



Living by Faith, Known by Love, A Voice of Hope



First Church in Windsor, UCC
May 2, 10 a.m.

**Asian American & Pacific Islander Sunday
Communion Sunday**

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Two: Make us your hands, your feet, your eyes, your lips, your body in the world.

One: Spirit of Peace, reconcile us, connect us to yourself, to each other.

Two: You are the source of our healing and hope, for if one is hurt, all of us are hurt.

One: You are the Vine, and we are the branches, connecting us all through your spirit and love.

Two: This morning when we raise up and celebrate the lives of our Asian American and Pacific Islander siblings, we pray for an end to racial and ethnic prejudice.

One: Free us from the dread of difference. Free the church from constricting traditions. Free our society from centuries of violence against the other.

Two: Grant your Spirit of power to all who are oppressed. Give healing victims of violence, protection to the vulnerable and abused, courage to the fearful, and hope to children and youth.

One: Clothe us, your body in the world, with your love, mercy, and grace. Amen.

Opening Hymn

Praise Our God Above

Music: Confucian Dacheng chant, arr. by W.H. Wong

Words: Tzu-chen Chao, translated by Frank W. Price

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**Praise our God above, source of boundless love:
Spring wind, summer rain, then the harvest grain;
Pearly rice and corn, fragrant autumn morn.
Though our work is hard, God gives us reward.**

**God's care like a cloak wraps us humble folk,
Makes all green things grow, ripens what we sow.
Through God we are strong; sing our harvest song.
Sing praise, field and flower, praise God's mighty power.**

Prayer of Invocation

O God, in your divine mystery you embrace difference in unity, and you call your people to live in peace with all. We pray for an end to racial and ethnic prejudice. Free us from the dread of difference. Free the church from constricting traditions. Free our society from centuries of violence against the other. Break down the walls that separate your people by color, culture, or religion. Call us to repentance for our sins of racism and prejudice, known and unknown. Transform discrimination into a passion for justice. Guide us to nurture a society that embodies reconciliation and cooperation among all, for the sake of the one who embodies your love, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Prayer of our Savior

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

Children's Moment

Scripture

John 15: 1-8

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ² He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes^[a] to make it bear more fruit. ³ You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

Sermon

Pastor Peter

“Faith in a Seed: The Vine and the Branches”

Hymn

Here, O God

Tune: Japanese gagaku mode, arr. by Isao Koizumi
Words: by Tokuo Yamaguchi, transl. by Everett M. Stowe
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**Here, O God, your servants gather, hand we link in hand;
Looking toward our Savior's cross, joined in love we stand.
As we seek the realm of God, we unite to pray:
Jesus, Savior, guide our steps, for you are the Way.**

**Many are the tongues we speak, scattered are the lands,
Yet our hearts are one in God, one in love's demands.
In despair our hope appears, calling age and youth:
Jesus, Teacher, dwell with us, for you are the Truth.**

**Nature's secrets open wide, changes never cease;
Where, O where, can weary souls find the source of peace?
Unto all those sore distressed, torn by endless strife:
Jesus, Healer, bring your balm, for you are the Life.**

**Grant, O God, an age renewed, show us how love thrives,
Help us as we work and pray, send us for our lives
Truth and courage, faith and power needed in our strife:
Jesus, Leader, be our Way, be our Truth, our Life.**

Prayers of the People

Prayer Response

In the Bulb there is a Flower
Words and music by Natalie Sleeth
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**In the bulb there is a flower, in the seed an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation
Words of Institution
Sharing of the Elements

Communion Response

Song of the Body of Christ
Tune: Hawaiian traditional, arr. by David Haas
Words by David Haas
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Prayer of Thanksgiving

O God, we thank you for this supper, shared in the Spirit with your servant Jesus, who makes us new and brings us life eternal. We praise you for giving us all good gifts, and pledge ourselves to serve you, even as in Christ you have served us. Amen.

Announcements

Benediction

Postlude

Watch the Bush of Thorns

Tune: Taiwanese traditional, arr. by I-to Loh

Words: Chun-ming Kao, paraphrased by James Minchin
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Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Sunday is intended to raise awareness around the continued rise of violence against Asian American and Pacific Islanders in the United States. If you would like to donate to this cause, you can donate to the nation-wide Stop AAPI Hate Organization at <https://stopaapihate.org/> Or, you can donate to the Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM) a branch of the UCC that has been in existence since 1974; more information about PAAM can be found here: <https://paamucc.org/>