



**First in
Caring**

You're Always Welcome Here at
PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 19, 2021

*Please stand in body and/or spirit as you are able.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***GATHERING MUSIC**

#593 Lift Every Voiced and Sing

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: *May God sow justice in our hearts, so the poor might find in us a friend;*

Many: **Open us, God, to your justice.**

One: *May God sow peace in our spirits, so the angry might find in us a sea of gentleness.*

Many: **Open us, God, to your peace.**

One: *May God sow generosity in our hands, so the hungry might find in us their daily bread.*

Many: **Open us, God, to your generosity.**

***OPENING PRAYER (in unison)**

Rabbi, Teacher Jesus, you who taught thousands and yet were willing to learn from the least of these. Sometimes we pretend to know when in truth we still wonder. Keep us open to unexpected teachers, to fresh ideas, to one another, to you. As you lived in generous love may we too remain open when we encounter suffering to see the need and respond with full hearts that we may care for one another and follow in the example you set for us. Amen

(adapted from UCC Worship Ways)

***HYMN**

#277 Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PSALTER READING: Psalm 1,

Page 621 New Century Hymnal

SUNG PSALTER RESPONSE

#438 It is Well With My Soul

JOYS AND CONCERNS

SILENT PRAYERS, INTERCESSORY PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

BIBLICAL TESTIMONY: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. 34Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." 35And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 36Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

CONTEMPORARY TESTIMONY: "Ephphatha" by Wayne Saffen

Now listen to this, you hucksters of religion, all you faith healers, gatherer of crowds, who come to smite the populace with miracles, spectaculars; when Jesus healed a deaf man he took the man aside, privately, away from gawkers.

Repeat the procedure exactly. Try the sequence in proper order. Isolate the experimental subject. Stick finger into ear. Spit on finger. Place finger on tongue. Look heavenward. Sigh. Say the magic word. Got it? Try it.

Ephphatha! Be opened!

Now that we have rehearsed the event, do we understand it better? Of course not. Let's start with something easier. Try listening to what others say.

Experience the loss of your own deafness. Say how you feel, and watch your tongue come untied. Get somebody you can trust to practice on.

You already know how to sigh. Now learn to open up.

SERMON Be Opened

***HYMN** #547 Amazing Grace

OFFERTORY / *DOXOLOGY & DEDICATION OF GIFTS

All-knowing God, teach us to use these gifts to create greater access, insights, and wisdom for people within and outside of these walls. Amen.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

NURSING CENTER/HOMEBOUND PRAYER LIST:

Deloris Ashburn Clara Ritter

CONCERNS

Divided America	Hatred in America	
Skip & Marilyn Wingate	Bill Rittscher	Harlene Redinbaugh
Clara Ritter	Gene Fields	Jesse Johnson
Dustin Meyer	Eric Heithoff	McCoy Backer
Laura Rutjens	Kathy Rethwisch	Larry Bartee
Fr. Pat Nields	Deloris Mozer	Michelle Dittmer
Kandi Hart	Deloris Ashburn	Diann Larson
Dr. Phil Ernest	Dave Carstens	Carter Brown
John Johnson	Holli Perez	Theresa Sullivan Meyer

JOYS

**Birth of Rivers Judy Johnson, daughter of Richard and Cassie born on
August 20, 2021**

Successful Burgers and Brats Benefit

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PASTOR MELANIE's office hours are Sundays noon-2. Call or text if
you'd like to meet with her. She can be reached at (402) 841-1450
or revdocmel@gmail.com**

CONFIRMATION CLASS meets Sundays 2-3:30.

**PEACE CHURCH IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE OUR NEW
WEBSITE at tildenpeace.org . Visit our website to get events,
sermons, bulletins, donate online, and more! Thanks Alex!!!**

**We need your help to UPDATE THE CHURCH DIRECTORY.
Please visit <http://tildenpeace.org/directory>. The password is
"family". Please add any missing entries or suggest edits for
outdated information. Anyone can do it!!**

First in Caring *Just Peace Sunday*

It has been said that in Africa, a traditional greeting and response is, “How are the children?” and “The children are well.”

“How are the children?” is not a way to inquire about the particular youth in one’s own household, but instead is an invitation to consider what is most important in the whole society, and whether that is being attended to. “The children are well” refers not just to the health of a few of the children who are known to the conversation partners, but the peace and prosperity of all of society. This question, and its response, is a way of assuring that the most important priorities of the community are placed first.

A movie available from the United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network (UCC PIN) called *How Are the Children?* tells the stories of Palestinian children, some as young as five years old, detained by Israeli forces in the West Bank of Israel. On their website, <https://hatcnw.org/>, UCC PIN responds to some questions that arise from that first and most important question, “How are the children?”

“Since 1967, the United Church of Christ has spoken through General Synod resolutions regarding issues of peace and justice in the Middle East. Long before that, mission personnel of our predecessor denominations worked successfully to create partnerships of mutuality and ministry throughout the region. Here we provide information on various aspects of UCC witness related to the experience of children in Palestine and Israel. These links provide information regarding the 2017 UCC resolution of witness concerning Palestinian children in Israeli military detention.”*

*From the website page <https://hatcnw.org/ucc-resolutions-and-faqs/>

You can also find links to the movie “*How Are the Children?*” and guides for utilizing this powerful resource with your congregation, on the website <https://hatcnw.org/>.

Today is Just Peace Sunday. For 30 years, the Just Peace Church pronouncement has inspired a grassroots movement of UCC congregations committed to corporately naming and boldly proclaiming a public identity as a justice-doing, peace-seeking church. For more information about Just Peace, visit ucc.org.

