

The First Church in Belfast

United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

August 13, 2017

10:00 a.m.

WE ARE GATHERED IN

An asterisk * means please stand.

WELCOME TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

PRELUDE

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT

CALL TO WORSHIP (the congregation's words are in **BOLD** print)

This is the day that God has made,
let us rejoice and be glad in it!
Enter each moment in anticipation,
for there is sweet surprise in store.
Greet every person with wonder,
for all house the Spirit of the Holy One.
Take every breath with reverence,
for life is a divine gift.
This is the day, enter the moment, and greet
all the people, **breathing the breath of God!**

***OPENING HYMN** "This Is the Day that God Has Made" tune: CONSOLATION words: Rev. Kate Winters, Belfast, ME, 2013

This is the day that God has made, / the sun breaks o'er the bay.
The osprey opens prayerful wings, / it's praise her soaring play.
"Awake, arise, be present now!" / the message of the morn.
Receive the gift from Love's own hand / for this the soul is born.

This is the day that God has made, / an offering sweet and fair.
With scent of earth, fresh sunlit breeze / and birdsong in the air.
But even when the gales grow strong / and thunder clouds appear,
I hear the whisper deep within, / "My child, hold fast. Be here."

This is the day that God has made, / a dance of dark and light.
Where love is found, sheer beauty lives / and dreams are given flight.
How deep the silence of the soul / that rests in earthen bliss.
For heaven is here, the Spirit our breath, / and life, God's own sweet kiss.

***PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CIRCLE

***GREETING OF PEACE**

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

CALL TO A PATH

-silence-

WORDS OF GRACE

by Marcus J. Borg

When a Christian seeker asked the Dalai Lama whether she should become a Buddhist, his response, which I paraphrase, was: “No, become more deeply Christian; live more deeply into your own tradition.” Huston Smith makes the same point with the metaphor of digging a well: If what you’re looking for is water, better to dig one well sixty feet deep than to dig six wells ten feet deep. By living more deeply into our own tradition as a sacrament of the sacred, we become more centered in the one to whom the tradition points and in whom we live and move and have our being.

A Christian is one who does this within the framework of the Christian tradition, just as a Jew is one who does this within the framework of the Jewish tradition, a Muslim, within the framework of the Muslim tradition, and so forth. And I cannot believe that God cares which of these we are. All are paths of relationship and transformation.

WE HEAR THE WORD

FIRST READING Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 Manley Rogers

GOSPEL READING Matthew 14:22-33

MESSAGE “Scripture Reading Us”

WE LIVE THE WORD

***HYMN** “God Made From One Blood” #427

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

INVITATION TO GIVE

SPECIAL MUSIC “Imagine” First Church Quartet

OFFERING

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God for all that love has done.
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, one.

(Note: The First Church honors the diverse languages of faith. Please sing with words that are meaningful to you. Other versions of the Doxology are found in our hymnal, #776-781.)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

To you be the glory, O God, when we give of our hearts. To the world be the comfort when we reach out our hands to heal. To the church be the challenge to live the compassion of Jesus today. With these gifts, we pledge ourselves to your great work. Amen.

WE ARE SENT AND BLESSED

***CLOSING HYMN** “Sent Forth by God’s Blessing” #76

***BENEDICTION**