

JOINT SERVICES
West Concord Union Church
Trinitarian Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Concord, Massachusetts
August 5, 2018

“The quality of mercy is not strained.
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.”

-Portia, in William Shakespeare,
The Merchant of Venice

SILENT PRAYER

God of unconstrained mercy, soften my hardened heart, that I may easily yield to the dual blessing that comes with giving and receiving mercy. Amen

WORDS OF WELCOME

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: To you, our God, who dwells beyond the infinite,
Who breathes and there is life,
Who knew us even before we were knit together in our mother’s womb,
And is as close to us now as our very breath.
To you, we pray.

Many: Draw near to us, our God.

One: We gather to pray for nations where conflict escalates to violence
And domination of the few inhibits freedom for the many.

Many: Hear our prayer for peace and justice.

One: We gather to worship you, our God,
Who made a way for us even as we turned away from you.

Many: Thank you for teaching us grace and mercy.

One: We gather to lay our burdens down, to feel our hope reborn,
Our faith renewed and life’s meaning restored.

Many: Speak to us, God, so that we might be transformed and made new.

One: May the Spirit of our living God descend on this place.

Many: May the Spirit of the living God sweep across this entire world.

All: Amen.

*INVOCATION

OUR MISSION AND MINISTRY

READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES Matthew 5:1-12 (responsively with chant)

R

One: When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain;
and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.

Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

**Many: "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

One: Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

**Many: Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.**

One: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.

**Many: Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy. R**

One: Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

**Many: Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.**

One: Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Many: Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you
and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.**

One: Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven,

**Many: for in the same way they persecuted the prophets
who were before you."**

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SERMON

"Mercy; An Immediate Call to Action"

Robert Brown

Matthew 5:7

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

*HYMN

Let Us With Gladsome Mind

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Everyone is invited to offer a joy or concern out loud.

Following your request please end with...

One: This is MY prayer.

Many: This is OUR prayer.

SILENT PRAYER, PASTORAL PRAYER, THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERING OF GIFTS

Call to Stewardship

Offertory

***Hymn of Praise**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Old Hundredth

***HYMN**

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

***Prayer of Dedication (unison)**

Merciful God,
you bless us from generation to generation
with steadfast love and mercy that never comes to an end.
All that we have and all that we are come from you,
so we gladly share this offering, that others too may be blessed,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Communion Prayer

Sharing of the Bread and Cup - Communion by Intinction

All are welcome to come forward to the center to receive a piece of bread to dip it in the chalice. If you wish to receive communion in your seat, raise your hand and Rev. Brown will serve you.

Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving (responsive)

One: For the bread that we have eaten
For the cup that we have tasted
For the life that you have given;

**All: Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit,
We praise you.**

One: For the life of Christ within us
Turning all our fears to freedom
Helping us to live for others;

**All: Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit,
We praise you.**

One: For the strength of Christ to lead us
In our living and our dying,
In the end with all your people

**All: Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit,
We praise you.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*The congregation is invited to stand.

† Go Forth and Serve †

Leading Worship: Rev. Robert Brown, Senior Minister, Trinitarian Congregational Church; James Barkovic, Music Director, West Concord Union Church; Phyllis Clarke, Liturgist.

The flowers are given by Fred and Billie Kinch in thanks for God's help in our everyday lives.