

**First Parish Church, Congregational
United Church of Christ
Worship Celebration
Sunday, October 18, 2020
10:00 am**

Prelude

"Hymn Medley"

arr. Cook

Welcome

Hymn

"Forward through the Ages"

Forward through the ages, in unbroken line
Move the faithful spirits at the call divine
Gifts in differing measure, hearts of one accord
Manifold in service, one the sure reward

Forward through the ages, in unbroken line
Move the faithful spirits at the call divine

Wide grows God's dominion, reign of love and peace
For it we must labor, till all strivings cease
Prophets have proclaimed it, teachers testified
Poets sung its glory, martyrs for it died

Forward through the ages, in unbroken line
Move the faithful spirits at the call divine

Not alone we conquer, not alone we fall
In each loss or triumph, lose or triumph all
Bound by God's far purpose in one living whole
Move we on together to the shining goal

Forward through the ages, in unbroken line
Move the faithful spirits at the call divine

Opening Prayer

God of all people and places, You call us to see all people in all places as Yours. You call us to see them as our equally loved and valued sisters and brothers.

But in this time of division and conflict, we struggle to do that. In this time, we too often close our eyes, ears, minds and hearts to those who are different from us economically; geographically; politically. In this time, we too often conclude that they are not worthy of our care and compassion. In this time, we too often see and treat them as less than us – less faithful; less patriotic; even less human.

Forgive us for this, Holy One. Lead us to do and be better. Lead us away from oversimplistic characterizations of others. Lead us away from tribalism. Instead, lead us to put Your call to be part of the Body of Christ before all other bodies.

We pray all this in the name of the One You sent to show us and teach us what life in that Body looks and sounds like – Jesus – the One who gave us these words...

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.

Solo *"Eye Hath Not Seen" (from 'The Holy City')* Gaul
Paul Knox, soloist

Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. For He hath prepared for them a city, whose builder and maker is God, Eye hath not seen the things prepared for them that love Him. There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people, the people of God; therefore fear lest anyone come short of it. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that Love Him.

Prayer Intentions

Time of Silent and Spoken Prayer

Music Meditation

"Widmung (Devotion)"
R. Schumann, arr. C. Schumann

The New Testament

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

(New Revised Standard Version)

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body.

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this.

Consistent with its mission to support and promote community affordable housing, the MAHT is reaching out to income eligible residents who are experiencing housing rent payment issues.

The MAHT can and wants to help during this difficult and uncertain time. For further information please contact Action, Inc. at 978-282-1000 or live chat at www.actioninc.org<<http://www.actioninc.org>.