

IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

January 17, 2020

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.

Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

PRELUDE

“You Are Mine”

Joyce Harris

By David Haas

WELCOME

LET US PREPARE OUR HEARTS AND MINDS FOR WORSHIP

CALL TO WORSHIP

LEADER: God of our ancestors and God of our dreams,
we gather today to remember
that you have created us all in your image and in your likeness.

PEOPLE: And so, we still have the courage to dream the impossible.

LEADER: We remember how you spoke into the darkness and created light

PEOPLE: And so, we still have the courage to dream the impossible.

LEADER: We remember the ways you have delivered your people
through trials and tribulations since the beginning of time,
right up until this present moment

PEOPLE: And so, we still have the courage to dream the impossible.

LEADER: You have comforted your people
through the middle passage, racism, segregation,
stripped identities, and unjust laws

PEOPLE: And so, we still have the courage to dream the impossible.

LEADER: God you have been the guiding light
along the paths of Hope and Love
leading toward a beloved community
where all are equally seen and radically loved

PEOPLE: And so, we still have the courage to dream the impossible.

OPENING HYMN #593

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

*Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the harsh past has taught us.
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of the new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.*

*Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
felt in the days when hope unseen had died;
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,
come to the place for which our people sighed.
We have come over the way that with tears have been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.*

*God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
God who has brought us thus far on our way;
God who by your might, led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God where we met you,
Least our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, forget you:
Shadowed beneath your hand, may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.*

GATHERING PRAYER

**God of our weary years and God of our silent tears,
God who has brought us thus far on the way,
we invite your presence into our midst
as we pay tribute the all who have labored for justice, equality and love.**

**We pray that in this moment you would strengthen us
to continue to fight for the fulfillment of the dream
that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
so eloquently laid out on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.**

**Help us to labor so that every valley is exalted,
every hill and mountain made low,
the rough places are plain, and the crooked places made straight
so that the glory of the Lord is revealed,**

and all flesh see it together.

**Let your love guide us to see one another
as fully human with diverse hues, colors, ethnicities and cultures,
and respect the content of their character.**

**Let your spirit strengthen us for the fight of today and tomorrow
until all God's children can say with full conviction,
"Free at last. Free at last. Thank God All-Mighty,
I'm free at last." Amen.**

SPECIAL HYMN

"As the Deer"

*As the deer panteth for the water,
so my soul longeth after Thee.
You alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship Thee.*

*You alone are my strength and shield,
To You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship Thee.*

*You're my friend and you are my brother
even though You are a king.
I love You more than any other,
So much more than anything.*

*You alone are my strength and shield,
To You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship Thee.*

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen**

HYMN #677CH /431UMH “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

*Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me;
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God our creator, children all are we.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.*

*Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:
To take each moment and live each moment
in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.*

SCRIPTURE

Revelation 21: 1-6a

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. **2** And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home^[a] of God is among mortals.

He will dwell^[a] with them;

they will be his peoples,^[a]

and God himself will be with them;^[a]

4 he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.”

5 And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” **6** Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

SERMON

“We Dream A World”

Rev. Merlyn Lawrence

HYMN #570

“We Shall Overcome”

*We shall overcome, we shall overcome,
we shall overcome some day;*

*Oh deep in my heart, I do believe,
we shall overcome some day.*

*We are not afraid, we are not afraid;
we are not afraid today.
Oh deep in my heart, I do believe,
we are not afraid today.*

*We shall live in peace, we shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace some day;
Oh deep in my heart, I do believe,
we shall live in peace some day.*

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory Hymn #780 “Doxology”

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

Prayer of Dedication

**God, we acknowledge our weaknesses and our failed attempts
at creating a just world for all.**

**We are ever cognizant of our limitations
but continue to dream the impossible, because of our faith in you.**

**And so we dedicate our lives to changing the plight
that continues to plague our communities and society.**

**We commit ourselves to a normalcy
that recognizes the dignity and worth of all of God’s children.**

**We pray for a normalcy that allows judgment
to run down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.**

We pray for true peace and justice. Amen

HYMN #575

“O For a World”

*O for a world where everyone
respects each others ways,*

*where loved is lived and all is done
with justice and with praise.*

*O for a world where goods are shared
and misery relieved,
where truth is spoken,
children spared, equality achieved.*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Fantasia”
by G. P. Telemann

Joyce Harris

Special Thanks to All the Participants in Today’s Service

Joyce Harris

Organist

Dr. Oliver Lawrence

Videographer

Rev. Merlyn Lawrence

Senior Pastor