

11th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
 Worship from Home
 First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, UCC
 August 16, 2020

GATHERING & WELCOME

TIME OF SILENCE

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Psalm 133*)

Leader: How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

People: It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.

Leader: It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.

People: For there God ordained a blessing: life forevermore!

MUSICAL INTERLUDE "Lead Me, Guide Me" (*David Akers*)

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. (Refrain)

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

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

Genesis 45:1-15

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to

his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there — since there are five more years of famine to come — so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.' And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Matthew 15: 21-28

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

MEDITATION "Filling God's Shoes" - Rev. Dr. Deborah M. Jenks

SHARING

CHORAL OFFERING "O God of Earth and Altar" (*1st St. G.K. Chesterton, 1906; 2nd St. Jane Parker Huber, 1985*)

O God of earth and altar, bow down and hear our cry;

Our earthly rulers falter, our people drift and die;
The walls of gold entomb us, the swords of scorn divide;
Take not your thunder from us, but take away our pride.

Awaken us to action and forge us into one,
defying sect and faction; O God, your will be done!
Oppressive systems snare us; our apathies increase.
Great God, in mercy spare us for justice and for peace!

A TIME OF PRAYER

Sharing of Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (Debts)

CHORAL RESPONSE "In God Alone" Taize

In God alone my soul can find rest and peace,
in God my peace and joy.
Only in God my soul can find its rest.
Find its rest and peace.

BLESSING & SENDING

SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE