

As we gather together there is some technical information that most of you already know, but just in case someone doesn't:

The service will be in voice and text.

There is a copy of the service in the red book by the door to the sanctuary. You'll want to grab one of those if you need the YouTube links or want the lyrics for today's worship music.

Speaking of which, worship music will be in the media player.

Frequently in my worship service, folk end up dancing right here in the aisles or in the back of the sanctuary, so if the mood strikes you—I say go for it!

GATHERING:

Today's worship is the third in a series exploring the work of Dr. Brené Brown, a Clinical Social worker and research professor at the University of Austin.

Two weeks ago, we watched a video of her first TED talk, and last week we spent some time talking about what we learned and how it might relate to Christianity.

This week, I'm going to share a follow-up video, and my plan is to talk about what we learn together next week.

I feel that the Holy Spirit is leading us in this, because what we're learning together seems to dovetail very well with what Pastor Yadi has been exploring with us on Sundays!

That was unplanned—well, it was unplanned by me. Again, I suspect that Someone might have had a hand in this!

In any case, in today's video, Dr. Brown uses the concept of a gremlin as a metaphor.

She doesn't mean the car, either! No, Dr. Brown is talking about the horrid, murderous, and quite frankly disgusting creatures from the 1984 film Gremlins. Spoiler Alert: I'm going to show you how to defeat a Gremlin with our first video. <https://youtu.be/Eos5Azm6HRs>, ~A Scene from Gremlins

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Most churches have a time of offering.

Making an offering, sharing what you can in God's name, is a spiritual practice.

That offering can be one of prayer or of presence,

of work on behalf of the church doing things like reading scripture or serving on the board of directors,

of helping with any of the many things that are needed for the church to function, and/or, that offering can be one of money.

As a UCC church, we support the work of the wider church both with prayer and with donations.

And it's true that we don't have a physical building, but there are monetary costs for this ministry to function.

So if you would like to make an offering by participating in leading worship or social events,

or if you would like to become a member of this church,

let any clergy or staff member know.

If you would like to make a financial offering to support this ministry there is a donation bowl by the door to the sanctuary,

or if you prefer you can make a donation in RL currency on our website:

[www.firstuccsl.org](http://www.firstuccsl.org)

And since we are a 501(c)(3) public charity, monetary donations are tax deductible in the U.S.

We thank you for the blessing of your presence and your offering of support.

#### WELCOME

Welcome to First United Church of Christ and Conference Center, Second Life. We have official standing with the Eastern Association of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ as a Real Life church located in Second Life.

And I still think that's pretty cool, because I have sat in South Central Pennsylvania—I have sat in Northern Maine—and I am currently sitting in Central Connecticut—and I still think it's pretty cool that we can partner with my brothers and sisters and non-binary siblings all across the country and all of you wherever you are!

Speaking of wherever you are:

"No matter who you are,  
or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here."

I was pleasantly surprised to figure out that the work we've been doing with Dr. Brown speaks so directly to the series that Pastor Yadi is doing—so I decided to continue that exploration with another video!

Part of what that means is that today I'm going to shift things around, just a little, because the video is a little bit longer than the amount of time I would usually preach.

And it's worth it.

I hope you'll be able to stay through the whole service, but just in case you have to run out at the end, I want to move up the core of what we do here together, and that is where we uplift our joys and concerns with one another in prayer.

Let us prepare our hearts for prayer.

#### PRAYER PREPARATION:

The part of me that loves language and poetry loves Hip Hop music.

The part of me that loves humanity loves The Roots.

"You don't say good luck

You say don't give up..."

<https://youtu.be/QWwtXFuEDPY>, "The Fire" ~The Roots (featuring John Legend)

Oh, the fire, the fire

Oh, the fire, the fire

There's something in your heart

And it's in your eyes

It's the fire

Inside you

Let it burn

You don't say good luck

You say don't give up

It's the fire

Inside you

Let it burn

Yeah, and if I'm ever at the crossroads

And start feeling mixed signals like Morse code  
My soul starts to grow colder than the North Pole  
I try to focus on the whole of where the torch goes  
In the tradition of these legendary sports pros  
As far as I can see, I've made it to the threshold  
Lord knows I've waited for this a life time  
And I'm an icon when I let my light shine  
Shine bright as an example of a champion  
Taking the advantage, never copping out or canceling  
Burn like a chariot, learn how to carry it  
Maverick, always above and beyond average  
Fuel to the flame that I train with and travel with  
Something in my eyes says I'm so close to having the prize  
I realize I'm supposed to reach for the skies  
Never let somebody try to tell you otherwise  
There's something in your heart  
And it's in your eyes  
It's the fire  
Inside you  
Let it burn  
You don't say good luck  
You say don't give up  
It's the fire  
Inside you  
Let it burn  
One love, one game, one desire  
One flame, one bonfire, let it burn higher  
I never show signs of fatigue or turn tired  
'Cause I'm the definition of tragedy turned triumph  
It's David and Goliath; I made it to the eye of the storm  
Feeling torn like they fed me to the lions  
Before my time starts to wind down like the Mayans  
I show 'em how I got the grind down like a science  
It sounds like a riot on hush; it's so quiet  
The only thing I hear is my heart--I'm inspired  
By the challenge that I find myself standing eye to eye with  
Then move like a wise warrior and not be a coward  
You can't escape the history that you was meant to make  
That's why the highest victory is what I'm meant to take  
You came to celebrate, I came to cerebrate  
I hate losing; I refuse to make the same mistake  
Oh, the fire, the fire  
Oh, there's something in your heart  
(The fire)  
There's something in your heart  
(The fire)  
There's something in your heart  
And it's in your eyes  
It's the fire  
Inside you

Let it burn  
You don't say good luck  
You say don't give up  
It's the fire  
Inside you  
Let it burn  
Oh, the fire  
Inside you  
The fire  
Inside you  
The fire  
Inside you

I would like to invite you to enter this time of prayer with a sense of reverence. We're about to enter into a conversation with God, and that shouldn't be done lightly, but rather "... with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:2-3)

Please type your prayers into chat, or if you need to use voice simply emote raising your hand so everybody can have a voice.

And as we pray together, you may wish to respond to others with words like, "God hear our prayer," or with any other words the Spirit leads to you use.

#### COMMUNITY PRAYER

If there was a prayer inside of you that you couldn't quite get out, it's ok. Because the Psalmist tells us that God knows what we are going to say before the words can even form on our tongues.

And so we know.

We \_ know \_ that God has heard our prayers. Those spoken out loud, those typed into SL chat, and those spoken only in the silence of our hearts.

And that we pray them in the name of the Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

#### LISTEN!

We have done a lot of talking. Let us take a moment of silence to listen to what God might be saying.

Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening...

#### PASTORAL PRAYER

Spirit of Truth, You have promised us that we will not be left alone, that we will not be orphaned.

On this day that can be both joyous and difficult, we are reminded that we are Your children, that You are our God, our Creator, our Parent, Mother/Father, the Source of our Being.

You are the only one who will never leave us or forsake us. No matter what has happened to us or will happen, You are with us every moment. You are Trustworthy and True.

We know that in You is all love and light and hope.

May we hold Your promise tenderly on days that are difficult and know that You are alive in us.

May we love one another and share Your grace and peace, on this day and all days. Amen. (Rev-o-lution Resources by Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell <http://rev-o-lution.org>, (c) 2021. Used by permission.)

#### SCRIPTURE

2 Samuel 10:9-12

When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the picked men of Israel, and arrayed them against the Arameans; the rest of his men he put in charge of his brother Abishai, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. He said, 'If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you.

Be strong, and let us be courageous for the sake of our people, and for the cities of our God; and may the Lord do what seems good to him.'

#### SERMON

<https://youtu.be/psN1DORYV0>, "Listening To Shame" ~a TED talk by Dr. Brené Brown

I hope that God spoke to you through Dr. Brown tonight.

So I'll ask you what I always ask you: What do you say? Amen?

#### BENEDICTION:

And now it really is just this simple:

God loves you.

So, don't forget to love each other.

Go with God.

Go in Peace.

And Amen!

#### CLOSING:

This song speaks for itself, but in tonight's context, what struck me hardest are the lines:

"Everybody's been there,  
everybody's been stared down by the enemy  
Fallen for the fear and done some disappearing  
Bow down to the mighty  
But don't run, stop holding your tongue  
Maybe there's a way out of the cage where you live  
Maybe one of these days you can let the light in  
Show me how big your brave is"

<https://youtu.be/QUQsqBqxoR4>, "Brave" ~Sara Bareilles

You can be amazing

You can turn a phrase into a weapon or a drug

You can be the outcast

Or be the backlash of somebody's lack of love

Or you can start speaking up

Nothing's gonna hurt you the way that words do

When they settle 'neath your skin  
Kept on the inside and no sunlight  
Sometimes a shadow wins  
But I wonder what would happen if you  
Say what you wanna say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave  
With what you want to say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I wanna see you be brave  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I wanna see you be brave  
Everybody's been there, everybody's been stared down  
By the enemy  
Fallen for the fear and done some disappearing  
Bow down to the mighty  
But don't run, stop holding your tongue  
Maybe there's a way out of the cage where you live  
Maybe one of these days you can let the light in  
Show me how big your brave is  
Say what you wanna say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave  
With what you want to say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave  
Innocence, your history of silence  
Won't do you any good  
Did you think it would?  
Let your words be anything but empty  
Why don't you tell them the truth?  
Say what you wanna say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave  
With what you want to say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I wanna see you be brave  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you

See you be brave  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you  
I just wanna see you

\*end\*