Westminster Presbyterian Church

LITURGY FOR OCTOBER 4, 2020
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Gathering Words **Linda and Greg Barbu**

From where we are sheltering in place,
from sacred spaces where
folks are socially distancing themselves
we are gathered as God's people,
called to the Table where brokenness
nourishes us with simple grace.

From virtual communities from all over the world,
we are gathered as God's faithful community,
serving, living, caring wherever we are.

From neighborhoods made up of those
of every class, every race, every branch of faith,
we are gathered as witnesses
to God's hope and peace
which are still manifested
in every place, in every person in this uncertain time.

Opening Prayer **Linda and Greg Barbu**

Holy One,
When you saw your children held bondage by fear and despair,
You gathered them up for a journey into freedom and hope.

In these days of worry and uncertainty, continue to walk with us, your children.

You came not with ready blueprints, but with grace cradled in your hands.
You came not to force us to choose sides,
as so many these days try to do,
but to be that voice which calls us together.

Forgive us when we long to trust promises offered to us
by those who do not care for anyone but themselves;
when we are tempted to believe those
who say there is nothing to worry about and no reason to look out for others;
when we hesitate to put our trust in those who would have us care
for the forgotten, the most vulnerable.

Fill our uneasy, shattered spirits with your peace
more precious than the brokenness we grasp.
Empower us to live our out calling to live in unity.
May we become your ambassadors of peace. Amen.

Opening Hymn No. 317 In Christ There Is No East Or West MC KEE

Scripture Reading 2 Corinthians 5:16-20 **Joshua Amimo**
In Dholuo language (Western Kenya)

16From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. **17**So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! **18**All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; **19**that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. **20**So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Sermon Ambassadors of Peace **Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**

Minute for Mission Peace & Global Witness Offering **Linda Barbu**

Hymn No. 526 Let Us Our Talents and Tongues Employ LINSTEAD

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving **Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**

God be with you!
And also with you.

Beloved, God has created us to live faithfully in these times.
We lift our hearts to the One who shapes us into communities of grace and peace.

Remind us, Holy One, that you spoke into the trembling emptiness of chaos,
and your goodness and wonder began all the days and nights
when hope raced across the sky,
when grace bubbled in springs,
when peace wandered the meadows.

All these gifts were, and still are, crafted for those made in your mage,
even when we grumble in wildernesses or live in the exile of fear and worry,
or seek to have our way, not yours.

In every moment when your people were alone, afraid, felt abandoned by all,
you sent prophets - women and men, to remind us of your promises and point us
to all the ways you continue to love.

Even in these months of isolation, even in these days which seem the same,
even in these moments we are alone, you are with us,
in the life, the promises made known in the Child you sent
to point us to the way home to you.

In these times when we wonder if anyone really cares about us,

he is the One who is your love poured out for us, each of us.
In these days when bitter voices would seek to seduce us with anger,
he is the gentle voice which calls us to trust in your heart broken for us.
In the moments when people seem not to care for those most at risk from this virus,
he is the living demonstration that death has no ultimate power
but that your resurrecting love is the final word spoken about us.

As we would seek to model his gentleness and grace in these overwhelming times,
as we try to let his light be revealed in us,
we call out to you, Redeemer of all creation, that you pour out your Spirit
on each and every place where we gather here in our community and around the world,
on each and every person.
Whether it is bread that is broken, or crackers that are split apart,
may these gifts remind us
that it is moments when we least expect, with people we usually do not notice,
that we are called to share your grace
to listen to the lonely, to welcome the heartbroken, to embrace the vulnerable.

Whether it is a mug of tea, a glass of wine or juice, or even a glass of water,
may this be your grace poured into us so that we might become
people who will not give up on justice,
who will not let go of hope,
who will not hoard life,
who will trust in you always.

And when this pandemic comes to an end and we can gather once again
with our sisters and brothers around the Table,
we will know your promised Feast
in that place, that time, that life beyond this,
where all hurtful words silenced,
where all is pain left behind,
where hope and grace are our closest friends,
and we will join our hearts and voices
with our sisters and brothers
who forever sing of your glory,
God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Video collage in Dholuo, German, Romanian, Chinese, Spanish and French by
Joshua Amimo, Dorothee Tripodi, Greg Barbu, Francis Bonk, Jack Veney and Linda Barbu

Closing Hymn No. 756 May The God of Hope Go With Us LLANGLOFFAN

Benediction **Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**

*Note: Gathering Words, Opening Prayer, and Great Prayer of Thanksgiving was adapted from Thom Shuman.

Hymn numbers 526 and 756 are led by Ken Shafer, piano, Pong Thiemmedh, tenor & guitar, Christine Kovach, tambourine, and Enikő Ferenczy, maracas.