

October 8, 2023
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Outdoor Sign to open hearts and minds to your grace, as we offer your invitation to relationship. We pray that you will use the sign to draw the people of our community to Christ Jesus, who is the Light of the World. On behalf of the all the saints of Starview United Church of Christ – past, present, and future - we dedicate this sign to this most high purpose. May we too, in this moment, re-dedicate ourselves to live in such a way that the welcome people see on the Outdoor Sign will always be matched by the welcome people receive from us, in person. Amen.

Liturgist: Let us now, bless ALL of our tithes and offerings with a song and prayer.

(Please stand in body and/or spirit)

DOXOLOGY *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*

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

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All people: With what you see before us, God, we demonstrate our deepest love. Receive our gifts – our very best – as sweet offerings before you. May they be the blessing to others that they have been for us. Amen.

HYMN *Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessings* **Red Hymnal, #35**

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Beloved people of God,
let the light of God's love shine on you,
shine in you, and
shine through you
as you go into God's world
to serve God's people –
all the people.

*All people: MAY IT BE SO!
AMEN!*

POSTLUDE

References

- The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, and Offering Invitation were written on September 25, 2023 by Pastor Laura Baker and are based on Psalm 118, Matthew 21:33-40 and the hymn: *In Christ Alone*.
- The Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness were written by Nancy Townley for Ministry Matters: October 8, 2023. <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/8442/worship-connection-october-8-2023>.
- The Prayer of Dedication was written by Rev. Kaji R. Spellman, a United Church of Christ Pastor who serves as a pastor of Saint Peter's Lutheran Church in New York City. This was originally posted on the United Church of Christ's [Worship Ways](#) website but was located on: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/10/offering-prayer-matthew-22-34-40.html>.

**GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS
JOYS AND CONCERNS**

Pastor Laura Baker

PRELUDE

Mr. Kevin Crone

(Please stand in body and/or spirit)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Lest we forget in this season of Pentecost, hear again the Good News:
Christ is risen!

All people: Christ is risen, indeed!

Pastor: Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good.
God's steadfast love endures forever!

All people: God's steadfast love endures forever!

Pastor: The Lord is our strength and might.

All people: The Lord has become our salvation!

Pastor: The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.

All people: This is God's handiwork, and it is marvelous in our eyes!

Pastor: This is the day that the Lord has made...

All people: let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Pastor: Let us pray.

All people: It is in you, O Lord, that our hope is found. You have promised to be our strength. Hence, we acknowledge how we have come into worship with so many burdens and concerns in our hearts. The ground upon which we stand feels shifting and unstable. Yet, you promise to be our solid ground, the cornerstone which will stand firm through the fiercest of life's storms. So, help us to be open to your words of healing and restoration. Still our fears. Draw us closer to you. We pray in the name of our Comforter, our All-in-All, 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.

HYMN

In Christ Alone

Bulletin Insert

CALL TO CONFESSION

Pastor: In the hymn we just sang, we testified that in Christ's resurrection, sin has lost its grip" on us. Even so, we know that we still fall short of God's glory. Trusting in Christ's resurrection power over sin and death, let us confess our sin.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All people: We keep slamming into walls, O merciful God, when we are left to our own devices. Throughout history, your Son offered words of healing and hope to people who dwelled in darkness. In the brilliant light of his love, people grew and flourished. But now, Lord, we find that this world dominates our lives. We are troubled, angry, and fearful. We want to see your presence in the world, but we spend far too much time looking for the "big picture" and "far into the future" rather than seeing the myriad of ways in which your love and healing power is shown in small ways, every single day. Forgive us when we grow impatient with you and with the course of things in our lives. Heal our wounds and put us back on pathways to peace and service. Enable us to speak your words of hope in this darkened world. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Hear the words of hope! Though the days seem to darken quickly, the brilliant light of Christ's love and presence will always be a guide and comfort to us.

All people: This IS the Good News of Jesus Christ! 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"

HYMN

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Red Hymnal, #158

OLD TESTAMENT READING – 1 Samuel 13:7b-18

EPISTLE READING – Philippians 3:4b-14

GOSPEL READING – Matthew 21:33-46

SERMON & PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Laura Baker

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: Our God is a Faithful God. Our God is the Giver of all good things. God calls us to share a portion of the gifts we've received so that we may experience the joy and humility of giving to others. We are blessed to receive and blessed to return a share of God's generous gifts. May they serve to communicate the message of Christ's saving love through the ministries of this congregation – Starview United Church of Christ.

Pastor: One such gift given for the specific purpose of communicating God's Good News was the church sign. The generosity of William and Joyce Schaeffer, Gary and Vicki Knisely, and the Family of Raymond "Bud" Moyer provided for its purchase. Many hours of time and talent was also given prior to the signs purchase to investigate sign companies, sign design, and the acquisition of permits and so forth by Dave Donbaugh, Tom Brenner, Scott Moore, and Diana Wolf. Kinsley Construction professionals also gave generously of their time, talent, and equipment to install the sign (twice). Let us look to God's Holy Word and remind ourselves once more, of our call as disciples to share God's good news. An adapted version of Psalm 145:1-12 reads: I will exalt you, O God my King, and bless your name for ever and ever.

Congregation: Every day we will bless and praise God's name. Every day!

Pastor: Great is the Lord; there is no end to God's goodness and power.

Congregation: Each generation will praise God's works to another!

Pastor: We will ponder the glorious splendor and works of God's majesty.

Congregation: We will speak of God's wondrous acts and goodness.

Pastor: We will publish the good news of God's faithfulness and eternal love.

Congregation: The Lord is gracious and full of compassion and slow to anger.

Pastor: The Lord is loving to all people. God's compassion covers all things.

Congregation: All creation praises you, Lord, and we, your faithful servants bless you.

Pastor: We will make known the glory of your kingdom so...

Congregation: everyone will know of your goodness and the splendor of your kingdom!

Pastor: Let us pray together, in one voice.

All people: Almighty God, in Holy Scripture we hear your desire, that we share the Good News of your love in both, word and deed with all whom you have made. We thank you for the opportunity provided to us by the gift of the