



An Open & Affirming Congregation in the United Church of Christ  
Order of Worship for 5/22/2022  
Sixth Sunday of Easter ~ Mental Health Awareness Sunday

Zoom link for Joys & Concerns: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2057847210>  
Link to PDF of Hymns for larger print: [CCA Hymns May 22.pdf](#)

**Prelude & Receiving the Light of Christ:**

**Welcome** (Rev. Amelia)

**Words for Centering:** (liturgy by the UCC Mental Health Network)

Dear God, we gather on this Mental Health Sunday, to lift mental illness out of the shadows and into the light, to talk openly about things that are often whispered, if they are talked about at all, and to confront the stigma that keeps people from dealing honestly with matters that are more common than we might care to acknowledge. Bless us with determination and persistence, as we strive to create safe space in our congregation for all people, including those dealing with mental health challenges, whether fleeting or lasting. Realizing that “they” are “us,” help us forge a path forward, together, toward a way of being that highlights empathy, universal compassion, and care for all your children. And give us courage and wisdom to keep the conversation alive, and to make it meaningful and helpful. We ask this in the name of the One who loves us all, no matter who we are or where we are on life’s journey. Amen.

**\*Hymn of Praise:** Black Hymnal #401 “O God in Whom All Life Begins”

**Listening To the Sacred Text:** Psalm 88 (The Voice translation)

Listening for the Spirit in Silence:

*Word and words, O God. Help us to hear the One among the many.*

**Reflecting:** Rev. Dr. CJ Wood

**\*Hymn of Reflection:** Black Hymnal #388 “Help Us Accept Each Other”

## **Litany of Life Experiences** (led by Jonathan Zercher)

One: When we feel nervous, and the walls close in, and too many people are too close, and every day noises are too loud, and every light is too bright, and all we can do is plan our panicked escape from the situation we are in...

**All: God help us**

One: When sadness and depression pull us down like a lead weight, making it hard to move, hard to concentrate, hard to find motivation, hard to be alive, just hard...

**All: God help us**

One: When we can't help but burst into tears, and we learn the difference between crying and weeping, and the weeping won't stop, and we lose hope that we will ever feel hopeful again...

**All: God help us**

One: When information comes at us in blasts that we can't make sense of, and it seems like someone keeps randomly "changing the channel" when we try to focus, and it feels impossible to learn or keep up with what's going on around us...

**All: God help us**

One: When we get so revved that we want to take on the world, and leap tall buildings, and outrun freight trains and take on too many major projects at once, and stay up all night for days on end, and the only thing we know we can't do is slow ourselves down, until we crash out of control...

**All: God help us**

One: When voices inside our minds constantly intrude upon our lives, and when they won't stop and they confuse our thoughts and make it impossible to be with other people, let alone have any kind of real conversation...

**All: God help us**

One: When all we can see is a world that is out to get us, and we get stuck believing that some grand conspiracy is designed to hurt us, or ruin us, or kill us, and we believe that only our constant vigilance can save us, if anything can...

**All: God help us**

One: When we simply don't know how out of touch other people think our thoughts are...

**All: God help us**

One: When we feel completely isolated and alone, longing for social connections we cannot make...

**All: God help us**

One: When we feel utter despair, and we see more reasons to end our lives than to keep living...

**All: God help us**

One: When we strive with best intentions to stop addictions that are ruining our lives, and we try our best again and again, but we can't resist, and we end up over and over again at the same helpless place that we would give anything to avoid...

**All: God help us**

One: When our thoughts jumble and things we thought we knew slip away, and we feel helpless, powerless, and scared, for the moment and for the future...

**All: God help us. Amen**

**Offering invitation**

Music:

**\*Doxology** (*Tune: All Creatures Of Our God and King*)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow.*

*Praise God all creatures here below. Alleluia, Alleluia.*

*Praise God for all that love has done. Creator, Christ, and Spirit One.*

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Amen.*

**\*Prayer of Dedication (in unison)**

O God, we call out in prayer, beyond our understanding,  
especially in times of need.

Our worship sends us forth in service,  
and we offer ourselves – not as individuals alone –

but as part of larger efforts, and supported by our faith.

We dedicate ourselves to the maintenance of healthy boundaries, and to our own  
self-care,

but also as instruments of blessing for others in need,

particularly those who are affected by the challenges with mental health.

Help us to remember our call and promise,

and to learn from the moments we falter or mis-step,

that love may increase,

that wellness may flourish,

that healing may come.

As we have always been, we are yours,

poured out in love for the world.

Amen.

**\*Sending Song:** Red Hymnal #539 “We Will Go Out With Joy”

**\*Benediction**

**Postlude:**

***\*Please rise as you are able, in body or in spirit.***

Stephen Russell, Usher and Jen Howicz, Deacon on Duty

Rev. Amelia Fulbright, Transitional Pastor

Kyle Riley, Director of Online Ministries

Jonathan Geer, Piano

Amy Harris, Violin

Liz Lee, Cello