**ST. JOHN’S UCC**

**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**October 5, 2025**

RINGING OF THE BELL

THE PRELUDE

WELCOME AND GREETING

 Whoever you are, and wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.

 **Praise be to God!**

\*RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Psalm 121)

One: Gather, at God’s command, to worship and pray, to honor God with your whole being.

**All: I will lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come.**

One: Our help comes from God, who made heaven and earth.

**All: God is our keeper and protector, shading us from the heat and storms of life.**

One: The sun will not smit you by day nor the moon by night.

**All: God will keep our lives from evil and be with us in all our coming and going.**

\*UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Sovereign God, who commandments guide and teach, strengthen us today to live as You intend. Save us from the distractions of principalities and powers who rule this present age. Hear the supplications of Your saints wherever they gather, that Your church may be filled with true ambassadors of the gospel. To that end, bless our worship. Amen.

SONG #293 Sweet, Sweet Spirit

SCRIPTURE READING Will Wehmeier/Jax Heim

**Micah 6:1-8 God Challenges Israel**

6Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. **2**Hear, you mountains, the case of the Lord, and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the Lord has a case against his people, and he will contend with Israel.**3**“O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! **4**For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. **5**O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the Lord.”

**What God Requires**

**6**“With what shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? **7**Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” **8**He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?

**Matthew 23:23-32**

**23**“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others. **24**You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

**25**“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. **26**You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and of the plate,[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2023&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-23942e)] so that the outside also may become clean. **27**“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you, you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful but inside are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of uncleanness. **28**So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. **29**“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, **30**and you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ **31**Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. **32**Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors.

FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

THE MESSAGE God’s Mic Drop: Justice, Mercy, Humility

SONG (on monitors) Beautiful by Mercy Me

PASTORAL PRAYER (Joys and Concerns)

Lord’s Prayer (unison)

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.

UNISON INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

We have prospered, not because we are deserving, but by God’s generosity. Our worship is in vain if we do not acknowledge the source of all we have and all we are. It is God who has granted life and equipped us to fight its battles. Let us give thanks with our offerings.

BRINGING OUR GIFTS TO GOD #625 (While the offering is brought forward)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise him all creatures here below;

Praise him above, you heavenly host, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

UNISON OFFERTORY PRAYER

In faith and gratitude, we return these gifts that they may proclaim the mystery of Your love and glorify the gospel. May hearts and lives be drawn to You by the witness our offerings will make in this community of faith and among all people You call us to serve. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

SONG #35 O Mighty God, When I Survey in Wonder

ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE