

14th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Worship from Home
First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, UCC
Sep. 13, 2020

GATHERING & WELCOME

TIME OF SILENCE

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Psalm 133*)

L: Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

P: For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.

L: God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

P: Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

L: For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

P: God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

INVOCATION

God of love, take hold of us in our worship, and do not let us go until we have been blessed by a vision of love, infinitely generous, gentle and forgiving; simple, wholesome, mysterious, profound; in which all are accepted and no one rejected; love that never ends. Living God, Love itself, live in us now and always. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 114

114:1 When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,

114:2 Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel his dominion.

114:3 The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back.

114:4 The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.

114:5 Why is it, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back?

114:6 O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs?

114:7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob,

114:8 who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water.

Matthew 18:21-35

18:21 Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?"

18:22 Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

18:23 "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.

18:24 When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him;

18:25 and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made.

18:26 So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.'

18:27 And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt.
18:28 But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.'
18:29 Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'
18:30 But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt.
18:31 When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place.
18:31 When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place.
18:32 Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.
18:33 Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?'
18:34 And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt.
18:35 So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

MEDITATION "How Important is Forgiveness to God?"
Rev. Virginia Snapp-Cunningham

SHARING

CHORAL OFFERING**

A TIME OF PRAYER
Sharing of Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer (Debts)

CHORAL RESPONSE

BLESSING & SENDING

SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

Comments:

In this gospel reading, Jesus invites us to forgive one another. His invitation, however, is not an optional activity for Christians. It is the heart of the gospel and the distinctive character of Christian life. Out of love for us in our weakness and sin, God forgives us, heals us, and strengthens us to be a forgiving people. The sign of the cross invites us to the ministry of reconciliation in word and sacrament. The cross, marked on our foreheads at baptism and traced over our bodies at the funeral liturgy, assures us of Christ's victory over death and the promise of eternal life.

I saw an interesting bumper sticker last week. "Must be present to win." Not sure what the owner of the car meant; but it does say something about forgiveness. You cannot be fully present in life if you are nursing hurts from the past. Also, saw a good slogan on a church sign today (not mine). "Life is more fun when you don't keep score." Ruby from Texas

**In the Midst of New Dimensions

In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,
who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?

refrain

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

As we stand a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,
grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams

Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
may your blazing phoenix spirit resurrect the church again.

Lead Me, Guide Me

Refrain

Lead me, guide me, along the way,
for if you lead me, I cannot stray.
Lord, let me walk each day with thee.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

I am weak and I need thy strength and power to help me over my weakest hour.
Help me through the darkness thy face to see, lead me, O Lord, lead me.

I am lost if you take your hand from me, I am blind without the Light to see,
Lord, just always let me thy servant be. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.