WELCOME

Grace and Peace be with you in the name of our Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit.

My name is Rev. Yadi Martínez-Reyna,
and I am one of the pastors in this community.

Anyone you see with a “Minister” tag is an ordained UCC minister in real life.

Welcome to First UCC in Second Life!

This Sunday, November 1, we gather to celebrate All Saints Day, a time to remember, honor, and give thanks for the lives of those who have gone before us.

As someone of Mexican descent Día de los Muertos, when we remember loved ones with joy, gratitude, and love.

Outside the church, you'll find an ofrenda, an altar honoring those who have gone before us.

I invite you to visit, pause, and remember.

In the UCC tradition, "saints" are not just biblical figures or canonized saints, but everyday people who lived with love, faith, hope, and kindness.

But today is not only about remembering those we have lost.

It is also about celebrating the love, courage, faith, and hope they planted in us—and recognizing that we, too, are part of this beautiful communion of saints.

If you have an image you would like to share with us we can set it up.

Just upload it.

There is a notecard on the viewer on how to do this and then share with us the image so we can put it up here in the front of the sanctuary. (

Whether you come carrying grief, gratitude, memories, or simply curiosity, there is room for you here.

So wherever you are joining us from, near or far, welcome to this sacred space where love knows no borders, memories become blessings, and every life matters.

Welcome home.

Welcome to the table.

Welcome to this celebration of life, love, and remembrance.

We are First United Church of Christ and Conference Center in Second Life, a

recognized congregation with full standing in the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ.
A place that welcomes you and wants you to know that:
No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.
Just a quick reminder that our music will be on the media viewer, so please be sure your voice and media are turned on.
If you're not sure how to do that, just let someone know and we'll gladly help.
There will also be a link in Nearby Chat so you can
watch in your browser if the viewer isn't working for you.

As a real UCC congregation, we help support the wider church in prayer and in finances.
We're deeply grateful for any offering you feel led to share.
There is a donation bowl in the back by the door.

Today, is also our first Sunday, or communion Sunday.

I invite you to gather the elements for after the Message of Hope to share together in our sacred time of remembering Christ in the breaking of bread.

Gather something to eat, such as bread, a cracker, or a cookie.

As well as a cup of grape juice or wine to drink after we pray over the elements remembering our savior Jesus Christ with the ritual of Holy Communion.

I also have an announcement that fills us with great joy.

A Full-Circle Moment: Welcoming Hazel

Familia, I want to take a moment to share something that is very personal and very special to me.

You know, my journey here at First UCC in Second Life began long before I became a pastor.

I first came to this congregation as a Member in Discernment.

I was still in seminary, still figuring out where God was calling me, and this community took me under its care.

You prayed with me, encouraged me, challenged me, and walked alongside me on my journey toward ordination.
I even did my seminary internship right here, before COVID!

And let me tell you, back then, trying to explain to people in the real world that I was doing ministry in Second Life was an adventure all by itself!

People would say, "Wait, isn't that a game?"

And I would say, "No, familia!

This is a real community, with real people, real relationships, real ministry, and a real church!"

And look at us now!

Fast-forward to today.

I am ordained, and I have the incredible honor of serving this congregation alongside Pastor Chris and Pastor Jamie.
And here's where it gets beautiful.

Life has a way of bringing us full circle.

And sometimes, I believe, that's the Spirit reminding us that our stories are connected.

I came here as someone being cared for, someone discerning a call.

And today, I get to be part of the team that will walk alongside someone else as they begin that same sacred journey.

That person is Hazel!

Hazel, whom you will hear preaching today, has requested to transfer her church membership to First UCC in Second Life and begin the process of becoming a Member in Discernment as she explores her call toward ordained ministry.
Now, familia, this is a journey.

There is a process, there are conversations, there is prayer, and there is discernment.

And we will be walking alongside Hazel every step of the way as that process unfolds.

But here's something else I want you to know.

Hazel is already doing ministry among us!
She's been working behind the scenes, helping us promote our worship services, creating content for social media, and finding new ways to connect people with this community. She was also instrumental in helping us bring yesterday's Culto Cuir service to life!
So today, we're not just introducing someone new.

We're recognizing someone who has already been sharing her gifts, her creativity, and her heart with this congregation.

Hazel, would you come up here and introduce yourself to our friends.

[Haze]l And guess what, this is not my first Church in Second Life Rodeo!

Nearly 20 years ago, while I was still working toward my MDiv at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, I planted a church here in Second Life, Koinonia Congregational Church, and you can still find the building over on the Xenia Sim that is lovingly cared for by the Presbyterians now.

I went on with that MDiv to serve in all kinds of weird and wonderful contexts, from being the Circuit Rider for The Beatitudes Society to the minister of Online community for our denominations;s online community, Extravagance UCC and even a RL fellowship called Sojourners that met in a little basement bar in The Netherlands.

It is an incredible honor to be welcomed back into Second LIfe as I resume my path of ministry and, no longer a side quest, toward ordination.

And what a beautiful reminder that ministry doesn't begin with ordination.

Ministry begins when we say yes to the call to love, to serve, and to show up for one another.

Pastor Yadi  - So, familia, I invite you to welcome Hazel with open hearts.

Pray with her, encourage her, and walk alongside her, just as this congregation once did for me.

Because that's what church is about.

We don't walk these journeys alone. We walk them together.

Hazel, bienvenida a la familia!

May the Spirit continue to guide your journey, may this community be a place where your calling is nurtured, and may you always know that you are surrounded by love.

Familia, let's give Hazel a big First UCC welcome!

¡Bienvenida, Hazel!

And now…Let us pray.

Invocation -

Come Holy Spirit and fill this space with your presence. Holy and Loving God,

We gather today as familia, coming from different places, carrying different stories, but united by your love.

As we celebrate All Saints Day, we give thanks for those who came before us, those

who shaped our journeys, and those whose love continues to live within us.

Open our hearts to your Spirit, our minds to new possibilities, and our lives to the calling you place before us.
May this be a sacred space of belonging, grace, and joy, where everyone knows they are welcomed, loved, and enough.

In your many holy names, we pray.

Amen.

Gathering Song -

No Hard Feelings
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFGs7HP15d4

Church Announcements

As the wheel of the year turns and the veil between seasons grows thin, we enter the Season of Ancestors — a time honored through Samhain, All Saints, All Souls, and Día de los Muertos.

You are warmly invited to a guided meditation inspired by the Celtic Yew Tree Path, a powerful contemplative journey into memory, connection, and the wisdom of those who came before us.

Together, we will make space to remember our ancestors - those of blood, those of chosen family, and those whose lives and courage helped make our own possible.

This 45-minute-ish meditation, offered in voice, will give us an opportunity for reflection, remembrance, and perhaps a little healing.

Monday, November 2 | 7 PM SLT

This season in morning meditation we will be reading the poetry of Mary Oliver and practicing the three-tier listening of lection divina.

Meditation is on Monday, and Fridays at 8 am (all times Pacific)

Evening Psalter
5pm Tues, Wed, Thu, sometimes other days

SCRIPTURES

Today’s Scriptural reading comes from the Gospel of Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.
Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The Word of God for the People of God

Thanks be to God

SECOND READING-
Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman, from "Meditations of the Heart"

AGAIN and again, it comes: The Time of Recollection, The Season of Remembrance.

Empty vessels of hope fill up again; Forgotten treasures of dreams reclaim their place; Long-lost memories come trooping back to me.

This is my season of remembrance, My time of recollection.

Into the challenge of my anguish I throw the strength of all my hope:
I match the darts of my despair with the treasures of my dreams; Upon the current of my heart I float the burdens of the years;

I challenge the mind of death with my love of life.

Prayer -

Divine Mystery of many names and no names, oil the hinges of our hearts' doors, that they may swing gently and easily to welcome the warmth of your presence

May we together with your spirit embody the light of wisdom And the resilience of faith To do justice and Love mercy. And walk arm in arm with grace.

SERMON
The Ancestors We Inherit, the Ancestors We Choose, and the Ancestors We Become

Since I've only recently returned to ministry in Second Life, when Pastor Yadi invited me to preach this week, I felt like the Kool-Aid Man crashing through the wall.

OH YEAHHHH!

And then I looked at the calendar.

Samhain. All Saints. Día de los Muertos. Ancestors.

Oh, no. No, no, no...

There's nothing quite like standing in front of a room full of people, even as a wee avatar, to contemplate our families of origin.
I mean, my family history is a hot mess of conservative Christianity, blatant racism, and outright rejection of one of their own - me.

How on earth do I have any good news to share about remembering our ancestors?

Across different traditions, this season invites us to remember those who came before us.

Samhain marks the turning of the wheel into the dark half of the year. It is welcomed as a thinning of the veil between this world and the next and a time when those dwelling in the afterlife draw closer to the known world.

All Saints invites Christians to remember those who have died, the great saints, our beloved family members, and All Souls is a day of remembering those who died far too young.

Día de los Muertos marks a day when Mexican families gather together around ofrendas, photographs, a sea of marigolds, and  favorite foods to welcome home, just for a day, their beloved departed family members.

And back in August I got to witness the unfolding of the month-long Hungry Ghost festival here in SE Asia where people burn incense and joss-paper replicas of the things their departed ones once loved.

These are all very distinct traditions, but each invites us into relationship with those who came before us.

For some, those memories bring genuine warmth.

But for others, it brings tangible memories that live on in our very bodies - estrangement, shame, abuse, and a myriad of  wounds no one in our families knew how to acknowledge, let alone how to heal.

And for many of us, it's all the things.
Because multiple things can be true at the same time.

The Ancestors We Inherit
There are hundreds, probably thousands, of chicken casserole recipes in the world.

You can find them on food blogs or in old, stained copies of church recipe books where you might have to wade through somebody's entire life story before getting to the good stuff.

And yet, every so often, I used to call my mother and ask her how to make hers.

Now, I knew perfectly well how to make that casserole.

I could have made it with one whisk tied behind my back.

But I'd call anyway.

My mother and I had what you might politely describe as a complicated relationship.

I called it toxic.

Sometimes I still do.

See, I wasn't quite the daughter she'd hoped for.

I asked too many questions, preferred mud pies to mud masks, and eventually grew into a woman whose life and love challenged nearly everything she'd been taught to believe.

My mother had been raised Southern Baptist, of the back-pew-sittin', color-line-enforcing flavor.

The church she took me to was called - and I promise I'm not making this up - Confederate Avenue Baptist Church.
When I came out as a lesbian, her fears for my everlasting soul, masquerading as seething rage, led to years of estrangement.

My aunts and uncles, citing their "sincerely held religious beliefs," also cut me off and struck my name from the family Bibles.

But somehow, over a casserole recipe, once in a while, mom and I could find each other.

A little advice about seasoning a cast-iron skillet.

How sweet the tea ought to be.

Whether I'd remembered the sour cream, and that any amount of sugar in the casserole

would be an abomination we could both agree on.

In this season of ancestors, when so many traditions speak of the veil between the living and the dead growing thin,
I have an opportunity to draw my mother closer, even though most of the year I keep my memories of her well beyond arm's length.

I remember all the times she told me that the doctor put the wrong egg in her basket, or was stone cold ghosting me because of how and who I loved.

But when I let her come closer in this season of remembrance, memories of actual gifts she gave me percolate up and fill my senses like a pot of coffee simmering on an old avocado color stove.

I was young, but old enough to have already have internalized some limited and limiting attitudes, when a woman who appeared to be living without housing approached us at a gas station and asked for money.

My mother reached into her purse and handed over a little handful of change.

And I asked her, "Mom, what if she uses it for drugs?"

She told me that wasn't her responsibility.

Her responsibility was her own heart.

What that person did with the money was between them and God.

What was between her and God was what was in her own heart in the giving.

I've hung onto that lesson for decades.

And here's the part I still can’t quite square.

This was the same mama who was not one  bit shy about her racism nor capable of extending that kind of unconditional love to her queer daughter.

Does that erase her racism?

Her homophobia?

The abuse and rejection that shaped so much of my life?

No.

Absolutely not.

But it does add nuance.

It reminds me that human beings are complicated, often contradictory creatures.

Someone can be capable of extraordinary generosity in one moment and cause profound harm in another.

And it invites me to approach my memories of her with a little more compassion for both myself and her.

Not to excuse what she did, but to remember her as a whole human being, shaped by her own inheritance, the abuses she suffered, and a faith that sometimes inspired generosity and sometimes became a weapon against her own daughter.

Perhaps that's part of the work of remembering our ancestors.

To recognize the gifts without denying the wounds.

To extend compassion without abandoning accountability.

Because compassion doesn't require us to rewrite the past.

It asks us to hold the truth of it with a more generous heart.

Inheritance is not destiny.

We can carry forward the best of what our ancestors taught us while refusing to pass along the harm they caused.
And as people of the United Church of Christ, we proclaim that God is still speaking.

Our ancestors do not get the final word.

The Ancestors We Choose

For generations, chosen family has been a lifeline in LGBTQ+ communities.

When families, churches, and the wider world turned us away, often violently, we found one another.

We became one another's siblings, elders, and sometimes the parents we wished we'd had.

We built families around kitchen tables, at Pride marches, and at hospital bedsides, especially during the AIDS crisis.
Chosen family reminds us that kinship is not simply something we inherit.

It is something we create through love, loyalty, and the radical act of showing up for one another.

We don't get to choose everyone whose blood runs through our veins.

But we do get to choose whose wisdom shapes our lives.

Some of our most important ancestors may be people we've never met.

Some of my chosen ancestors are poets like Mary Oliver, John O'Donohue, and Andrea Gibson; teachers like Joanna Macy and Thích Nhất Hạnh; queer elders like Audre Lorde and Harvey Milk; theologians like Leonardo Boff, Mary Daly, and Dorothy Day; authors like Anne Lamott, Annie Dillard, and Robin Wall Kimmerer; and friends whose lives have shaped mine, whether they ever knew it or not.

How many people in our histories have been remembered as troublesome simply because they refused to disappear?

How many black, brown, immigrant, queer people were erased from family stories?

From history?

Sometimes honoring our ancestors means recovering stories deliberately forgotten.

Sometimes justice begins by listening to the people history taught us to ignore.

And I think there's something beautiful about the chosen families we create here in Second Life.

We come from vastly different places and experiences.

And yet, here WE are.

A church without a conventional building, gathered through pixels that represent our souls in creative, deeply real ways.

We are choosing to belong to one another and choosing to extend God’s extravagant welcome to everyone, everyone, everyone.

And perhaps that means we're becoming part of one another's spiritual ancestry, too.

So let me trouble the water a little bit more…

Because someday, the world we leave behind will become somebody else's inheritance.

And this is where I want to finally turn back to Jesus and the Beatitudes.

Because I think Jesus offers us something of a compass for becoming the ancestors future generations need.

I grew up hearing the Beatitudes as a list of personal virtues.

Be humble.

Be gentle.

Be merciful.

Try not to cause trouble.

And perhaps, if you suffer enough, and quietly, in this life, God will make it up to you in the next one.

I think that theological take can be super dangerous because it can be, and has been, used to do a couple of things that perpetuate oppression.

It tells those who are suffering that, hey this life may be hard and totally unfair, but hang on, suffering is righteous, Jesus said so, and you will be rewarded in heaven if you can just bear your suffering with meekness…now get back to work.

Or, it tells us there's no need to (or that its not possible to) topple the systems that create suffering because that's just how it is in THIS life and God will make it all good for everyone the sweet by and by.

But I say Nope. And in fact, Jesus was saying nope, though a tad more poetically.

A bit more radically.

Matthew places the Beatitudes at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus is teaching in first-century Palestine under Roman occupation, where ordinary people face economic insecurity, taxation, and powerful elites.

He goes up a mountain, a setting that evokes Moses and the giving of the Torah, and begins teaching.

Blessed are the poor in spirit.

Blessed are those who mourn.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Blessed are the merciful.

Blessed are the peacemakers.

The Greek word translated as "blessed," makarioi, conveys being fortunate or favored.

And Jesus is declaring blessing upon people the world might consider anything but fortunate.

Luke's version makes the economic challenge even clearer.

"Blessed are you who are poor."

"Blessed are you who are hungry now."

And then something that doesn't make it onto many inspirational wall hangings: Woe to you who are rich.

Luke refuses to let us ignore the material realities of poverty and inequality.

And this is where liberation theology becomes so important.

Theologians like Gustavo Gutiérrez and James Cone challenge us to read scripture from the perspective of people experiencing oppression.

Gutiérrez helped articulate God's preferential option for the poor.

Cone, writing from the struggle against white supremacy, insisted that the gospel cannot be separated from the liberation of the oppressed.

They remind us that the Beatitudes are not simply instructions for becoming nicer people.

They challenge systems that allow some people to flourish at the expense of others.

And when we hear them this way, they become questions about the world we are leaving behind.

Blessed are those who mourn.

Will we become ancestors who make room for grief, including grief that society would rather ignore?

Will we remember the people whose losses were never publicly mourned, whose suffering was overlooked or dismissed?

Jesus does not say that grief is good.

He says that those who grieve are seen, and that they will be comforted.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

What would it mean to become ancestors who hungered for a world made right?

Who refused to accept poverty, racism, or exclusion as inevitable?

Who understood that justice is not simply an admirable idea, but something we are called to practice?

Blessed are the merciful.

Jesus asks us to go further.

That person asking for money at the gas station was not simply an opportunity for my mother to practice generosity or win stars in her crown of glory.

They were a human being with dignity, with a story and needs of their own.

And while individual generosity matters, we must also ask why people are living without housing in the first place.

That's where mercy and justice meet.

And then Jesus says:
Blessed are the peacemakers.

Not the peacekeepers. Not the people who insist everyone be quiet and get along.

PeaceMAKERS.

Because sometimes making peace means getting into Good Trouble and disturbing an unjust peace.

Often it means challenging the very systems our ancestors taught us to accept.

The Beatitudes are not Jesus telling suffering people to be grateful for their suffering.

They are Jesus announcing that the world as we inherited it is not the world as God intends it to be.

And discipleship means participating in the work of making that difference visible.

So perhaps becoming a good ancestor means asking not only what we will leave to our children, but what kind of world we are helping create for everyone.

A world where people no longer have to fight so hard simply to belong.

Where compassion is not rationed according to who we think deserves it.

Where the dignity of every person matters.

And where our responsibility extends beyond human communities.

Will our grandchildren's grandchildren know birdsong in the morning?

Will they drink clean water?

Will they live in communities where difference is welcomed rather than feared?

We may never know.

But our lives are already part of the answer.

The work of becoming a good ancestor isn't the work of perfection.

It's the work of participation.

We are responsible for what we do with the little portion of history entrusted to us.

And I wonder what my mother would make of the person I've become.

What she'd think of her daughter standing here, preaching about mercy and justice in a church that welcomes the very people she was taught to fear.

I don't know.

But I know that one of the lessons she gave me is part of why I'm here.

That our responsibility is to love.

To give freely.

And to resist deciding who deserves our compassion.

I've carried that lesson into places she could never have imagined.

And perhaps that's what we're called to do with the gifts our ancestors gave us.

To carry them further.

To let love grow beyond the boundaries they knew.

To refuse to pass along the harm.

And here, in this extraordinary little church made of pixels and genuine human connection, we're already practicing something of that future.

Not a perfect community.

But one willing to keep becoming.

God's vision for the world is not finished.

The work of liberation is not finished.

And neither are we.

God is still speaking.

Our ancestors do not get the last word.

The systems of injustice they handed down do not get the last word.

And the wounds we carry do not have to become the wounds we leave behind.

May we become ancestors worthy of the generations who follow us.

Not because we were perfect.

But because we loved enough to keep changing.
Amen.

COMMUNION

The invitation is simple: come and eat of the feast.
Not a meal to nourish the body, but to feed the soul.

We receive the bread and wine connected to the ages:
to the saint of old who felt unworthy,
to the seeker eager to know God,
to the teenager who wonders what it's all about,
to the child who eats with unburdened faith.

Woven into this time, the hopes and tears of generations.
There is great joy here.
No one is turned away for God is the host!

I invite you to hold your hands over the elements as we pray:
Lord,
We walk along all the roads of life,
some with joyous, others with a heavy heart,
and you walk with us.

Bless this bread and this cup
May they be vibrant with your grace
Nourishing what is deepest in us.

And through this holy meal
May our eyes and hearts be opened
To the wonder of your presence

Even in the most unexpected of places
May we come to know
that wherever we are

In Real Life, in Second Life,
We are connected to each other
Through our faith in you,
And that your promise of new life
Is as real and tangible

As this bread and drink
We share.
Amen.

Now take the bread.
Feel it in your hand.

And let us remember another time, and another table,
when Jesus gathered in a upper room with his disciples,
his closest friends.

When he took the bread on the table for the evening meal, blessed it, broke it, and shared it saying “This is my body, given for you. Take. Eat. And remember me.”

Let us eat this bread of life together.

Now pick up your cup of drink,

Because at the end of the meal, Jesus took a cup of wine, the juice of the vine,
And said, “This is the cup of the new covenant, a new relationship in my blood.

Drink, and as often as you drink, remember me.”

Let us drink this cup of blessing together.

And now I invite you to be in communion in community as we remember those Saints that have gone before us.

‘We Remember Them’
by Sylvan Kamens & Rabbi Jack Riemer
(https://www.plazajewishcommunitychapel.org/we-remember-them-by-sylvan-kamens-rabbi-jack-riemer/)

Pastor Yadi: At the rising sun and at its going down;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of the autumn;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: At the beginning of the year and when it ends;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: As long as we live, they too will live, for they are now a part of us as
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: When we are weary and in need of strength;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: When we are lost and sick at heart;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: When we have decisions that are difficult to make;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: When we have joy we crave to share;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: When we have achievements that are based on theirs;
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: For as long as we live, they too will live, for they are now a part of us as,
All: We remember them.

Pastor Yadi: You are invited to share the names of those you are remembering, your inherited kin and your chosen kin, in chat.

Amen

PRAYER PREPARATION

Familia, we now come together in prayer, bringing our joys, our concerns, and the people we carry in our hearts.

On this All Saints Day, we especially remembered those who have gone before us.

We make room for grief, for memories, for laughter, and for the joy of having shared life and love with them.

Today I will do prayers a little different.

I will invite you to type your prayer request.

I will invite the congregation to type the words “Lord hear our prayer” after each prayer request.
Pause for sharing.

Pastoral Prayer

Holy One, today we remember.

We remember those we miss, those who shaped us, those who made us laugh, and those whose love continues to live through us.

We give thanks for the gift of having known them, even as we acknowledge the ache of their absence.

And for the prayers we couldn't quite find the words to express, remind us that you know our hearts even before we speak.

May our grief be held with tenderness, our memories bring us joy, and our love remind us that we are forever connected.

For every name shared, every memory remembered, and every prayer held in silence, we give thanks.
Amen.

Benediction - (Hazel)

May love be at the center of your remembering.

Love of your inherited ancestors Love for your chosen ancestors Love for the children of this world who will inherit your legacy.

And, love for the truth of what has been done before, even by those we love the most.

Love for how we can transform our wounds into healing for others

Love for how a person transformed, and a people transformed, can transform our beautiful and broken world into a truly, beloved community.

May we remember those who made a way for us.

May we honor the forgotten and the unnamed.

May we tell the truth about both the beauty and the brokenness of our inheritance.

May we have the courage to change the stories that need changing.

And may those who come after us inherit our generosity rather than our fear, more kindness than cruelty, more justice, more wonder, and a world still wild enough to call home.

Go in Peace.

Amen

Music for the Journey -  Ester Ruth and Rahab by Flamy Grant

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feSr8mlljzU