



Community UCC, 805 South 6th Street, Champaign, IL 61820
Worship for Ordinary Time *** Unraveled 1: Sarah Laughs
Live Stream Service
June 21, 2020



Community UCC

We're worth our words
Welcoming Progressive Community
Vibrant Messengers of Hope



Champaign, Illinois

Worship for Ordinary Time *** Unraveled 1: Sarah Laughs

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Thoughts before Worship:

Theologian Walter Brueggemann writes of the story of Sarah's laughter, "Laughter is a biblical way of receiving a newness which cannot be explained. The newness is sheer gift—underived, unwarranted." As we enter into worship today, consider this: What might it look like for our disbelief to unravel into joy?

Welcome and a Word About Worship

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Today, we begin a new worship series from A Sanctified Art, called, "Unraveled: Seeking God When Our Plans Fall Apart." What happens when our world, as we know it, falls apart? How do we press onward when our tightly knit plans unravel into loose threads? What do we become when our identity—or the path we're on — comes undone? What if all of this is not the end we fear it will be? We can ask these questions in light of all that is going on in our world these days. Throughout these next 12 weeks, we will be reminded that, in our unraveling, sometimes life surprises us with unexpected joy, love, and hope—with a new beginning we couldn't have imagined. Sometimes we need God to unravel us, for we long to be changed. Together, we'll explore 12 stories of unraveled shame, identity, fear, grief, dreams, and expectations. It is good and important work to be doing in this time of multi-faceted, epic change in our world. So, with all this before us, let us settle ourselves down and begin.

(Prayer requests may be submitted by using the Chat Button on Zoom and Commenting on Facebook. These requests will be collected throughout the service and voiced by the Pastor during the Prayers of the People following the Offertory.)

Gathering Music

Jesus Paid It All

Brian Clark

Music Composer: Elvina M. Hall, arranged by Greg Howlett

Call to Worship

David Gerstenecker

As we gather together today to learn from Sarah's laughter in worship,

May we be as welcoming as Sarah and Abraham, who were quick to serve the stranger.

In faith,

May we proclaim that nothing is too big for God.

In moments of holy surprise,

May we laugh with deep abiding joy.

For God is in the holy surprise.

God is in the winding path.

And God is in our presence today.

Let us worship the Holy One to whom we belong.

We welcome you to our service this morning. Celebrating the diversity of creation, Community United Church welcomes persons of any age, ability, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, or life condition. May the Divine Presence become real to you through this time of worship. We hope you come back!

Hymn

We are Dancing Sarah's Circle

NCH 501 v 1, 4, 5

Led by: Kathy Lee, Xiaoyi Zha

African-American Spiritual, Words: Carole A. Etlzer, Tune: Jacob's Ladder

*We are dancing Sarah's circle, we are dancing Sarah's circle,
we are dancing Sarah's circle, sisters, brothers, all.*

*Every round a generation, every round a generation,
every round a generation, sisters, brothers, all.*

*On and on the circle's moving, on and on the circle's moving,
on and on the circle's moving, sisters, brothers, all.*

Responsive Invocation

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser & David Gerstenecker

Gracious God, we bring you the broken parts of ourselves.

Hem us in before and behind.

Creator God, we bring you the joyful parts of ourselves.

Weave us together in hope and praise.

God of new life, we bring you doubt and faith knotted up in our hearts.

Unravel our doubt. Weave faith into our hearts. Draw us together and point us toward you.

In hope and faith we pray. In hope and faith we worship. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

God of unexpected joy and answered prayers, we confess that sometimes things feel too good to be true, while at other times, like in these days, we wonder if you hear us at all. When life unravels for the worst, often, we blame you. And when life unravels for the best, filling our days with holy surprise, we tend to praise ourselves, thinking we've earned this unexpected joy. Forgive us. Help us to see you in our midst in these challenging times. Bring, with every breath, the possibility of laughter. Draw us closer to you. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Children's Moment

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Prelude to Scripture

David Gerstenecker

Whether we take what is written in the Bible as fact, metaphor, myth, or story, let us listen now to the meaning they might hold for us on this day.

Sacred Reading from the Original Testament

Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7

¹The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. ²He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. ³He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. ⁴Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." ⁶And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes." ⁷Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. ⁸Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

⁹They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” ¹⁰Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. ¹¹Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. ¹²So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?” ¹³The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ ¹⁴Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.” ¹⁵But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. He said, “Oh yes, you did laugh.”

21The LORD dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as he had promised. ²Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. ³Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. ⁴And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. ⁵Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶Now Sarah said, “God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.” ⁷And she said, “Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

Postlude to Scripture

Together, let us say:

May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder as we ponder the meaning of these words for our lives.

Hymn of Reflection

Restless Weaver

Chalice Hymnal 658 v 1, 4

Led by: David Willcox

Words: O. I. Cricket Harrison, Tune: Attributed to B. F. White, Harmonization: Ronald Nelson

Restless Weaver, ever spinning threads of justice and shalom; Dreaming patterns of creation where all creatures find a home; Gathering up life's varied fibers – every texture, every hue: Grant us your creative vision, with us weave your world anew.

Restless Weaver, still conceiving new life – now and yet to be – Binding all your vast creation in one living tapestry: You have called us to be weavers. Let your love guide all we do. With your Reign of Peace our pattern, we will weave your world anew.

Message

The Insurrection of Joy

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Call to Offering

David Gerstenecker

All that we have and all that we are belongs to God. In gratitude for all God has first given to us, we offer our gifts, and we ask God to use them to make the kin-dom manifest among us, even here and even now. As we offer them, bless us, we ask, O God, with your love, your power, and your grace. And, if you have finances to share, go to <https://community-ucc.org/> and click “Donate” so that the ministry of this Community of faith might continue.

Continuing today and running through next Sunday, we are receiving a LOVE offering for DREAAM House <https://www.dream.org/> and UCC Racial Justice Ministries https://www.ucc.org/justice_racism. CUCC will match these offerings from the Mission Reserves up to \$2,000.00. All offerings are being split evenly between these two organizations – it is important to act locally and broadly.

Offertory

Simply Alleluia

Kathy Kew Lee

Words & Music: Tom Fettke

Prayer of Prayers of the People

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

- Prayers for the John Osborne family as they grieve the death of John's mother, [Carmen Rucker](#)
- Sebastian
- Violence against our African American siblings
 - Tony McDade
 - Dominique Fells
 - Riah Milton
 - Rayshard Brooks
 - Malcolm Harsch
 - Robert Fuller
- Residual trauma all black and brown people experience every time there is trauma against black and brown people in this country.
- People of our country

Commissioning of the Community

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Closing Hymn

Give Us Laughter Unexpected

Stephen M. Fearing for Unraveled

Led by: Megan Krejci, Jeanne Ward, David Willcox, Xiaoyi Zha
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*Give us laughter unexpected, mirth that mothers us to health,
Bubbling up from deep within us, endless source of wondrous wealth.
May our tears flow o'er our cheekbones, not of sorrow but of mirth,
Freely flowing silly giggles, ones that mend this broken earth.*

*Though our grief can be so heavy - burdens break our brittle bones -
There exists a salve that softens hurt amid the mournful moans.
Laughter charges not a copay, needs no credit to obtain.
All may gather at the fountain, for a moment, heal the pain.*

*When we think creation's over, when we think there is no more,
Lead us to rethink our logic, help our joyous song restore.
There's a cheerful balm that saves us from the sorrow and the sting.
Laughter is the gift within us, sprouting up from joyous spring!*

*Blessed are you who weep with sorrow; soon the laughter comes to save.
God, our joyful source of mercy, raises you up from the grave.
Never cease to loose your chuckles, laugh out loud and let it fly.
Hold yourself in holy humor, share God's joy in strong supply.*

Blessing and Benediction

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

In these days filled with disbelief and doubt, may God open you when you've close yourself off.

In these days when we are tightly wound by rage, grief, anxiety, fear, and bound by structural systems, may God unravel you with unexpected joy.

When you need it most, may God unravel you with blessed newness and boundless joy. Amen.

Serving Today

Ministers: The Community of Community UCC

Preacher: Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Liturgist: David Gerstenecker

Organist: Brian Clark

Director of Music Ministry: Kathy Lee

Audio/Video: Director of Campus Ministry, Rev Nate Brantingham

Audio/Video: Andy Contreras, Andrew Gupta

Zoom Room Greeter: Chase Skye

CUCC Staff

Pastor: Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser leah@community-ucc.org	Parish Associate: Rev. Connie Bandy connie@community-ucc.org
Director of Youth Ministries: Jessica Smiley jessica@community-ucc.org	Director of Music Ministries: Kathy Lee music@community-ucc.org
Childcare Coordinator: Courtney Hayman childcare@community-ucc.org	Organist: Brian Clark
Commissioned Minister of Congregational Health: Linda Morgan lindamorgan@sbcglobal.net	Office Manager: Carla Rush info@community-ucc.org

Your Ministry Team Leaders

-Community Building: Peg Wade and Randy Musser	-Usher Coordinator: Russ Houglund
-Care Team: Jeff & Tina Stovall	-Sound Coordinator: Roger Wade
-Prayer Shawls: Elena Kasper	-Clerk: Shane Brownfield
-Meal Train: Jennifer Robbennolt	-Moderator: Jon Ebel
-Driver's Ministry: Becky Sheridan and John Osborne	Past Moderator: John Murphy
-Card Ministry: Peg Wade	-Incoming Moderator: Elizabeth Shack
-Healing Music Ministry: Marilou Hinrichs	-UCC Campus Ministry Liaison: Ilsa Kantola
-Health and Wellness Team: Doug Irwin	-Pastoral Relations: Cara Finnegan
-Finance: Roger Wade (treasurer), David Willcox (financial secretary)	-Personnel Committee: Anna Barnes
-Mission: Nancy Smith and Ramona Oswald	-Sound & Ethical Practices (SEP): Grant Robbennolt and Kyle Mahannah
-Identity: Keri Evans and (pending)	-Buildings & Grounds: Tom Ward and Matthew Hart
-Children & Family: Julie McClure and (pending)	-Contracts & Insurance: (pending)
-Worship: Chase Skye and Susan Pawlicki	

United Church Foundation (UCC Campus Ministry)

Director of Campus Ministry: Nate Brantingham (nate@ucccampusministry.org)

<http://community-ucc.org/campus-ministry/>

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Community United Church of Christ

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Daring Discipleship

Father's Day

Today's scripture reminds us that there is nothing so small and insignificant that it fails to fall under God's watchful care.

It's a great reminder on this, the 63rd anniversary (6/25/2020) of the United Church of Christ. This is just an ordinary, even insignificant year. If you try to look it up, you will find that there is no traditional 63rd anniversary gift. A 63rd might go by unremarked.

One of the hallmarks of the United Church of Christ is that we follow Christ in noticing that which goes unnoticed by others. This year don't let the 63rd anniversary of the United Church of Christ pass without a celebration. What are some of the ways you can celebrate the UCC on this ordinary birthday year?

1. Find out more about the history of the ever-changing denomination and the ecumenical movements that came together to found the UCC. Trying checking out <https://www.ucc.org/about-us-hidden-histories> for more information.
2. Give a gift of \$63 (or \$630 or \$6300!) to the UCC's disaster relief fund. (<https://www.ucc.org/disaster>). UCC Disaster Ministries works with established, local organizations to provide spiritual, physical, financial and psychological support to those living in the aftermath of disaster.
3. Look for and list 63 ways that God is at work in and through your local congregation. Share your list with a friend. What ways are the same and which are different?
4. Make a commitment to pray for your local congregation, conference or association daily for the next 63 days. Notice how your prayers change things.
5. Get a cake, blow up some balloons, invite your congregation to gather and have a party! As followers of Christ, who blessed the smallest and least significant things, we don't need to wait for a big birthday to celebrate.



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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