

The 25th Sunday after Pentecost

November 19, 2023

9:00 a.m.

+ Indicates those times when all who are able may stand.

Bold indicates congregational response.

Ringling of the Bell

Pastor's Welcome

Prelude "Thanksgiving Joy!" Davis

Announcements

Call to Worship *(Inspired by Psalm 90)*

Holy One, you have been our God from generation to generation. Before the universe exploded and the earth was without form, you have been with us. .

Creator, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

We enter your presence to worship and praise your holy name.

Mighty One, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

Teach us to count the days with joy and appreciation for all your marvelous works and steadfast love.

Everlasting God, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

Gathering Prayer

Let us pray:

Generous God, you pour your Spirit into us. You bless us with your love. In your presence, there is fullness of joy, comfort for those in despair, and peace in the midst of chaos and confusion. You do not abandon us in time of need or of celebration. We turn toward you now seeking to receive your message, to give you honor, and to commune in your presence. Make yourself known among us, O God, make yourself known to us. Amen.

First Reading of Scripture

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 CEB

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

Thanks be to God!

+ Opening Hymn No. 48 "Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise"

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Sovereign God, we confess that life is hard. We don't always make the best choices, and all too often we realize the options before us are lacking. We are overwhelmed with the enormity of the world's problems. Sometimes, we turn away completely. Sometimes, we respond with our tribal allegiances first in mind. Bitterness and resentment are easy guides.

Help us seek wisdom and clarity, compassion and presence, hope and peace over shallow victories, material gain, and violence of the mind, body, or spirit. Bless us to be peacemakers, hope sharers, and love spreaders in the world for our neighbors and for your glory. Amen.

Words of Grace

Friends, God is merciful and journeys with us as we navigate uncertain terrain. God is still at work in us and through us that we might have flourishing and abundant lives in community with one another. Receive the grace God grants to begin anew when our journey stalls or diverts from the path of the kin-dom. That grace is yours.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

Giving from Our Hearts



It is the generosity of the friends and members of this church which supports this ministry. Over 95% of our budget is directly supported through our offering. While the ministry at Zion is sustained by more than dollars and cents, the monetary giving is vital to the work we do. We give thanks for all who have supported Zion over the years. For those contributing financially: There is an offering plate just outside the sanctuary or you can donate online through the online giving button at zionunion.org.

+ Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

+ Prayer of Dedication

**Generous God, we bring the gifts of ourselves and our abundance.
Magnify and multiply these offerings to meet the needs before us.
Continue to cultivate the spirit of generosity among us and make us
good stewards as we allocate the use of these gifts in your name.
Amen.**

Second Reading of Scripture

Matthew 25:14-30

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

Thanks be to God!

Special Music

“Not Too Far from Here”

arr. Fettke

Kirk Hancox, soloist

Sermon

Pastoral Prayer and The Prayer of Our Savior

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

+ Closing Hymn No. 723

“For the Fruit of All Creation”

+ Benediction

+ Postlude

“Song for a Feast Day”

Livingston

Today's Liturgy was written The Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-25a-november-19/>

We commit ourselves...

to worship God

to form faithful followers of Jesus

and to care for our wider community.

We care as Christ cares.

WELL DONE,
—GOOD—
AND
faithful
SERVANT.

+ The Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost +

November 19, 2023 9:00 a.m.

Zion United Church of Christ

Union, Missouri