



May 5, 2024

St. John's United Church of Christ

As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.

**Called by God
Sharing with the World**

May 5, 2024
6th Sunday of Easter

Meditation

“We do not draw people to Christ by loudly discrediting what they believe, by telling them how wrong they are and how right we are, but by showing them a light that is so lovely that they want with all their hearts to know the source of it.”

Madeleine L'Engle

Chimes

Prelude

O the Deep Deep Love of Jesus

Welcome and Announcements

✝ Opening Hymn #446 *O Love that Will Not Let Me Go*

O Love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee.
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.

O Light that follows all my way,
I yield my flick'ring torch to thee.
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee.
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain,
that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee.
I lay in dust, life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red,
life that shall endless be.

Lifting up our Joys

May Birthday Blessings

Passing of the Peace

✠ Call to Worship (Congregation reads **bold print**)

Let us worship God, our light and our salvation.

The Lord is the stronghold of our lives.

We desire to live in God's house and to seek God in his holy temple.

We have come with shouts of joy, to sing and make music to the Lord.

Let us worship God in spirit and in truth.

Teach us your ways and make straight our paths in this hour of worship and always.

– based on Psalm 27; John 4:23

✠ Opening Prayer

Pastor Jeff

✠ Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

God of life and earth, we confess that sometimes we are not alive to the possibilities you offer. In the midst of pain, unfairness, and fear, we find little reason for hope. We feel despair or blame others, but we do not turn to you for help. Forgive us and show us how to receive anew the new life you offer and then share it with those around us.

Silent pause for reflection **Amen.**

✠ Assurance of Forgiveness

As we put out trust in Christ, there is relief from stress, forgiveness of our sins, and the guarantee of eternal life.

Let us then continue our journey of faith and obedience, through the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bible Readings

Psalm 98, John 15:9-17

Elaine Miller

Psalm 98

1 O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things. His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory.

2 The LORD has made known his victory; he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.

3 He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.

6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it.

8 Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy 9 at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

John 15:9-17

9 As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you.

15 I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.

16 You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. 17 I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Choir Anthem

Remember

Children's Message

Pastor Jeff

Pastor's Message *"Everything You Need to Know About Love"*

Pastor Jeff

Time of Blessing for All Nurses

Giving our Gifts to God

Offertory

Jesus is All the World to Me

✠Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

✠Communion Hymn #693 *Bread of the World*

Bread of the world in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul in mercy shed,
By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose death our sins are dead.

Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
Look on the tears by sinners shed,
And be thy feast to us the token,
That by the grace our souls are fed.

✠Invitation to the Table

✠Communion Prayer

Pastor Jeff

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy God, we praise and bless you for creation and the gift of life and for your abiding love which brings us close to you, the source of all blessing. We thank you for revealing your will for us in the giving of the law and in the preaching of the prophets.

We thank you especially that in the fullness of time you sent Jesus, born of Mary, to live in our midst, to share in our suffering, and to accept the pain of death at the

hands of those whom Jesus loved. We rejoice that in a perfect victory over the grave you raised Christ with power to become sovereign in your realm.

We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to gather your church to do your work in the world and to proclaim the gift of eternal life. Baptized by your Spirit into one body, we testify to your faithfulness toward those of every time nation, people, and language.

And so we join our voices with all creation to praise you in song:

✠Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of thy glory, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest! *(the congregation may be seated)*

Words of Institution

Hear the words of the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ...Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

The Blessing of the Elements

Pastor Jeff

Prayers of the People

Pastor Jeff

The Lord's Prayer *(unison)*

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

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

Sharing the Elements

Take and eat; this is the body of Christ, broken for you. **Amen!**

Take and drink; this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you. **Amen!**

✠ **Prayer of Thanksgiving** (*unison*)

Holy God, may this meal we have shared renew us and inspire us to join more fully with you and with each other in your work of bringing the love of Christ to all. Amen.

✠ **Closing Hymn #358** *Love Divine All Love Excelling* (verses 1,2,3)

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heav'n to earth come down,
fix in us Thy humble dwelling;
all Thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love Thou art;
visit us with Thy salvation;
enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit,
let us find the promised rest.
Take away our love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning,
set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver;
let us all Thy life receive;
suddenly return and never,
nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve Thee as Thy hosts above;
pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
glory in Thy perfect love.

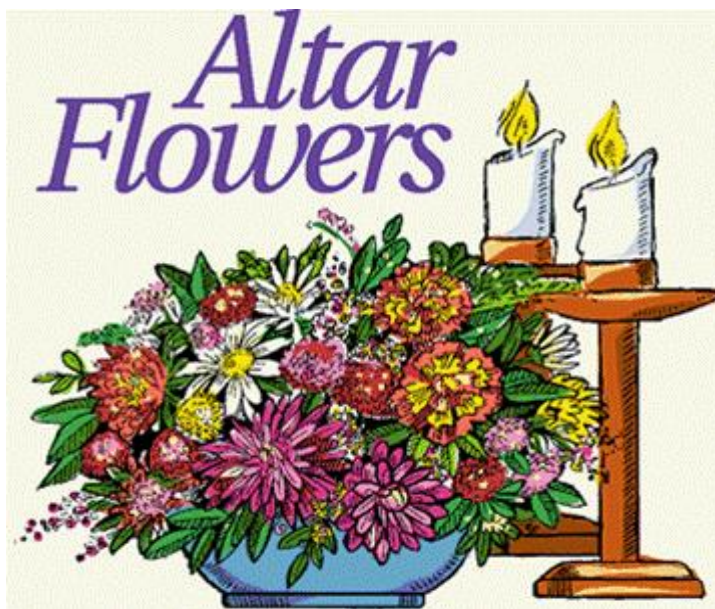
✠ **Sending Forth and Final Blessing**

✠ **Chimes/Meditation**

✠ **Three-fold Amen**

Postlude

Toccata - Gordon Young



*The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God,
In Memory of Ray Gaston and other family
members. Presented by wife, Ruth Gaston.*