

Date: August 23, 2020

Theme: Becoming

Prelude: The Rose—Bette Midler. (3:30)

Welcome Pastor Frank Langholf

Meditation :

“For me, becoming isn’t about arriving somewhere or achieving a certain aim. I see it instead as forward motion, a means of evolving, a way to reach continuously toward a better self. The journey doesn’t end.”

— Michelle Obama, Becoming

Our Community Declaration:

**Guided by Spirit’s Wisdom, Inspired by Creator’s Imagination,
Centered in Christ's Love, and knowing that God is our Source,
Emmanuel is a Spiritual Community that is progressive, inclusive, creative, and called to serve.**

Litany based on John1:1-14 by John Speers

In the beginning was the Word ...

It all started with an act of divine self-expression.

and the Word was with God ...

It all comes from the center of God.

and the Word was God.

God is our source.

He was in the beginning with God.

In Christ we encounter God’s primal expression, God’s first Word.

All things came into being through him,

In Christ we encounter the divine, creative impulse.

and without him not one thing came into being.

In Christ we encounter our connection to the source.

What has come into being in him was life,

The energy of life is from God.

and the life was the light of all people.

The energy of life in us is God’s incarnate presence.

May we live as though we know it. Amen.

Proclamation of Grace:

Presider: The Good News is we are beloved children of God. We live in the promise of Christ, and NOTHING can ever separate us from God’s love.

Gathering Song: Come to Us Creative Spirit (WOV758) verses 1-3

Reading (Susan Hurley and David Whitacre)

Me: Hey God.

God: Hello.....

Me: I'm falling apart. Can you put me back together?

God: I would rather not

Me: Why?

God: Because you aren't a puzzle.

Me: What about all of the pieces of my life that are falling down onto the ground?

God: Let them stay there for a while. They fell off for a reason. Take some time and decide if you need any of those pieces back.

Me: You don't understand! I'm breaking down!

God: No - you don't understand. You are breaking through. What you are feeling are just growing pains. You are shedding the things and the people in your life that are holding you back. You aren't falling apart. You are falling into place. Relax. Take some deep breaths and allow those things you don't need anymore to fall off of you. Quit holding onto the pieces that don't fit you anymore. Let them fall off. Let them go.

Me: Once I start doing that, what will be left of me?

God: Only the very best pieces of you.

Me: I'm scared of changing.

God: I keep telling you - YOU AREN'T CHANGING!! YOU ARE BECOMING!

Me: Becoming who?

God: Becoming who I created you to be! A person of light and love and charity and hope and courage and joy and mercy and grace and compassion. I made you for more than the shallow pieces you have decided to adorn yourself with that you cling to with such greed and fear. Let those things fall off of you. I love you! Don't change! ... Become! Become! Become who I made you to be. I'm going to keep telling you this until you remember it.

Me: There goes another piece.

God: Yep. Let it be.

Me: So ... I'm not broken?

God: Of course Not! - but you are breaking like the dawn. It's a new day. Become!!!

--By John Roedel

Meditation/Gospel Song—Change My Heart O God (ELW801)

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” 14 They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, [a] and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades[b] will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be[c] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be[d] loosed in heaven.” 20 Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Presider: This is the witness of an early Christian community.

All: **May we find wisdom for our living.**

Sermon Pastor Frank Langholf

Offering

Presider: We take this time now to offer our gifts and intentions.

Special Music: Flying Free—Tim, Bryn, Clea

Prayers of the People

The Lord’s Prayer interpreted by William L. Wallace

O God of sky and God of Earth,

We honor your presence

Within us and beyond.

As we eat may we share your gifts

Of hope and compassion

With all the life of Earth.

Give us, O God, forgiving hearts

Affirming each other

With humor and with grace.

May we grow beyond narrow needs

To join in the spreading

Of just and loving peace.

You greet us here and everywhere,

In moments of oneness

And spaces of delight.

To all this we now say “Amen”,

Your song is our anthem,

Your dance our cosmic joy.

Sending Song: You are the Seed (WOV753)

Benediction/Sharing of Peace