

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 17, 2023

9:00 a.m.

+ Indicates those times when all who are able may stand.
Bold indicates congregational response.

Ringing of the Bell

Pastor's Welcome

Prelude "Take the Name of Jesus With You" Landon

Call to Worship (*Inspired By Psalm 103*)

Bless the Holy One with our whole selves. Praise the Maker of our being!

Remember the mighty deeds and the good works of our God.

The Sovereign One endows us with many gifts and equips us to do good work.

Remember the mighty deeds and the good works of our God.

Holy Love entered the world without condemnation but with grace and forgiveness, mercy and compassion, redemption and restoration.

Hallelujah! We give thanks for the mighty deeds and the good works of our God!

Gathering Prayer

Let us pray:

God who calls, it is you who gathers us together and forms us as a community. It is you who makes us uniquely individual and who designs us for companionship. Let us journey together this day in your presence reminded of our interdependence with one another. May we see your glory and be inspired to demonstrate your goodness and care through our lives. Amen.

First Reading of Scripture

Psalm 103 NRSVUE

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

Thanks be to God!

+ Opening Hymn No. 424

"How Can I Keep from Singing"

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

God of grace, we need your strength in our weakness. We confess that we can be judgmental and hyper-critical of our neighbors, family, and friends. We project our own shortcomings on others in order to deflect attention from our mistakes. We withhold and condition forgiveness, mercy, and grace from those who wrong us at the same time we seek it for the wrongs we have done. Even still, we struggle to forgive ourselves. You have shown us the better way. Help us to follow your path—receiving and extending forgiveness in a world in need of an infusion of grace for transformation. In your mercy, O God, hear our prayer, and let us forgive as you forgive. Amen.

Assurance of Grace

Beloved, grace has always been part of God's relationship with humanity. God does not want you condemned or held captive by unresolved anger leading to bitterness. Rather, our Creator desires you to be released as both forgiven and forgiver so that all may live a life that is whole, free, and flourishing.

We are forgiven, praise be to God! Amen.

Announcements

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

Merciful God, receive our humble offerings as a testimony to your provision and a demonstration of our love. May they be magnified and multiplied for the benefit of our community and all creation. Amen.

Second Reading of Scripture

Matthew 18:21-35 CEB

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

Thanks be to God!

Special Music

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

arr. Paris

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. 355

“This is a Day of New Beginnings”

+ Benediction

+ Postlude

“Be Thou Exalted”

Wetherill

Today's liturgy was written by The Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-16a-september-17/>

We commit ourselves...

to worship God

to form faithful followers of Jesus

and to care for our wider community.

We care as Christ cares.



*“how often should
I forgive?
“Not SEVEN times,
but, I tell you,
SEVENTY-
SEVEN
times.”*

Matthew 18:21-22, NRSV

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Zion United Church of Christ

Union, Missouri