

Outdoor Worship

St Paul United Church of Christ

At the Tuck Farm

October 18, 2020

1:00 PM

This Sunday, our Service of Worship is an outdoor event at the farm of George and Tina Tuck, where we are gathered for the annual church picnic. Because of the virus, our church picnic is being held later than usual this year, and there are some changes from the usual way we do things. Those who are in attendance at the farm have all eaten ahead of time; we are distanced and wearing masks, and we have brought with us our own snacks and drinks, including something we will use for the Holy Communion celebration. If you are participating with us from home, we invite you to read the service and take Communion with us as well. If you are joining us gby video, you will hear and see the service in a pre-recorded format. We hope everyone will feel a genuine part of the congregation throughout this experience. You are all in our thoughts and in our hearts.

Hello, dear friends. May God be with you on this autumn day!

May God be with us all: Our friends who are gathered at the farm, and our friends who are joining us from their homes.

Today, we celebrate the season of harvest, thanking God for fields of grain, fruit of the orchards and vegetables from the ground.

We give God thanks for those who labor, for those who have planted, cared for the fields, and harvested the bounty of the earth.

Listen now to the words of Jesus, when someone asked him, "What will the kingdom of God be like?"

The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.

(Mark 4:26-29)

*(The Congregation responds)* **Then how is that like the Kingdom of God?**

It is growing mysteriously within us and among us, until the day when our life together in Christ will produce the bountiful harvest at the end of our days. Come, give thanks to God, in whose time that day will come!

***Come, ye thankful people, come; raise the song of harvest home.***

***All is safely gathered in ere the winter storms begin.***

***God our maker does provide for our wants to be supplied;***

***Come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.***

***All the world is God's own field, fruit unto his praise to yield,  
Wheat and tares together sown, unto joy or sorrows grown.  
First the blade and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear,  
Lord of harvest, grant that we wholesome grain and pure may be.***

***For the Lord our God shall come and shall take his harvest home,  
From his field shall in that day all offenses purge away,  
Give his angels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,  
But the fruitful ears to store in his garden evermore.***

***Even so, Lord, quickly come to your final harvest home,  
Gather all your people in, free from sorrow, free from sin,  
There forever purified, in your presence to abide.  
Come, with all your angels, come, raise the glorious harvest home.***

#### Celebration of Holy Communion

We are reminded today that Jesus, on the night of his betrayal, took bread and wine, traditional produce of the harvest, to symbolize his own life given as spiritual food for all the world. Today, each of us has come with food and drink so that it might be blessed to remind us of our spiritual nourishment in the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord. We usually would have the bread and wine on our Communion table, to symbolize our sharing of the one Body of Christ, as Jesus shared the loaf and the cup in the upper room. But today each one of us has come with our small offering, and the gift will be in our fellowship as we eat together in the presence of Christ's love.

Let us pray for those who are gathered here. Let us pray for those who are sharing from their homes. Let us pray for everyone we see, and for everyone we do not see, but are held in our hearts.

We give thanks for those whose lives have provided a rich harvest of faith for us to inherit.

We pray that our own lives are forming together a ministry of caring for the life of the world.

We pray for the fully formed life of the Spirit among us, and for the vision of God's Realm of Peace.

And we pray in the words of Jesus,

***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 debts as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.***

This is the body of our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ. Take and eat. Do this in remembrance of him. This cup is the new covenant in the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ that is shed for you for the remission of your sins. Take and drink. Do this in remembrance of him.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give you thanks most holy God for this your sacrament of grace, for the wonder of your love, and your presence with us till the end of time. Amen.

Closing Hymn

***God be with you till we meet again, by his counsels guide, uphold you,  
With his sheep securely fold you; God be with you till we meet again.***

***God be with you till we meet again, 'neath his wings protecting hide you,  
Daily manna still provide you; God be with you till we meet again.***

***God be with you till we meet again; if life's perils should confound you,  
God will put his arms around you; God be with you till we meet again.***

Benediction

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

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Reminder:

Wednesday, October 21 is the Pot Belly fundraiser. Visit the Northgate location from 11 am - 7 pm and present the flyer for a donation to St. Paul. The flyer is in the October Messenger, some are also available in the office at church.