

St.Paul's United Church of Christ
Sunday, October 1, 2023
9:30 a.m.
Rev. Robert Fellows

Prelude

Welcome

Ringing of the Bell

Call to Worship

One: God's wisdom is pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity.

All: Our wisdom is none of these things. We compete for knowledge and are too sure of ourselves. Our understanding is insufficient and our compassion is limited by our humanness. We long for certainty and sacrifice too much for its sake.

One: The harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

All: We cannot know with God's wisdom, nor always walk in God's righteousness, but we can come together to share our thoughts, to read scripture, to sing, to pray, and to make peace.

One: Let us worship together.

Invocation

One: Almighty God, you have created a tabernacle for the sun, the moon, and all the lights of heaven and you are present to all things in all times and yet never can be contained.

All: We know that you reside in houses of worship we build with our hands, and that your love always shelters our worshipfulness. Bless and consecrate our gathering in this place and the love we share at this time. May your touch of peace be upon our restless hearts, and may we always in greater reverence find you in our midst. Amen.

***Opening Hymn I Love to Tell the Story #199**

***Sharing the Peace of Christ**

***Gloria Patri 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 without end. Amen.**

Hebrew Scripture Reading: Exodus 17:1-7

Gospel Reading: Matthew 21:23-32

Message for All Ages

*Hymn	Glorious Things	#304
Sermon	Questioning Authority	Rev. Robert Fellows
Prayer Requests	Silent Prayer	The Lord's Prayer

Cares Chorus

I cast all my cares upon you. I lay all of my burdens down at your feet. And anytime that I don't know what to do, I will cast all my cares upon you.

Offering our Gifts

Offertory Music

***Doxology**

**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.**

Prayer of Dedication

Prayer of Confession

God, we come before you as those who have been baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and who seek to be raised to new life in Christ. Yet we confess our fear of death. We fear death as life's ending, and its threat hidden in poverty, conflict, or sickness. We fear death as letting go of old ways, old relationships, old self-understandings. And sometimes we want to build shells to protect ourselves from people who are different from us, from change that comes too fast, from possibilities that seem bewildering.

God, help us trust our lives into your keeping, accept the embrace of your loving arms, and receive your forgiveness and your promise of life eternal in Jesus Christ. Raise us to walk in newness of life, through Jesus Christ, who has promised to be with us always. Amen.

Words of Assurance

*Communion Hymn	Let Us Break Bread Together	#210
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Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

An Affirmation of Faith: *from the Salem Church Covenant*

We covenant with the Lord and with one another and do bind ourselves in the presence of God, to walk together in all God's ways, according as God is pleased to reveal unto us the blessed word of truth.

Prayer of Consecration

Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

O God, we thank you for knowing when we are hungry, before we ourselves know it. We thank you for the friendship of Christ that has a meal ready for us when we are weary and have come up empty, powerless to provide for ourselves, or when we are celebrating as a gathering of believers. Grant us the humility and enthusiasm to keep coming back to be renewed at your table, Christ's feast of love for all the world, now, and in all our days. Amen.

Benediction

***Singing Benediction**

Threefold Amen

#812 NC

* Those who are able please stand