

Movement 1: Opening Worship of Synod

Last Friday, attendees to the 32nd General Synod of the United Church of Christ gathered in Milwaukee from all the Conferences across the U.S. along with our many interfaith partners and friends from around the world. This multiethnic church seeks to embody the cultural, rhythmic, theological and linguistic pluralities of congregants and the human family and rejoices in this multiplicity which mirrors God's face. It seeks to honor the languages lost through our church and cultural histories and seeks to reclaim them as part of a healing—decolonizing--process. The opening worship of this Synod was filled with a wide expression of color, music, dance, voices, and languages in celebration of the wonder of God's creation. As we gathered in worship on the ancestral land of the of the Ho Chunk Nation, Chief Winneshiek granted us permission to meet on their ancestral land.

Opening Hymn: Arise, Your Light Has Come, #164

Litany of Confession

Gathered here in this remarkable moment,
in God's holy light, let us offer a moment of confession.

We confess to complicity in the sins
of colonialism, slavery and genocide;
We open our hearts to lament all that has been lost
and commit ourselves to justice.

May your light lead us to transformation
and liberation for all: oppressors and oppressed.

O God, shine on us your light of restorative justice.

History recalls that throughout modern times,
the actions of Church leadership have cooperated
with economic and imperial decisions
that robbed indigenous peoples of their humanity,
and sided with forces of evil by
invading lands not theirs, stealing lands of first peoples,
enslaving peoples around the globe,
and taking their cultural heritage and languages.

O God, shine on us your light of restorative justice.

We repent the colonial, enslaving, and genocidal actions
against Native Peoples of the Americas,
of African Descent peoples
of Asian Descent people and
even European Descent people
by many called Christians.

We lament the languages lost.

We lament the lives of those killed as a result
of the action, or the silence, of the churches.

For those who have died in colonial and enslaving conditions

and for those who gave their lives asserting the light of justice against these forces of separation and genocide, let us remember them

O God, shine on us your light of restorative justice.

Even now, this evil legacy has power in our midst:
Your all-revealing light exposes the Stranger refused welcome, families separated, people enslaved by human trafficking, unjustly incarcerated, and bound by poverty.
Your unflinching light exposes invisible structures supporting White privilege.

We all require the light of your liberating love.

O God, shine on us your light of restorative justice.

Centered in our faith and in your light, we commit to ways that honor and preserve your Creation in its wonderful diversity:
hundreds of languages, cultures and ethnicities through which your children, communities and societies express their identities, their love for all of your people, and find ways to praise You.

O God, shine on us your light of restorative justice.

You are invited to move and greet each other with these affirming words of our Christian hope.

“You are the Light. I am the Light. We are the Light.”

Movement 2: Sunday Worship of Synod

The Sunday worship at Synod is still a couple of hours away. The synod worshippers will share in Communion. The morning has been filled with delegates in committees reviewing the many Resolutions that will come before the full Plenary on Monday and Tuesday. Pastor Jim is a Chair of one of these committees. The scripture we are hearing today is the centering scripture throughout Synod – read at each worship with a preaching message by a different person each time.

Sacred Text: **Matthew 5:13-16** (p. 4 NT section pew bible)

Sermon Reflection: Let Your Light Shine Before Others

Response Hymn: This Little Light of Mine (revised words to #525)

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine! (3x)
Let it shine! Let it shine! Let it shine!

God’s Love in the world, I’m gonna let it shine! (3x)
Let it shine! Let it shine! Let it shine!

Holy Spirit through me, I'm gonna let it shine! (3x)
Let it shine! Let it shine! Let it shine!

We can be the church, and let justice shine! (3x)

Let it shine! Let it shine! Let it shine!
Let it shine! Let it shine! Let it shine!
Let it shine! Let it shine! Let it shine!

Invitation to Offering

No matter who we are or where we come from, your love claims us;
your love binds us together; your love entangles us in shared destiny, humanity and hope.
Together in this love, we bring our money together that we might walk in humility, faith and
justice together.

*Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Christ all creatures here below
Praise Spirit Living Comforter
Community of Love adored. Amen**

Offering Prayer

**Creator God of all peoples, your presence has been witnessed
throughout history and through all eternity. We witness your faithfulness, your promise and
grace today in the gathering of the church in one hall in Milwaukee, to our Church here in
Colville, to every UCC church gathering in all places. Through Jesus we walk in the forgiveness
and grace of your love as we struggle to be people of justice, repairers, beauty and hope.
Bless our offering gathered here in Your name. Amen**

Movement 3: Tuesday, Closing Worship at Synod

*The final action of the General Synod is closing worship on Tuesday night. Five days of learning,
business, service, fun, and lots of connections. Now we are ready to celebrate what has brought us
together and what now sends us out – back to our Conferences and Churches.*

Prayer Space

INVITATION TO PRAYER

(Note: Lay Leader will use these words to invite people into prayer time. For the chime, use the little gold bowl on the mantle in my office. Rinse the ashes out of it. This lead in need not be printed in the bulletin just given to lay leaders.)

We have experienced God's word
and what the Spirit is saying to us, the Church, today.
Now let us pray.
I invite you to steady yourself in your seat.
We want to be at ease in our bodies
and yet ready to experience God's Word.
If it feels safe you can close your eyes.
Or gaze upon something in the worship space.
Take a few mindful breaths.
Use your breath to steady your body and mind.
As one body, let's take a breath together.
Let stillness come over this One Body with the sound of this chime:

A chime is rung and some silence is left before inviting prayers from the people

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

Our Father who is in heaven,
Holy is your name.
Your kingdom come, Your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

***DEPARTING HYMN**

Arise, Your Light has Come!

FESTAL SONG

*Words by Ruth Duck, from **New Century Hymnal**, and new for this Synod*

**Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;
Show forth the glory of your God which shines on you to day!**

**Arise, my friends, arise! Rejoice, for Christ is near,
the faithful teacher of the wise, arise and do not fear.**

**You are salt of the earth, but do not lose its taste,
lest you forget its precious worth, its value gone to waste.**

**And we reflect God's light, for all the world to see
In doing what is kind and right, that all be safe and free.**

**Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;
Show forth the glory of our God, which shines on you today.**