**Sunday July 18, 2021**

**You Are Citizens**

**Prelude**

**Words of Welcome**

**Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

Leader: As God is our shepherd we need nothing else.

**People: We rest in green pastures and walk by still waters,**

**which renews and refreshes our spirits.**

Leader: God guides us along paths of righteousness

**People: And walks with us through shadowed valleys so we are not afraid.**

**The shepherd’s staff comforts us.**

Leader: God set the banquet table for us in the presence of our enemies.

There, we’re anointed with oil and our cup overflows.

**People: Goodness and mercy shall never depart from us**

**as long as we dwell in the house of God.**

**Opening Prayer Unison**

**Caring and Gracious God, you are the shepherd who gathers us together today to celebrate with grateful thanksgiving the community in which we live. We are nourished by its diversity, brought about by the unique gifts each person contributes. Be with us in this time of worship and encourage us to never cease welcoming the strangers we meet and accepting the gifts they bring. Grant that they will enrich our lives and will be a reminder of the joy that comes when all will be one in you. Amen.**

**Hymn #314: Community of Christ** *Hymn Leader*: Ken Littlefield

(*Please see separate attachment for the score)*

1. Community of Christ, who make the Cross your own,  
   live out your creed and risk your life for God alone:  
   The God who wears your face, to whom all worlds belong,  
   whose children are of every race and every song.
2. Community of Christ, look past the church's door  
   and see the refugee, the hungry, and the poor.  
   Take hands with the oppressed, the jobless in your street,  
   take towel and water, that you wash your neighbor's feet.
3. Community of Christ, through whom the word must sound -  
   cry out for justice and for peace the whole world 'round:  
   Disarm the powers that war and all that can destroy,  
   turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish into joy.
4. When menace melts away, so shall God's will be done,  
   the climate of the world be peace and Christ its Sun;  
   Our currency be love and kindliness our law,  
   our food and faith be shared as one for evermore.

**Prayer of Confession Unison**

**O God, we live in a diverse community. There are people of different colors and abilities. There are people with different sexual orientations and gender identities. There are people on the left and the right, young and old, rich and poor. We often fail to love others as you do. We’ve erected walls built upon our biases, fears, and insecurities that keep us apart. Forgive us that we don’t love as unconditionally as you. Help us to take down those walls so we may welcome the stranger and truly be one community together. Amen**

*Moments for Reflection and Silence*

**Assurance of Pardon**

We know we fall short in our discipleship.

We’ve confessed our sins before God.

We look to God to repent of our sins and transgressions.

By God’s overflowing steadfast love and mercy we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

**Passing of the Peace**

Pastor: The Peace of Christ be with you

**People: And also with you!**

**Reading**  David Alexander

**Psalm 23 (NRSV)**

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
2    He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;   
3    he restores my soul.   
He leads me in right paths  
    for his name’s sake.

4Even though I walk through the darkest valley,   
    I fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
    your rod and your staff—  
    they comfort me.

5You prepare a table before me  
    in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
    my cup overflows.  
6Surelygoodness and mercyshall follow me  
    all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
    my whole life long.

**Ephesians 2:11-22 (NIV)**

2:12 remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.  
  
2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

2:14 For he is our peace; in his flesh he has … broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.  
  
2:15 He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace,  
  
2:16 and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it.  
  
2:17 So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near;  
  
2:18 for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.  
  
2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God,  
  
2:20 built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.  
  
2:21 In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord;  
  
2:22 in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

**Special Music** Ken Littlefield

**Gospel Reading**

**Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 (NIV)**

6:30 The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught.  
  
6:31 He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.  
  
6:32 And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.   
  
6:33 Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them.  
  
6:34 As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.  
  
6:53 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat.  
  
6:54 When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him,  
  
6:55 and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was.  
  
6:56 And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

**Musical Interlude**

**Sermon:** You Are Citizens

**Music for Meditation**

**Prayers of the People**

**Hymn #537** Christian, Rise and Act Your Creed (verses 1 and 2)

**1) Christian, rise and act your creed;  
 let your prayer be in your deed;  
 Seek the right, perform the true,  
 raise your work and life anew.**

**2) Hearts around you sink with care,  
 you can help their load to bear;  
 You can bring inspiring light,  
 strengthen them to do the right.**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**The Lord’s Prayer Unison**

**Offering Invitation**

**Think of the beginning of the 23rd Psalm and the words we pray every week, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Taken together, God promises to provide us with what we need to live today so we may see tomorrow. When we think of what we actually have, though, we have more than enough. We give honor and thanks to God when we make our generous offering from our abundance.**

**Offering and Dedication Unison**

**Thank you, God, for the ministries of the people of your church.**

**Thank you, God, for the bounty of your blessings you have poured out upon us. We have taken a portion of our abundance and given it to you in grateful thanksgiving. Consecrate this offering. May it help to support the ministries of this church that will dismantle the walls that divide us so all people will be one in the new family gathered in Christ Jesus. Amen.**

**Benediction Unison**

**Jesus taught us that when we welcome the stranger, we create a new community where all are one in God. Let us continue the work that Jesus started by welcoming the strangers who cross our paths knowing that God is with us and protects as we pursue our ministries of healing and hope. We will proclaim God’s glory through our work. We go in peace.**