

Paul United Church of Christ
5312 Old Blue Rock Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45247
Allen M. Fluent, Transitional Pastor
Order of Worship for the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
Stewardship Dedication Sunday
October 10, 2021

(Although we are now holding worship in our building, we are conscious of the ongoing challenge of in-person worship while the coronavirus persists, and the need many feel to avoid the possibility of contagion. Therefore, we will be continuing the practice of sending a worship bulletin to all who are on our mailing lists for email or hard copy. Those who will be worshipping from home and who have computer access will also be receiving a recorded version of the service that will be sent out by email on Sunday afternoon and also can be seen on our Facebook page. We welcome your participation in any way that is convenient for you, and we encourage you to share our worship service with any person you know who may appreciate receiving it.)

Welcome, Announcements and Prayer Concerns

(On this Stewardship Dedication Sunday in our local church, we are using portions of the liturgy and theme Scripture from the Heartland Conference Annual Gathering to remind us that we are connected to the church in all its settings with a common mission for the world.)

Prelude (recording begins)

Call to Worship: The Heartland Conference Litany of Covenant

Our shared journey of faith leads us to grow in mutual love.

Respecting each other's place on our journey of faith;

Extending an extravagant welcome to all;

Nurturing the unity of the One Spirit;

Offering our diverse gifts across all settings, building God's Beloved Community here and now!

Promoting responsible stewardship and sharing of resources;

Answering the call to reach out across the Heartland and beyond to our ecumenical partners;

We seek to extend God's love and justice throughout the world.

*Hymn

“Yes, Yes, a Thousand Times Yes”

Insert

Morning Prayer

Holy God, on this day of dedication, we remember the many gifts we have experienced in this church. For the learnings of our childhood that have stayed with us through the years; for the common meals that we have shared and for the friendships cultivated here; for the projects we have worked on that have brought blessings to others; and for the inspiring testimonies we have heard from faithful witnesses, we give you thanks. Now, on this day of autumn when we bring our promises to you, may our faith and our commitment be renewed, and may the work of your Church bring great blessing to the world. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Hymn #134

“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”

There’s a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know that it’s the Spirit of the Lord; there are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord.

Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us, filling us with your love;

and for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise;

without a doubt we’ll feel that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.

Epistle Lesson:

2 Corinthians 1:15b-22

(This was the text for the opening worship of the Heartland Conference Annual Gathering on September 24, 2021.)

I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on to Judea. Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to ordinary human standards, ready to say “Yes, yes” and “No, no” at the same time? As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been “Yes and No.” For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you - Silvanus and Timothy and I - was not “Yes and No”; but in him it is always “Yes.” For in him every one of God’s promises is a “Yes.” For this reason it is through him that we say the “Amen,” to the glory of God. But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment.

Sermon:

“Our Yes to God”

Pastor Allen

Musical Interlude

Chester Imhausen

Pastoral Prayer

Holy God, your thankful people give you praise as we consider what each of us can do to share in the sacred work that is set out before us day by day. We seek your Spirit’s guidance, God, reminding us of blessings received and urging us to consider how to use our gifts to take part in the church’s calling. There are times when we feel that our efforts are too small to meet the challenges of our time ; but we trust your “yes” that turns our moments of fear into days and years of hope relying upon your strength to multiply what we can do.

God bless this church, which has been for us a sanctuary of healing through many difficulties and a place where opportunities for ministry have been found when we have sought a way to serve. May all who share in fellowship here feel the caring ministry of Christ through our common work, in times of illness and personal struggle, and in times of joy and celebration.

May the ministry of your church be faithful also in our outreach to the vast world where people unknown personally to us struggle with the same real problems that we experience in life; and may those in dire situations due to natural disasters and human misadventures also know the presence of the church in partnerships throughout the world to bring comfort and support to all who are in need.

And now we pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

Our Covenant Promise (in unison)

Answering God’s call to build a just world for all, we commit in our shared life to:

Live the love, unity and compassion of Christ

Collaborate to mutually share our resources.

Communicate with openness and transparency.

Empower generous and responsible stewardship.

And Honor God’s diverse gifts among us.

Dedication of our Commitments

Holy One, may these commitments we place before you today remind us that we have a place in your fellowship and a part to play in your holy work. May the church that you have called into being continue to follow in your way and bear the good news of Jesus Christ in both word and deed, saying “Yes” wherever people hunger for your presence and desire to live in hopefulness and peace. Amen.

***Closing Hymn #688**

“We Give Thee But Thine Own”

*We give thee but thine own, whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.*

*May we thy bounties thus as stewards true receive,
and gladly, as thou blesses us, to thee our first-fruits give.*

*To comfort and to bless, to find a balm for woe,
to tend the lone and fatherless is angels' work below.*

*The captive to relieve, to God the lost to bring,
to teach the way of life and peace – it is a Christ-like thing.*

*And we believe thy word, though dim our faith may be;
what-e'er for thine we do, O Lord, we do it unto thee.*

***Benediction**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you his peace.

Postlude