

Use the following worship guide as we gather on Sunday morning via Zoom. Simply click here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2398495210>

** Announcements are at the end of this order of worship. **

The Service of Worship
First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ
Baltimore, Maryland
The Third Sunday after the Epiphany – Year C

January 23, 2022

10:30 a.m.



*If you are visiting with us, Welcome!!
If you are visiting online, please place your email address in the chat.
We will gladly send you the weekly Order of Worship and Announcements.*

Please note that the "chat" feature will be turned off before the Gospel is read and back on at the Benediction.

Prelude "Psalm 19" Nancy F. Chronister, Director of Music
Benedetto Marcello arranged by John Carter
Welcome and Opportunities for Ministry Rev. Kelly M. Sisson, Pastor
The Lesson from the Psalms Psalm 19 Laura Haas, Liturgist

Call to Worship

Loud talkers and silent worriers, glad-handers and lonely wallflowers:
God gathers us together to be the Body of wonder and joy, of hope and healing.
Bystanders with hands shoved into our pockets, fraidy-cats whose feet are frozen in place:
Jesus calls us to carry grace to outsiders, to walk with all those left behind.
Kids who never offer answers in class, bashful folks whose tongues tie in knots:
The Spirit anoints us to speak up for the voiceless, to partner with the poor to discover their gifts.

Hymn for Worship NCH #177 "God of Change and Glory"

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Rev. Sisson

- Those impacted by COVID, and healthcare workers everywhere
- We celebrate the birth of Karen Lovelace's grandson, Cy Jupiter Bukoski Lovelace.
- We remember Megan and Jared Wildberger as they await the birth of their daughter.
- David Wharton, Martha's father
- Anthony Carota
- Bonnie Kramer – Tina's mother
- Lisa Kennedy – Zack's other mother. Awaiting surgery for adrenal cancer
- Amanda Ajulu and her family
- Gloria Banks – living with cancer
- Stef's brother, David, living with Alzheimer's

Call to Reconciliation

We are afraid to join hands with others; we want to listen to those who speak falsely; we glibly offer silliness to those we love the most. Let us share with God how we have not been that Body we are made for, that God might reshape us into that holy community, even as we pray together, saying,

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

Do we make you laugh or weep, Gracious God? We sing that we are one in your Spirit, but cannot tolerate those who disagree with us. We talk of being one Body, but fight over music or Bible versions or carpet colors. We affirm the giftedness of each person, but we heap honor on just a special few.

Forgive us, Creative God, that we dismember your Body so easily. May the words of our mouths speak peace to the brokenness in our world; may the hopes of our hearts bring wonder to those in despair; and may our love embrace all who are around us, even as we have been welcomed by your grace in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Silence is kept

Assurance of Pardon

Forgiven, we are filled by God's Spirit, commissioned to be Christ's hope, Christ's people for the world.

Anointed, we can care for one another, weep with one another, serve one another, and live with one another. Thanks be to God. Amen.

The Gospel Lesson

John 2:1-11

Hymn NCH 58

“Spirit of Love”

The Message

“Where will you shine your light?”

Rev. Sisson

If you would consider making an offering through on-line giving, the plate in the back of the sanctuary, or mail your check to the church address, you can find all of that information on our church web page: first-ststephens.org

Prayer of Dedication/Offering

Though many different amounts and ways, when gathered up by you, our gifts become a food pantry, a rebuilt life, medicine for children, a caregiver to the lonely - your grace in action. In love we offer these gifts in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Welcome of New Member

Today, we welcome **Laura Haas** into full membership of First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ. Hear these words:

You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are equally citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus alone being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in Christ; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Laura, by your baptism you were made one with the body of Christ, the church. Today we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith that has been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your presence in this household of faith. Here, we covenant together to be the Church.

As you are willing, share briefly with us about yourself and what has brought you to choose First and St. Stephen's as your spiritual home. *(Laura shares her story.)*

Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of God's people at First and St. Stephen's UCC, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves our community and world?

I promise, with the help of God.

Let us, the members and friends of First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

We welcome you, Laura Haas, with joy in the shared life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ we extend to you our love, welcoming you into the family of our local church.

Let us pray:

O God, we praise you for calling us to faith and for gathering us into the church, the body of Christ. We thank you for your people gathered in this local church and rejoice that you have increased our community of faith. *Together may we live in the Spirit, building one another up in love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

Song for Sending
Benediction

“This Little Light of Mine”

Pastor

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COVID Update – due to the massive spread of the Omicron variant of COVID, worship will be **zoom only** at least through the end of January. We will re-evaluate upcoming services after that.

ACTC – We will continue to collect **canned goods – fruits and vegetables** - for the next week. You may bring food to the church and leave them in the red wagon in the foyer or drop them off on the porch at 535 Brook Rd. Towson.

If you want to **speak with the pastor**, it is best to leave a message on her home phone number: 410-832-3974. Or, you can email her at: fssuccpastor@gmail.com

If you would like to receive the worship materials, hymns, etc. for Sunday, please place your email in the chat column of Zoom at the end of the service, or email the pastor at fssuccpastor@gmail.com

Worship Resources for today:
Thom Shuman, PCUSA
The United Church of Christ Book of Worship

Spirit of Love

Shirley Erena Murray, 1992

1 Spir - it of love, you move with - in cre - a - tion,
 2 Though we have frayed the fab - ric of your mak - ing,
 3 Great loom of God, where his - to - ry is wo - ven,

draw - ing the threads to col - or and de - sign:
 tear - ing a - way from all that you in - tend,
 you are the frame that holds us to the truth,

Life in - to life, you knit our true sal - va - tion,
 Yet, to be whole, hu - man - i - ty is ach - ing—
 Christ is the theme, the pat - tern you have giv - en—

come, work with us, and weave us in - to one.
 come, work with us, and weave us in - to one.
 come, work with us, and weave us in - to one.

Originally titled "Weaver Spirit," this text was written for the World Council of Churches Assembly at Canberra. It addressed one of the themes of that meeting—"Come, Holy Spirit, Reconcile Your People."

Tune: PERFECT LOVE 11.10.11.10.
Joseph Barnby, 1889