

Grace Note: Reconstituting the World on World Communion Weekend

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Fri 10/2/2020 3:54 PM

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October 2, 2020

Beloved in Christ,

This World Communion weekend we need the bread of life as we continue living this 2020 script that keeps throwing us one curve ball after another. I know I am exhausted from all the ducking and dodging and pivoting! For instance, last week we learned that the global number of COVID-19 cases had topped 34 million. Then this morning we learned that the day's count for new cases in the USA was 12,853. Among them are the POTUS, his wife and his staffer. The coronavirus, being no respecter of nationality, status, religion, race, gender or party politics, has invaded the White House. Fact is, no matter what boat we are in, we are all in the same global pandemic ocean. Taking a cue from the pandemic, our prayers ought to be unconfined and generous and undiscriminating. Whoever we are, we are all God's

children. And so, I ask you to pray for a speedy recovery for the Trumps.

Yesterday I wrote a letter to the NAACP local branch denouncing racism and white supremacy in our Evanston boat. In my letter ([click here to read it](#)) I informed the community that First Church was called to the work of dismantling racism at least ninety-nine years ago. We have been rowing a long time! Accurately or not, I often claim my surprising and humbling appointment to First Church as a sign of the Holy Spirit among us.



This weekend I'll show up with communion on Saturday when Colin gathers with children and families in a short time of outdoor and in-person family fellowship from 3:00 - 3:30p.m. I will offer communion using the pre-filled communion cups which guarantee an abundance of caution. I love our subversive claim that Jesus is among us even when we are masked and six feet apart with individual wrapped communion servings. Pre-registration is encouraged. (Colin@faithatfirst.com)

Those among us longing for a short time in the sanctuary without the worship piece are welcome to come for the prelude only (4:15-4:30 p.m.) and leave quietly during the procession for in-person worship. Saturday's prelude will feature an all-female string quartet, including our former Summer Music Intern Isza Wu and church member Cheryl Haack. Music will include a movement from an organ concerto by Johann Albrechtsberger, an Austrian composer who taught Beethoven, and a movement from a string quartet by Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos, who, having composed more than 2,000 works, is South America's most notable composer. Pre-registration is required.

Rev. Jane Cheema will preach at the in-person service, 4:30 - 5:00 p.m. Rev. Bonny Roth will offer the prayers of the people, and I will officiate at the Lord's Table. The power of God is in places that seem without any extraordinary power! Pre-registration is required.

Worship will conclude outside on the steps at Hinman Street for distribution of the elements. In the sanctuary we will break the bread Mark Henry will bake for us. However, communion will be distributed in the pre-filled communion cups. You are welcome to come at 5:15 - 5:20 p.m. to receive communion. If you wish, you can park on Hinman and communion can be brought to you.

On Sunday morning at the in-person prayer meeting in Lunt Park 9:00 - 9:30 a.m., we will hear from our guest musician Käthe Wright Kaufman, a keyboardist. A graduate of ETHS, Käthe (pronounced KAY-tuh) studied music at Music Institute of Chicago and continues her education as Organ Scholar at Peterborough Cathedral and Truro Cathedral. Käthe holds a Master of Music degree in Organ Performance from the Eastman School of Music. For those wishing to remain in their vehicle, I will be glad to bring to them curbside communion. Again, we will use the pre-filled communion cups. Pre-registration is not required but is encouraged.

Jesus taught us how to stay grounded and make a difference with the simple and ordinary things of prayer, bread, cup and music. This weekend, let us do a lot of that.

With Love,

Pastor Grace

My heart is moved by all I cannot save:
so much has been destroyed
I have to cast my lot with those

who age after age, perversely,
with no extraordinary power,
reconstitute the world.

~ Adrienne Rich, *Dreams of a Common Language*

Contact

First United Methodist Church

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First United Methodist Church is a community of Christians inviting all people to grow in their relationship with God and to live their faith in the world.

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