

WITNESS OF  
**LOVE**



IMMANUEL CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST  
1 Hovey Street • Oxford, MI 48371  
[www.icucc.org](http://www.icucc.org) • 248-628-1610  
May 17, 2020 • 11:00 a.m.



---

**Welcome to worship at Immanuel United Church of Christ!  
God is Still Speaking,**

**Thank You for taking the time to turn off your cell phone during the worship service.**

Prelude

\*Bringing in the Light of Christ

(\* denotes those who are able may stand.)

Ringling of the Bell

Welcome

Pastor Liz Wilson

Children's Message "Witness of Love"

Pastor Liz Wilson

**\*Call to Worship**

Ken Martin, Liturgist

One: In awe and wonder, we lift our eyes to the heavens. We raise our sons of joy to the Ruler of all time and space.

**Many: Sing praises to God, sing praises; Shout to God with loud songs of joy.**

One: We gather to remember the One who shared our common lot. Jesus Christ, who visited this earth, dwells in heaven.

**Many: We celebrate the life and ministry of Jesus. We rejoice in the hope to which Christ has called us.**

One: We open ourselves to baptism with the Holy Spirit. We expect to be empowered as witnesses in today's world.

**Many: We seek a spirit of wisdom and revelation. We are here to be filled with power from on high.**

Invocation

Pastor Liz Wilson

As Christ ascended to heaven, our spirits are lifted to you this day, O God. Your Spirit fills all the universe. We dwell within your embrace and cannot escape from your watchful care. You are with us here, choosing us as apostles and instructing us in the way we should go. Focus our limited understanding on the person of Jesus, that all he did and taught might come alive in us during this hour. Grant to us convincing proof of your promises as we welcome your winds of change in our lives. Amen.

**\*Hymn: "There is a Name I Love to Hear"**

Page 2

(Please remain standing for the Prayer of Confession)

# There Is a Name I Love to Hear

(O How I Love Jesus)

Frederick Whitfield, 1835; alt.

1 There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth;  
 2 It tells my Sav - ior's love for all; Christ died to set us free;  
 3 It bids me serve a - mid the wrath God's peo - ple face each day,

It sounds like mu - sic to my ear, the sweet - est name on earth,  
 What - ev - er prob - lems may be - fall, we'll live in dig - ni - ty.  
 And sheds a - long life's trou - bled path bright sun - shine on my way.

*Refrain*

O how I love Je - sus, O how I love Je - sus,

O how I love Je - sus, whose love has first found me.

Frederick Whitfield was ordained in the Church of England and served several English parishes. This hymn is a combination of Whitfield's stanzas and a refrain by an unknown author, both set to an existing nineteenth-century note. The text was published in a leaflet in 1835.

Tune: O HOW I LOVE JESUS C.M. with refrain  
 United States, 19th century

**Unison Prayer of Confession:**

Pastor Liz Wilson

**Hear us, God, our hope, for we have too easily denied our heritage amid the competing claims all around us. We declare ownership of what is only lent to us for time. We strive for knowledge and control beyond our capacity, wanting power on our own terms rather than through the unpredictable empowerment of your Spirit. Sometimes we stand on tiptoe to view what is out of sight, then arrogantly conclude that there is nothing to see. O God, open our eyes and our hearts that we might be forgiven and find true life in you. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Repentance and forgiveness of sin are proclaimed to all people in the name of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness is God's gift to us, one we can never earn but are welcome to accept. When we agree to God's freeing offer, we are also agreeing to let God's love change us. We are blessed by this opportunity for newness of life.

The Congregation Prays

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Ken Martin, Liturgist

**Congregational Response: "Lord hear our prayers."** (Response after each Prayer request)

Silent Meditation

**The Lord's Prayer:** (use words most comfortable for you)

Ken Martin, Liturgist

**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.**

Scripture Readings:

Acts 17:22-33

Ken Martin, Liturgist  
Pages 137 & 138 New Testament

1 Peter 2:2-10

Page 234 New Testament

John 14:1-14

Page 109 New Testament

Pastoral Prayer

Pastor Liz Wilson

God of all times and places, whose promise of the Holy Spirit is for us as well as for generations past, let your blessing fall on us while we are together, clothing us with the resources to be your witnesses through the church, Christ's body. May the glorious inheritance that is ours be shared that our communities may be enlightened and transformed. Amen.

Sermon:

"Witness of Love"

Pastor Liz Wilson

\*Hymn:

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

Page 3

Stewardship Message

Announcements

*(Be sure to read about up-coming events in the back of the bulletin.)*

Offering:

Offertory

\***Doxology:** (The tune is found on page 356 of your red hymnal.)

**PRAISE GOD, FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW...**

**PRAISE GOD, ALL CREATURES HERE BELOW...**

**PRAISE GOD, ABOVE, YOU HEAVENLY HOST...**

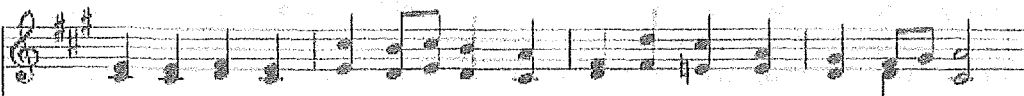
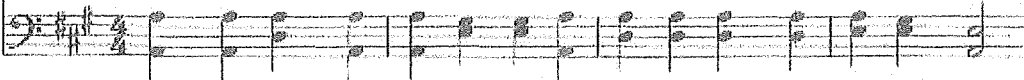
**CREATOR, CHRIST AND HOLY GHOST...AMEN.**

Mat. 3:1; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17; Eph. 3:27

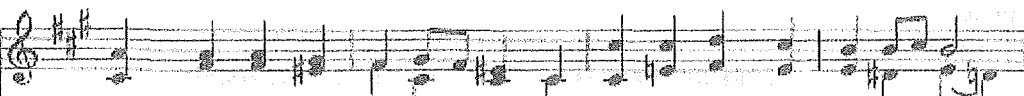
Charles Wesley, 1747; alt.



1 Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, joy of heaven, on earth be found,  
 2 Breathe, O breathe your lov-ing Spir-it in-to ev-ery trou-bled breast;  
 3 Come, al-might-y to de-liv-er, let us all your life re-ceive;  
 4 Fin-ish, then, your new cre-a-tion; pure and spot-less may we prove;



Fix in us a ham-ble dwell-ing, all your faith-ful mer-cies crown;  
 Let us all in you in-her-it, let us find your prom-ised rest;  
 Sud-den-ly re-turn, and ne-ver, ne-ver-more your tom-ples leave,  
 Let us see your great sal-va-tion per-fect-ly re-stored in you;



Je-sus, you are all com-pas-sion; pure, un-bound-ed love in-part,  
 Take a-way our love of sin-ning; Al-pha and O-me-ga be;  
 You we would be al-ways bless-ing, love you as your an-gels love,  
 Changed from glo-ry in-to glo-ry, till in heaven we take our place,



Vis-it us with your sal-va-tion, en-ter ev-ery trem-bling heart,  
 End of faith, as its be-gin-ning, set our hearts at lib-er-ty.  
 Pray and praise for your un-fail-ing, wound-ed arms out-stretched a-bove.  
 Crowned as saints, we ev-er shall be lost in won-der, love, and praise.

*This hymn is said to have been suggested by a "Song of Venus" from Dryden's King Arthur. It is one of 6,500 written by Charles Wesley, the "sweet singer of Methodism," who was skilled at interweaving literary and scriptural images.*

Tune: BEECHER 87,87.D;  
 John Zundel, 1855  
 Alternate note: HYFRYDOL.  
 For another harmonization, see 368, 395

May our offerings express our care for one another and our commitment to serve the world in the name of Christ. Help us to use well all the resources you entrust to us. Equip us, as forgiven and forgiving people, to carry the good news to people we meet every day as well as to unknown sisters and brothers who live in desperate circumstances we can scarcely imagine. May our gifts and our lives praise you. Amen.

**\*Hymn: "Jesus Shall Reign"**

\*The Light of Christ goes into the world

**\*Blessing:**

Pastor Liz Wilson

One: The risen Jesus appeared to friends in many ways. Christ is seen by persons today in people like us.

**Many: The life and teachings of Jesus point us to God's reign. God promises to empower our witness.**

One: We will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. This is the promise Jesus made to us.

**Many: Through revelation, we will know more of Christ. Through the work God gives us, we will grow.**

One: Our worship sends us out to work and witness. We scatter to continue our worship through service.

**Many: God sends us out with love for all the saints. We commit ourselves to care for all God's children.**

Amen: Amen.

**\*Postlude**

*We scatter to serve*\*\*\*\*\*

**Join together for refreshments in Fellowship**

**Immanuel Open and Affirming Statement:**

We welcome and affirm all people in celebrating diversity. We welcome to our faith family people of every race, age, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability and those who have doubts or questions.

**In Worship and Service Today**

**Ministry Message:** Pastor Liz Wilson

**Liturgist:** Ken Martin

**Choir Director:** Ken Martin

**Accompanist:** Ann McKinley

**Our Tech team:** Tammy & Ken Martin, Eric Schuette, Larry Douglas, and David Ollie-Ray

**Floral Arrangements:** A gift created by Amy Wilson

**Ministers:** All the Immanuel Church faith community

**Christian Ed Director:** Danielle Willcock

**Sunday School:** Amy Wilson

**Church Officers & Staff**

**Moderator:** Justin Willcock

**Vice Moderator:** Ken Martin

**Treasurer:** Art Nagasaki

**Council Secretary:** Janet Caporale

**Clerk:** Suzanne Spiker

**Church Secretary & Custodian:** Sue Molczyk

**Building and Grounds Chair:** Paul Good

**Maintenance:** Paul Good

**For Pastoral Needs call:** Pastor Elizabeth Wilson Cell 1-248-379-3521

Treasury notice will be eliminated for few weeks until there's something to report(\$). Please remember to send tithe even though we are all sitting at home. (Support your church!) Thank you to those who sent their envelopes! Please remember us as we go thru this difficult time. Call each other! Send notes! Send a prayer. Send jokes. Let's stay in close communication. And be Safe! Love you all! Pastor Liz

# Jesus Shall Reign

300

*Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.*

*Ps. 72; Rev. 1:6-8*

1 Je - sus shall reign wher - e'er the sun  
 2 Through Christ shall end - less prayer be made,  
 3 Peo - ple and realms of ev - ery tongue  
 4 Bless - ings a - bound where - e'er Christ reigns:  
 5 Let ev - ery crea - ture rise and bring

does its suc - ces - sive jour - neys run;  
 borne by the Spir - it's cease - less aid;  
 dwell on God's love with sweet - est song,  
 the pris - oners leap to lose their chains,  
 trib - utes of praise for all to sing;

God's realm shall stretch from shore to shore  
 Like sweet per - fume new hymns shall rise  
 And in - fant voic - es shall pro - claim  
 The wea - ry find e - ter - nal rest,  
 An - gels de - scend with songs a - gain,

till moons shall wax and wane no more.  
 with ev - ery morn - ing sac - ri - fice.  
 their ear - liest prayers in Je - sus' name.  
 and all who suf - fer want are blessed.  
 and earth re - peat the loud a - men.

*The second half of a longer paraphrase of Psalm 72, this hymn was included in Isaac Watts' Psalms of David, a collection of psalm-based poems with New Testament orientation. John Hutton once lived on Duke Street in St. Helier's, Lancaster, England.*

Tune: DUKE STREET L.M.  
*Attrib. to John Hutton, c. 1793*

# SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 17, 2020

John 14:15-21

## Witness of Love

### *Rural Life Sunday | Mental Health Sunday*

WHEREAS, most people believe that mental illnesses are rare and “happen to someone else,” when in fact, mental illnesses are common and widespread with an estimated 61.5 million Americans (1 in 4) experiencing some form of mental illness in a given year;

WHEREAS, there continues to be strong stigma and discrimination in society against people with these brain disorders in housing, employment, social relationships, (including how they are treated in our churches);

WHEREAS, many uninformed people believe people with mental illnesses are likely to be violent, while in reality, people with mental illnesses are more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators;

WHEREAS, the public mental health system, which previously served as a safety net for people with the most severe mental illnesses, has suffered from dramatic funding cuts in the last decade, and our prisons and county jails now house more people with mental illnesses than psychiatric hospitals do;

WHEREAS, faith and spirituality can be an important component of recovery from mental illnesses and addictions;

WHEREAS, a mental illness or brain disorder in the family affects not only the ill family member, it profoundly affects other family members and loved ones and the entire family structure;

WHEREAS, people having a diagnosable brain disorder and/or substance abuse disorder are potentially at a higher risk for suicide;

WHEREAS, the church is called to be a community that breaks through fear and isolation to offer love, hope, care and healing;

WHEREAS, Jesus showed us the way to reach out to those who are ill or marginalized to offer companionship, compassion and support;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod encourages United Church of Christ congregations to adopt covenants to be WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) Congregations for Mental Health.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod encourages congregations to work to eradicate stigma around mental illnesses/brain disorders, and to offer support to persons with and those impacted by mental health challenges, including their family members, loved ones and others concerned.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod encourages advocacy by all settings of the church for broader and more just access to quality mental health services including private and public insurance coverage. This advocacy includes services for all persons with mental illness who are falling through the fraying safety net, especially persons in jails/prisons, and persons who are homeless.

This “Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged” (WISE) resolution was adopted in 2015 at the 30th Annual UCC General Synod. Is your church community a WISE congregation? Learn more at: <http://moredomainsforless.com/mhuucc/becomingaWISEcongregationformentalhealth2019ed.pdf>





## SERMON

MAY 17, 2020

**Acts 17:22-33** Paul speaks in Athens telling the story of Jesus.

**1 Peter 3:13-22** The First letter of Peter gives practical advice to an early congregation, advice based upon the resurrection.

**John 14:15-22** Jesus urges disciples to love one another.

OK. You've arrived at a newly discovered planet (stay with me here). These people are highly intelligent, inventive, advanced in every way. But, no matter how they pray to their big, round rocks, nothing happens. Well, Acts 17 vs. 22-33 has the answers. That's when Paul plunked himself down in that planet (Athens) and started to preach. The short of it is: it worked. Greece no longer worships big round rocks. So, that's what our first and second lessons are today. How do we talk to very intelligent people who worship big round rocks. Isn't that the reason you don't do as Jesus told us. You don't know how! So, here's what worked for Paul.

He flattered people, exclaiming how holy they were because of all their temples and statues. You could say instead, I've noticed how you enjoy the beauty of nature, how you express your love in so many ways, how you help people sort out your problems. Try it! They'll like it!

The lesson in the last scripture is the same since I came to Immanuel "Love one another". One of our time worn hymns is another one of conversion "They will Know We are Christians by Our Love". When people see it and appreciate the strength and warmth of the love, we have for each other. Oh, you might say "That's for disciples, not us. Yes, dear hearts, it is for you, you are disciples.