

IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Organist: Karen Cain

Pastor: Rev. Dana Schindler

June 12, 2022

First Sunday after Pentecost

“Extending God’s love with the work of our hands and hearts...”

GATHERING MUSIC

BELLS RING

WELCOME

Welcome to worship at Immanuel United Church of Christ in Hamel, IL. We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us today. No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here! Those who are worshipping online today are asked to please leave a comment to let us know you are here. Also note any joys and concerns you may have and feel free to greet each other in Christian love.

Music used is covered under our CCLI livestreaming license # 4012842.

PRELUDE

Karen Cain

POINT TO PONDER

“If we take a promise of God and refuse to believe it, we must remember that it wasn’t God who didn’t deliver it. Rather, it was that we refused to receive it.”

— Craig D. Lounsborough

CALL TO WORSHIP

“Be Still, for the Spirit of the Lord”

129 W&R

**1 Be still, for the Spirit of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.
Come, bow before him now, with reverence and with fear.
In him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the Spirit of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.**

**2 Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around,
he burns with holy fire, with splendor he is crowned.
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.**

**3 Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place,
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace.
No work too hard for him, in faith receive from him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.**

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION

OPENING HYMN**“To God be the Glory” # 66 W&R**

**1 To God be the glory, great things he hath done;
so loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that all may go in.**

Refrain:

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear his voice!**

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice!**

**O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory,
great things he hath done.**

**2 O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.**

Refrain:

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear his voice!**

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice!**

**O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory,
great things he hath done.**

**3 Great things he hath taught us, great things he hath done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.**

Refrain:

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear his voice!**

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice!**

**O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory,
great things he hath done.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Gracious God, we come once again, to confess how often we fail to trust your promises. We forget that they may not be fulfilled according to our time frame, but that you have always been faithful in keeping your promises. And we are not always so faithful in keeping our own. Help us to do better and to be better people. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Scripture tells us that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins. Know that we are forgiven. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Karen Cain

FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

Do you like movies? One of my favorite Christmas movies is Jingle All the Way. The dad in this movie works really hard and is gone a lot. He promises his son that he will leave work early to come to his karate class where he is working on his next belt. The son is very excited, but the dad misses it. The son is angry and tells his father that he makes promises but never keeps them. The father realizes his son is right and promises to do better. And he promises his son that he will get him the gift he wants for Christmas. Then he finds out it is impossible to get the toy because it's the one every child wants and its now Christmas Eve. He goes through a lot of trouble to try to get the toy and keep his promise. And he learns the importance of keeping a promise.

Today we will be talking about promises that God made to some people who lived thousands of years ago and how they didn't believe the promises. One thing I want all of us to remember is that when God makes a promise, it is always kept, even if it takes a while to happen. And when WE make promises, we should also keep them.

PRAYER: Thank you God, for always keeping your promises to us. Help us to remember to keep our promises too—especially when we make them to you. Amen.

HYMN

“Great is Thy Faithfulness”

72 W&R/423 NCH

**1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not;
as thou has been thou forever wilt be.**

**Refrain:
Great is thy faithfulness!**

**Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided--
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

**2 Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.**

**Refrain:
Great is thy faithfulness!
Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided--
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

**3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!**

**Refrain:
Great is thy faithfulness!
Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided--
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Genesis 12:1-3

Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

Genesis 16:1-16

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children. She had an Egyptian slave-girl whose name was Hagar, and Sarai said to Abram, 'You see that the LORD has prevented me from bearing children; go in to my slave-girl; it may be that I shall obtain children by

her.’ And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. So, after Abram had lived for ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her slave-girl, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife. He went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, ‘May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my slave-girl to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the LORD judge between you and me!’ But Abram said to Sarai, ‘Your slave-girl is in your power; do to her as you please.’ Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she ran away from her.

The angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. And he said, ‘Hagar, slave-girl of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?’ She said, ‘I am running away from my mistress Sarai.’ The angel of the LORD said to her, ‘Return to your mistress, and submit to her.’ The angel of the LORD also said to her, ‘I will so greatly multiply your offspring that they cannot be counted for multitude.’ And the angel of the LORD said to her,

‘Now you have conceived and shall bear a son; you shall call him Ishmael, for the LORD has given heed to your affliction. He shall be a wild ass of a man, with his hand against everyone, and everyone’s hand against him; and he shall live at odds with all his kin.’

So she named the LORD who spoke to her, ‘You are El-roi’; for she said, ‘Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?’ Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.

Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

SERMON

“Promises, Promises”

Rev. Dana Schindler

Today’s story begins with Abram, who will later be renamed Abraham.

God has promised Abram that he will be made a great nation, he will have as many children as there are stars in the sky, according to some translations.

An important detail to remember here is that Abram is 79 years old and his wife Sarai (Sarah) is about 10 years younger. Sarai has been described as a beautiful woman, but she is childless.

We know the odds of her having a child are incredibly small, and so did she. The problem is that in their culture, a woman without children, especially male children, are considered worthless. If their husband divorces them, which is their right if they are childless, the woman cannot go back to her family and she will have no means of support. She will have to resort to selling herself or begging to survive. And people will gossip about her constantly. She will not be respected or welcomed anywhere unless

her husband is by her side.

Even in our day, women are often looked at as “less than” if they do not have children by the time they are 25.

Our second passage occurs 7 years later. Abram is now 86. Sarai has given up any hope of bearing a child and offers her Egyptian slave Hagar to Abram so that he may have a child, hopefully a son. Abram has also given up hope that Sarai will bear a child and accepts Hagar. Once Hagar becomes pregnant, the real problems begin.

Sarai feels that Hagar is now haughty and disrespectful toward her and Sarai is certainly resentful that the slave has accomplished so easily what Sarai so desperately desires. Sarai treats Hagar harshly and Hagar runs away, the only option she sees.

An angel appears to Hagar and tells her to return to Sarai, and that Hagar will have many descendants. The son she is bearing is to be called Ishmael, which means “God Hears,” because God has heard her cries and is with her.

Genesis 17:15-21

God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 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.’ 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?’ And Abraham said to God, ‘O that Ishmael might live in your sight!’ 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. 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. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year.’

So now, God has made another promise to Abraham (note the name change) and his wife (now) Sarah, that Sarah will have a child, who will be the father of 12 princes and be very fruitful. Abraham heard God’s promise, and laughed because both he and Sarah are so old. Sarah also laughed when she heard this promise. And so God commanded the son be named “Isaac,” which means “he laughs.”

After Isaac’s birth and weaning, Sarah sees Isaac and Ishmael playing together and tells Abraham that he must send Hagar and Ishmael away to keep Ishmael from claiming a share of the inheritance Abraham will leave. Although Abraham doesn’t want to do this, God tells him to do as Sarah asks. As Hagar and Ishmael wander in the desert, God hears Hagar praying and provides them with a well and promises

again that Ishmael will become a great nation, and provides for their needs during their time in the wilderness.

If we really pay attention to the scripture, we will see that God's promise to Abraham was that he would be the father of many descendants. But what it doesn't say is who will be the mother of all those descendants. God made the promise to Abraham.

Sarah's part in the promise isn't made clear until AFTER Ishmael is born. In those days, it was common for a man to take a slave or concubine or even another wife if his wife did not provide a child. So if there was a lack of trust to be seen, it would have been on Abraham's part. Sarah was just doing what custom demanded, whether she liked it or not—and she probably didn't like it any more than any other married woman would. She simply had no choice. And because she was not a second wife, she did not have equal power with Sarah.

Hagar also had no choice in the matter. She was a slave and was required to do whatever her mistress, Sarah, requested. To refuse Sarah's command could result in death. We don't know Hagar was the only slave available or merely the one most likely to bear a child. As a slave, she will never have any power equal to or over Sarah, even though her son was the first born.

Two women find themselves in difficult positions. Sarah is hurt by her childlessness and is compelled to offer her husband a slave girl. Hagar, the slave girl, has no choice in the matter either. Both are harmed by social norms. Both have sons that grow to be very important men with many descendants. The one becomes very important in the Jewish faith, while the one exiled becomes instrumental in the Muslim faith. Both are covered under God's covenants.

But the story is not yet over. After Sarah dies, Abraham marries a woman named Keturah. All we know about her is that she had six sons with Abraham, adding to the total of his promised descendants.

Yes, God made promises not only to Abraham, but also to Sarah, Hagar, Isaac, and Ishmael. And God was faithful to those promises, even when Abraham and Sarah doubted.

My prayer is that we will accept God's promises and be faithful to those we make ourselves. Amen.

Read the Story: Genesis 12, 16, 17:15-22, 18:1-15, 20, 21, 23:1-2, 25:1-6

Further Mentions of these women in the Bible:

Question to Consider:

- 1. Which character do you relate to the most?**
- 2. How do you feel about Sarah's behavior in these stories?**
- 3. What do you think Hagar was thinking and feeling through all of this?**
- 4. Have you ever been in a position where you felt you had to force things to get your way?**
- 5. Did you ever feel you were pressured or manipulated into someone else's plans?**
- 6. Where have you noticed God in the darkest times of your life?**
- 7. What kind of promises do you feel God has made for you? Has God kept them?**
- 8. What does this story mean for you today?**

Observations:

PASTORAL PRAYER

All these things we pray in the name of your son, Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray saying:

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, forever. Amen.

***CONFESSION OF FAITH The Apostle's Creed**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ; God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the

Father, and will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy universal church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

Glory be to the Father
And to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.
World without end, Amen, Amen.

GIVING OUR GIFTS

God has promised us presence, comfort, help, healing, and forgiveness. In gratitude, let us joyfully give of our time, talent, and treasure to bring the kingdom of God to our community and our world.

Gifts may be placed in the offering plates in the Narthex, mailed in to Immanuel United Church of Christ, 5838 Staunton Road, Edwardsville, IL 62025, or by going to our website at iucchamel.org, clicking on the GIVING tab and then clicking on the DONATE button.

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (*unison*)

God of all good gifts, we offer ourselves and our gifts to you. Bless each gift, that it may provide nourishment and help to our church, our community, and the world. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

"He Leadeth Me"

499 W&R

1 He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.

**2 Sometimes mid scenes of deepest gloom,
sometimes where Eden's flowers bloom,
by waters calm, o'er troubled sea,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.**

**He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.**

**4 And when my task on earth is done,
when, by thy grace, the victory's won,
e'en death's cold wave I will not flee,
since God through Jordan leadeth me.**

**He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.**

AS WE GO FORTH TO SERVE please remember the opportunities we have.

PRAYER GROUP will not meet this Wednesday. Please take time during the week to pray for our church, our members/family/friends, our leaders, and our community.

BOOK STUDY will meet Wednesday at 7 pm on Zoom. All are welcome to attend.

WORSHIP TEAM Allen and Karen will be working with Dana to take our music to the next level. We will be introducing new hymns. We are encouraging anyone willing to sing (solos/duets, etc.) or play instrumental solos to let us know. Let your light shine!

VOLUNTEERS are needed for our AV team and for Faith Quest (in the fall). Please sign up on the clipboards on the table to help as you are able.

BREAD OF LIFE FOOD PANTRY is open on Mondays and Saturdays from 9:00 am till 10:30am. All who need assistance are welcome.

ITEMS NEEDED:

Mayonnaise	Syrup	Pancake Mix
Ramen Noodle	Hamburger Helper	Jelly
Frosting	Mustard	Pasta Sauce
Coffee	Sugar	Flour
Shampoo	Dish Detergent	Toilet paper
Laundry detergent	Also need empty egg cartons and plastic bags	

CONCERNS

Maria S.
Kathie R.
Tomiko J.

Harry S.
Martha K.
Jamie C.

Lillie H.
Carole G.
Rose O.

Roger W.	Kathleen L.	Michelle L.
Kristy K.	Dorothy D.	Jane B.
Mary Ann C.	Jake G.	Rich R.
Wayne S.	Roger W.	Stan B.
Sherri R.	Sid H.	Bill
Judy L.	Lori K.	Luella L.
Helen F.	Linda	Dave S.
Our Church	Our Church Council	People of Ukraine
People of Russia	Those living in violence	
Our country as we deal with pandemic and violence		
Hitz Home workers and residents	Pastor Dana, as she leads	

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Pastor Dana:	pastoriucc@gomadison.com

BENEDICTION

And now, until we meet again, may each one be held safely
in the palm of God's hand. Amen.

POSTLUDE

**Please stand as you are able*