

**ST. DAVID'S (SHERMAN'S) UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

September 26, 2021

9:30 AM

WELCOME

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, one and all to meet God here.

People: **Our only hope is in the Maker of heaven and earth.**

Leader: Come, all who are weary and oppressed.

People: **God hears our prayers and answers us.**

Leader: Come together to sing songs of praises to God.

Unison: **God's glory abides in this place of worship. God's presence and help are real.**

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

May all Your people find favor with You this day, God of majesty and power. Turn our sorrow into gladness. Lift us from our daily preoccupation that we may pray with earnest intent, both to thank You and to be changed by You. Let our prayers be powerful and effective. May our worship be alive and life-changing. May the service we extend find favor in Your eyes. AMEN

OPENING HYMN: "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

Author: William Williams (1745); Translator: Peter Williams (1771)

This hymn is in the Public Domain.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more,
Feed me till I want no more. | 2) Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing streams doth flow.
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through.
Strong Deliverer, Strong Deliverer,
Be Thou still my strength and shield,
Be Thou still my strength and shield. |
|---|---|

3) When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside.
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs of praises, Songs of praises
I will ever give to Thee,
I will ever give to Thee.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so you may be healed. Prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective. We seek that right relationship with God that empowers our prayers and our service.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Compassionate and Merciful God, in our worst moments we despise ourselves. We know what is right but we fail to do it. We are easily deceived by voices other than Your own. When we seek Your face our vision is clouded by self-concern. When we intend to do Your will, easier paths beckon, and we follow them. Forgive us, God, as we repent in dust and ashes. Save us from ourselves, that we might bear Christ's name with renewed confidence. Hear our silent prayers brought to Your throne of grace.

A TIME OF SILENT PERSONAL CONFESSION

UNISON ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

The snares that entrap us are broken. Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth. Prayers of the faithful make a difference. They are powerful and effective. We are changed in the hands of a loving God. We have much to give, beginning with the simplest of gifts, like a cup of cold water offered to one who is thirsty. Praise God, who is transforming us!

HOLY SCRIPTURES: Psalm 19:7-14, Mark 9:38-50

PSALM 19:7-14

⁷The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul.

The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

⁸The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

⁹The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous.

¹⁰They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.

¹¹By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

¹²But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

¹³Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

MARK 9:38-50

Whoever Is Not Against Us Is for Us

³⁸“Teacher,” said John, “we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”

³⁹“Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “For no one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, ⁴⁰for whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.

Causing to Stumble

⁴²“If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. ⁴³If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. ^[44] ⁴⁵And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown

into hell. ^[46] 47 And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where “the worms that eat them do not die, and the fire is not quenched.’

⁴⁹ Everyone will be salted with fire.

⁵⁰ “Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves and be at peace with each other.”

CHILDREN’S STORYTIME

SERMON: “Stumbling Blocks”

LITANY OF DEDICATION

Leader: For the worship of God in prayer and praise, for the preaching of the Word, for the celebration of the holy sacraments,

People: We rededicate this building.

Leader: For the comfort of those who mourn, for the help of those who are perplexed, for the guidance of those who seek strength,

People: We rededicate this building.

Leader: For the support and nurture of families, for the guidance of children, for the calling of youth to a life of service,

People: We rededicate this building.

Leader: For guarding against evil, for fostering faithfulness, for promoting peace and justice in all the earth,

People: We rededicate this building.

Leader: For the opening of minds to Your truth, for the care of the needy, for the giving of hope and courage,

People: We rededicate this building.

Leader: For the unity of all believers in Christ, for the carrying of the gospel into all the world, for the furtherance of the unity of all people,

People: We rededicate this building.

Leader: For the consecration of life and service, for grateful remembrance of those who have gone before us, and in gratitude for our life together in this church,

People: **We rededicate this building to the glory of God, to the honor of Jesus Christ, and to the praise of the Holy Spirit.**

UNISON PRAYER

Eternal God, we offer thanksgiving and praise to You on this festive day. We give You thanks for those who responded to Your call to establish this church 278 years ago. We acknowledge our gratitude for the continuing ministry and mission of our church through the years. We thank you for all that the church has meant to its members, to those its ministry has touched, and to the United Church of Christ. In tender memory, we rejoice at the inspiration which has been founded here, through the preaching of Your Word, through the singing of hymns to Your praise, and through the sharing of life-sustaining sacraments. Look upon us this day with mercy. Bless us as we re-consecrate ourselves to You. Sanctify our lives and our work through this church. Help us to preserve the best of our past and to be open to new vision. May this local church long continue to be a sign of Your Spirit and a witness to Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray as He 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

RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION

Leader: We are called to care in an uncaring world. We are commissioned as lovers among the indifferent.

People: **As Christians we cannot be apathetic. The people we encounter are brothers and sisters.**

Leader: God is our helper, and Christ is our teacher. Our prayers and our efforts will make a difference.

Unison: God is with us wherever we go. The Maker of heaven and earth cares for us.

CLOSING HYMN: "Standing in the Need of Prayer"

Source: African-American spiritual, alt.

- 1) Not my brother or my sister, but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer.
Not my brother or my sister, but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer.

Chorus:

- It's me, it's me, it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer.
It's me, it's me, it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer.
- 2) Not my mother or my father, but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer.
Not my mother or my father, but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer.
- 3) Not my stranger or my neighbor, but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer.
Not my stranger or my neighbor, but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer.