

2020 SUMMER WORSHIP VIDEO  
created for the churches of the  
Illinois South Conference  
of the United Church of Christ



photograph of a starry campion by Marty Kemper

With the suggestion of our Local Church Ministry team, I created this worship service with your pastors and churches in mind. Since mid March, churches have quickly adapted to not being able to safely worship in person. Pastors in the Illinois South Conference have gone above and beyond to continue to offer worship experiences for the congregations they serve. Many pastors have taken little time off, let alone a Sunday. My hope is this will enable them to have a moment of Sabbath rest.

Trusting in the promises of God, may we never lose hope,  
*Rev. Shana Johnson*  
*Conference Minister of the Illinois South Conference*  
*of the United Church of Christ*

## OUR CENTERING WORD

Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman's "Life Goes On"  
from Meditations of the Heart

Liturgist: Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

*"During these turbulent times we must remind ourselves repeatedly  
that life goes on.*

*This we are apt to forget.*

*The wisdom of life transcends our wisdom;*

*The purpose of life outlasts our purposes;*

*The attack of disillusion and despair,*

*distilled out of the collapse of hope*

*has so invaded our thoughts that*

*what we know to be true seems unreal.*

*There seems to be little energy left for anything but futility.*

*Yet, this is the great deception. Let us not be deceived.*

*It is just as important as ever to attend to the little graces  
by which the dignity of our lives is maintained and sustained.*

*Birds still sing; the stars continue to cast their gentle gleam*

*and the heart is still inspired by the kind word*

*and the gracious deed.*

*There is no need to fear.*

*To drink in the beauty that is within reach*

*to clothe one's life with simple deeds of kindness*

*to keep alive a sensitiveness*

*to the movement of the spirit of God*

*in the quietness of the human heart*

*and the workings of the human mind—*

*this is as always the ultimate answer to the great deception."*

THIS HOPE. MAY WE NEVER LOSE HOPE.

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: Rev. Jerry Bennett, pastor of St. Peter's UCC, Hookdale  
and St. Paul UCC, Jamestown

God alone is our refuge and hope,  
our shelter and protection.

From our very first breath to our last,  
God's love and compassion never fails.

So come, let us draw our spirits together in praise to God.  
Let us bear witness to God's acts of mercy and love.  
Let us proclaim God's glory to all who will listen.

Let us worship God together.

## CENTERING SONG

"Sanctuary" by Carrie Newcomer  
used with permission from Carrie Newcomer

## SCRIPTURE READINGS 2 Corinthians 4

*selected verses from the New International Version*

Liturgist: Rev. Jeremy Wood, pastor of Salem UCC, Alhambra, IL

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus.

Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Isaiah 40:28-31

*from the New International Version*

Liturgist: Rev. Carol Shanks, pastor of Bethel UCC, Cahokia, IL

Do you not know?  
Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
God will not grow tired or weary,  
for no can fathom the understanding of the Lord.  
God gives strength to the weary  
and increases the power of the weak.  
Even young people grow tired and weary,  
and stumble and fall;  
but those who hope in the Lord  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
They will run and not grow weary,  
They will walk and not be faint.

SERMON

"Hope Will Not Be Canceled"  
Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Liturgist: Rev. Kim Magwire, pastor of Church of the Good Shepherd,  
Carbondale, IL

## OFFERING INVITATION

Liturgist: Rev. Bob Goddard, St. Paul UCC, Columbia, IL

DOXOLOGY Musician: David Ekstrand, director of music at Trinity UCC,  
Belleville, IL

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Liturgist: Rev. Bob Goddard, St. Paul UCC, Columbia, IL

We worship you, O God, with gladness.  
We are your people.  
Your love endures forever.  
You have been faithful to all generations.  
As witness to this faith which we claim,  
we boldly give money for ministry which changes  
people's lives in your holy name.  
We give because we know the amazing ways our churches  
make a difference in our communities  
and around the world.  
With joy in our hearts, we give you thanks.  
Hallelujah! Amen.

## CLOSING SONG

"God Will See Us Through"  
by Bryan Sirchio and his daughter Emma Ceurvels  
\*used with permission from Bryan Sirchio

## BENEDICTION

Liturgist: Rev. Michelle Torigian, senior pastor of St. Paul UCC, Belleville, IL

As we dream of a future with hope,  
We seek our refuge in God.  
We find enduring comfort in the Holy Spirit.  
We embrace the peace furnished by Jesus the Christ.  
We will not let our hearts be troubled or afraid  
as the steadfast presence of the Divine is in our midst  
giving us the vision to look ahead to the future with love and hope. Amen.

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I am deeply grateful to all those who said “Yes” to participating in this worship experience and were willing to add one more thing to their “to do” list.

A big THANK YOU to Nick Luer who said “Yes” to offering his creative, technical and production skills once again so we might offer this worship video to our churches in the Illinois South Conference.

\*A note from Bryan Sirchio:

*Dear Shana,*

*It was so good to hear from you. Given the nature of this moment and history and my longstanding affection for the Illinois South Conference, please feel free to use this song and video however you like for ministry purposes. No license is needed for you and no fee is required.*

*Please invite your pastors and churches to check out [www.convergencemp.com](http://www.convergencemp.com). This song and other videos and sheet music are available for worship are available through the online worship music company I and others (Christopher Grundy, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan, Brian McLaren, Otis Moss III, Andra Moran, Ken Medema, Tracy Howe Wispeley, ect.) have started.*

*Thank you for all you are doing to support pastors and churches in this difficult moment.*

*Sincerely,  
Bryan Sirchio*