

# GUESTS AT GOD'S TABLE

**REV. DR. KEITH HERRON**



## Order of Worship

Gathering

Prelude:

*Simple Gifts* - arr. Virgil Fox

Words of Welcome / † Mission Statement

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

Announcements

Dan Loven-Crum

Musical Reflection:

*Lush Life* - Billy Strayhorn

Examen

Dan Loven-Crum

Examen Meditation:

*Lotus Blossom* - Billy Strayhorn

Call to Worship

Dave Wingert

**Hearing God's Word**

Children's Moment

Rebecca Morello

† Hymn:

*Sing a New World into Being*

Scripture:

Isaiah 55: 1-9

Dave Wingert

Reflection

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

Choral Reflection:

*At This Table* - Idina Menzel

**Responding to God's Word**

Communion

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

Musical Reflection:

*Somewhere Over the Rainbow* -

Harold Arlen / E.Y. Harburg

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

The Basket

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

† Hymn:

*For All the Children*

Countryside Blessing

Kelsey Arends

Postlude:

*Born This Way* - Lady Gaga

OUR WORSHIP HAS CONCLUDED.

NOW OUR SERVICE BEGINS.

† Indicates those places where those who are able are invited to stand.

**ISAIAH 55: 1-9**

**JULY 16, 2023**

**LIVE AT 10 AM**

## Who We Are:

We are an inclusive, open and affirming family of faith, welcoming all to God's table of love and acceptance.

We are diverse, yet united by Christ's example.

We care for one another, support one another and challenge one another to become all that God creates us to be.

We work together to nurture our community and to promote peace, equality and justice in our conflicted world.

Pop-Up Pride Choir - Adam Witte, director

Christian Vihstadt, vocalist - Matt Wallace, sax

Rick Avard, piano - Alex Ritter, organ - Steve Gomez, bass

## **Music notes:**

It would be remiss on Pride Sunday not to discuss the significant contributions that queer church musicians have made to sacred music for centuries. A considerable number of organists are LGBT, and many serve in churches that are homophobic or where they can't live into who they are - an unfortunate reality that still exists to this day. Virgil Fox (1912-1980) was the organist for two decades at Riverside Church in NYC where his partner was the choir director, before becoming a concert organist. In addition to his virtuosity, his flamboyant style, glittering shoes, and colorful jackets drew large audiences. He was one of the most famous gay musicians in the world at the height of his career, alongside Liberace and Bernstein. Cameron Carpenter today carries on this legacy of performing camp and queerness through organ music on stage.

Billy Strayhorn was an incredibly influential jazz musician, composing many a standard for Duke Ellington's band such as "Take the A Train." Strayhorn was openly gay during the Harlem Renaissance where queer culture flourished. An overlooked aspect of Black history and LGBT history is their convergence during this time. As scholar Octavio González puts it, "sexuality became a form of freedom... expressing sexuality became a form of emancipation." Many prominent figures from the Harlem Renaissance were gay, many of them openly. Billy Strayhorn was one such figure. He was an activist for social justice and a committed friend of MLK. In Ellington's autobiography, he cites Strayhorn's major moral freedoms he held as an activist: "freedom from hate, unconditionally; freedom from self-pity (even through all the pain and bad news);

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# Joys and Concerns

Join us as we pray for our congregation members and their loved ones who are on our Joys and Concerns list every week on Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. If you have someone who would benefit from prayer, want to share a joy or be included on the bulletin list and /or on Countryside's Prayer Chain, contact Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones at 402-391-0350, ext. 225 or [sarahrj@countrysideucc.org](mailto:sarahrj@countrysideucc.org)

## JOYS:

*Please lift these joys with prayers of celebration and praise!*

**Mike and Jan Brown** are grateful for the many prayers, messages and meals this past year as Mike received treatment and a stem cell transplant for multiple myeloma. He's doing well and seems to be in remission, so they're going on safe adventures this summer! Thank you, Countryside friends.

## CONCERNS:

*Please join in praying for the following new and ongoing concerns:*

**Joan Denton** went to Methodist Hospital on Tuesday and had surgery. She is still recovering and would appreciate your prayers.

**Kari Randazzo's** father, Dan Rishel, had open-heart surgery on July 7. The surgery went well and he is on his way to a full recovery!

**Don (Bev) Sarton** had a pacemaker placed on Friday, July 7, at UNMC, and he is doing well. Please continue to keep him in your prayers for health and well-being.

Prayers for our dear long-distance members, **Larry and Mary Jo Weiss**. They have an appointment this week with their oncology team to determine a treatment for Larry's lung tumor. Sadly, after all of his hard work preparing for a transplant, this diagnosis makes him no longer eligible. Pray for God's strength as they face this new challenge.

*We continue to pray weekly for the Pastoral Search Committee, as they continue in their discernment towards calling Countryside's next Settled Pastor. We appreciate all the time and effort the PSC is putting into this process, and we continue to hold them in prayer.*

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freedom from fear of possibly doing something that might possibly help another more than it might himself, and freedom from the kind of pride that might make a man think that he was better than his brother or his neighbor."

*Lotus Blossom* was inspired by his grandmother's garden - he would visit during difficult times in his childhood, or when avoiding his alcoholic father. The song invokes introspective sophistication alongside youthful hopefulness - reflecting the garden as a safe space, perhaps a space in which to exist as his authentic self.

David Lohman's *For All the Children* was inspired by his work at the Institute for Welcoming Resources, part of the LGBTQ-Welcoming Faith Movement. Lohman was asked to write a hymn in honor of UCC minister Rev. Ann B. Day and her partner Donna Enberg who lead the UCC's Open and Affirming program for twenty years and were retiring from that ministry. For Lohman, "the task was daunting because I had never written lyrics before. I stared at a blank sheet for weeks as the deadline drew ever closer. Then I thought of the adage, 'Write what you know.' So, what did I know? Well, I was clear that the reason I was doing this Welcoming work was so that queer kids growing up after me wouldn't have to experience the despair, isolation, and shame that had filled my own adolescent years. Once that was clear in my mind, thoughts began pouring onto the page and the song almost wrote itself."

As Lohman puts it "church, at its best, is a place where God's unfathomable and limitless love is celebrated. At its worst, the church can be a place where our prejudices and fears of those who are different receive reinforcement every time it declares who is, and who is not, acceptable in God's sight." It is a reminder of the work we have to do to fight for justice for all the children.

## Sunday Flowers This Week

Flowers are given today by Bill O'Dell  
To commemorate the birthday of Barbara O'Dell.