GUIDE FOR WORSHIP

“I don’t know what tomorrow holds, but I know who holds tomorrow”

Prelude Music
“Day by Day”
Godspell Stephen Schwartz

Call to Worship
Reconciling God, we would rather gossip about those who sin against us, than speak to them privately;

We would rather parade our wounds for all to see, than quietly work toward forgiveness and reconciliation.

Help us choose the more difficult and wider path, the path that includes others, opens possibilities for real healing, real forgiveness, and real growth in your Spirit.

Help us place the best interests of our community above our own need for public vindication. Amen, and amen.

Gathering Song
“Make Me a Channel of Your Peace”
Arr. Lloyd Larson
Amelia Lloyd, vocalist

Gathering Prayer
Light of Christ help us to be mindful of Your presence in our midst today, and every day. Shine the light before us that we may recognize trouble, but choose to walk the path made for us. Help us to behold the world as You created it to be, as You created US to be. And help us to keep our hearts and minds open to receive your abundant blessings.
This we pray in the name of the one who creates all openings, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Children’s Time
Jill Stoll
Then Peter approaching asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many of seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kindom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.’

Moved with compassion the master of the servants let him go and forgave him the loan. When the servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, ‘Pay back what you owe.’ Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt.

Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?’

Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.”

**Message**

**Widen and Open the Path**

**Song of Response**

“Whatsoever You Do”

vv 1,2 and 3

Willard F. Jabusch

**Prayers of the People/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.

**Doxology Song**

“Make Them Hear You”

Sung by Mara Stoll

Music by Stephen Flaherty, lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
I Hear You, by Kristin Spradley

As I listen to your palpable pain,
I try to imagine your experience.
I have not been on the receiving,
Yet seen it, and not acknowledged its presence.

As I listen to your wretched worry,
I try to imagine your situation.
These are not my fears,
I have calm, where you have frustration.

As I listen to your anxious anger,
I try to imagine your struggle.
This is a fight I will never have to face,
I have reassurance, where you have a raging bull.

As I listen to your valiant voice,
I try to give you space for re-membering.
This is our shared history,
I need to learn it and ally with you as a being.

As I listen to your humble, heavy heart,
I try to imagine your grieving.
I will sit. I will reflect. I will act.
This is why I am here and not leaving.
Silence is a Vote, by Kristin Spradley

Sometimes too many terrific things need our attention
Parents, children, spouses, siblings, relatives, friends, pets, bosses, coworkers, strangers, enemies
We are led by a string that extends from now to eternity
Do this, call them, go here, solve that, put it together, take it apart
Same routine, same routine

What does it take to break out of this whirlwind?
shake our head?
shut our eyes?
shout “Enough”?

It is easy to be frustrated and to curl up on the couch
It is easy to growl at anyone that dares to distract and disturb
It is easy to turn a cold shoulder on those we don’t really know or need

What does it take to break out of our whirlwind?
shake our head?
shut our eyes?
shout “Enough”?

Gather your people
Gather your fearlessness
Gather your plans
Gather your voice

Because silence is a vote

Blessing and Commissioning

Closing Song
“Let there be Peace on Earth”
WHATSOEVER YOU DO

Willard F. Jabusch

Refrain

What-so-ev-er you do to the least of my peo-ple, that you

don-to me.

Verses

1. When I was hun-gry, you gave me to
d eat; When I was thirst-y, you gave me to drink.
2. When I was home-less, you o-pened your
door; When I was na-ked, you gave me your coat.
3. When I was wea-ry, you helped me find
rest; When I was anx-i-ous, you calmed all my fears.
4. When in a pris-on, you came to my
cell; When on a sick-bed, you cared for my needs.
5. When I was laugh-ed at, you stood by my
side; When I was hap-py, you shared in my joy.

1-5. Now en-ter in-to the home of my Fa-ther.

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Let There Be Peace on Earth

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.
Woven throughout the entire Bible, there are stories that compel us over and over to Love our Neighbor. The Bible tells us that the greatest commandment of all is “to love God, but to this, Jesus added a second command: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:37-38)

More than 12 years ago, Kirkwood UCC joined a four-church effort to provide breakfast on Sundays for hungry neighbors in North St. Louis. Three teams of KUCC members cook and serve four times a year to make this ministry possible. Our church also has provided backpacks and school supplies, Easter outfits and Christmas gifts for the children of the Ville neighborhood. While we have been unable to gather, we have sent the money we would have spent on groceries to help stock a food pantry that serves the Ville families.

For years, Kirkwood UCC has had a Black Lives Matter sign on our property. In this time of racial crisis, we have added a weekly vigil for justice, with heartening support from those driving by our church.

As we assess our mission for 2021, we know God is calling us, perhaps more than ever, to serve and love our neighbors. Please help us keep our outreach strong with your gifts of funds and time. Beloved, Love your Neighbor.