

First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
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February 25, 2018 Second Sunday in Lent

Still I Rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may tread me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the
slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

By Maya Angelou

ALL ARE WELCOME

*“Friend, you enter this church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God.
Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks upon your lips,
and offer God today your love and your service.”*

(Adapted from a 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England)

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WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

LIGHTING THE CHRIST LIGHT

Acolyte: Heather Richardson

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS; HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS
SHARING JOYS & CONCERNS

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Please stand in body or Spirit.)

One: We are invited to walk with God.

Many: How awesome to stand in the presence of our Creator!

One: We are summoned to faithfulness and fruitfulness.

Many: God hears our cries and meets our needs.

One: Remember the promises, the proof and turn to God.

Many: Let us praise our holy God: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

*HYMN: #24 – The God of Abraham Praise

***INVOCATION**

In trust and confidence, we call on your name, almighty God, eager to know you more fully and serve you more faithfully. We have heard your amazing promises given to our ancestors in the faith. We seek your word for us in our day, for we want to grow strong in our faith as our ancestors did in theirs. Amen.

*SONG OF PRAISE #760

Amen siyakudumisa. (Amen, we praise your name)

Amen, Bawo; Amen Bawo; (Amen Father)

Amen siyakudumisa. (Amen, we praise your name)

RECOGNITION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

PRESENTATION: Ruby Sales

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S YOUNGER DISCIPLES

At this time, all children are invited to come forward for the children's offering, and children's time. An offering is not required for participation. All are welcome, especially first time visitors.

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

"I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing"

I'm going to sing when the Spirit says sing (repeat 3x)

And obey the Spirit of the Lord

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

In our hearts these gifts we bring; for you give us everything. Teach us how to follow you; in all we say and all we do. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Sarah Keller

THE 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

*HYMN: #8 – Praise to the Living God

OLD TESTAMENT Genesis 17:1-8; 15-21

¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless.

² And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous."

³ Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him,

⁴ "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations.

⁵ No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations.

⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.

⁷ I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

⁸ And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God."

¹⁵ God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, "Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"

¹⁸ And Abraham said to God, "O that Ishmael might live in your sight!"

¹⁹ God said, "No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac, I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.

²⁰ As for Ishmael, I have heard you; I will bless him and make him fruitful and exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

²¹ But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year."

GOSPEL Mark 8:34-38

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

SERMON Counting the Cost of Covenant

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

CHOIR ANTHEM

"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

arr. Hayes

PASTORAL PRAYER

CHORAL PRAYER

