
Dover Congregational United Church of Christ

April 26, 2020



Rev. Keith Stuart, Minister

Martha Vivona, Lay Leader

Rev. Scott Patterson, Pastor Emeritus

Rev. John Rinehart, Minister of Justice

An Open & Affirming Congregation

Worship & Celebration of Life

Worship Theme...

One: If you live in the dark a long time and the sun comes out, you do not cross into it whistling. There's an initial uprush of relief at first then a profound dislocation.

My old assumptions about how the world works are buried, yet my new ones aren't yet operational. There's been a death of sorts, but without a few days in hell, no resurrection is possible.

*-Mary Karr,
21st Century*

Music of Reflection

"As the Deer"
Michael Simile, guitar
(sing twice)

As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you;
you alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you.
You alone are my strength, my shield, to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship you!

Liturgy of Possibility...

From Ezekiel

One: Exile is death. It is a valley where all the prophet can see are bones, where he alone has eyes to see and hear the question too horrible to be answered except by God, "Can these bones live?" "God, you know."

Many: **The place of exile is not just the north country, or a new Egypt, or the regions around the earth's boundaries, north, south, east, and west.**

One: It is as cold and final as the tomb, where no breath is drawn...
Yes, Israel is totally dead...
The valley is full of bones, and all are very dry.

Many: Not one shows any sign of stirring by its own effort.

One: The prophet sees a wasteland, still, lifeless, and all encompassing.

All: His words of judgement have reached as far as they can, until he alone is left—or, better, he is alone with God whose hand first sent him on this grim mission.

Hymn

“What a Covenant”

What a covenant, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting arms.

[Refrain]

Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms;
Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,
Leaning on the everlasting arms. [Refrain]

What have I to dread, what have I to fear, leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Savior near, leaning on the everlasting arms. [Refrain]

Reading From Our Sacred Tradition

Hebrew Tradition:

Ezekiel 37:1-14

- ¹ The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones.
- ² He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry.
- ³ He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.”
- ⁴ Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.
- ⁵ Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.
- ⁶ I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.”
- ⁷ So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.
- ⁸ I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them.

⁹ Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”

¹⁰ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹ Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’

¹² Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

¹³ And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people.

¹⁴ I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act,” says the LORD.

Special Music

“Un Dia de Noviembre”
(A Day in November)
Michael Simile, guitar

Leo Brouwer

Sermon

“Hope Among the Ruins”
Rev. R. Keith Stuart

To Pray...

Pastoral Prayer

Lord’s Prayer 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, for ever. Amen.

To Leave...

Hymn

“Lord, I Want To Be a Christian”

Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart. In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart.

Lord, I want to more loving in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart. In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart.

Lord, I want to more holy in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart. In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.

Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart. In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.

Benediction

One: God of earth, air, fire and water,
we surrender to you our old humanity.

**All: Christ, we would rise with you:
we would be born anew.**

One: Christ has died; Christ is risen.
We are forgiven; we too may leave the grave.

*Kate Compston
from Litany of the Four Elements*

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Sermon: Rev. R. Keith Stuart
Reader: Joe Healey
Organist: Jan Jones
Guitarist: Michael Simile
Media: Dave MacKeigan

The service will be live streamed on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. on the Dover Congregational UCC Facebook page and on the Website on Monday morning.

Weekdays, there will be someone in the office from 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
If you have a care or concern you need to discuss, please communicate by phone (440-871-1050) or email to either the office at (doverucc@doverucc.org) or to Rev. Stuart at (kstuart@doverucc.org).

~ Prayer Requests, please pray for God to be with these individuals, and for them to feel God's presence in the midst of their concerns:

Marie Black, Emily Borocz-Johnson, Susan Coldsnow, Loreen Flesher, Gerrard (friend of Kevin Kurth), Robb & Jennifer Gaskins (friends of Bonnie & Parker Reynolds), Mary Gerdel, Sofia Greer (friend of Jeff & Amanda Hughes), Nanci Keller (Amy Keller's mother-in-law), Jason (David Wakelee's partner), Jeff Matos (friend of Jan Jones), Lois McCreight, Patty Porter (friend of Jane & Larry Coil), Karen Pittak (Lindsey Kaschak Pittak's mother-in-law), Parker Reynolds, Susan Reynolds (sister of Denece Praeger). Ernie Rickard, Donna Shiley, & Pat Daily (friends of the Koehlers), Haley Schultz, Helen Sima (neighbor of Kevin Kurth), Cynthia Stuart, Robin Thomas, Pete Thompson, Linda Wiant (Kurt & Rita Wiant's sister-in-law), Penny Yagich and Debbie Zitello (Ruth Schneider's daughter).

The vision of Dover UCC is to seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with Our God.
