

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All people: Take our offerings and tithes, O God, bless them that they may be used to share your love and blessing in our community and the world. May these offerings provide for the least of these needs and the proclamation of your word to those seeking hope. Amen!

HYMN

Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

Chalice, #67

BENEDICTION

Pastor: May the Love of God, the Creator sustain you!
May the peace of Jesus flow through you!
May the presence of the Holy Spirit fill you with grace
and give you courage to share the Good News.

All people: Amen.

POSTLUDE

References

- The Call to Worship was written by Nancy Townley for Ministry Matters: Worship Connection: October 15, 2023.
- The Prayer of Confession was shared by a friend of Pastor Laura, but no reference was available.
- The remaining worship liturgy for today was written by the Rev. Pérsida Rivera-Méndez, retired UCC pastor for “*Filled from the Streets*” Order of worship for the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, October 15, 2023.

October 15, 2023
Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS JOYS AND CONCERNS

Vicki Donbaugh
Vicki Donbaugh

PRELUDE

Mr. Kevin Crone

(Please stand in body and/or spirit)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Our Lord is gracious, who in love for all people, opens wide the doors and welcomes us into God’s presence—saints and sinners alike!

All people: The Lord invites us to a celebration, overflowing with the richest fare. In God’s presence we are invited to feast on Christ’s abundant love and mercy - nourishment for our body and soul.

Pastor: We come with joy to meet God here, to taste and see Christ’s goodness, to celebrate the Lord’s grace and mercy in our lives.

All people: May the Holy Spirit inspire our praise and thanksgiving, our prayers and petitions as we worship together in the Lord’s presence.

HYMN

Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life

Chalice #665

CALL TO CONFESSION

Pastor: Trusting in God’s abundant grace and love, let us confess.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Pastor: God of grace, you invite us to a banquet, and we don’t even respond. You set us a place at the table, but we find excuses not to come. You lovingly prepare for our arrival...

All people: yet, we ignore your invitation, forgive us, God.

Pastor: God of creation, you give us a world capable of abundance, but we act as if it is a world of scarcity. You give us the resources and intelligence to provide for all...

All people: yet we lack the will and the vision to feed all of your children. Forgive us, God, for filling our plates while others go hungry.

Pastor: God of love, you call us to be the body of Christ in the world, but we hoard the blessings for ourselves. Instead of loving our neighbors, we are consumed by the love of self. Instead of loving you...

All people: we bow before idols of our own making. Forgive us, God.

Pastor: God of hope, we avert our eyes when we see hunger and need; we close our ears to the cries of the poor and the oppressed; we refuse to let our minds be opened to the realities of our world...

All people: *we refuse to let our hearts overflow with love and compassion. Forgive us, God.*

Pastor: God of mercy, as you once again call us to share in your abundant love and grace; help us to respond in faith.

All people: *Forgive our failures and help us to learn from them. Change our hearts and minds as we hear your good news proclaimed. Help us to taste and see the goodness you have prepared for us - - - and for the world. Amen.*

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS (Based on Romans 5:8)

Pastor: God demonstrated his love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Beloved in Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

All people: *May our lives, restored and made whole, move us to share God's abundant grace and mercy with the world. Amen!*

PRAISE HYMN

Gloria Patri

Red Hymnal, #493

PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Pastor: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Congregation: **And, also with you.**

(The congregation may be seated, as the children & youth come forward)

JESUS SAID, "LET THE CHILDREN COME"

Cathy Rentzel

HYMN

I Need Thee Every Hour

Chalice, #578

OLD TESTAMENT READING – 1 Samuel 14:1-15

EPISTLE READING – Philippians 4:1-9

GOSPEL READING – Matthew 22:1-14

SERMON

Ms. Spring Davidson

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Gracious God, we thank you for all that you provide and the blessings we receive daily from you. We know that, at times, we feel hopeless amid so much uncertainty in our world, but we trust you, O God, to bring us peace; to give us comfort when we are overwhelmed with anxiety. Please help us be calm in the chaos around us and give us the strength to overcome.

All people: *Gracious God, we bring all our concerns, doubts, and insecurities with the confidence that you are walking with us and guiding us with your Holy Spirit. Mold us into the vessels you want us to be, full of hope and joy.*

Pastor:

Gracious God, we lift prayers for the homeless, the hungry, the lonely, the rejected, those left behind, and all suffering injustice in our community and the world. Hear their cries for healing, wholeness, and acceptance, O loving God.

All people:

Gracious God, we ask that your Holy Spirit accompany and protect all who communities dealing with violence and hatred. We pray for continued strength and courage for all being persecuted by society. Let us not be afraid to stand boldly to speak against all hate and violence. Please help us to be agents for transformation and equity.

Pastor:

Gracious God, help us live according to your word's mandates that call us to love one another as you love us. Help to show mercy and offer compassion and forgiveness to all in our care. Help us acknowledge when we have not been good stewards or loving to all our neighbors or the stranger.

All people:

Gracious God, we pray that our hearts will be open to the change that needs to happen here on earth so your Sovereignty will be a reality and all your creation will sing your praises. Please help us to see each other as gifts from you. Let us enthusiastically embrace your love to share the good news with those who need to hear and receive your amazing grace. We pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, who taught us to pray: "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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Chancel Choir/Chimes

(An Offering Collection Box is located on the table in the back of sanctuary, by the exit door)

OFFERING INVITATION

Liturgist:

All we have comes from the Lord. So, let us give our offerings and tithes with generous hearts in thanksgiving for God's goodness. May these gifts given today offer hope in proclaiming and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ our Savior with all the world. Let us accompany our offerings with a song and prayer.

(Please stand in body and/or spirit)

DOXOLOGY

We Give Thee But Thine Own

Red Hymnal, #258

(Verse 1, only)