



Zion Goshert's United Church of Christ

Sunday, March 10th, 2024

Ministers: All Gathered

Pastor: Rev. Joel Risser

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*Please stand if you are able. Congregation, please speak the words in **bold**.

PRELUDE

WELCOME (Ringing of the Bell)

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22)

"Give thanks to the Lord because he is good,

because his faithful love lasts forever!"

That's what those who are redeemed by the Lord say,

the ones God redeemed from the power of their enemies,

the ones God gathered from various countries,

from east and west, north and south.

Some of the redeemed were fools because of their sinful ways.

they suffered because of their wickedness.

They had absolutely no appetite for food;

they had arrived at death's gates.

So they cried out to the Lord in their distress,

and God saved them from their desperate circumstances.

God gave the order and healed them;

he rescued them from their pit.

Let them thank the Lord for his faithful love

and his wondrous works for all people.

Let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices

and declare what God has done in songs of joy!

*OPENING HYMN

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

Hymnal #338

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

CALL TO CONFESSION

Today begins the fourth full week of our journey through Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, for people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. Let us uncover our sin before the liberating light of Christ.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we confess the folly of our sin and the hypocrisy of our complaints. We grumble about the evils in our world, even as we commit injustices and profit through deceit. We fret about the scarcity of resources while hoarding earth's goods and cheating the poor. We protest the problems of our world, but we do not actively work to address them. Merciful God, expose our sins before the light of your grace. Heal our sin and free us from our foolish ways that we me know the joy of eternal life in Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

SONG OF CONFESSION

Change My Heart, O God

Worship & Rejoice #373

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.

*Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.
You are the Potter, I am the clay;
mold me and make me, this is what I pray.
Change my heart O God, make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.*

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYER FOR DISCERNMENT

God be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray: Almighty God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, open your Word and illumine our darkened world, that we may see clearly and live faithfully by the light of your truth in Jesus Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

John 3:14-21

¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so must the Human One be lifted up ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life. ¹⁶ God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won't perish but will have eternal life. ¹⁷ God didn't send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him isn't judged; whoever doesn't believe in him is already judged, because they don't believe in the name of God's only Son.

¹⁹ "This is the basis for judgment: The light came into the world, and people loved darkness more than the light, for their actions are evil. ²⁰ All who do wicked things hate the light and don't come to the light for fear that their actions will be exposed to the light. ²¹ Whoever does the truth comes to the light so that it can be seen that their actions were done in God."

SERMON

No Matter What

Pastor Joel

HYMN

Amazing Grace

Hymnal #344

PRAYERS of the people and pastoral prayer

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father Who is in heaven, hallowed be Your Name. Your kingdom come; Your 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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING—GOD'S WORD ON GIVING

In joyous thanksgiving, we offer sacrifices of time and resources to announce God's healing grace to the world. It is our privilege to participate in God's wonderful works to humankind, to share the steadfast love that is saving us, and to offer life to those who are perishing.

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

WR 359 NO REPEATS!

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One,
give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son.

And now let the weak say "I am strong," let the poor say "I am rich,"
because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

For life-sustaining gifts that we so often take for granted—for shelter, food, and meaningful tasks to do; for your steadfast love that awakens us and raises us from our sinful ways; for your word that guides and heals us—we give you thanks, gracious God. As we invest part of all you entrust to us to further the ministries of the church, may we show to others the immeasurable riches of your grace in Jesus Christ. Make this church a beacon of hope for the world. Amen.

***OUR TESTIMONY**

United Church of Christ Statement of Faith back free end leaf of hymnal

***HOLY COMMUNION**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

...And so with all who have walked the wilderness way in every time and all who walk it this day, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we join the unending hymn.

SERAPHIC HYMN

E&R Hymnal #522

***Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of Thy Glory,
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!***

Great is the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

***HYMN**

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Hymnal #352

***BENEDICTION**

May the God who shakes heaven and earth, whom death could not contain, who lives to disturb and heal us, bless you with power to go forth and proclaim the gospel. Amen

NOTES ON PARISH LIFE

THE POSTLUDE

Citations of Worship

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Communion service from Wells, Samuel and Abigail Kocher. *Eucharistic Prayers*. Grand Rapids [MI]: William B. Eerdmans Publishing.