Welcome

Announcements

Prelude “Thanks Be To God” G. F. Handel

Call to Worship

One: Lord, we have come to you this day bringing all that we have, our lives, our hopes and dreams, our fears and sorrows. We place these before you in faith and hope, knowing that no matter what has happened you are with us and blessing us.

Many: Open our hearts to receive your words and your spirit, that we may find healing and comfort. Open our lives to the wondrous possibilities for service and joy that you offer to us. Ease our minds and spirits that we may hear the words of encouragement and peace this day.

Hymn NCH 565 “God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

1. God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store, Nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door: Gifted by you, we turn to you offering up ourselves in praise; Thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.

2. Skills and time are ours for serving, that your will on earth be done: All at peace in health and freedom, races joined, the Church made one. Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone; born with talents, make us servants
3. Treasure, too, you have entrusted, 
gain through powers your grace conferred; 
Ours to use for home and kindred, 
and to spread the gospel Word. 
Open wide our hands in sharing 
as we heed Christ's ageless call, 
Healing, teaching, and reclaiming, 
honoring you by loving all.

4. Lend your joy to all our giving, 
let it light our pilgrim way; 
From the night of anxious keeping, 
loose us into generous day. 
Then when years on earth are over, 
and we've lived our human span, 
God, fulfill beyond our dreaming, 
all our stewardship began.

Confession

Gracious God, so often we look at ourselves, our gifts and our talents, and wonder what you would do with these offerings. We don't think that we have much to give. So, far too many times, we belittle the gifts and turn our backs on the needs and opportunities present to serve, believing that our gifts cannot possibly make a difference. We think that we must possess the greatest of talents and wealth in order to truly please and serve you. How foolish we are! Forgive us when we stop listening to your healing and comforting words and focus on our anxieties. Heal us, Lord. Help us know that you have given to us such blessings and that these blessings are truly wonderful and meant to be used for joy and service to others.

~ Time for silent reflection and prayer~

Assurance of God’s Love
God has given to each one of us such blessings and talents. With joy we bring these gifts to God. You are blessed by God's absolute love for you. Rejoice in that love and find healing and hope. Amen.

Passing the Peace
The peace of Christ is with you all!
And also with you.

Response
We are walking a path of peace, we are walking a path of peace,
We are walking a path of peace, lead us home, lead us home.
(repeat)

Reading Psalm 146 (NRSV) | Mark 12: 38 - 44 (NRSV)

Psalm 146
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long. Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help. When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish. Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord!

Mark 12: 38 - 44
As he taught, Jesus said, “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows’ houses and for
the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.”

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.

For the word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us, Thanks be to God.

Sermon
Rev. Lacey Brown

Musical Offering “Count Your Many Blessings” E. Excell, Marty Lamb, soloist

Invitation to Give

- **Text the amount of your donation, with one keyword, to 919-888-4541**
  General – give to CUCC’s general fund
  Pledge – give toward your pledge

- **You can give online at our website www.communityucc.org by simply clicking on Donate.**

- **Or you can always mail a check to our physical address: 814 Dixie Trail, Raleigh, NC 27607**
We give Thee but Thine own, whate’er the gift may be;  
All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God, all creatures here below,  
Praise God for all that Love has done  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit One.

Whether out of our scarcity or from our abundance, we pray that  
these gifts might offer life instead of despair, hope instead of grief,  
grace instead of fear. This we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

1. Take my gifts and let me love you,  
   God who first of all loved me,  
   gave me light and food and shelter,  
   gave me life and set me free,  
   now because your love has touched me,  
   I have love to give away,  
   now the bread of love is rising,  
   loaves of love to multiply!
2. Take the fruit that I have gathered from the tree your Spirit sowed, harvest of your own compassion, juice that makes the wine of God, spiced with humor, laced with laughter flavor of the Jesus life, tang of risk and new adventure, taste and zest beyond belief.

3. Take whatever I can offer gifts that I have yet to find, skills that I am slow to sharpen, talents of the hand and mind, things made beautiful for others in the place where I must be: take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me.

Benediction

Go forth nourished by the Spirit to live in gratitude and service. Amen.

Postlude “To Bless the Earth” Vulpius, 1609
Visit www.communityucc.org to explore ways to connect with our church.
CUCC is here to support you throughout the week.
While our physical office is closed, our virtual office is open.
Please email office.cucc@gmail.com to reach our office.
Please email lacey.cucc@gmail.com for pastoral care needs.

We thank all of those who created parts of today’s liturgy.
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gave me light and food and shelter,
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Take the fruit that I have gathered
from the tree your Spirit sowed,
harvest of your own compassion,
juice that makes the wine of God,
spiced with humor, laced with laughter
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