**The Celebration of World Communion Sunday**

**Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**October 12, 2025**

“Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear

 and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death.”

Barmen Confession (The German Church’s confession during WW II)

**RINGING OF THE BELL**

**PRELUDE**

**\*WELCOME AND GREETING**

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

**Praise be to God!**

**\*CHORAL GATHERING “Sweet, Sweet Spirit” No. 293**

**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 know that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.**

**There are blessings you cannot receive till you know that Spirit’s fullness and believe;**

**You’re the one to profit when you say, “I am going to stay with Jesus all the way.”**

**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 know that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you

**As the day rises to meet the sun.**

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

As Jesus once was walking through a region between Samaria and Galilee,

Ten lepers approached him and called out,

**“Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”**

We, like those lepers, have needs we bring to Jesus.

Our illnesses afflict us. Our mortality looms before us.

Our shortcomings weigh heavily on our hearts.

Like those of yesteryear, we call out,

**“Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”**

Come, my friends, as we come before God

Whose steadfast love is from everlasting to everlasting.

**\*APOSTLES’ CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the one, holy universal Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**\*HYMN “To You, O God, All Creatures Sing” No. 17**

**\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

As we come today to your great table, O God, we realize how small we have made our own. Our vision of your grace is too narrow. Our awareness of your mercy is too limited. Our understanding of your kingdom always falls short. We fail to measure up to the people you have called us to be. Hear our prayers and forgive our shortcomings. Raise our eyes, lift our hearts, and inflate our spirits, so that we may live joyfully and abundantly in the manner of Jesus. Amen.

**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Hear the good news: Your call has been answered. Christ has healed you and forgives your sin. With glad hearts, return praise to God.

\*RESPONSE “Glory to the Creator” No. 759

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three-in-One, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

PSALM 66 (Responsively) Jessica Barts

Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth;

**sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise.**

Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! Because of your great power, your enemies cringe before you.

**All the earth worships you; they sing praises to you, sing praises to your name.”**

Come and see what God has done: he is awesome in his deeds among mortals.

**He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There we rejoiced in him,**

who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations let the rebellious not exalt themselves.

**Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of his praise be heard,**

who has kept us among the living and has not let our feet slip.

**For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.**

You brought us into the net; you laid burdens on our backs;

**you let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; yet you have brought us out to a spacious place.**

**THE OLD TESTAMENT** **II Kings 5:1-15 Jessica Barts**

(Elijah and Elisha are two great prophets in Israel’s history. The story we’re about to hear gives witness to one event in Elisha’s ministry.)

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favor with his master because by him the Lord had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from a skin disease. Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman’s wife. She said to her mistress, “If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his skin disease.” So Naamanwent in and told his lord just what the girl from the land of Israel had said.And the king of Aram said, “Go, then, and I will send along a letter to the king of Israel.”

He went, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten sets of garments. He brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, “When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you my servant Naaman, that you may cure him of his skin disease.” When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to give death or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his skin disease? Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me.”

But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, “Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel.” So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and halted at the entrance of Elisha’s house. Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean.” But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, “I thought that for me he would surely come out and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God and would wave his hand over the spot and cure the skin disease! Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” He turned and went away in a rage. But his servants approached and said to him, “Father, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more when all he said to you was, ‘Wash, and be clean’?” So, he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.

Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company; he came and stood before him and said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel; please accept a present from your servant.”But he said, “As the Lord lives, whom I serve, I will accept nothing!” He urged him to accept, but he refused. Then Naaman said, “If not, please let two mule-loads of earth be given to your servant, for your servant will no longer offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god except the Lord.”

**THE GOSPEL Luke 17:11-19 Jessica Barts**

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%2017%3A11-19&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-25655a)] was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten men with a skin disease approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” When he saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus’s feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, “Were not ten made clean? So where are the other nine? Did none of them return to give glory to God except this foreigner?” Then he said to him, “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.”

**SUNDAY SCHOOL SINGING** **“He’s Got the Whole World In His Hands”**

**SERMON ON THE STEPS** **“Those Beautiful Thank You Notes”**

**\*HYMN “I Must Tell Jesus” No. 486**

**SERMON “Once a Commander, Now a Servant”**

**INGATHERING OF PRAYER CONCERNS**

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD’S PRAYER**

**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.**

**THE OFFERING**

A necessary and fitting portion of our worship of God is the offering. As we have been given…..we, in turn give. As we have been blessed…..we, in turn seek to be a blessing to others. Let us express our faith in part through the gifts we give…..

**\*OFFERING RESPONSE “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” No. 780**

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

**Praise God above, you heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**Glory be to you, O God. Our lives are eternally richer and more beautiful because of your gracious love for us. As a gesture of gratitude, we bring an offering as an expression of the joy, hope, and love that you have bestowed on us. Amen.**

**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION ON WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY:**

The United Church of Christ practices an open table. All who are present here this morning are invited to share this sacrament with us. People will come from east and west and north and south to sit at table in the Kingdom of God.

**They will come with hope and they will come with doubts.**

**They will come with faith and they will come with fears.**

**They will come with love and they will come with regrets.**

They will come from all over.

**They will come across all sorts of barriers and boundaries**.

They will come. They will all come for God longs for it to be so.

**Joining God’s people across the globe and joining the saints of every time and place, we come to this table today.**

Everyone is welcome. God longs for it to be so. God longs to feed us – all of us – with the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

**GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also, with you.**

Lift up your hearts!

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise**.

Blessed are you, O God our Creator, whose image dwells in every face of the human family. In the faces of the matriarchs and patriarchs of Israel, we see your desire to raise up a chosen people. In the faces of judges and rulers, we behold the sanctity of your law. In the faces of your priests and prophets, we witness your passion for justice and righteousness. So now, joined with the global chorus of our siblings in Christ around the world, we glorify you and pray for the day when the earth will be filled with the knowledge of you as waters upon the face of the sea.

When the world could wait no longer, you sent your Son into the world to show us your many faces:

**Unexpected child, Unwelcomed refugee, Unhoused wayfarer, Teacher and rebel, Healer and provocateur, Lover of the unlovable, Toucher of the untouchable, Forgiver of the unforgiveable, Loved by the least, feared by authority, friend of the weak, foe of the strong.**

In all these faces, we beheld love’s true form until the world could stand him no longer, so we made him a cross.

**When heaven could wait no longer, O God, you the broke powers of death and raised Christ to new life.**

Come, Mighty Spirit, upon this bread and cup that they may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

As once you set your face to Jerusalem to relieve your people’s suffering once and for all— send now your Holy Spirit to the people of Palestine, starving and tired of being starved… the people of Burundi, impoverished and tired of being impoverished… the people of Ukraine, war-ravaged and tired of being war-ravaged… the people of El Salvador, corrupted and tired of being corrupted… the people of North Korea, silenced and tired of being silenced… the people of the United States, divided and tired of being divided.

By your Spirit unite all peoples in Christ until we feast with him and all the saints in light. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

**BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE CUP**

**SHARING OF THE SACRAMENTAL ELEMENTS**

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**\*HYMN “Guide My Feet” No. 497**

**\*ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION**

**\*POSTLUDE**

**United Church Men and Women----Friday, October 31**

The United Church Men and Women presents, “What We Sing Matters: Sustaining the Church’s Song in Changing Times.” The Singalong Concert and workshop will feature the Rev. Dr. Christopher Grundy on Friday, October 31, 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The event will be held in the Bradley Auditorium at Lakeland University.

**Scholarship Banquet: United Church Men and Women: Thursday, October 30**

Dinner: 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Ebenezer UYCC, 3215 Saemann Avenue, Sheboygan

Cost: $20----register by contacting Darryl at 920-917-8181

Keynote Presenters: 7:30-8:45 Julie Kinney and Rev. Dr. Christopher Grundy

Presentation of Scholarships

Financial gifts to the scholarship fund should be made out to United Church Men and Women, and sent to: Doug Charles, 833 E. Washington Street, Appleton, WI. 54911.