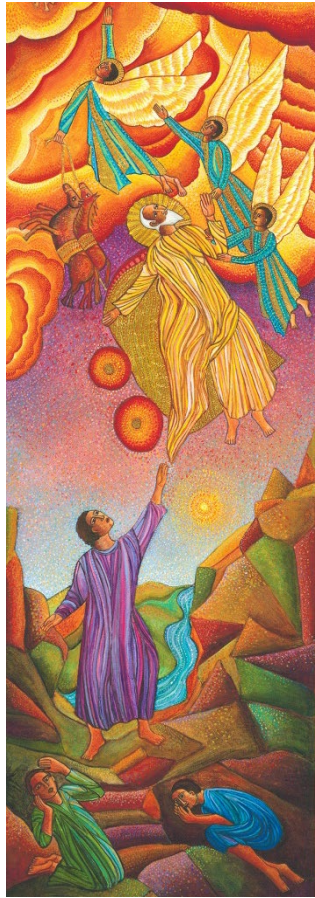


Worship Bulletin - Bethel Congregational Church UCC

June 29, 2025

Third Sunday after Pentecost



Sermon – “Following Freedom”

Centering Words (2 Kings)

When Elijah was about to be taken from him, Elisha asked for a double portion of his spirit. May we too recognize our need and have the courage to ask for what we need to do our ministries.



www.betheluccontario.org

536 N Euclid Ave Ontario CA 91762

In Person & Live Streaming Sundays at 10am

Facebook, YouTube, Twitch;

Also available On Demand on Vimeo, Roku and Amazon Fire TV



Bethel Congregational Church, UCC

Sunday – June 29, 2025

Prelude Music

Responsive Call to Worship

ONE: Throughout the ages, disciples have said,
“I will follow you wherever you go.”

MANY: Lord, give us the freedom to follow you in the ways of love.

ONE: We have busy lives, filled with little time to consider Christ in our lives.

MANY: Lord, give us the strength to follow you in the ways of peace.

ONE: In times of struggle, we look to God for help.

MANY: Lord, give us the opportunity to follow you in the ways of compassion.

ONE: Today, we celebrate the Holy Spirit, who shows us the joy of following God.

MANY: Lord, give us the strength and patience to follow you in the ways of faith.

Unison Opening Prayer (*2 Kings 2, Galatians 5*)

Holy One, we come before you today:

full of hope, full of desire, full of promise.

Help us take up the mantle of faith you have laid before us,

that we may use our own gifts of the Spirit to face the challenges before us.

Help us face the turmoil within and around us,

that we may face the future unafraid.

Speak to us, Spirit of wisdom and truth, as we worship this day.

Show us your way, your truth, and your life.

Bind us together into a community of love and peace.

Live and move in our lives, that we may grow in your Spirit, deepen our faithfulness, and display the love, peace, patience, kindness, and generosity you have planted in our souls. Amen.

Gathering Hymn *We Shall Not be Moved*

*We shall not, we shall not be moved,
We shall not, we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's planted by the water
We shall not be moved*

We're young and old together, we shall not be moved
We're young and old together, we shall not be moved,
Just like a tree that's planted by the water
We shall not be moved
CHORUS

We're women and men together, we shall not be moved,
We're women and men together, we shall not be moved,
Just like a tree that's planted by the water
We shall not be moved
CHORUS

We're straight and gay together we shall not be moved,
We're straight and gay together we shall not be moved,
Just like a tree that's planted by the water
We shall not be moved
CHORUS

Yes, all peo-ple together we shall not be moved
Yes, all peo-ple together we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's standing by the water
We shall not be moved
CHORUS

We Shall Not Be Moved

Chorus F

C7



F

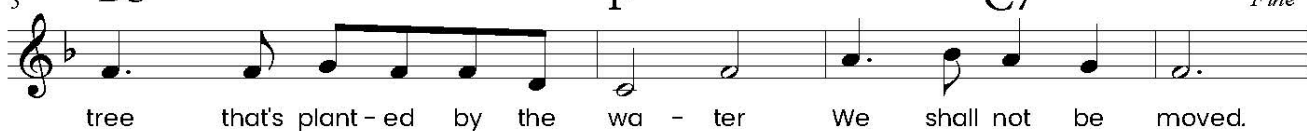


Bb

F

C7

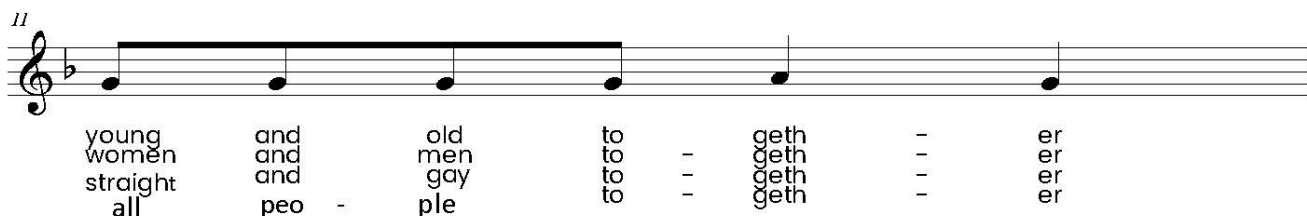
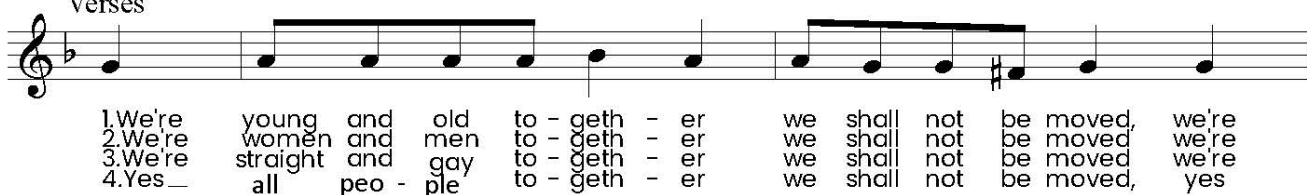
Fine



Verses

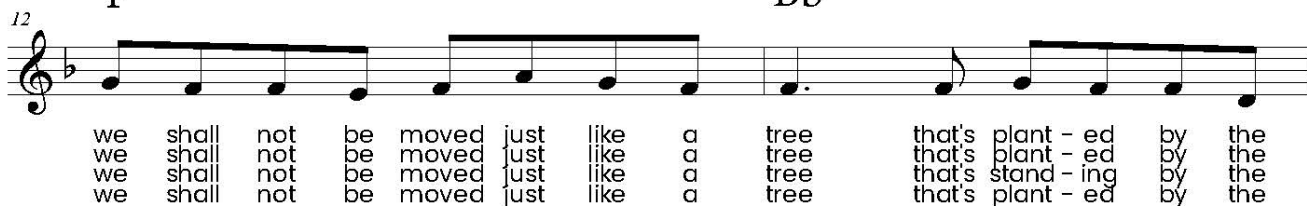
F

C7



F

Bb



F

C7

F

D.C. al Fine



Passing the Peace - Announcements/Regular and Special Events - Summer

- **Sundays** – *Worship! (Bethel 10am Sanctuary/Parlor; FCCO 11:30am)*
- **Wednesdays** – *Scouts: 6pm (basement).*
 - **OYS:** 5 – 6:45pm June 4 – July 16.
 - **Spiritual Studies:** 7pm (Parlor) “Resistance”/“How We Learn To Be Brave”
- **Thursdays at 10am** - Qi-Gong
- **Fridays** – *evenings Occasional SWE Rehearsals (sanctuary/parlor)*
- **Saturdays** – *FCCO Korean Fellowship 10-2*

Children’s Time

“The Good Samaritan”

Kids Video

***Gloria** Glory to the Creator, The Christ, the Holy Spirit Three in One
 As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be
 World without end, Amen, Amen.

71

Glory to the Creator

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system (measures 1-4) has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the melody and harmony. The third system (measures 9-12) concludes the piece with a final cadence. The lyrics are written below the staves, aligned with the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the staves to indicate the harmonic structure.

Chord symbols: C, G/D, C, G/B, G, C, G/B, Am/C, G/D, D⁷, G, C, G⁷, G⁷, C, G, G/F, C/E, C/G, G⁷, C.

Lyrics:
Glo - ry to the Cre - a - tor, the Christ the Ho - ly Spi - rit
three in one; as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er
shall be, world with - out end. A - men. A - men.

2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14

Dalton Thomas

Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal.

Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan.

Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and the two of them crossed on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." He responded, "You have asked a hard thing, yet if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not."

As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan.

He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him and struck the water, He said, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah? Where is he?" He struck the water again, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha crossed over.

1 Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you.

13-15 It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows. For everything we know about God's Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That's an act of true freedom. If you bite and ravage each other, watch out—in no time at all you will be annihilating each other, and where will your precious freedom be then?

16-18 My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit. Then you won't feed the compulsions of selfishness. For there is a root of sinful self-interest in us that is at odds with a free spirit, just as the free spirit is incompatible with selfishness. These two ways of life are contrary to each other, so that you cannot live at times one way and at times another way according to how you feel on any given day. Why don't you choose to be led by the Spirit and so escape the erratic compulsions of a law-dominated existence?

19-21 It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. I could go on.

This isn't the first time I have warned you, you know. If you use your freedom this way, you will not inherit God's kingdom.

22-23 But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.

23-24 Legalism is helpless in bringing this about; it only gets in the way. Among those who belong to Christ, everything connected with getting our own way and mindlessly responding to what everyone else calls necessities is killed off for good—crucified.

25-26 Since this is the kind of life we have chosen, the life of the Spirit, let us make sure that we do not just hold it as an idea in our heads or a sentiment in our hearts, but work out its implications in every detail of our lives. That means we will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse. We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original.

Gospel: Luke 9:51–62

Pastor Sylvia

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to prepare for his arrival, but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” But he turned and rebuked them, *[and said, “You do not know what spirit you are of, for the Son of Man has not come to destroy the lives of humans but to save them.”]* Then they went on to another village.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” But Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” Another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” Jesus said to him, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

SERMON

“Following Freedom”

Rev. Dr. Sylvia Lee Mann

Unison Prayer of Yearning *(2 Kings 2, Luke 9)*

God of our lives, we set our sights on you.

For you know where you are going, and long for us to follow.

It is not easy to keep our eyes upon you, God, and watch until the end.

Sometimes the call to follow you comes softly and gently.

At other times, your call rushes in with urgency and may even overwhelm us as we balance the obligations of the day with the needs of the day.

Gift us with discernment to know what needs our attention, focus, and energy.

Free us of distractions, even and especially the ones we create for ourselves.

It is truth we need; courage and strength we desire.

Enough to face this day and the next . . .

enough to stay with you as you stay with us . . .

enough to inherit your Spirit,

the whole of it and a double share as well . . .

enough to follow you to the end . . .

and beyond. Amen.

Prayers of the People – *Sharing our Joys and Concerns*

Silent Prayer – *bring your personal prayers to God*

Words of Assurance (Pastor)

Jesus says, “Follow me.”

When we stay with him, he always stays with us.

God places the Spirit upon us and within us, trusting us to watch and follow.

The Holy One calls us to reach out our hands

and receive God’s mantle of leadership.

Believing that we can, we will.

The Lord’s Prayer *(Unison)*

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 and ever. Amen

Offering - Invitation to Generosity (Pastor)

Giving Options: In person – *We are not yet “passing the plate”. You may leave your offering in one of the offering plates (front of the sanctuary, or usher’s table in the rear).*



Give online at www.bethelucontario.org,

To use a credit or debit card, use the yellow “Donate” button (processed by PayPal – no PP account required), or green Tithe.ly button (Processed by Tithe.ly)



Use **ZELLE** (through your bank website or via the stand alone app) to transfer your offering to us directly from your bank. When you use Zelle, we are “Bethel Congregational Church” Our verified Zelle email is info@bethelucontario.org



MAIL - Just mail your check to Bethel Congregational Church
536 N Euclid Ave, Ontario CA 91762.



Scan. Pay. Go.

QR Code – Scan the code to send your offering to us through PayPal

Unison Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving (*Psalm 42, Luke 8*)

Gracious God, you have put your Spirit within us
and laid your mantle upon us.

These are gifts we could never earn
and can never repay.

Yet we are filled with your love, joy, patience,
peace, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness,
and self-control.

And so we offer them all to you,
grateful to pass them on to your people
and to your world. Amen.

***Singing into Mission**

Keep Your Hand on the Plow – Hold On

Noah, Noah let me come in
Door's all locked and window pinned
Keep your hand on that plow, hold on
Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Mary wore three links of chain
Every link was Jesus name
Keep your hand on that plow, hold on
Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

God gave Noah the rainbow sign
No more water could fire next time
Keep your hand on that plow, hold on
Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

United nations make a change
Every link is freedoms name
Keep your hand on that plow, hold on
Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Freedom's name is mighty sweet
All God's people are gonna meet
Keep your hand on that plow, hold on
Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Many good men have fought and died
So we could be here side by side
Keep your hand on that plow, hold on
Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Freedom's name is mighty sweet
All God's people are gonna meet
Keep your hand on that plow, hold on
Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Keep your hand on the gospel plow
I wouldn't take nothing for the journey now
Keep your hand on that plow, hold on
Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on
(one.more.time) Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Lead

Keep Your Hand on the Plow - Hold On

traditional

With Energy ♩ = 120

Musical score for the song 'Keep Your Hand on the Plow - Hold On'. The score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 120 beats per minute. It features a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into three systems. The first system contains measures 1-4 with lyrics '1. No - ah, No - ah let me come in Door's all locked and win-dow'. The second system contains measures 5-8 with lyrics 'pinned, Keep your hand on the plow, hold on (ho-ld on), Hold on'. The third system contains measures 9-12 with lyrics 'Hold on Keep your hand on that plow hold on'. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: Am, E7, Am, E7 in the first system; Am, E7, Am, E7, Am, E7 in the second system; Am, E7, Am, E7, Am, E7, Am in the third system.

2. Mary wore three links of chain

Every link was Jesus name

Keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

3. God gave Noah the rainbow sign

No more water could fire next time

Keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

4. United nations make a change

Every link is freedoms name

Keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

5. Freedom's name is mighty sweet

All God's people are gonna meet

Keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

6. Many good men have fought and died

So we could be here side by side

Keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

7. Freedom's name is mighty sweet

All God's people are gonna meet

Keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

8. Keep your hand on the gospel plow

I wouldn't take nothing for the journey now

Keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on
(one more time)

Hold on, hold on, keep your hand on that plow, hold on

Benediction (Blessing) - Unison

People of God,
the mantle of God's love and mercy is upon you.
Carry it with you, as you go and serve.

Go in Peace

AMEN

Postlude

Carillon



Bethel Ontario Online
Bethel Congregational Church, UCC
526 N Euclid Ave Ontario CA 91762
www.betheluccontario.org
info@betheluccontario.org
(909) 984-9111

Rev. Dr. Sylvia Lee Mann
Pastor & Minister of Music
drmann@betheluccontario.org
(626) 393-5507 (mobile)

Live Stream Sundays at 10am on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitch](#)

**All music licensed and used by permission (CCLI, One License, Artist Permission, PD)*

God sends us to serve, but God does not send us alone. The Spirit is with us in the world guiding our steps and protecting our paths. Christ yearns for us to be one in ministry and service, and one in community and faith – a unity that we discover through the Spirit's miraculous power in our lives. Sent to serve, we are sent not only with the power of the Spirit, but also with the power of unity with one another. Embracing this unity with both the Holy Spirit and one another opens a path to the "Complete joy" that Christ prays we may one day know.