



Community UCC

We're worth our words

Welcoming Progressive Community

Vibrant Messengers of Hope



Champaign, Illinois

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany, Year C

Thoughts before worship: "Blessing that Opens its Heart to You" by Jan L. Richardson

You have seen
the impostors
trying to masquerade
as this blessing,
how they cloak themselves
with words
that look so much
like what you longed for
while beneath
they are hollow.

This blessing
has come to tell you
do not be discouraged
do not be dismayed
do not berate yourself
for where you have been
searching,
for the wisdom that comes
along what seems
a foolish road.

You will know this blessing
by how it opens its heart
to you.
You will know this blessing
by how it turns its face
toward you.
You will know this blessing
by how it approaches you
arm in arm with faith
and hope.

You will know this blessing
not by the ease it offers you
but by what it asks of you:
patience and kindness
forbearance and belief
hope and endurance
and more

not because this is what
you owe
but because this is what
this blessing stirs in you,

what it provides for you,
what it pours into your hands
that you suddenly
find open

like your heart
that unfolds itself
in welcome,
finally knowing
and fully known.

Prelude

Katie Barr

Introit

Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos

NCH 526

We Are Marching in the Light of God

We Are Marching in the Light of God

Si-ya-hamb' e-ku-kha-nyen' kwen-khos', si-ya-hamb' e-ku-kha-nyen' kwen-khos'.

Si-ya-hamb' e-ku-kha-nyen' kwen-khos', Si-ya-hamb' e-ku-kha-nyen' kwen-khos',

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!

Note: *Our worship services are live streamed. If you prefer not to have the back of your head seen on the live stream worship please do not sit in the first seven pews on the left side (organ/piano) of the sanctuary.*

Note 2: *The congregation responds to the liturgy parts in **BOLD***

**Everyone is invited to stand in body or in spirit.*

*Si-ya-ham-ba Oo
si-ya-hamb' e-ku-kha-nyen' kwen-khos'.
Si-ya-ham-ba Oo
si-ya-hamb' e-ku-kha-nyen' kwen-khos'.
We are march-ing in the light of God,
we are march-ing in the light of God.
We are march-ing in the light of God,
we are march-ing in the light of God.
We are march-ing, Oo,
we are march-ing in the light of God.
We are march-ing, Oo,
we are march-ing in the light of God.*

***Call to Worship**

Give glory to God!

Glory to God.

We come to worship with grateful hearts

Glory to God.

Give glory to the Creator and bow in holy splendor!

Glory to God.

God renews and rebirths, redeems and restores.

Glory to God.

We are refreshed and revived, with lives made for loving

Glory to God.

Introit Reprise

***Opening Prayer**

Together, let us pray:

With powerful words and dramatic gestures, with a quiet conversation and a gentle touch, we respond to your call, O God, to offer healing and hope to our world. With courage to face the injustices around us, with the willingness to go into the brokenness, we fulfill the call of Jesus to engage in faithful obedience. With the peace of a dove and intensity of your Pentecost fire, we become the Spirit's refuge for all who live in worry and fear. In you, with you, through you, God in Community, Holy in One, we can seek to be your people, here and now. Amen.

Welcome, a Word About Worship, and an Opportunity to Check-In

***Opening Hymn**

Amen, Amen

NCH 161

Congregation sings as Introduction and during solo:

A-men' a-men' a-men' a-men' a-men•'

A-men' a-men' a-men' a-men' a-men

Solo: O see the lit-tle ba-by ly-ing in a man-ger on Christ- mas mom-ing.

Solo: See Je-sus in the tem-ple talk-ing to the el-ders; how they all mar-veled!

Solo: See Je-sus at the sea-shore preach-ing to the peo-ple, heal- ing all the sick ones!

Solo: See Je-sus on the cross, bear-ing all my sins in bit- ter ag-o-ny!

Solo: Yes, Je-sus died to save us, rose on Eas-ter mom-ing, and lives for- ev-er!

Solo: We're sing-ing Al-le-lu-ia! Je-sus is my Sav-ior, who lives for- ev-er!

***Passing the Peace**

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
 When the star in the sky is gone,
 When the kings and princes are home,
 When the shepherds are back with their flock,
 The work of Christmas begins:
 To find the lost, To heal the broken,
 To feed the hungry, To release the prisoner,
 To rebuild the nations,
 To bring peace among others,
 To make music from the heart.*

Call to Prayer

As part of the holy communion service, we will offer up our joys and concerns. Your prayer requests will be offered aloud. Whether you are sitting here in the sanctuary, or worshipping with us remotely, you are invited to add your joys and concerns to the prayer list: go to community-ucc.org/pray (a Google Form), or scan the QR code found here or there are prayer cards on the table at the back of the Sanctuary that you may fill out and hand to the usher.



Prelude to Scripture

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

Sacred Reading from the Original Testament

Jeremiah 1:4-10

⁴ Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

⁵ 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.'

⁶ Then I said, 'Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.' ⁷ But the LORD said to me, 'Do not say, "I am only a boy"; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you.

⁸ Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD.'

⁹ Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me, 'Now I have put my words in your mouth.

¹⁰ See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.'

Sacred Reading from the Epistles

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

¹³ If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹²For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Postlude to Scripture

Together, let us say:

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

Call to Offering

Together, as a church, we need not offer to speak in tongues, but to offer words of encouragement. We do not have to be know-it-alls, but those who work to lift the burdens off those around us. We do not need to give everything, but we will join our gifts with those of others to reach out, in love, to those who have nothing. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. You may give online at www.community-ucc.org and clicking donate. Our ushers will now come forward to receive this morning's offering.



Message

A Love that Lifts

Silent Meditation

Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

Sharing our Community's Joys and Concerns

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

May the God of love be with you.

And also with you.

Do not be afraid to offer your hearts to God.

We do so, knowing they will be filled with God's love.

Always and forever, let us praise our God.

Here, now, every day, everywhere, we will offer our songs to the One who abides.

You could have spoken any tongue, God of every love, but you silenced the cacophony of chaos with the simple words, 'let there be,' and creation, in all its goodness and beauty sprang forth from the depths of your heart. Mysteriously, you chose to create us in your image, knowing we might reject you, which we did, placing our faith in death, learning more about death than we ever dreamed. Empowered with your words, prophets came to remind us of what would happen, but because we loved sin and death more, we gained nothing from their advice. So you gave us the priceless treasure of your heart who, filled with your love, handed over his body so we might gain everything.

With those who worry they cannot do what you ask, with those who believe your word is fulfilled, we join our voices in singing your praises:

Holy, holy, holy are you, God of abiding faith.

All creation sings of its hope in you.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who came as your love embodied.

Hosanna in the highest!

As patient as a cat waiting for a sunbeam on a winter's day, kinder than a parent teaching teenager how to change their tire, Jesus showed us love in so many ways. He never blew his own horn or wished he was someone else; he never bullied the vulnerable, didn't whine, and let go of every grudge. He didn't look the other way when we were foolish, but encouraged everyone to own up to their mistakes. He picked up all of our burdens, he trusted those otherwise discounted, and looked beyond all our fears, as well as his own, taking on everything sin and death had to offer him in order that everyone might experience resurrection love.

We may not have prophetic powers, we may not know as much as we think we do, but we can speak of that mystery of faith:

God's Word came, offering life in faith on the cross.

God's Word comes, offering resurrection hope to all.

God's Word will come, bringing love for each one of God's children.

Your love never ends, Eternal God. Your Spirit pours it out upon the gifts of the Table and those gathered around it. This bread, though broken, will feed us so we might be able to bear the brokenness of those around us. The cup, containing faith, hope, and love, will send us into the world, to serve in the belief that justice has no future to endure until peace becomes the reality rather than the fantasy of a few.

And when we run out of things to say and words drift away, when your fullness comes and all the pieces of life fall into place, your children will see you clearly, God in Community, Holy in One, knowing you as well as you know them, rejoicing that your steadfast love, the grace of Jesus, and the Spirit's hope rest forever in your love even as we all will. Amen.

Sharing the Meal

Solo *We Will Rejoice in Love* Kathy Lee

We will rejoice in love,
lift up our voice in
love, make every
choice in love,
we will uphold your world in
love. We will delight in love,
share and invite
in love, till all
unite in love,
we will enfold your world in love.*

*We will repent in love, raise
our lament in love, dare to
dissent in love,
we will uphold your world in love. We
will persist in love,
choose to resist in love, and
coexist in love,
we will enfold your world in love.*

**Faith, hope, or peace may be substituted
for love if desired.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us pray:

We give you thanks, Almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world, in courage and in peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Savior, Amen.

Commissioning of the Community

*Hymn *Love Astounding*

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response**

You Are the Seed

CUCC Choir

***Postlude**

Please join us for the after party in the Parlor.

Acknowledgements

Opening Prayer and Holy Communion Liturgy adapted from Thom M. Shuman, Lectionary Liturgies, <https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>

Anthem, "*The Work of Christmas*," Words by Howard Thurman, Music Dan Forest

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Offertory, "We Will Rejoice in Love," Mark Miller, Text David Bjorlin

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

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Commissioning of the Community

*Hymn

Love Astounding

1. Love a - stound-ing, Love con - found - ing lim - its fear - ful minds im - pose.
2. Love re - ceiv - ing Love be - liev - ing, we re - jice with thanks and song,

Love re - new - ing, Love pur - su - ing ev - ery heart un - til it knows
faith re - gain - ing, hope pro - claim - ing; Love has taught us, we be - long

Love's trans - form - ing, heal - ing good - ness, Love's a - bid - ing gen - tle grace,
safe with - in Love's ten - der keep - ing, safe from fear's per - sis - tent cal.

Love's en - dur - ance, Love's as - sur - ance, Love's con - sol - ing strong em - brace.
Love de - fend - ing, Love un - end - ing, Love of God en - fold - ing all.

Serving Today

Ministers: The Community of Community UCC
Presider and Preacher: Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser
Liturgist: Tom Ward
Ushers: Kelly and Jherilyn Tull

Accompanist: Katie Barr **Musicians:** Kathy Lee, CUCC Choir
Audio/Video: Marilou Hinrich, Elizabeth Shack, Sean Walker

Community United Church of Christ Staff

Pastor:

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser
leah@community-ucc.org

Director of Youth Ministries:

Rev. Nicole Havelka |
nicole@ucccampusministry.org

Childcare Provider:

Alexis Robinson

Commissioned Minister of Congregational Health and Wellness Emeritus:

Linda Morgan | lindamorgan@sbcglobal.net

Faith Community Nurse

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Minister Emeritus:

Rev. Connie Bandy | connie@community-ucc.org

Director of Music Ministries:

Kathy Lee | music@community-ucc.org

Accompanist: Katie Barr | kbarr.pianist@gmail.com

Office Manager:

Carla Rush | info@community-ucc.org

Your Ministry Team Leaders

Moderator: Julie McClure*

Past Moderator: Johnalene Radek*

Incoming Moderator: Susan Pawlicki*

Clerk: Jeff Radek*

Pastoral Relations Committee: Cara Finnegan

Personnel Committee: Stephen Kolderup

Community Building: Peg Wade*

- **Care Team:** Marilou Hinrichs

- **Prayer Shawls:** Elena Kasper

- **Meal Train:** Jennifer Robbennolt

- **Driver's Ministry:** Marilou Hinrichs

- **Healing Music Ministry:** Marilou Hinrichs

- **Card Ministry:** Peg Wade

- **Visitor's Ministry:** Marilou Hinrichs

- **Health and Wellness Team:**

- **Hospitality Team:** Rocio (Ro) Arroyave Jamison
and Dennis Jamison

Children & Family: Brin Schuler* and Kelly Tull

Finance: Roger Wade* (treasurer), David Willcox
(financial secretary)

Identity: Keri Evans* and Ramona Oswald

Mission: Jeanne Ward* and Patty Gropp

Sound & Ethical Practices (SEP): Shane Brownfield*
and Sue Fristoe

- **Buildings & Grounds:** Tom Ward and Matthew
Hart

- **Contracts & Insurance:** Andrew McClure

UCC Campus Ministry Liaison: Ilsa Kantola*

Worship: Mara Smith* and Sebastian Major

- **Sound Coordinator:** Roger Wade

*denotes Church Life Board Member

United Church Foundation (UCC Campus Ministry)

Director of Campus Ministry: Rev. Nicole Havelka | nicole@ucccampusministry.org
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Community United Church of Christ

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