

AUGUST 2 2020 WRESTLING WITH LIFE OFFERS BLESSING

COMMUNITY WELCOME

- Tawow, Bienvenue, Welcome to this time of worship. While we continue to join remotely in our individual or family places of social isolation and physical distancing, please be mindful that in this moment we are joining in a spiritual way with the entire community of St. Albert United Church and others who are also participating in this same worship opportunity from their homes and places of safe physical distancing.

- **Items to gather together before beginning:**

➤ **Bread and beverage for communion**

➤ ***A Voices United* and a *More Voices* hymn book if you have them**

- As you and/or your family move through the service, I invite you to read aloud the words of the prayers, readings, etc. Even if you are alone, speaking the words aloud can help internalize and deepen the worship experience. If there are other loved ones gathered with you, I invite you to share the leader parts with all who are comfortable with and able to read.

- In addition, at points in the service below there will be links to YouTube videos of an opening, the Message and celebration of Communion. There will also be links to some music/sung hymns that unfortunately are not local but are legally accessible on the internet. I have included them because we are all aware that music is such an important aspect of worshiping. When you click on these links you may have to shut down the ads that pop up first and close the link as soon as the hymn is finished before it goes to another that may or may not be appropriate.

WELCOME TO OUR VIRTUAL WORSHIP

[Wrestling With Life Brings Blessing - Welcome and Opening August 2](#)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Copyright 2020 Justice and Local Church Ministries, Faith INFO Ministry Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.)

One: The day breaks

All: **And God does not let us go.**

One: The hour calls

All: **And God does not let us go.**

One: The evening falls

All: **And God holds us fast.**

One: We turn to you God in worship,

All: **God, who never turns from us.**

One: and we light this Christ candle to remind us that in your presence

with us we find hope and life.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

PRAYER OF APPROACH (in unison) (Copyright 2020 Justice and Local Church Ministries, Faith INFO Ministry Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.)

God, you see us: you see our struggles; you see our difficulties; you see our possibilities; and you see our promise. Connect the dots for us, O God. Soften the hard spots with your blessing. Call us in our wandering to hear you say our names. Satisfy our longings as with loaves and fishes and manna from heaven. For you are a good God, a God present in the scramble, and in the end, you offer blessing. For this and so much more,

we give you thanks, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

HYMN: [Breathe on Me, Breath of God](#)

TIME FOR ALL AGES: Link to Imagination Station final read aloud:
<https://youtu.be/A3goXVhXFXQ>

HYMN: Colouring Outside The Lines - <https://youtu.be/asLiQTKs2Ig>

SCRIPTURE READINGS - Please share the reading among those who gather physically with you and even if you are alone, speaking the words aloud can help internalize and deepen the worship experience.

HEBREW SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION

Genesis 32: 22-31 (The Scripture quotation contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and are used by permission. All rights reserved.)

The same night Jacob got up and took his two wives, two maids, and eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. Jacob took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had.

Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him.

Then the man said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So the man said to Jacob, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed."

Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet

my life is preserved." The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

GOSPEL INTRODUCTION

MATTHEW 14: 13-21 (The Scripture quotation contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and are used by permission. All rights reserved.)

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick.

When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves."

Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." The disciples replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And Jesus said, "Bring them here to me."

Then Jesus ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, Jesus looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

SILENT REFLECTION: *Please take time to reflect on all we have heard.*

ANTHEM: [Sing A Happy Alleluia by Jim & Jean Strathdee](#)

(Found in More Voices hymnbook # 224)

MESSAGE:

[Wrestling With Life Offers Blessing - Message and Dedication Prayer](#)

by Rev. Mervin Gallant

SHARING OF GIFTS (Copyright 2020 Justice and Local Church Ministries, Faith INFO Ministry Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.)

When resources were short, did Christ worry? No! Christ saw the gifts, and Christ multiplied them! This is the miracle we witness every time we give to the church. God will take what we have, and God will do good things with it. You are invited to give, and even to participate in the miracle of God's multiplying acts.

Thank you to all of you for the various ways in which you continue to support the ongoing ministry of St Albert United Church through sharing your gifts of time, connection, prayer, talent and resources with God's people. Please, consider continuing to support agencies and associations which have relied on your financial support prior to these changing world circumstances.

Please check the church website for ways in which you can support ministry with time, talents and resources.

<https://stalbertunited.ca/donations/>

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

God of increase and bounty, Source of all good things: we offer our gifts as a portion of that which you have given us. May these gifts be as loaves and fishes for those who find themselves in poverty or hunger. May this act of giving bring about change: change in our lives, change in the lives we touch, change in the systems that harm. Through Christ, who gave so much to save. Amen.

HYMN: [As We Gather At Your Table](#)

(If you would like to sing along the words can be found at # 457 of Voices United.)

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION:

[Wrestling With Life Offers Blessing - Communion and Benediction](#)

WELCOMING ALL TO THE TABLE

One: The celebration of communion is always a festival of friends, a pulling together of our loves and our hopes, our moments of agony and our glimpses of victory.

All: It is here, where bread is broken and wine is shared, that we can most fully be ourselves and see others for who they truly are: beloved children of the living God.

One: Here the common things of life— bread and drink, memories and dreams— become holy, touched by God.

All: Here that which is earthly becomes divine, and that which is human becomes more than it has ever dreamed.

One: I invite you to stand as you are able and to say the United Church Creed – our church’s attempt to put that dream into words.

UNITED CHURCH CREED

We are not alone, we live in God’s world.

**We believe in God: who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others
by the Spirit. We trust in God.**

We are called to be the Church:

**to celebrate God’s presence, to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.**
PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

GREAT THANKSGIVING PRAYER

God be with you.

And also with you.

Open your hearts.

We gladly open them to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is good to give thanks and praise.

One: It is good to bless and thank you, God, Source of life and love.

We give thanks for your many gifts: for the gift of creation,
for the renewal of summer light and warmth and recreation,
for the renewal of our hearts made whole in your grace.

**All: We give thanks for the gift of new life we experience in your
Spirit, as time and again you reorient your people, enabling us to see
the world around us with new eyes, to discover the new life you offer
through creation as we spend more time in its midst during this
summer season.**

One: We give thanks for the witness of Jesus, who gave himself for the
realization of that new life. In each moment of time your vision of beauty
surrounds us. Your love is stronger than death; Jesus is risen and present
with us wherever we journey.

And so we join all creation in praise:

**All: O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space.
All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace.
Hosanna in the highest heav'n, creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name always.**

One: Life-giving God, we pray in memory of Jesus
who made your dream known in countless meals:
meals shared like a picnic with crowds on a hillside,
a final meal shared with his friends on the night before his death,
meals of risen presence restoring them to hope.

One: In Jesus' name we pray, take this bread, Living One:
fill it with the story of empty tomb.

Take this wine, Living One:
let it echo with the whisper of resurrection.

One: Take this table, Living One:
**All: let it be the place where people sense their oneness in You in the
midst of a time of social distancing.**

One: Take this community, Living One:
**All: infuse it with fresh spirit, living hope, risen life that is shared
wherever we journey.**

One: In you, we rise to new life and so we can proclaim:
All: Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

One: Renewing God, as we break bread,
we pray for your gift of new life in the world:
where there is discord and violence, may there be peace;
where there is oppression, may true justice reign;
where there is physical separation, may there be spiritual union;
where people are struggling with illness, may they know your healing love;
where people are burdened with grief, may hope in your new life be restored.

All: Send your Spirit upon us.

May our sharing in this meal renew us in your grace.

**Enliven us in your Spirit that we may be
a sign of your promise of life in the world.**

One: May we ever sing your praise: through Your Word made flesh, in the power of your life-giving Spirit, you are glorified God, now and forever, as we pray together the words that have been passed down through the generations by people of faith:

1 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

PREPARING THE TABLE:

One: As the bread is broken, let us breathe in God' spirit

All: and remember Jesus, broken for us.

One: As the fruit of the vine is poured, let us give thanks for Jesus,

All: whose life was poured out for us.

SHARING THE MEAL

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious God, may your gifts of love transform and enliven us that we may live lives of thanksgiving. May your presence among us provoke such longing for your realm, that we will never be satisfied until the whole earth knows your justice, your peace, and your love.

In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH (Copyright 2020 Justice and Local Church Ministries, Faith INFO Ministry Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.)

God's peace: carry, keep and hold you.

God's love: nourish, bless and enfold you.

God's spirit: inspire, lift and mold you.

SENDING HYMN: [Spirit God Be Our Breath](#)

(If you would like to sing along the words can be found at #150 of More Voices.)