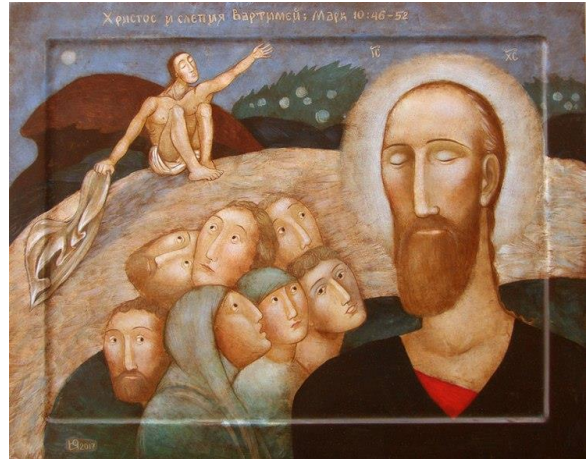


**Twenty-Third  
Sunday  
after Pentecost**  
October 27, 2024



*Julia Stankova (Bulgarian, 1954–), Christ and Bartimaeus, 2017*

## **We Gather in Response to God's Invitation**

THE GIFT OF MUSIC TO GATHER US

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AFFIRMATION OF MISSION:

We declare ourselves to be a Christ-centered Open and Affirming Congregation, welcoming persons into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, ability, culture, economic status, ethnicity, or family composition.

We recognize that there are differences among us, but believe that we can love alike even though we may not think alike. We proclaim this covenant of welcome to all who have known the pain of exclusion or discrimination in church and society. We invite all people to join us in our faith journey toward greater love, understanding, and mutual respect.

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (*RESPONSIVE, INSPIRED BY PSALM 34*)

*\*An asterisk indicates when the people stand in body or spirit. Bolded text indicates when the people speak.*

*One:* Look to the Holy One and be radiant! Bless God at all times.

*All:* **We praise God who is with us. We honor God who sustains, redeems, and delivers.**

Look to the Holy One and be radiant! Boast in the Holy One.

**We seek the Holy One who hears our cries with grace, mercy, and compassion.**

Look to the Holy One and be radiant! Magnify God with me.

**O taste and see, hear and proclaim, touch and know that God is good. Bless the Holy One!!**

\*OPENING PRAYER (*TOGETHER*)

**Source of goodness we long to see your face and hear you call our name. We seek your grace and are eager to follow the way of Jesus. Meet us in our deepest needs and call us forth to journey with you and one another, and our neighbors in need. Amen**

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

\*SINGING TOGETHER:

“O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing” Black #42

**O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise,  
The glories ever echoing the triumphs of God's grace!**

**My gracious Savior and my God, assist me to proclaim,  
To spread through all the earth abroad the honors of your name.**

**Jesus! the name that calms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease  
Is music in the sinner's ears, is life, and health, and peace!**

**Glory to God, and love and praise be ever, ever given  
By all the saints in every age, the church in earth and heaven.**

### **We Pray for Transformation and New Life**

INTRODUCTION

In confessing our sins to our loving God, and learning to forgive the people who have hurt us, our painful feelings and attitudes towards ourselves and others are transformed, and we grow to love ourselves and others as God loves us. Let us pray.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*TOGETHER*)

**O God, we confess that we have lost sight of you, and as we have lost sight of you, we have lost your compassion for our neighbors. We've come to rely on what others say about you, rather than struggling to see you for ourselves. Our doubts keep us from trying to look, from taking time to pray. And we have failed to see our neighbors as your children. Open our hearts fully to compassion and companionship with our neighbor and your vision of a beloved kingdom come.**

*Time of silent confession.*

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

Our God, who has reached out to us in love, welcomes even our timid answers. God is most generous in blessing us and lifting us beyond our losses and our fears. In Christ, we are linked with God's saving grace. Let us take heart, and praise God, recognizing that God has the power to heal.

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*(As a sign of our deep fellowship and communion with God and with one another, let us greet one another with a handshake or peace sign and bless one another with the peace that comes from being in Christ.)*

The passing of Christ's peace in worship is practice for working for peace with each person we meet each day. The peace of Christ be with you!

**And also with you!**

Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

\*SUNG RESPONSE

“We Stand Humbly in God's Grace” Sing! #24, chorus  
**We stand humbly in God's grace as we worship in this place.  
Joy will be complete as we reach out to those in need.  
We stand humbly in God's grace as we worship in this place.  
Here we join our songs of praise with all the human race.**

**We Listen for God's Word**

MINISTRY THROUGH MUSIC

“A Place for Healing Grace” Heather Sorenson

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Loving God may your Holy Spirit help us to hear what you are saying to us, and to do what you are calling us to do as followers of Jesus Christ. Amen.

RESPONSIVE PSALTER READING

PSALM 34:1-8

*Praise for deliverance from trouble. Our responsive reading begins.*

I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

**My soul makes its boast in the Lord;  
let the humble hear and be glad.**

O magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together.

**I sought the Lord, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.**

Look to him, and be radiant,  
so your faces shall never be ashamed.

**This poor soul cried and was heard by the Lord  
and was saved from every trouble.**

The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him and delivers them.

**O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.**

GOSPEL READING

MARK 10:46–52

*The healing of blind Bartimaeus. Hear the Good News.*

<sup>46</sup>They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. <sup>47</sup>When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” <sup>48</sup>Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” <sup>49</sup>Jesus stood still and said, “Call him here.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you.” <sup>50</sup>So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. <sup>51</sup>Then Jesus said to him, “What do you

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

want me to do for you?” The blind man said to him, “My teacher,<sup>a</sup> let me see again.”<sup>52</sup> Jesus said to him, “Go; your faith has made you well.” Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

May these words of scripture speak life into your spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

MEDITATION:

“Going Against the Flow”

Pastor Dave

SINGING TOGETHER

“Stay With Us”

Sing! #93

**Stay with us, till night has come: our praise to You this day be sung.**

**Bless our bread, open our eyes:**

**Jesus, be our great surprise.**

**Walk with us, our spirits sigh: hear when our weary spirits cry,**

**feel again our loss, our pain:**

**Jesus, take us to your side.**

**Walk with us, the road will bend: make all our weeping, wailing end.**

**Wipe our tears, forgive our fears:**

**Jesus, lift the heavy cross.**

**Talk with us, till we behold a joyful life you will unfold:**

**heal our eyes to see the prize:**

**Jesus, take us to the light.**

**Stay with us, till day is done: no tears nor dark shall dim the sun.**

**Cheer the heart, your grace impart:**

**Jesus, bring eternal life.**

## **We Respond to God’s Word**

A TIME FOR PRAYER

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

*You are invited to share joys and concerns we can pray for together. Let our sharing itself be an act of prayer.*

ENTERING INTO PRAYER:

“Open My Eyes, Lord”

Brown #486 v. 1

**Open my eyes, that I may see Glimpses of truth You have for me;**

**Place in my hands the wonderful key That shall unlock and set me free.**

**Silently now I wait for You, Ready, my God, Your will to do;**

**Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life’s journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE

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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

ENCOURAGEMENT TO SHARING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*You are invited to place your gifts in the offering basket as you arrive or depart from our worship together.*

Generosity begins as a decision from the heart. It reflects care and concern for the needs of the world as well as trust for the abundance and plenty of God's creation. Let us give from the gifts we have been given as a sign and act of faithfulness.

DEDICATING OUR OFFERING (TOGETHER)

**Loving God, bless us with increased generosity, trust, and faithfulness. Receive these gifts as an offering of praise. May needs be met, lives be changed, and hearts be warmed through our giving. Amen.**

## We Come to the Lord's Table

INVITATION

Before Jesus shared the last meal with his disciples and friends, Isaiah had already proclaimed God's welcome to the feast. Our faith already had known overwhelming abundance and hospitality, but we so easily forget. We worry that we don't deserve goodness. We think that we have to be more perfect or more faithful to be at Christ's table. But that's not what God wants for us. God wants us to imagine enough at every table, starting with this one.

So come to this table. Come to this table no matter who you are or what your journey to this moment has been. Come to this table celebrating your background, celebrating who you love, celebrating your age and place in life, and celebrating your uniqueness. There's no entry fee and there's an unlimited number of spaces. Come to this table bringing all that you are because God's covenant of love is everlasting, unbreakable and true. This is Christ's Table and a place is saved for you.

THE COMMUNION PRAYER (RESPONSIVE)

Prophetic God, in the midst of our lives you call us to be disciples: to be learners and teachers, to be followers and leaders, to be servants, and yet to speak the truth in love. You lead us through our encounters with Christ to new ways of living. You offer us healing, and you call us to offer the same to others.

**Now in this sacred time we recall Jesus' challenge to us to serve others with humility and love. And we offer that loving service to others who cross our paths, inviting all to come and share this blessed banquet.**

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

In simple bread and wine and juice you offer a meal that can always satisfy, that fills our longing for a deep connection with your sacred presence. As we share in this holy feast may we remember and feel newly and joyfully reconnected with the Christ and with one another. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION (*RESPONSIVE*)

Now as Jesus' disciples were eating the night before Jesus died, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke it, and shared it with the disciples, people just like us, and said: "Take, eat: This is my body."

**In the same way, after supper Jesus took a cup, gave thanks, and shared it with people just like us, saying: "This cup is my blood, my new covenant with you. Each time you drink this cup, remember me."**

According to his command and promise of presence, we affirm the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again.**

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Bless now both us and these gifts of bread and drink by your Holy Spirit, that we may be united with Christ and with one another as we share this sacred meal. Strengthen us in faith, so that we become a blessing to one another and to your whole world. Amen.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

Through the broken bread, we participate in the body of Christ.

Through the cup of blessing we participate in the new life Christ gives us. Come, for all things are ready.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (*TOGETHER*)

Let us give thanks.

**We give thanks, O God, because in your own free gift of love you have reached out to us. You have refreshed us at your table, touched our deepest needs, and called us to a life shared in memory and hope. Send us forth with courage and joy in the name of Jesus Christ that we, too, may become bread and healing peace for one another and the world. Amen.**

## We Go Out to Serve

\*SINGING TOGETHER

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

Black #439

**A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing,  
Our present help amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe does seek to work us woe  
with craft and power great, and armed with cruel hate,  
on earth without an equal.**

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**



**Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,  
But there is one who takes our side, the One of God's own choosing.  
You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus sets us free!  
With mighty power to save, victorious o'er the grave,  
Christ will prevail triumphant.**

**And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear for God has willed the truth to triumph through us.  
The powers of evil grim, we tremble not for them;  
their rage we can endure, for lo, their doom is sure:  
one little word shall fell them.**

**That word beyond all earthly powers forever is abiding;  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours, for Christ is with us siding.  
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;  
the body they may kill; God's truth shall triumph still;  
God's reign endures forever.**

**\*GOOD WORDS FOR GOING FORTH**

Beloved, go now in the blessing of Christ's mercy. May God grant you persistence to cry out for help, an open heart to notice the cries of others, and the courage to listen and lend a loving hand to neighbors known and unknown. Amen.

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

**"Go, My Children, with My Blessing"**

**Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone;  
waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own;  
in my love's baptismal river I have made you mine forever, Go, my children,  
with my blessing, you are my own.**

**TAKE WITH YOU GOD'S GIFT OF MUSIC**

**WE RETURN TO THE WORLD**

**RENEWED AND EMPOWERED BY GOD'S SPIRIT**

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*Much of the liturgy is adapted from Take Heart: Service Prayers for the Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost Year B was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay who serves as Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.*

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