

Christ United Church of Christ

November 26, 2023

Twenty-Sixth Sunday After Pentecost



Guest Speaker – Rev. Lou Ann Jones

Guest Pianist – Maria Hildebrand

The Gathering of God's People

Centering Scripture: PSALM 100 *A Psalm of thanksgiving.*

¹ *Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.*

² *Serve the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing.*

³ *Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.*

⁴ *Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name.*

⁵ *For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations.*

Greetings and Announcements

The Prelude

***The Call to Worship** (Responsive) Inspired by Psalm 100
Make a joyful noise to the Lord! Worship with gladness and singing!

God is Creator, Sustainer, Keeper, and Shepherd. Bless God's name.

Enjoy the presence of God! Give thanks and praise!

God is Sovereign and Holy. Bless God's name.

Know that God reigns! God's kingdom comes!

God is Healer, Redeemer, Restorer, and Friend. Bless God's name!

***The Opening Prayer (Unison)** by Rev. Cheryl Lindsey, U.C.C.

God who cares. We flourish in your compassion. You search for us and find us. You, Holy One, surround us with the power of your abundant love and utmost care. Be present among us as we praise your name, bring our burdens, and give thanks for all that you are and all that you do. Amen.

***Hymn** "Crown Him with Many Crowns" #45

Children's Message

The Invitation to Reconciliation

The Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, May 2023.

We talk about how little we have and do not recognize the abundance we have when we share. We allow resources and gifts to be wasted in our neighborhoods instead of valuing and preserving the smallest fragments the world so often casts aside. We rush about life attempting To do everything on our own instead of being grateful for all the ways we love and support one another. We grumble about all that is going wrong instead of approaching you with gratitude and trust that you will provide. Forgive us, we pray. Free us to live as your grateful people.

The Assurance of Pardon

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, May 2023.

Receive this good news: God's love never fails! The same Christ who commanded his disciples to gather leftover bread and fish so that nothing would be lost has not overlooked or forgotten us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Praise God we are a forgiven people! Amen.

The Sharing of Our Joys and Concerns

The Prayer Versicles: God be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray

A Period of Silent Prayer

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer (using "debts and debtors")

Hymn "There's Something About That Name" #83

The Prayer of the Day (Unison) from UNFOLDING LIGHT.net

Jesus Christ, you have taught us that what we do to each other, we do to you. Make us quick to help and slow to hurt, knowing that in our neighbor it is you who receive our love or our neglect. Shape us by your love, and fit us for your Realm of grace. Eternal God, you have set Christ to rule over

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all the earth. He reigns with mercy and grace. Under his glorious and gentle rule, help us as we you're your scriptures and proclaim your good news, to listen with humble hearts and to devote our lives to your service. We pray in the name of Christ, our King. Amen.

The Readings from Scripture

Old Testament Lesson: Ephesians 1:15-23 Pg. 1133

Gospel Reading: Matthew 25:31-46 Pg. 962

The Sermon

****The Presentation of Our Tithes and Gifts*** #816

We Give Thee but Thine own, whate'er the gift may be.

**All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.
Amen.**

****Prayer of Dedication (Unison)*** from UNFOLDING LIGHT.net

Gracious God, we thank you for the mystery that you give yourself to us. In gratitude we give you our lives, symbolized in our gifts. Receive them with love, bless them with grace and use them according to your will. By your Spirit in us form us as citizens of your Realm, obedient to your law of grace, eager to work for justice in this world, in the name of Christ. Amen.

****Hymn*** "Take The Name of Jesus With You" #235

****The Commission and Benediction***

As we go, may we recognize God in the stranger.

May we extend hospitality and care to our neighbor.

And may we trust in the reign of God forever.

In the name of God our Father, our Savior and King Jesus Christ, and our Comforter and daily guide, the Holy Spirit.

****Threefold Amen***

The Postlude