

The Congregational Church of West Medford
An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Worship
August 4, 2013
10:00 am

WELCOME

The Congregational Church of West Medford, United Church of Christ, is a community that strives to live according to the teachings of Jesus Christ and to share in the costs and joys of discipleship. We unconditionally welcome and affirm people of every age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, race, culture, ability, and economic circumstance, and invite everyone into full participation in our church life and ministry.

If you're visiting for the first time, feel uncertain about church, find yourself here infrequently, or attend weekly, there's a place for you here. There are many ways to be involved and if you'd like to know more about our many activities, please speak to a greeter or the pastor.

**We ask that you wear a name tag to help us know each other.
Blank name tags are available by the door for anyone in need.**

Please be sure to sign the Pew Register which you will find on the center aisle.

GATHERING TO PRAISE GOD

Prelude

Meditation

— Franck

Welcome

Call to Worship

Robin Baker

(Adapted from "The Creation," *God's Trombones* by James Weldon Johnson)

LEADER: And God stopped and looked at what he had created and saw that the earth was hot and barren

PEOPLE: **So God stepped over to the edge of the world and spat out the seven seas.**

LEADER: She batted her eyes and the lightnings flashed.

PEOPLE: **He clapped his hands and the thunders rolled and the waters above the earth came down.**

LEADER: The cooling waters came down.

PEOPLE: **Then the green grass sprouted, and the little red flowers blossomed.**

LEADER: The pine tree pointed his finger to the sky and the oak spread out her arms.

PEOPLE: **The lakes cuddled down in the hollows of the ground, and the rivers ran down to the sea.**

LEADER: And God smiled again and the rainbow appeared and curled itself around her shoulder.

** Please rise in body or spirit as you are able*

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PEOPLE: Then God raised his arms and waved his hand over the sea and over the land and said, "Bring forth! Bring forth!"

LEADER: And fishes and fowls, beasts and birds swam the rivers and seas, roamed the forests and the woods and split the air with their wings.

PEOPLE: And God said: "That's good!"

All: That's Good!

Gathering Song "All Things Bright and Beautiful" # 478

Prayer of Praise (Unison)

God of all creation, by whose power we are continually upheld and sustained, we give you praise. You are the author of all beginnings, the giver of every good gift. The glory of summer astounds us with your generosity. Yes, God, we see it! Forgive us if we ever lose our sense of wonder.

But help us to find you too, in the dry letting go of brown leaves, in the grey sky that touches our secret fears. May we trust that everything you can work in us so that seeds of hope will flourish. Amen

A Time of Confession

Preparing our Hearts "Spirit of the Living God" —Iverson

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me, Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me, Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Prayer of Confession

In honor of our delegation returning from Pine Ridge, we offer this confession from the Native American tradition.

O Great Spirit, Whose voice I hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me! I am small and weak; I need your strength and wisdom. Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice. Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people. Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight speech, so when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame. Amen

***The Good News of God's Grace and Presence**

This is the good news of Jesus Christ: God longs for our healing and loves us into wholeness. By divine grace we are forgiven and set free.

***Passing of the Peace**

One: May the peace of Christ be with you all. **All: And also with you.**

***Sung Response** **“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”** **#293**

Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us, filling us with your love
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Church Life and Mission

Hymn

Prayers of the People and Pastoral Prayer

One: God in your mercy **All: Hear our prayer**

The Lord's Prayer (You are welcome to pray in the language most familiar to you)

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

From the Bible

Selections from Psalm 104

Sermon

“IN THE GARDEN”

Rev. Judy Brain

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE

Hymn

“In The Garden”

#237

Offering

Invitation to Joyful Stewardship

Offertory

Nocturne

— Mendlessohn

***Doxology**

***Procession of Gifts and Prayer of Dedication**

Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)

We give you thanks, loving Christ, that you come to us in simple things like gardens and highways, friends and strangers, sorrows and celebrations, and especially in the love of this community gathered around its fellowship table. And now, send us forth nourished and ready so that we might be a gateway to God for others. Amen

***Closing Hymn**

“For the Beauty of the Earth”

#28

Blessing and Sending

Postlude

Sarabande

— J. S. Bach

** Please rise in body or spirit as you are able*

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