

ORDER OF VIRTUAL WORSHIP

October 31, 2021

10:00 A.M.

*Welcome to Worship at the virtual Ellington Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ. We're happy to have you with us this morning.*

Our Church Mission Statement

*To be a dynamic and nurturing community
called by God's grace
to know Christ and make Him known
through worship, love, and service.*

Adopted September 15, 2019



TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

REFORMATION SUNDAY

**STEWARDSHIP MONTH – RECEIVING AND
DEDICATING PLEDGES**

WELCOME

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

UNISON CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 146:1-10 (CEB)

All: ¹⁴⁶ Praise the LORD!

Let my whole being praise the LORD!

² I will praise the LORD with all my life;

I will sing praises to my God as long as I live.

**³ Don't trust leaders;
don't trust any human beings—
there's no saving help with them!**

**⁴ Their breath leaves them,
then they go back to the ground.
On that very same day, their plans die too.**

**⁵ The person whose help is the God of Jacob—
the person whose hope rests on the LORD their God—
is truly happy!**

**⁶ God: the maker of heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,
God: who is faithful forever,
⁷ who gives justice to people who are oppressed,
who gives bread to people who are starving!
The LORD: who frees prisoners.**

**⁸ The LORD: who makes the blind see.
The LORD: who straightens up those who are bent low.
The LORD: who loves the righteous.**

**⁹ The LORD: who protects immigrants,
who helps orphans and widows,
but who makes the way of the wicked twist and turn!**

**¹⁰ The LORD will rule forever!
Zion, your God will rule from one generation to the next!
Praise the LORD!**

HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #527

More Love to Thee, O Christ

¹ *More love to thee, O Christ,
more love to thee!
Hear thou the prayer I make
on bended knee;*

*this is my earnest plea,
more love, O Christ, to thee,
more love to thee,
more love to thee.*

² *Once earthly joy I craved,
sought peace and rest;
now thee alone I seek,
give what is best;
this all my pray'r shall be,
more love, O Christ, to thee,
more love to thee,
more love to thee.*

³ *Let sorrow do its work,
send grief and pain;
sweet are thy messengers,
sweet their refrain,
when they can sing with me,
more love, O Christ, to thee,
more love to thee,
more love to thee.*

⁴ *Then shall my latest breath
whisper thy praise;
this be the parting cry
my heart shall raise;
this still its pray'r shall be,
more love, O Christ, to thee;
more love to thee,
more love to thee.*

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Merciful God, give us understanding that we may keep your commandments through Christ and observe them in our hearts.

All: **Dear God, we ask that you forgive us when we stray from your path.**

One: At times, we do not serve our neighbor even though Christ commands it of us.

All: **Dear God, we ask that you forgive us when we stray from your path.**

One: Sometimes we are selfish and not trustworthy.

All: **Dear God, we ask that you forgive us when we stray from your path. May we walk in new life. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Pastor: In Scripture, Hebrews 9:14, we hear this testimony that affirms our pardon: "Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself as a perfect sacrifice for our sins." In Christ Jesus we are forgiven. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI

Chalice Hymnal #35

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever-shall be,
world with-out end. A-men. A-men.*

ENGAGING THE WORD

NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLE LESSON

Hebrews 9:11-14 (NLT)

¹¹ So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come. He has entered that greater, more perfect Tabernacle in heaven, which was not made by human hands and is not part of this created world. ¹² With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever.

¹³ Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer could cleanse people’s bodies from ceremonial impurity. ¹⁴ Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

NEW TESTAMENT GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 12:28-34 (NLT)

²⁸ One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realized that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

²⁹ Jesus replied, “The most important commandment is this: ‘Listen, O Israel! The LORD our God is the one and only LORD. ³⁰ And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.”

³² The teacher of religious law replied, “Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth by saying that there is only one God and no other. ³³ And I know it is important to love him with all my heart and all my understanding and all my strength, and to love my neighbor as myself. This is more important than to offer all of the burnt offerings and sacrifices required in the law.”

³⁴ Realizing how much the man understood, Jesus said to him, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.” And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

MESSAGE

Pastor Joanne, Stewardship Committee, Congregation

“A Dialogue Between Hebrews and Mark”

PRAYER

Chalice Hymnal #460

The Church in Mission

Joanne: Gracious God, we celebrate with thanksgiving your acts of creation, your making all humanity in your own image, and your presence throughout the world in all of life.

All: We thank you for the gift of redemption in Jesus of Nazareth in whom “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.”

Penny: We rejoice that you have never, in any time or place, been without witness.

Cassie: We take joy in making known your deeds throughout the earth and your transforming power in Jesus Christ.

All: Be with your church in every time and place as we seek to be faithful in witness to your power and love. Give us strength to challenge all attempts to deprive persons of their humanity. Encourage us to support all who suffer on behalf of justice and freedom. May your church always witness to the gospel's declaration of the uniqueness and value of all persons as your children.

Bryan: We bless you for your everlasting love that impels us to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Jol: We bless you for witness in the fulfillment of your will on earth, and to prepare the way for Christ to be known deeply in each individual life.

All: We pray in Christ Jesus that the church may forever bring praise to you. Work your power in us to do far more than we dare ask or think. Amen.

~"General Principles and Policies." Division of Overseas Ministries, adapt.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE

Chalice Hymnal #267

Blessed Quietness

Refrain: *Blessed quietness, holy quietness,
what assurance in my soul.*

*On the stormy sea, Jesus speaks to me,
and the billows cease to roll.*

WORDS: Manie P. Ferguson, c. 1897 MUSIC: W. S. Marshall, c. 1897; arr. J. Jefferson Cleveland and Verolga Nix, 1981, alt. Arr. © 1981 J. Jefferson Cleveland; used by permission of William B. McClain // CCLI #1326969

SILENT MEDITATION

PASTORAL PRAYER and THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

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. Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

VIRTUAL OFFERING

Sentence

DOXOLOGY

Chalice Hymnal #46

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. A-men.*

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All: Saving and Loving God, cleansed by your generosity and kindness, sustained by your graciousness, and led by your righteousness, we come before you bearing our gifts. We ask that you bless them and, in our stewardship and discipleship, help us to use these gifts wisely for your purposes here on earth. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

GOING WITH THE WORD

HYMN OF DEDICATION

Chalice Hymnal #453

Called as Partners in Christ's Service

¹ *Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace, we respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace. May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend, equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.*

² *Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth, let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth. Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old, blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.*

³ *Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense, help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence. Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care, bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.*

WORDS: Jane Parker Huber, 1981 MUSIC: John Zundel, 1870 Words © 1981 Jane Parker Huber // CCLI #1326969

RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION

Adapted from Chalice Hymnal #453

One: Let us go out into God's world as partners in Christ.

All: **Inspired by Christ's example, we are refreshed to do God's mission in the world.**

One: May we share with ALL our neighbors, "side by side, and friend with friend."

All: **We have heard Christ's call and by following Christ's example, will bring "new power for strength**

**and action” into the world. We will continue to
praise God! Amen.**

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE Chalice Hymnal #434

God Be with You Till We Meet Again

*¹ God be with you till we meet a-gain;
lov-ing coun-sels guide, up-hold you,
with a shep-herd’s care en-fold you:
God be with you till we meet a-gain.*



CEB – Common English Bible
MSG – The Message
NLT – New Living Translation