

May 11, 2016

For immediate release

For further information call 651-698-8871

Macalester Plymouth United Church of Saint Paul, Minnesota is pleased to announce the winners of our church's 2015 hymn contest. Our twentieth annual contest was a search for a **hymn that celebrates language of love, inclusiveness, commitment, and the love God has for the union of all people regardless of gender.**

The judges this year selected one winning hymn. The winning author will receive a prize of \$500.

The winning hymn, *O God, Bestow Your Love and Care*, was written by **Dr. Barbara Hamm**. Dr. Hamm began writing hymns, both text and tune, in 2001. One of her hymns won honorable mention in the 2003 Macalester Plymouth Hymn Contest. In 2006, Abingdon Press published her collection: *Children of Creation, Hymns of Love and Justice for the 21st Century*. Her work appears in *Sing! Prayer and Praise, Worship and Song, Glory to God, Community of Christ Sings, At Your Altars*, and in Hope Publishing Company's Online Hymnody. Barbara also has tunes in collections by Brian Wren and Ruth Duck. She studies with the Rev. Dan Damon (Methodist pastor, hymn writer, and jazz pianist).

Barbara has served as the Minister of Music since 1996 at Community Congregational Church United Church of Christ in Benicia, CA. From 1980-1996 she was the Director of Music at First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, in Antioch, CA. Serving as a "partner musician" for both UCC and DOC events, Barbara has accompanied congregational singing at national conventions of the UCC Synod and the DOC General Assembly, as well as at Northern California Conference and Regional gatherings. She has conducted various workshops for the UCC Musicians National Network as well as for local UCC and DOC events.

Barbara plays piano occasionally at Max's Opera Café in San Francisco. This past year she also played several times at the Bourbon Orleans Hotel in the French Quarter in New Orleans, where her daughter's family lives. Barbara earned her Ph.D. in English Literature from Kansas State University in Manhattan, KS, and teaches English at Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, CA.

### O God, Bestow Your Love and Care

8.8.8.6

#### MARRIAGE HYMN

O God, bestow your love and care  
Upon this newly married pair,  
Who here their faith and trust declare.  
Be with them, God, we pray.

Unite this loving couple here,  
Who choose each other without fear,  
In front of all who hold them dear.  
Be with them, God, we pray.

Remove the stumbling blocks they face  
From those who would deny your grace  
Upon their union in this place.  
Be with them, God, we pray.

United now in heart and mind,  
May they remember to be kind,  
Who daily on love's feast have dined.  
Be with them, God, we pray.

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