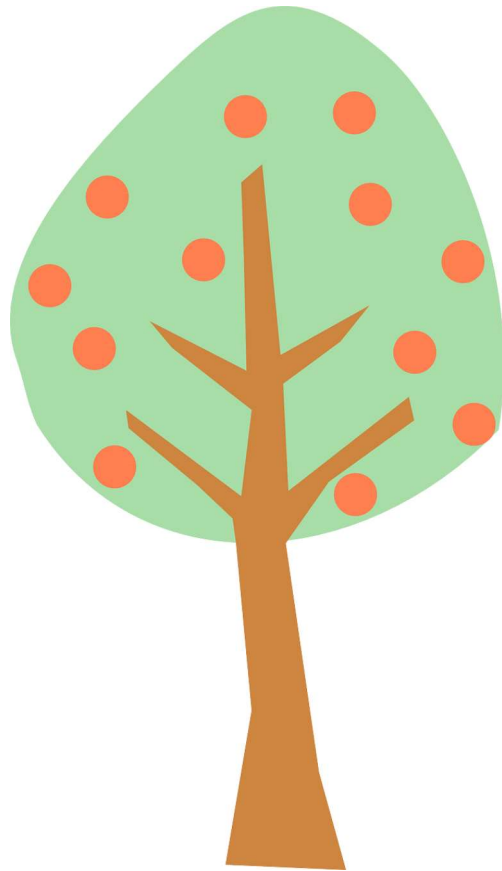


In Appreciation:

Greeters: Aki Kumagai, Miko Kumagai
Online Greeter: May Lee
Ushers: Aki Kumagai, Miko Kumagai
Parking: Russ Hart
Parking Barriers (Sat): Jonathan Sakakibara
Sound System: Kaz Nozue
Zoom Moderator: Lori Hart
Altar Flowers: Nancy Arata-Fong



The Celebration of Worship

July 23, 2023 • 8th Sunday after Pentecost

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave
Worship Leader: Donna Komure-Toyama
Pianist: Haruko Sakakibara
Japanese Reader: Haruko Sakakibara

Centering Prayer for Worship

*Dear Lord Jesus,
As we worship today, we realize that we often come to You asking for favors. Today we'd just like to be in Your presence, and bring You joy. As we worship, let our hearts respond to Your love. Amen.*

Prelude Haruko Sakakibara

*Introit

All: Make us one, Lord, make us one. Holy Spirit make us one. Let Your love flow so the world will know, we are one in You.

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

** Those who can, please stand*

Call to Worship

Donna Komure-Toyama

Leader: Glory to you, Creator God, You made this day for joy and gladness.

People: God's radiant light surrounds us. God's radiant love connects us to all creation.

Leader: Holy God, through the power of Jesus' resurrection, fill us with Your transforming grace and empower us to serve You.

All: Lord Jesus, Light of the world, receive our song of praise!

*Opening Hymn: "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (#376)

Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heaven, to earth come down, fix in us Thy humble dwelling; all Thy faithful mercies crown. Jesus, Thou art all compassion; pure, unbounded love Thou art; visit us with Thy salvation, enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast! Let us all in Thee inherit, let us find the promised rest; Take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be; End of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty, to deliver; let us all Thy life receive; suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave. Thee we would be always blessing, serve Thee as thy hosts above; pray, and praise thee without ceasing, glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then Thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be; let us see Thy great salvation perfectly restored in Thee; changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our crowns before Thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.

*Sending Hymn: "I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me" (#369)

I'm gonna live so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna work so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna pray so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

*Response: "Shalom"

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom,
Kami no mi megumi.**

(Peace, peace, until we meet again. Peace, peace, may we be blessed with grace from God.)

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom,
yuta kani, yuta kani, yuta kani.**

(Peace, peace, until we meet again. Peace, peace, abundantly, abundantly, abundantly.)

Postlude

Haruko Sakakibara

We invite you to remain seated during the Postlude as we enjoy the music and God's presence together. If you need to go, please feel free to do so. Go with God's blessings.

Musical Offering

Haruko Sakakibara

Time for silent reflection

Opportunity To Present Offerings

All: Give thanks with a grateful heart; give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because God's given Jesus Christ, God's Son. (Repeat) And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich" because of what the Lord has done for us. (Repeat) Give thanks. Give thanks.

*Doxology

All: Praise God from Whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below. Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

Donna Komure-Toyama

Joys & Concerns

Donna Komure-Toyama

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

All: Our Parent Who art in heaven, hallowed be 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Invitation to Confession

Donna Komure-Toyama

Leader: May God who alone knows the depths of the human heart give us the gift of humility, that we may see our own sins clearly and refrain from judging our neighbor. Let's allow God's Spirit to lead us in reflection and repentance as we pray.

Prayer of Confession

Donna Komure-Toyama

Leader: God of our lives, we will try to open our hearts to You and admit who we really are. Called to live gently with our families and all the world, we wound others by our words and actions.

People: Given Your command to love and care for each other, we are cautious with compassion, sharing only with those we think are deserving.

All: Forgive us, Loving Lord. Fill us with Your grace, not because we're so special, but because we are Your servants.

Time for silent reflection and confession to God

Assurance of God's Grace

Donna Komure-Toyama

Leader: God leans over to meet us so that God's great heart of forgiveness and comfort might touch our own, healing us and restoring us to new life.

People: Not condemnation but God's compassion; not judgment, but God's justice; not punishment, but God's grace.

All: Through the grace of God's heart we are forgiven and made whole. Thanks be to God. Amen.

*Response to God's Forgiveness: "Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me" (#582GtG)

*All Sing: Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.*

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

***Passing of the Peace**

Donna Komure-Toyama

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

The Gospel in Story

***Hymn of Reflection: “Take My Life” (#391)**

Sing verses 1, 2, 5 and 6

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee. Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise, let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love. Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee, swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my will, and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine. Take my heart, it is Thine own; it shall be Thy royal throne, it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store. Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for Thee, ever, only, all for Thee.

Unison Prayer of Guidance

All: Now may the words of our mouths, the meditations of our hearts, the interpretation of our minds, and the response of our hands be acceptable to You, our Lord and our Redeemer. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

Japanese Reading: Colossians 3:23-24

Haruko Sakakibara

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for people,..it is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

1st Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 9:7-9 (The Message)

Donna Komure-Toyama

Seize life! Eat bread with gusto, drink wine with a robust heart. Oh yes—God takes pleasure in your pleasure! Dress festively every morning. Don’t skimp on colors and scarves. Relish life with the spouse you love each and every day of your precarious life. Each day is God’s gift. It’s all you get in exchange for the hard work of staying alive. Make the most of each one! Whatever turns up, grab it and do it. And heartily!

Sermon & 2nd Scripture Reading

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

Summer Sermon Series: The Spirituality of Living with Gusto
Nehemiah 1:1-4, 2:1-8 The memoirs of Nehemiah

I was in the palace complex at Susa. Hanani, one of my brothers, had just arrived from Judah with some fellow Jews. I asked them about the conditions among the Jews there who had survived the exile, and about Jerusalem. They told me, “The exile survivors who are left there in the province are in bad shape. Conditions are appalling. The wall of Jerusalem is still rubble; the city gates are still cinders.” When I heard this, I sat down and wept. I mourned for days, fasting and praying before God. I was cupbearer to the king.

At the hour for serving wine I brought it in and gave it to the king. I had never been hangdog in his presence before, so he asked me, “Why the long face? You’re not sick are you? Or are you depressed?” That made me all the more agitated. I said, “Long live the king! And why shouldn’t I be depressed when the city, the city where all my family is buried, is in ruins and the city gates have been reduced to cinders?” The king then asked me, “So what do you want?”

Praying under my breath to God, I said, “If it please the king, and if the king thinks well of me, send me to Judah, to the city where my family is buried, so that I can rebuild it.” The king, with the queen sitting alongside him, said, “How long will your work take and when would you expect to return?” I gave him a time, and the king gave his approval to send me.