

Dear Pastor and/or Worship Leader:

Greetings on behalf of the Annual Meeting Planning Work Group.

How beautiful it is when we stand in solidarity with one another as congregations of the United Church of Christ; clergy, delegates and visitors all coming together to celebrate and negotiate the important ministry that we are doing in Minnesota. Our hope is that as we gather in St Joseph our congregations will also be worshipping in solidarity with us, pondering the same scriptures and hearing a word of hope for the future of our denomination.

We also know the stresses of being away from the pulpit on a Sunday morning; worrying that you'll miss one of those parts of worship that are second-nature and off the cuff for you, finding pulpit supply, planning a worship service that someone else will lead.

We want to make it as care-free as possible for you, so we offer these worship resources. Enclosed you will find a sample bulletin, additional prayers and responses, and a sermon based on our Annual Meeting theme, Embracing God's Promise: A Future with Hope.

You'll note that the Opening Hymn, "Welcome to This House" is from *Sing! Prayer and Praise*. If you don't have access to *Sing!*, you can download a copy of the accompaniment for a small fee through UCC Resources. Copyright permission is available through [www.onelicense.net](http://www.onelicense.net).

Looking forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting.

Blessings,

Rev. Jill K Warner  
Annual Meeting Planning Work Group  
(New Journey UCC, Hutchinson, MN)

(Link for Welcome to This House)

<https://www.uccresources.com/products/sing-prayer-and-praise-for-accompaniment-sheet-music-gather-songs-downloadable-pdfs?variant=1231754352>

# Embracing God's Promise

*- a future with hope -*



Minnesota Conference Annual Meeting Weekend

June 11, 2017

## Prelude

Gathering Music *I Woke Up This Morning* NCH # 85

## Call to worship

One: So often we are afraid, O God,

**All: Open our eyes to your word and possibilities.**

One: We gather to seek encouragement and inspiration,

**All: Open our minds to your grace and surprises.**

One: Sometimes we close ourselves up for protection,

**All: Open our hearts to embrace your Spirit and your love.**

One: May our worship enlighten and enrich us

**All: as you call us forward into a future with hope.**

Opening Hymn *Welcome to This House* Sing! Prayer and Praise # 7

## Greet One Another / Sign of Peace

## Time of Discovery (Children's Time)

## Announcements

## Scriptures

Jeremiah 29:7-14

Matthew 15:32-39

The Message "God's Abundance vs. Our Scarcity"

*written by the Rev. Danielle Bartz*

Hymn *We Are Not Our Own* NCH # 564

## Prayers of the People

One: Gracious God, we pray today for justice for all of your people:

## All:

for those wrongly accused to be able to prove their innocence ...

for those who are abused to find places of safety and people who care...

for those who are hungry to find permanent sources of adequate food...

for those who are homeless to find shelter from the elements...

for those who are facing serious medical procedures to find healing  
hope, patience and perseverance...

for those who are grieving to give themselves all the time they need,  
and for everyone else to give them enough time as well...

for those who are lonely to find someone who cares enough to try being  
their friend...

for those who are depressed to find ways to cope, whether medical,  
spiritual, or friends and family who care...

for those who are labeled as "different" by the rest of society to find  
acceptance...

One: We pray, O God, that we may be instruments of your peace and your justice. Open our eyes, ears and hands to the needs around us. Guide us, as your people, to find ways that we, the body of Christ, may work toward achieving justice for your people who are suffering, and that we, ourselves, may be loving, caring examples of your love and grace wherever we go. In Jesus' name we pray, ...

## The Lord's Prayer

## Offering

Invitation

Doxology

Offering Prayer

Closing Hymn *We Would Be Building* NCH # 607

## Benediction

## Postlude

*All prayers and responses written by the Rev. Sue Hamly,  
Faith UCC, International Falls, MN.*

## **Additional Prayers and Responses**

### **Invitation to Offering**

Everything we are and everything we give is a symbol of love and hope. All our gifts, no matter how small or large, or how insignificant they may seem to us, are blessed by God and will make a difference to someone else. So, with joy in our hearts, we now bring our gifts and offerings to God.

### **Offering Prayer**

Gracious God, we give thanks for our congregation and its work in the world. We are grateful that these offerings embody our welcome to both friends and strangers. We give thanks for your love which binds us together as a community of faith working to share your love in our community and far beyond. Amen.

### **Benediction**

May we go from this place inspired to live into a future with hope and to share God's love wherever we are. Go in peace to serve the world God loves. Amen.