

Paul United Church of Christ
5312 Old Blue Rock Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45247

Allen M. Fluent, Transitional Pastor

**Order of Worship for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
Harvest Home Celebration – Sunday before Fall Equinox
September 19, 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

Prelude (recording begins)

Opening Praise: Psalm 67 (Common English Bible)

Let the people thank you, God!

Let all the people thank you!

Let the people celebrate and shout with joy

because you judge the nations fairly and guide all nations on the earth.

Let the people thank you, God!

Let all the people thank you!

The earth has yielded its harvest.

God blesses us – our God blesses us!

May God continue to bless us; let the far ends of the earth honor God.

***Hymn #722**

“Praise and Thanksgiving”

**Praise and thanksgiving, God, we would offer
for all things living, you have made good:
harvest of sown fields, fruits of the orchard,
hay from the mown fields, blossom and wood.**

***God bless the labor we bring to serve you;
that with our neighbor we may be fed.***

*Sowing or tilling, we would work with you;
Harvesting, milling for daily bread.*

*You are providing food for your children,
your wisdom guiding teaches us share
one with another so that, rejoicing,
others may know you and praise your care.*

*Then will your blessing reach every people,
all lands confessing your gracious hand.
Where you are reigning no one will hunger,
your love sustaining, fruitful the land.*

Morning Prayer

The Season of Autumn is upon us, God. As our northern hemisphere of the earth tilts slowly from the sun, and the days grow cooler, we think of the gifts the summertime has brought and the harvest of gardens and fields of grain that feed and sustain our world. We give thanks for those who work the fields, and for the abundance we enjoy. We pray for the wisdom to keep only what we need and to share until all the world is fed. May our worship this morning remind us that you are the giver of all good things. In the spirit of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

*Hymn #724 "Sing to the Lord of Harvest"

*Sing to the Lord of harvest, sing songs of love and praise;
with joyful hearts and voices your alleluias raise.
By him the rolling seasons in fruitful order move;
Sing to the Lord of harvest a joyous song of love.*

*God makes the clouds rain goodness, the deserts bloom and spring,
the hills leap up in gladness, the valleys laugh and sing.
God fills them with his fullness, all things with large increase;
he crowns the year with blessing, with plenty and with peace.*

*Bring to this sacred altar the gifts his goodness gave,
the golden sheaves of harvest, the souls Christ died to save.
Your hearts lay down before him when at his feet you fall,
and with your lives adore him who gave his life for all.*

Epistle Lesson:

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.... Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and God will draw near to you.

Gospel Lesson

Luke 12:16b-31

A Parable of Jesus

The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" Then he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry. But God said to him, "You fool! This night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.

Hymn #570*"As Saints of Old Their First-fruits Brought"**

***As saints of old their first-fruits brought of vineyard, flock and field
to God the giver of all good, the source of bounteous yield;
so we today our first-fruits bring: the wealth of this good land,
of farm and market, shop and home, of mind and heart and hand.***

***A world in need now summons us to labor, love and give,
to make our life an offering to God, that all may live.
The church of Christ is calling us to make the dream come true:
a world redeemed, by Christ-like love, all life in Christ made new.***

***With gratitude and humble trust we bring our best to you,
not just to serve your cause, but share your love with neighbors too.
O God, who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ your Son,
help us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.***

Sermon: "A Harvest of Righteousnes"

Musical Interlude

Pastoral Prayer

*Let my whole being bless the Lord!
Lord my God, how fantastic you are!
You are clothed in glory and grandeur!
You wear light like a robe;
you open the skies like a curtain.
you build your lofty house on the waters;
you make the clouds your chariot,
going around on the wings of the wind.
You make the winds your messengers;
you make fire and flame your ministers.
You established the earth on its foundations so that it will never fall....
The earth is filled full by the fruit of what you've done.
You make grass grow for cattle;
you make plants for human farming in order to get food from the ground, and wine,
which cheers people's hearts, along with oil, which makes the face shine, and bread,
which sustains the human heart....
Lord, you have done so many things!
You have made them all so wisely!
The earth is full of your creations!
All your creations wait for you to give them their food on time.
When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand they are filled
completely full!
May your glory last forever! May you rejoice in all that you have made!
Let my whole being bless you, God!*

Psalm 104, selected verses from the CEB

Gracious Spirit at the center of everything that is, all this you have given us – the fields of the earth to plant and till and the harvest to reap. And like the fields, our lives themselves are a gift from you, O God. May the produce from each day we spend preparing and sowing, nurturing and gathering, include treasures of abundant love and memories and hopefulness shared among family and friends until we reach the end of our days in the final harvest that completes our pilgrimage to you. In all the days that are given to us, may we see the signs of your presence in the fields of our labor and the pathways we discover along the way. May we find you in the majesty

of landscapes and in the fragile details of your smallest creatures. May we discover you within the human emotions that we share in times of celebration and times of sorrow or distress. May we find you present in our thoughts as we plan our daily work, and may we search you out when we are called upon to take actions that affect our neighbor and our world.

God, on the day of Harvest, may we not be caught like the foolish person in Jesus' story, with barns too full of things we will not use and an emptiness of soul that cannot be satisfied. May we learn the generosity of spirit that brings abundance to our inner soul.

We lift up in prayer a world that lives too much in fear. We pray for an increase of faith and hope among all the peoples of the earth. May we contribute to hope in the days to come by practicing the welcoming and generous way of Jesus in all our work with others.

May any among us who are sick or recovering or anticipating surgery or finding themselves in need of personal support find within our company a place of healing.

And may this gathering of your people, as we go our separate ways, be retained in our thoughts as a sign that we are forever in your care.

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.

***Closing Hymn #712**

"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 that 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.*

***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