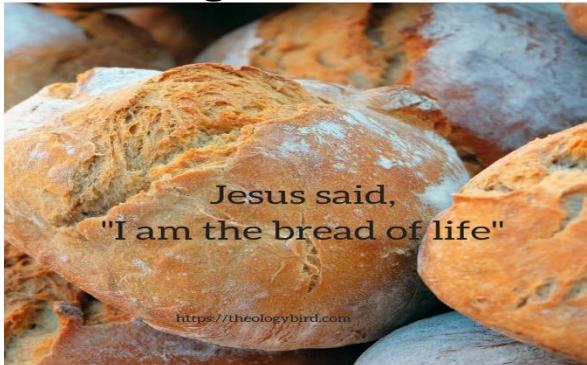


Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 1, 2021



**St. John United Church of Christ
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*Please stand if comfortably able

Please respond with words in **bold** print

(NCH) New Century Hymnal

CCLI LICENSE #11164431

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

PRELUDE: "Commune with Me/Let Us Break Bread Together" KIRK DEARMAN

***CALL TO WORSHIP:** (*a continuation of last week's Call to Worship for Pentecost 9*)

ONE: You call your people to prayer and praise in many ways. This day, bring us together just as you called the people of Israel to gather manna in the desert to eat and sustain life

MANY: God of unity, give us this day our daily bread. Offer us the nutrients we need to remain connected to you. As spiritual beings, we desire to receive food that endures— faith, hope, and love.

God of grace, give us this day our daily bread.
All life is created and nourished by you!

May we grow into new circles of understanding and being, reflecting the ways in which we have been touched by your holy manna.

Holy Spirit, come! Give us this day our daily bread.

***OPENING HYMN: NCH 332 "As We Gather"**

***INVITATION TO CONFESSION:** Please continue your generosity to the church.

***UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION:**

God, we confess that we often spoon-feed ourselves items and ideas that do not provide us the energy we need to do your work.

This creates space between you and us, between ourselves and each other, as members of Christ's one body. Oftentimes, we are willing to risk our sustained health and well-being for immediate satisfaction. (*Moment of silence and reflection*)

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON:**

Through Jesus, we have been given an example of one who was truly nourished and sustained by God. In Christ, we are forgiven, made whole, and restored to the one body.

***GLORIA PATRI:**

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.

GOSPEL: John 6:24-35

²⁴ When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and came to Capernaum looking for Jesus. ²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

²⁶ Jesus replied, "I assure you that you are looking for me not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate all the food you wanted. ²⁷ Don't work for the food that doesn't last but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Human One will give you. God the Father has confirmed him as his agent to give life."

²⁸ They asked, "What must we do in order to accomplish what God requires?"

²⁹ Jesus replied, "This is what God requires, that you believe in him whom God sent."

³⁰ They asked, "What miraculous sign will you do, that we can see and believe you? What will you do? ³¹ Our ancestors ate manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, *He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*"

³² Jesus told them, "I assure you, it wasn't Moses who gave the bread from heaven to you, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ The bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

³⁴ They said, "Sir, give us this bread all the time!"

³⁵ Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

These are the Words of God.
They are true and can be trusted.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

MESSAGE: “Are We Listening?”

Today is the second of five Sundays on which the Gospel lessons are drawn from the Gospel of John. The author is encouraging us to re-think what bread is and why Jesus says “I am the bread of life.” We seem to have a problem with understanding what Jesus means. Does Jesus speak in a language that we are unfamiliar with or are we just not listening.

For example: Jesus spoke of a temple of God, and his audience thought of a building (2:19-21). Jesus spoke of being born anew, and Nicodemus thought of a woman’s womb (3:3-4). Jesus spoke of living water, and a woman thought of Jacob’s well (4:7-15). So here Jesus will speak of true bread, and the crowd will think of their next meal.

SPECIAL MUSIC: “You are My All in All”

D. Jernigan, J. Raney **Flute/Piano Duet**

PASTORAL PRAYER: Beginning with a time for silent personal prayer
Dear God, with such attentiveness you care for your people. Continue to show your provision for the whole human family by inspiring generosity in those of us who share with those who do not. Save us from selfishness that insists in holding on to what we could really spare for the benefit of the truly impoverished.

Encourage governments and both labor and management in our nation and other countries to find ways of sharing ideas and work that will be to the advantage of all who need work and its rewards. Bless agencies of mutual help that bring encouragement to the troubled, whether they be troubled by alcoholism or other addiction, or emotional distress, or single parenting. Break down the pride that prevents some who need such help to seek it for themselves and then in turn share their experience by helping others.

Great Physician, heal those who are suffering from another variant of Covid and give strength to all the medical caregivers who are caring for those affected. We pray for all those on our prayer list that they might find comfort in knowing you are with them in

their struggles. We ask these things in the name of your son, Jesus as we pray the prayer he taught us . .

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed it be your 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.

PRAYER RESPONSE: NCH 769

**Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God;
Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.**

CALL FOR THE OFFERING:

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." Let us offer our loaves and fishes in the service of God's kingdom.

OFFERTORY: "Fill My Cup, Lord" Richard Blanchard

***DOXOLOGY:**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done.
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

O God, we share these gifts in the spirit of those who shared their loaves and fishes: we ask that you take these gifts and use them to feed all of creation—to produce seed and grain, filling humans and animals alike, and to restore wholeness in the places where malnourishment exists. Amen.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts, people of God.

We lift them to our Lord so they might be filled with a new spirit.

Let us give thanks to God who loves us.

May our willing spirits offer praises to the One who feeds us.

Our greatest joy is to offer you our thanks and praise, Creator, Grace-giver, Healer of our brokenness.

All that is beautiful was created for our eyes; all that is wonderful was created for our awe; all that is majestic was created for our praise; all that is mystery was created for our silence. But despite everything you have given us,

we are not satisfied. Believing life is about our appetites, we choose the moldy bread of the world; knowing our only hope is from you, we continue to rebel; called to live in unity with one another, we cling to all which divides us.

Yet you refuse to let go of us, sending your only Son, Jesus, to call us to life in you. We have fallen, and you lift us up; we have forsaken you, and you redeem us; we are broken, and you make us whole. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices, here and now, with the faithful of every time and place, singing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy are you, God of every mercy.
All creation praises one God and Father, one Lord,
one Spirit. Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who gifts all of God's people!
Hosanna in the highest!**

Holy are you, God of grace and tenderness, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Though we look for him for all the wrong reasons, he holds out the bread of life to us; though we offer the cross to him,

he graces us with life; though we thirst for more and more, he offers us the cup of salvation; though we gossip and slander one another, he speaks the truth in love to us; though we would divide each other by class, race, or condition, he calls us to oneness in you.

Recalling your steadfast love in Christ, and knowing we cannot understand your grace until that eternal day when we can know your heart, we take this bread and this cup, praising and blessing you for these gifts of hope and joy. Great is the mystery of faith.

**Christ died, a seeming prisoner of death.
Christ was raised, so all might be freed in
resurrection love.
Christ will return, finishing the work of God.**

Holy God of Truth, though we come to your Table as many, may your Holy Spirit make us one body and one spirit. As you feed us with the Bread of Life, may we feed those who know true hunger; as your justice illuminates our hearts' darkness, may we be a beacon to the oppressed and lost; as you speak to us the truth in love,

may we be a voice for the powerless and forgotten;
as you restore us to wholeness,
may we bind up our shattered world.

Through Christ who saved us, all glory and honor are yours, God, who created us in your own image, through the Holy Spirit, in our midst making us your people, now and forever. Amen.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS:

***UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:**

Eternal God, you have called your people from east and west and north and south to feast at the table of Jesus Christ. We thank you for Christ's presence and for the spiritual food of Christ's body and blood. By the power of your Holy Spirit, keep us faithful to your will. Go with us to the streets, to our homes and to our places of labor and leisure that whether we are gathered, we may be the servant church of the servant Christ, in whose name we rejoice to pray. Amen.

***SENDING HYMN: NCH 533 "Children of God"**

BENEDICTION

Let us go forth in faith in our Nonperishable God, who gives us daily what we need to feed our bodies and spirits. Our common need for nourishment unites us together as the body of Christ. May the holy Bread of Life create sustenance for the journey, calm for troubled stomachs, grace-filled movement for aching limbs, and joyful activity for all bodies as we seek to live in sacred community. Amen.

POSTLUDE: "Happiness is the Lord" Ira Stanphill

**Please
call the office if you know anyone in either
Memorial Hospitals**

PRAYER LIST: Urban Baum, Donna Isselhard, Nelson Libell, Joe Knapp, Jim Garrett, Agnes Doctolero, Julie Walker, David Seneczyn, Cathy Ganschinietz, Warren Neff, Baby Hannah Mosco, Jack Harris, Wayne Huff, Jackie Canterbury.