

The United Church of Conway  
The Third Sunday after Pentecost  
June 26, 2022  
Rev. Sherril Willis – Bridge Pastor

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.

**Call to Worship**

One: The way of our God is holy.

**Many: Holy One, we seek your presence in our midst.**

One: The way of our God is wondrous.

**Many: Wondrous God, we marvel at your works and marvelous deeds.**

One: The way of our God is awesome.

**Many: Awesome God, we call out to you in hope.**

**Unison Invocation**

**Many: Liberating One, we keep you before us. Our souls rejoice and our hearts are gladdened. Our very beings find safety and security in your presence. We approach you with thanksgiving and anticipation. Enliven us to be your people in the world. Embolden us to live in freedom. Empower us to be your good news. Stand up in us and show us the path of life. Amen.**

**Hymn # God Bless America (vs. 1)**

**Unison Prayer for Transformation and New Life**

**Many: Restoring God, too often we accept the conditions of the world around us and impose limitations on what is possible. We bind ourselves to societal conventions, norms, and pressure rather than follow you and your way. We conform to the values of this world rather than pursue the fruit of the Spirit. Show us the path of life and freedom in you. Teach us to plant seeds of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. May we perennially bear that fruit.**

**Words of Grace**

One: The Guiding Spirit opens us to new life and leads us to right paths. Hear the voice that continually calls, leads, and companions with us. Life in the Spirit is constantly renewed and restored. Let the grace of God nurture our roots and allow our flourishing.

**Invitation to Generosity**

One: Jesus invites us to follow him in all ways, including the use and sharing of our resources. An accounting of our time, talent, and treasure that reflects our active citizenship in the kingdom brings glory to the Holy One. These seeds bear fruit.

### **Doxology**

**Many: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, Praise God, all creatures here below. Praise God, above, ye heavenly host. Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!**

### **Unison Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving**

**Many: Giver of Gifts, receive the resources we bring. May they bless our community and our world. May bonds of scarcity be broken as we meet the needs around us with the gifts that you have first given to us. May we be gladdened by giving and rejoice in generosity. Amen.**

### **Prayers for the People of God**

One: Heavenly Creator, we thank You, that You have promised to be with all people in all the trials and difficulties of their lives. Soothe any sorrows, and heal the hurt that many are facing at this difficult time. Drive away the fear and worries that cause us to lose precious fellowship with You. Calm every trouble, and let all those that are called by Your name find their true rest in You. Creator-God, I pray that those that are Your church, will recognize who they are in Christ Jesus. Help every member of Your body to realize the privileged position we all have in Him. We are a special people in the sight of God, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, for which we praise Your holy name. You have called us all out of darkness into Your most marvelous light and have given each one eternal life as Your free gift of grace. Praise Your holy name. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

~Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com/Prayers-for-People~>

### **Prayer Jesus Taught Us to Say**

**Many: Our Loving God in heaven, hallowed be your Name, Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the dominion, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### **Hymn # America the Beautiful (vs. 1)**

#### **Reading of the Good News- Galatians 5:1, 13-25**

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh

desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

### **Hymn # My Country Tis of Thee (vs. 1)**

#### **Sermon "It's Not about Patriotism" by Rev. Sherril Willis**

#### **Closing Hymn # "Song of Peace"**

**This is my song, O God of all the nations  
A song of peace, for lands afar and mine  
This is my home, the country where my heart is  
Here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine  
But other hearts in other lands are beating  
With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine  
My country's skies are bluer than the ocean  
And sunlight beams on cloverleaf and pine  
But other lands have sunlight, too, and clover  
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine  
O hear my song, thou God of all the nations  
A song of peace for their land and for mine**

**~(from FINLANDIA) words by Lloyd Stone, music by Jean Sibelius  
words ©1932 Lorenz Publishing Co., music ©1899 Breitkopf und Hartel, ASCAP.  
All rights reserved. [www.earthmama.org](http://www.earthmama.org)~**

#### **Benediction**

**One:** As you go in the world, stand firm in the freedom of Christ. Be guided and live by the Spirit. Glorify God and bear fruit. Amen.

#### **Congregational Response- "Go Now In Peace"**

**Many:** Go now in peace. Never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of every day. Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know He will guide you in all you do. Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can see. God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Freedom and Fruit: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday after Pentecost were written by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ.  
Copyright 2022 Faith INFO Ministry Team, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.