

An Open and Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Christ



Order of Worship for

July 7, 2024 10:00 am

Welcome to Worship at Center Church! We are delighted that you are with us today.



SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - COMMUNION SUNDAY

*Please rise in body or spirit.

CHIMES

PIANO PRELUDE Go Down, Moses African-American Spiritual

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Listen.

I have a story to tell—

A story of a God who longed for justice.

A story of a God who pushed back the waters to make dry land.

A story of a God who would not take "no" for an answer when it came to the safety of God's own.

For God's people were suffering.

God's people were crying out.

God's people were shackled and bound by oppression.

So God said to Moses:

All: "Speak."

"Let my people Go."

One: And Moses spoke—

Over and over again.

Moses stood up for justice,

But over and over again, Pharaoh said:

All: No.

One: Power said no.

The path to justice is never easy, is it?

The path to change is never a straight line, is it?

So like Rosa, who sat on the bus, and Martin who had a dream,

Moses kept trying.

God kept speaking.

Moses kept listening.

Hope kept breathing.

And when power tried to unravel justice,

The people kept dreaming.

God longed for justice.

God still longs for justice.

So let us worship God—

For human injustice will never be strong enough to unravel God's dream

that all might be free,

And all might know love.

All: Let us worship holy God

*HYMN NCH 572 When Israel was in Egypt's Land Tune: GO DOWN MOSES

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Congregation sings:

Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-ja (3X) Halleluja! Hal-le-lu-ja!

Caribbean Melody

SCRIPTURE Exodus 5: 1-2; 7: 8-23 (NRSV)

VIDEO "Passover Rhapsody"

SERMON When Humans Unravel God's Plans for Justice

The Rev. Liza Arulampalam

SONG Form Us Vineyard Worship

Arunan Arulampalam, guitar

Form us, make us, mold us, shape us To be like You, moved to action, Full of mercy and compassion.

Our hearts say Yes Lord, come take control In us in us, come have Your way O Lord, In us in us, Your way

Move us, lead us, send us, release us To the broken, to the hungry, to the outcast, to the weary

We want to love the things You love, hate the things You hate As Your heart is formed inside us, may we learn to walk in grace And extend the hand of mercy to set the captives free Bringing freedom to the prisoner, bringing hope the blind can see Mercy triumphs over judgment.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: God, you have asked us to be like Moses—

Standing up for your people, standing up for justice.

All: But too often we are like Pharaoh—

Holding onto power, or holding onto privilege.

One: God, you ask us to be like Aaron—

Who stood by his brother to unravel systems of oppression.

All: But too often we align with Pharaoh—

Saying "no" to change and unraveling your vision for justice and peace.

One: Forgive us for all the ways we stand on the wrong side of history.

All: Forgive us for the harm we do to your planet, and for the harm we do to your

children.

One: Help us to be like Moses.

All: Forgive us when we're like Pharaoh.

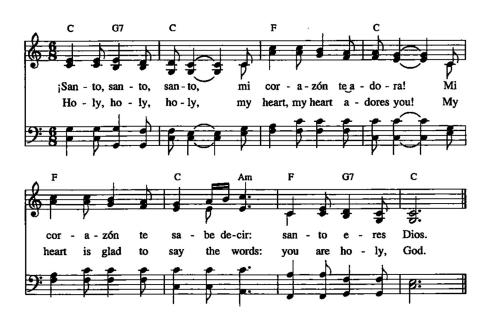
Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Telling the Story Anew

SANCTUS NCH 793



Words of Institution

Invitation to the Table

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

People Need the Lord

P. McHugh/G. Nelson

Chris Dukes, Tenor

*DOXOLOGY:



*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN NCH 574 In Egypt Under Pharaoh

LANCASHIRE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

SUNG CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

When Israel was in Egypt's land, let my people go, Oppressed so hard they could not stand, let my people go! Go Down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land. Tell old Pharaoh to let my people go.

Go Down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land. Tell old Pharaoh to let my people go.