



GRACE UCC
UNIONTOWN

An Open and Affirming
Congregation of the



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

graceutown.com

Grace United Church of Christ November 12, 2023

Rev. Dr. Michael H. Bone, Minister
Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

* When a portion of the service is preceded with an *, you are invited to stand in body and/or spirit.

Words printed in bold are an invitation for you to join in the spoken or sung response.

PRELUDE

Be Alert, Be Awake - DeFrange

*WORDS OF WELCOME

(Pastor and **People**)

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

In this safe space, may God grant us the vision to see the Holy in each other and the Holy in ourselves.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(Liturgist and **People**)

Unless our worship is genuine, it is a waste of time.

Out of the depths we cry to, you, O God. Lord, hear our voices.

Remember the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, so that through his poverty we might become rich.

**Let God's people put all their hope in the Lord. For with God there is faithful love,
and in the Lord is plenteous redemption.
Let us worship in Spirit and in truth.**

***GATHERING PRAYER** (Liturgist & People)
Because of our faith in You, O Lord, we acknowledge You as the source of all that we have and all that we are. Help us to place You first in our lives by becoming more prayerful and more focused on loving and caring for our families and our neighbors in need and by becoming less preoccupied with material things. Help us, Lord to find the true source of happiness and fulfillment that we all seek and that You, alone, can provide. Help us to hear Your call to be stewards of all Your gifts by sharing them for Your purposes. We pray in the name of Christ. Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN** **What Gift Can We Bring?**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION (Liturgist)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (People)
Merciful God, we can hardly imagine not wanting to be wealthy. We fear we won't have enough or that we aren't enough. We don't trust you to provide what we need. God, you have been faithful. Strengthen our trust in your good gifts to us. You know our needs. You know what it takes for the tasks you have called us to. Help us be satisfied when our needs are met and be joyful when we can share with others. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Pastor)

A GIFT OF MUSIC **Come On Down - DeFrange**

READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES (Liturgist)
Psalm 78:1-7
NRSVUE

***CENTERING HYMN** **Breathe on Me, Breath of God**

READING FROM THE EPISTLES

(Pastor)
2 Corinthians 8:1-7
NRSVUE

SERMON

Our Best Gift to God

***SUNG RESPONSE**

(People)

**What can I offer, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise one, I would do my part;
but what I can I offer: all my heart.**

***INVITATION TO GENEROSITY**

(Liturgist)

***DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God, above, ye heavenly host.
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!**

***LITANY OF CONSECRATION AND CALL TO OFFERING**

(Pastor and **People**)

The Lord gathers us into the fellowship of this congregation. Here we share our spiritual gifts and use them to build up the body of Christ. Together we dwell in God's love, praying for one another in the peace of Christ our Lord.

We offer our gifts to honor your holy name and to strengthen one another in faith.

God calls us to commit our treasure, time and talents to the building of the kingdom, to give generously in proportion to the blessings we have received.

Search our hearts and try our ways that we might give to your glory, O God.

Jesus leads us onward in the high mission of the Church. Bless and guide this congregation, Lord, that we might proclaim the gospel near and far, by word and deed, with people everywhere finding new life in you.

We hear your call. We pledge the best of our labors that your glory may be known in all the earth. We offer the symbols of our pledge before you and ask that they might be acceptable in your sight through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE PRAYER OF JESUS

**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.**

CHURCH FAMILY UPDATES

***SENDING HYMN Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?**

***WORDS OF SENDING AND PEACE**

***SENDING RESPONSE Sent Forth by God's Blessing
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 hearts 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 realm and to answer the call.**

POSTLUDE

Great is the Lord - Smith

Attributions: Our Prayer of Confession is adapted from “Worship Resources for Stewardship Sunday January 20, 2008” written by Pauline Bauman and posted on **CommonWord.ca**. Our Pastoral Prayer is inspired by “Waiting and Longing” by Walter Brueggemann in *Prayers for a Privileged People*. Our Words of Sending and Peace were posted by Rev. Susannah DeBenedetto on her blog, **Tea and Theology**.

Grace United Church of Christ

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Live stream can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@graceutown/live>

<https://www.facebook.com/graceutown/live>

WORSHIP LEADERS

Reese Melvin is helping lead worship as our liturgist. Altar flowers are presented by **Dave and Myrna Angell** in Memory of Chuck. Our greeter this morning is **Cheryl Burg**.

Dave Forman, Mike Pirogowicz, Paul Sodergren, and Jim Lynn serve as our Livestream and Sanctuary Technicians and **Tom DeFrance** serves as musician and accompanist.

Reminder...

The Annual Congregational Meeting to elect officers and approve a 2024 budget will be held after worship Sunday, November 19. Please mark your calendar and be ready to attend this important event in the governing of your church.

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

| | | |
|-----------|----------|--|
| Monday | 7pm | Catching Our Spiritual Breath (A time of prayer) on Zoom |
| Tuesday | 9am-noon | Tuesday Crew meets here to work on our building and grounds. You are welcome to join in! |
| | 9am-noon | Office Hours |
| Wednesday | 9am-noon | Office Hours |
| | 10am | Yoga in the Family Activity Center |
| | 2:30pm | Spiritual Council Meeting in Library |
| | 1pm-5pm | Community Sew or Quilt-E&C room |
| Thursday | 1:30pm | Card Club in Library |
| Sunday | 9:15am | Adult Sunday School |
| | 10:15am | Worship Service |



Poinsettia Sign Up

The sign-up sheet for Christmas flowers is posted in the narthex. Sign up for red or white poinsettias that decorate the sanctuary during Advent. The deadline is November 19th and the cost is \$8.75 per plant. Note if your plant is in memory of someone special, in honor of an occasion or simply to the glory of God. Payment may be made through your regular offering, marking it "Christmas flowers."



If you have questions, contact
Lynn Flory.