**St. John United Church of Christ**

***“In Christ We Live, Celebrate, & Serve”***

October 4, 2020 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Pastor: Karla J. Frost Organist: Ritch Alexander

10:30 Worship (618) 877-6060

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**WE COME TO WORSHIP GOD**

**To follow safety guidelines**

**please keep social distance and do not sing.**

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A STORY FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN

“Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:13b-14)

PRELUDE *Reflection* Psalm 72:3

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Today we gather around the Lord’s Table from near and far.

***Whether gathered or scattered we are the Body of Christ.***

Though we may differ in language, custom, and tradition,

***We are brothers and sisters in Christ!***

There is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism.

***There is one God and Father of us all.***

May the Holy Spirit bless the world communion of the Church

   this day.

***For through Christ we are one family of God.***

Let us pray:

***Holy and gracious God, let us be open to your Spirit’s presence here and among all your people living throughout creation. Unite us in worshiping and honoring you alone, this Sabbath day and always.***

-2-

***Unite us in caring for your good creation. Unite us and help us press on toward the goal of justice and righteousness, of peace and goodwill for all. Unite us, we pray, and inspire us for life-long service. Amen.***

\*HYMN ***“In Christ There Is No East or West”***

Words: Michael Perry from a line by John Oxenham. Music: African-American Melody; arr Harry T. Burleigh. Words © 1982 Jubilate Hymns (Admin. Hope Publishing Company). Lyrics reprinted by permission, CCLI License #1334401

***In Christ there is no east or west, in him no pride of birth;***

***the chosen family God has blessed now spans the whole wide earth***

***For God in Christ has made us one from every land and race;***

***has reconciled us through his Son and met us all with grace.***

***It is by grace we are assured that we belong to him;***

***the love we share in Christ our Lord, the Spirit’s work within.***

***So brothers, sisters, praise his name who died to set us free***

***from sin, division, hate and shame, from spite and enmity!***

***In Christ there is no east or west—he breaks all barriers down,***

***by Christ redeemed, by Christ possessed, in Christ we live as one.***

LITANY OF CONFESSION (Prayer from Reformed Worship)

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us confess our sins before God and one another.

***God of Grace, we grieve that the church which shares one Spirit, one faith, one hope, and one calling, has become a broken communion in a broken world. The one body spans all time, place, race, and language,  
but in our fear we have fled from and fought one another, and in our pride we have mistaken our part for the whole.  We marvel that you gather together the pieces to do your work, that you bless us with joy, with growth, and with signs of unity.  Forgive our sins as we commit ourselves once more to seeking and showing the unity of the body of Christ, for it is in Christ’s name we pray.  Amen.***

-3-

Hear the words of Jesus. “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

***As we promise together to fulfill the Law of Love, Christ is with us.***

We are united with him, and with one another.

***And we are made whole again.***

SOLO  *How Great Thou Art* Ritch Alexander

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

PSALTER READING Psalm 19

MEDITATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LORD’S PRAYER

***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.***

INVITATION TO COMMUNE, AS INSPIRED BY THE SPIRIT

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In Luke’s Gospel we read that Jesus, at the table with two of the disciples, took bread and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, and their eyes were opened, and they recognized the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread. In the Acts of the Apostles we read that as the church was gathered, often in the homes of believers, Christians devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and community, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers.

***Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, we gather at your table everywhere, to know you in the breaking of the bread.***

COMMUNION PRAYER

PARTAKING OF THE ELEMENTS

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

-4-

***Lord, we thank you for inviting us to your Table. In your name, we have received the bread of life and cup of blessing in unity with the faithful around the earth. As we leave this time together, may we go to press on toward the goal of one loving family, on earth and in heaven, now and forever. Amen.***

SONG PLAYED ON PIANO TO SING OR READ AT HOME

***“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”***

Words: Omer Westendorf. Music: Welsh folk tune; harm. Leland Sateren; Words © 1964 World Library Publications. Music Harm. © 1972 Contemporary Worship 4: Hymns for Baptism and Holy Communion (Admin. Augsburg Fortress) Lyrics reprinted by permission, CCLI License #1334401

***Sent forth by God’s blessing our true faith confessing,***

***the people of God from this dwelling take leave.***

***The service is ended, O now be extended***

***the fruits of our worship in all who believe.***

***The seed of the teaching, receptive souls reaching,***

***shall blossom in action for God and for all.***

***God’s grace did invite us, and love shall unite us***

***to work for God’s kingdom and answer the call.***

***With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,***

***the tasks of our everyday life we will face.***

***Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,***

***embracing God’s children of each tribe and race.***

***With your grace you feed us, with your light now lead us;***

***unite us as one in this life that we share.***

***Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving***

***give honor to Christ and that name which we bear.***

BENNEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Chorale Postlude* Bach

-5-

Exodus 10:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

**20**Then God spoke all these words:

**2**I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; **3**you shall have no other gods before[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+20%3A1-4%2CExodus+20%3A7-9%2CExodus+20%3A12-20&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-2055a)] me.

**4**You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

**7**You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

**8**Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. **9**Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

**12**Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

**13**You shall not murder.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+20%3A1-4%2CExodus+20%3A7-9%2CExodus+20%3A12-20&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-2065a)]

**14**You shall not commit adultery.

**15**You shall not steal.

**16**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

**17**You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

**18**When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+20%3A1-4%2CExodus+20%3A7-9%2CExodus+20%3A12-20&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-2070b)] and trembled and stood at a distance, **19**and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die.” **20**Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.”

Psalm 19

The heavens are telling the glory of God;  
    and the firmament[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+19&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-14170a)] proclaims his handiwork.  
**2**Day to day pours forth speech,  
    and night to night declares knowledge.  
**3**There is no speech, nor are there words;  
    their voice is not heard;  
**4**yet their voice[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+19&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-14173b)] goes out through all the earth,  
    and their words to the end of the world.

-6-

In the heavens[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+19&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-14173c)] he has set a tent for the sun,  
**5**which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,  
    and like a strong man runs its course with joy.  
**6**Its rising is from the end of the heavens,  
    and its circuit to the end of them;  
    and nothing is hid from its heat.

**7**The law of the Lord is perfect,  
    reviving the soul;  
the decrees of the Lord are sure,  
    making wise the simple;  
**8**the precepts of the Lord are right,  
    rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the Lord is clear,  
    enlightening the eyes;  
**9**the fear of the Lord is pure,  
    enduring forever;  
the ordinances of the Lord are true  
    and righteous altogether.  
**10**More to be desired are they than gold,  
    even much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey,  
    and drippings of the honeycomb.

**11**Moreover by them is your servant warned;  
    in keeping them there is great reward.  
**12**But who can detect their errors?  
    Clear me from hidden faults.  
**13**Keep back your servant also from the insolent;[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+19&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-14182d)]  
    do not let them have dominion over me.  
Then I shall be blameless,  
    and innocent of great transgression.

**14**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
    be acceptable to you,  
    O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

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***Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, we gather at your table everywhere, to know you in the breaking of the bread.***

COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Holy God, we praise and bless you for creation and the gift of life, and for your abiding love which brings us close to you, the source of all blessing. We thank you for revealing your will for us in the giving of the law and in the preaching of the prophets. We thank you especially that in the fullness of time you sent Jesus, born of Mary, to live in our midst, to share in our suffering, and to accept the pain of death at the hands of those whom Jesus loved. We rejoice that in a perfect victory over the grave you raised Christ with power to become sovereign in your realm. We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to gather your church by which your work may be done in the world and through which we share the gift of eternal life. With the faithful in every place and time, we praise with you your holy name. Consecrate, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and wine, and bless us that as we receive them we may offer you our faith and praise, we may be united with Christ and with one another, and we may continue faithful in all things. In the strength Christ gives us, we offer ourselves to you, eternal God, and give thanks that you have called us to serve you in his name. Amen.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

For on the night in which he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to his disciples, telling them “This is my body, broken for you.” And in the same manner after the meal, Jesus took the cup, and when he had given thanks he poured it out and shared it with his disciples, telling them “this cup is the new covenant of my blood, which is poured out for all.”

As often as we do this, we do it in remembrance of him.

And now, the Spirit is present at our various tables, uniting us at one table, the Lord’s table.

Take and eat, the body of Christ, broken for you.

Take and drink, the blood of Christ, shed for the forgiveness of sins of all.

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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