

**A SERVICE TO UNITE US IN SPIRIT
FOR SUNDAY AUGUST 7, 2022
(NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST)
(and a daily prayer)**

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***Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
2401 Atwood Avenue, Madison WI***

Pastor: Rev. Leslie Schenk

Sabbatical Pastor: Rev. Gayle Tucker

Accompanist: Wilder Deitz

Ministers: All the people of Plymouth Congregational UCC

*Worship Help: Sylvia Adrian (reader), Marianne Mollway (greeter), Ann Lacy (usher), Bill Mollway (tech and audio support), Congregational Life Team - **SUNDAE SUNDAY** - (Social Hour hosts)*



“Raise Your Head” by Lauren Pittman Wright, via Vanderbilt University Library

The Community Gathers

Lighting of the Candles

Ringling of the Bell

Welcome & Announcements

♪Prelude

Gathering Prayer

Pastor: *Creator resides in the midst of creation...calling us to this community.*

All: **Our world waits for the Holy One, our help and shield.**

Pastor: *God our Righteousness gazes upon the beloved with delight and concern.*

All: **Our bodies wait for the Holy One, our help and shield.**

Pastor: *The Spirit of the Living God greets us with fresh winds and new mercies.*

All: **Our souls wait for the Holy One, our help and shield.**

♪Opening Hymn No. 336 *Here, O My Lord, I See You Face to Face*

Here, O my Lord, I see you face to face; here would I touch and handle things unseen; here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace, and all my weariness upon you lean.

Here would I feed upon the bread of God, here share the cup, the gracious gift of heaven; here would I lay aside each earthly load, here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiven.

This is the hour of banquet and of song; this is the heavenly table spread anew; here let me feast, and, feasting, still prolong the brief, bright hour together here with you.

Too soon we rise; the symbols disappear; the meal, but not your love, is past and gone. This joyful feast confirms that you are here, now and forever, as our shield and sun.

We have no help but yours, nor do we need another strength than yours to lean upon. It is enough, O Lord, enough indeed; our faith is in your might, your might alone.

Celebrating the Sacrament of Communion

Invitation (*from Luke 12: 32-40*)

Words of Remembering

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing of the Elements

Pastor: *The bread on your table is blessed and broken like the picnic of grace.*

All: **Sharing love, we will never be hungry.**

Pastor: *The cup in your hand is blessed to share with overflowing tears and joy*

All: **Drinking deeply, we will never thirst.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Pastor: *In thanksgiving for a meal that heals yesterday and empowers tomorrow, we pray ...*

All: **O Holy One, as we receive this sacrament, we think we eat a gourmet menu, only to discover we are to become your “food trucks” of love and justice, compassion and courage, in every corner of every city for all of your children who need a meal of hope and healing. Thank you for the sustenance and the call. Amen**

The Community Shares God’s Word

Scripture Reading: Luke 12: 32-40

‘Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

‘Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

‘But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.’

Sermon *Being Ready*

The Community Responds to God’s Word

♪Hymn of Response No. 112 *Keep Awake, Be Always Ready*

Keep awake, be always ready, God's time approaches sure and steady, God's strength will keep your heart from blame. Clouds, the Spirit's light concealing, disperse, God's purest light revealing; creation will its Sovereign name. Dry branches burst forth green, God's advent signs are seen: Hallelujah! Christ’s judgment won, God's will be done; God's new dominion thus begun.

Rise and shine for One is coming whose love will quench all nature's thirsting to be

made whole forever more. On that day to end all weeping, death's swords transformed to tools of reaping, the God of might will mercy pour. Incarnate, God appears embracing all our tears: Hallelujah! God's majesty eternally revealed to set the cosmos free.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Joys & Concerns

Pastor: *Let us pray ... as Jesus teaches us anew:*

All: **Eternal Spirit,
Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all.
Loving God, in whom is heaven.
The hallowing of your name echoes through
the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples
of the earth!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.**

♪ Sung Prayer Response No. 542 *Born of God, Eternal Savior*

**Born of God, Eternal Savior, source of life, of truth and grace, Human One, whose
birth incarnate hallows all our human race, Come again, in all your glory; come to us,
inspire and lead; Fill us with your lovingkindness; heal our wrongs, and help our need.**

**Christ, as you have lived for others, so may we for others live; Freely have your gifts
been granted, freely may your servants give. All the wealth that we may gather is for
use in causes just. We are stewards of the bounty loaned to us in solemn trust.**

**Come, O Christ, and reign among us, grating love and joy and peace; Hush the storm
of strife and passion, bid its cruel discords cease. By your patient years of toiling, by
your silent hours of pain, Quench our fevered thirst for pleasure, shame our selfish**

greed for gain.

See the Christlike host advancing, high and lowly, great and small, Linked in bonds of common service, answering the Savior's call. Jesus Christ, we hear your pleading that your people should be one. Grant, O grant our hope's fruition: here on earth, your will be done.

Offering

Thank you for your offerings (in-person, electronic, or mailed in) for the ministry and mission of this congregation. Through your generosity, we are doing God's work in the world.

Those attending in person may place offerings in the basket by the door at the back of the sanctuary.

Thank you for all you are doing to help keep all in the community safe, including getting vaccinated and boosted (if safe for you), wearing of face masks, physically distancing, and hand washing.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Pastor: Luke 12:34 informs us, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Let our hearts direct the use of our resources, our time, and our talents. May our generosity meet God's abundance in attending to the needs and hopes of our community.

All: Generous One, receive the gifts we bring as we return a portion of your treasure to the use of your kingdom. May your will be manifested and your creation restored through sharing these offerings. Amen.

The Community Goes Forth

♪ Sending Hymn No. 565 *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending*

God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store, Nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door: Gifted by you, we turn to you offering up ourselves in praise; Thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.

Skills and time are ours for serving, that your will on earth be done: All at peace in health and freedom, races joined, the Church made one. Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone; born with talents, make us servants fit to answer at your throne.

Treasure, too, you have entrusted, gain through powers your grace conferred; Ours to use for home and kindred, and to spread the gospel Word. Open wide our hands in sharing as we heed Christ's ageless call, Healing, teaching, and reclaiming, honoring you by loving all.

Lend your joy to all our giving, let it light our pilgrim way; From the night of anxious keeping, loose us into generous day. Then when years on earth are over, and we've lived our human span, God, fulfill beyond our dreaming, all our stewardship began.

Blessing and Sending Prayer

Pastor: Live in the abundance of God's treasure, spreading the love and peace of Christ in the world to the glory of God.

All: Our worship has ended, our service begins, as we take God's light out into the world with us!

♪Postlude

Elements of our worship service and thoughts to ponder for the week are adapted from resources of the Local Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ, written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay made possible through our contributions to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM). Version of the Lord's Prayer From "A New Zealand Prayer Book – He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa."

Communion Liturgy adapted from "Holy Communion Liturgy for August 7, 2022," Maren Tirabassi, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2022/07/28/holy-communion-liturgy-for-august-7-2022/>

Thoughts to Ponder for the week:

The 33rd General Synod adopted a Resolution to Recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024). As part of its implementation, Sermon and Weekly Seeds offers Reflection from Voices of People of African Descent related to the season or overall theme for additional consideration in sermon preparation and for individual and congregational study.

"Mother to Son"

Well, son, I'll tell you:

Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

It's had tacks in it,

And splinters,

And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare.
But all the time
I've been a-climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So boy, don't you turn back.
Don't you set down on the steps
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
Don't you fall now—
For I've still goin', honey,
I've still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
—Langston Hughes

For further reflection

“Love doesn't just sit there, like a stone, it has to be made, like bread; remade all the time, made new.” — **Ursula K. Le Guin**

“Finding yourself after many years, is a treasure like no other.” — **Nancy B. Urbach**

“True wisdom is like an ocean; the deeper you go the greater the treasures you'll find.” — **Matshona Dhliwayo**

And a daily (morning) prayer to center yourself for this week (source: <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-c-august-7-2022/>)

Prayer

Abundant God, we wait for you with longing, hope, and anticipation. May your kingdom be realized in this community. May your people be your ambassadors. May your love be our propeller in the world and our beacon to direct us home. Fill us with the bread of life and nourish our spirits to be your good news in the world. Amen.

~ From *Treasures in Heaven: Service Prayers for the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost* were written by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ. Copyright 2022 Faith INFO Ministry Team, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.