.

³³ The woman, full of fear and trembling, came forward. Knowing what had happened to her, she fell down in front of Jesus and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He

responded, “Daughter, your faith has healed you; go in peace, healed from your disease.”

³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking with her, messengers came from the synagogue leader’s house, saying to Jairus, “Your daughter has died. Why bother the teacher any longer?”

³⁶ But Jesus overheard their report and said to the synagogue leader, “Don’t be afraid; just keep trusting.” ³⁷ He didn’t allow anyone to follow him except Peter, James, and John, James’ brother. ³⁸ They came to the synagogue leader’s house, and he saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹ He went in and said to them, “What’s all this commotion and crying about? The child isn’t dead. She’s only sleeping.” ⁴⁰ They laughed at him, but he threw them all out. Then, taking the child’s parents and his disciples with him, he went to the room where the child was. ⁴¹ Taking her hand, he said to her, “*Talitha koum*,” which means, “Young woman, get up.” ⁴² Suddenly the young woman got up and began to walk around. She was 12 years old. They were shocked! ⁴³ He gave them strict orders that no one should know what had happened. Then he told them to give her something to eat.

These are the ancient words revealed to us anew.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

MESSAGE: “Fear and Faith”

Last week we talked about fear; fear of the storm at sea and perhaps fear of Jesus and his power. Today we have more stories of fear; the temple administrator’s fears of his daughter dying and his fear for his reputation if he approached Jesus for help.

We also had the elderly woman’s fears. Let’s explore her situation first. This woman’s perpetual uncleanness (with all its consequences in her family and social life) explains her fear both of openly requesting help and then of being discovered after she’s received it. One of the most remarkable things about this story is the way in which Jesus knows at once that power had gone out of him. I don’t recall any other place in the Bible where this comment is repeated. Jesus knew that power had gone out of him. Amazing!

Healing by touch, not least when the healer wasn’t expecting it, is such a strange phenomenon. This event highlights for us the intimate nature of the contact between the individual and Jesus. Perhaps the author of the Gospel of Mark expects and hopes that his readers will develop this for themselves. When life crowds in with all its pressures, there is still room for us to creep up behind Jesus – if that’s all we feel we can do – and reach out to touch him, in that odd mixture of fear and faith that characterizes so much Christian discipleship.

What about Jairus, the synagogue administrator or president? Who was he? He was not a priest or rabbi or scribe. His job was to make sure things ran well in the temple. Since the time when Jesus moved from Nazareth to Capernaum, he can’t always have been an easy person to have in the village congregation. Local experts in Jewish law were upset at some of the things he was doing; murmurs around the place suggested that if Herod Antipas heard Jesus say that a new Kingdom-of-God movement, there would be trouble. Jairus might well be afraid that someone who came to town to be in the spotlight might bring attention to the town for all the wrong reasons. At best, Jairus probably wants to keep a safe distance. Let others go after this Jesus sooner or later he’ll see if anything comes of the efforts of Jesus, and for the moment it was best to preserve something like neutrality.

Until disaster strikes. Jairus’s daughter was very very sick. She was 12 years old and, in that culture, she was almost old enough to be married. You can imagine the agonized household, the distraught father, and hope slipping away by the minute. Then word arrived that the strange teacher had just come back from across the lake. Jairus put his pride in his pocket and forgot his fears of a religious controversy or political danger. His daughter was dying! He rushed off to Jesus.

There was one more fear that struck Jairus. As he was leading Jesus to his house, someone arrived from

the house and announced that Jairus's daughter was dead and that Jairus should not bother the teacher any more. Can you imagine what Jairus felt hearing that?

Those were the fears mentioned in this passage, although there might have been more that I didn't mention. But now comes the best part of the stories; Jesus' response to Jairus and the woman who touched his robe. FAITH!

Jesus overheard what the messenger said to Jairus concerning the status of the young girl. Jesus looks at Jairus intently and says, "DON'T BE AFRAID; JUST KEEP TRUSTING."

When the woman, full of fear and trembling, came forward and knowing she had been healed, she fell down in front of Jesus and told him the whole truth. What did Jesus say? "DAUGHTER, YOUR FAITH HAS HEALED YOU; GO IN PEACE, HEALED FROM YOUR DISEASE."

Was it Jesus' power that rescued her, or her own faith? Clearly it was Jesus' power; but he says, (in other translations) "Your faith has rescued you." The answer must be that faith, though itself powerless, is the channel through which Jesus' power can work. (see 6:5). Jesus is not a magician, doing conjuring tricks by some secret power for an amazed but uninvolved audience. Even though the onlookers don't yet realize it, he is God's Son, the one through whom the living God is remaking Israel, humans, the world. And faith,

however much fear and trembling may accompany it, is the first sign of that remaking, that renewal, that new life. Where are you in this story? Amen.

**SPECIAL MUSIC: "Just as I Am" Flute/Piano duet
Stacie/Sharon**

PASTORAL PRAYER: God our healer and comforter. We are grateful that no matter the perils of our lives, you are with us, no matter what. We should be still and know that you are God. Nothing else compares and nothing else is needed. Not only do you calm storms, but you help people recover from those storms, floods, and tornadoes. You send your helpers to be your advocates in crisis such as those. Thank you.

We know you are with all those on our prayer list and all people who feel discouraged and afraid because their struggles seem too great to conquer. Yet you remain with us, even if we ourselves have created that situation that threatens us, such as in the case of addiction.

We are grateful that on this past Tuesday the United Church of Christ celebrated their 67th Anniversary. So we continue to pray for our all UCC churches that they may weather any crisis that suddenly appears.

We pray for peace around the world when so many people are lost, injured, dying, grieving, starving, and

need of water and shelter. There is no place for wars when God's creations of ALL people are in danger. Hear us as we pray the prayer your Son taught us. . .

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 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.

PRAYER RESPONSE: 772

**Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten.
Those who seek God shall never go wanting.
Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten.
God alone fills us.**

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY:

We are grateful for the gifts that we receive in our lives. We invite you to participate in this opportunity of generosity to continue the mission of God's Love to the world. We are grateful and thankful.

**OFFERTORY: "America/America, the Beautiful"
by Mark Hayes**

***DOXOLOGY:**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;**

**Praise God above you heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION:**

O Holy One, with gratefulness we offer and dedicate these gifts for the continuation of our work in Christ's Name. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN: "God Bless America" Irving Berlin**

**God bless America, land that I love.
Stand beside her and guide her
through the night with a light from above.
From the mountains to the prairies,
to the oceans white with foam.
God bless America, my home sweet home.
God bless America, my home sweet home. (repeat)**

***BENEDICTION:**

Dear Friends as we go out into the world seeking healing of all kinds, let us share the faith and hope that we carry in Christ. Be the light of peace and healing to a world which seeks it in the Name of God who created, redeems, and sustains us. Amen.

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE:**

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"

POSTLUDE: "This Is My Country" Al Jacobs