

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
3 Gray Road, North Yarmouth, Maine 04097
Organized in 1806

**Breaking Through: The
Disruptive Power of
Just Peace**

JUST
PEACE
SUNDAY
9.18.2022

*“For he is our peace...and has broken down
the dividing wall, that is, the hostility
between us.” Ephesians 2:14*



**Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 18, 2022 ~ 9:30 a.m.**

September 18, 2022
The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude:

Choral #3

Cesar Franck

Sung: God welcomes all! Strangers and friends!
God's love is strong! And it never ends!

Words: John L. Bell, Music: South African traditional,
transcribed by John L. Bell at the Sunrise Hospice, Themba
Text: © 2008, GIA/Iona Community / WGRG

Welcome and Announcements

Remember that at one time you were without Christ . . . and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made us one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us . . . that he might create in himself one new humanity . . . thus making peace, and might reconcile us to God in one body through the cross . . . for through him we have access in one Spirit to the Father. – **Ephesians 2:11-18**

Call to Worship:

Pastor: The barriers feel tall—between people, communities and nations.

People: **Christ tears down the barriers between us.**

Pastor: The barriers feel wide—between heaven and earth.

People: **Christ tears down the barriers between us.**

Pastor: The barriers feel large—on the long path to peace.

People: **Christ tears down the barriers between us.**

Pastor: Let us worship the God of peace and justice. Amen.

***Invocation:** (in unison)

Let us pray: **Unifying God, thank you for your vision to break through barriers to build peace. Break though again today, disrupting the status quo with a new message from your word. Stir our hearts, so that there might be healing, wholeness and peace. Amen.**

***Hymn *Let There Be Peace on Earth* (sung twice)**

CH #677

Words: Sy Miller and Jill Jackson, 1955

Music: Sy Miller & Jill Jackson, 1955, har. Charles h. Webb, 1987

**Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me;
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God our creator, children all are we.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:
to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.**

Confession:

P: Holy God, sometimes the walls build up in our hearts when we aren't looking, when we are just going about day-to-day life. Bricks of bitterness, bricks of apathy, bricks of shame. As they start to stack up, we can feel surges of rage and even violence without understanding why. Disrupt our quiet building with the transforming Spirit of Christ.

L: **Help us to imagine how we might use the power of your love to break through barriers to peace.**

P: God of Just Peace, you sent your Son to preach "peace to those who are far away and peace to those who are near." Even with his message of Just Peace, we struggle to understand one another, and we love to dole out blame. We justify violence like children in a schoolyard by shouting "they started it."

L: **Slow our reactions and break through our lies with your truth.**

Silent Prayer

Words of Assurance

P: God has promised us that no matter who started it, Christ has already finished it. Christ has united all people with the Spirit of Love, so we may no longer be strangers but friends. Let us live in friendship and peace.

Passing the Peace:

**But waiting not for places, you meet us all around.
Our covenant is written on roads, as faith is found.**

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer:

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Call to Offering:

God gives us a place, a people, and a project. God blesses us so that we might bless others.

***Doxology**

**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. Amen.**

***Dedication: (in unison)**

God of covenant, you gave Abraham a place, a people, and a project so that he might be a blessing for all. As we dedicate these gifts, we pray that you will show us how to honor your covenant, so that we might be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

***Hymn**

They'll Know We Are Christians

CH#494

Words and Music: Peter Scholtes, 1966

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, we are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, and we pray that all unity may one day be restored:

***And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, yes,
they'll know we are Christians by our love.***

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand, we will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand, and together we'll spread the news that God is in our land:

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will work with each other, we will work side by side, we will work with each other, we will work side by side, and we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride:

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come, and all praise to Christ Jesus, God's only Son, and all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one:

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

***Charge & Benediction**

Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus said, "As you go, wherever you go, follow me and help others follow me, welcoming them into the family of God, and instructing them – by word and example – to practice of everything I have commanded you. And remember, I'll be with you day after day after day, until the end of time."

Postlude

The Invocation and Litany of Confession were prepared by Rev. Amber Neuroth for the observance of Just Peace Sunday and are used by permission of the United Church of Christ.

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Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Paul A. Day
Administrative Assistant: Lyn Glassock
Organist: Peter Dickson*
Organist: Jesse Myers-Wakeman
Choir Director: David Myers-Wakeman
Sexton: Mark R.H. Heath
Treasurer: Liz McGlinn, CPA, CGMA

Church Phone: 829-3644
Church e-mail: nyarmouthcucc@gmail.com

Pastor Day's phone: 207 712-9896
Pastor Day's email: revpaulday@gmail.com

Church Website: <http://nyccucc.com>
Maine Conference Website: www.maineucc.org
YouTube: youtube.com/c/nyccucc

Due to the Corona Virus-Covid-19, this service was recorded
and streamed on YouTube.

If you are not receiving church emails and would like to, please send an email to nyarmouthcucc@gmail.com asking to be added to the list. Like the NYCC FB page and you will be notified of what is happening there, too!

Offering can also be made online through Tithely at
<https://tithe.ly/give?c=1301940>

Neighbors in Need Special Offering

In 2022, the Neighbors in Need "BEHOLD!" offering focuses on an economic justice. With inflation impacting all of our households, we wanted to provide a way to discuss this through a faith lens. Join us by promoting this year's NIN "Behold!" campaign at your church. As you may recall, one-third of the offering supports Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds are used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. We will collect this offering on October 2.