

The 11th Sunday after Pentecost August 8, 2021



“Where are those who hunger and thirst
for God?”

St. John United Church of Christ
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Rev. Rosemary Captain

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Liturgy - Rev. Bonnie Tarwater

Technologist - Judy Schmitt

Ushers - Christina Hardin-Weiss and Sue
Williams

*Please stand if comfortably able

Please respond with words in **bold** print

(NCH) New Century Hymnal

CCLI LICENSE #11164431

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

PRELUDE: “Come, Now is the Time to Worship”

Brian Doerksen

***CALL TO WORSHIP: (Psalm 130 and John 6:35)**

One: Out of the depths I cry to you, O God:

**Many: We hunger for the bread of life, O Jesus,
and we thirst for you, O God.**

O God, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the
voice of my supplications!

**We hunger for the bread of life, O Jesus,
and we thirst for you, O God.**

There is forgiveness with you and I wait for you O God, my
soul waits, for

**We hunger for the bread of life, O Jesus,
and we thirst for you, O God.**

In your words I hope. My soul waits for you, God,
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning:

**We hunger for the bread of life, O Jesus,
and we thirst for you, O God.**

***OPENING HYMN: NCH 331**

“Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life”

***PRAYER OF INVOCATION:**

God of Healing and Transformation,
we hunger and thirst for your abundant life.

we bring you our sorrow and ask for the bread of joy;
we bring you our despair and ask for the bread of hope;
we bring you our weariness and ask for the bread of
inspiration. Meet us here.

We need the bread of heaven to sustain us for our journey
to find our way, that we may be one with you. In Jesus’
name we pray, **Amen.**

***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 6:35, 41-51

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.

⁴¹ The Jewish opposition grumbled about him because he
said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”

⁴² They asked, “Isn’t this Jesus, Joseph’s son, whose mother
and father we know? How can he now say, ‘I have come
down from heaven’?”

⁴³ Jesus responded, “Don’t grumble among yourselves.

⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless they are drawn to me by
the Father who sent me, and I will raise them up at the last
day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets, And they *will all be*

taught by God. Everyone who has listened to the Father
and learned from him comes to me. ⁴⁶ No one has seen the
Father except the one who is from God. He has seen the
Father. ⁴⁷ I assure you, whoever believes has eternal life.
⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate manna in the
wilderness and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes
down from heaven so that whoever eats from it will never
die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven.
Whoever eats this bread will live forever, and the bread
that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

This the Word of God.

They are true and can be trusted.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

MESSAGE: “Do we hunger and thirst for God?” (With
thoughts from Rev. William Barclay)

What is it that sparks your hunger and thirst? And I don’t
mean physically. What catches your eye? What makes you
wonder? What makes you scratch your head? What
mesmerizes you? When you hear something new, does it
make you say, “I want to know more about that?” Or do
you shy away from something you’ve never heard before?
Do you think, “if it’s new, it must be bad”? Or “that can’t
be right. Have they been drinking too much wine?” (Acts
2:13)

When Jesus said: “I am the bread which came down from
heaven”, those who heard him were very skeptical. “We
know this Jesus, his father, and where he came from.
Where did he get this nonsense?” Why did they reject him
and thus reject eternal life?

First of all, they judged things by human values and by external standards. Their reaction in face of the claim of Jesus was to produce the fact that he was a carpenter's son and that they had seen him grow up in Nazareth. They were unable to understand how one who was a tradesman and who came from a poor home could possibly be a special messenger from God. *(We should not ever neglect a message from God because we despise or do not care for the messenger. However, in our world, how do we know the message is from God. Is the message about love? Does the message sound like something God and Jesus might say? In my opinion the safest way to proceed is to look to the words of Jesus in the Bible.)*

Secondly the Jews listening to Jesus argued with each other. They were so taken up with their private arguments that it never struck them to refer the decision to God. They were exceedingly eager to let everyone know what they thought about the matter; but not in the least anxious to know what God thought. *(Perhaps you have been at a meeting when those present are desirous of pushing their opinions down one another's throats. We would be better to be quiet and ask God what God thinks and what God wants us to do. After all, it does not matter so very much what we think; but what God thinks matters intensely, and we so seldom take steps to find it out.)*

Another reason why the crowd doesn't believe what Jesus is saying is because they really aren't interested in learning anything new. They might have been listening, but at the same time planning their words to rebuke Jesus. The only

listening that is worth while is that which hears and learns; and that is the only to listen to God.

The fourth reason the Jews resisted Jesus was because they refused to be drawn to God. Have you ever been drawn in by a book you are reading or a movie you're watching? Perhaps you were so drawn in that you didn't know where you were or if anyone had walked into the room. You wanted to read on or you wanted to watch the movie to see what would happen next. When you read the words of Jesus, do you get caught up into what he was saying? The Jews WERE NOT. They were resistant to anything Jesus said. When we hear God's words we can be so resistant that we refuse the invitation and command of Jesus and we miss life and instead die lost. The choice is ours.

In other words, to refuse the offer of Jesus as the bread of life, is to miss life in this world and in the world to come; whereas to accept his offer is to find real life in this world and glory in the world to come.

What is your response to Jesus when he offers his life for you? Amen.

MUSIC: "God Be With You Till We Meet Again"
Collinsville Chorale video

PASTORAL PRAYER: Beginning with silent personal prayer
We are gathered here, by the Holy Spirit, or by actual presence in the sanctuary. Our prayers are heard by you, Gracious God, no matter where we are, together or apart. We know you are with us, no matter what.

And we are thankful for that presence, which connects us in many ways. These communal prayers inform us to the joys and struggles of our church family and of our extended family. We can become aware and we can find a need that you, Holy Teacher, guide us to do a deed that fulfills that need.

And there are many people, many places, many organizations, many governments, many communities, many villages, that have many needs. Guide us to do what each of us can to fulfill even just one of those needs.

Today we lift up all those who are in pain, in mourning, in despair, in depression, in unwanted solitude. We pray for all those on our prayer list.

We also pray for all those affected by Covid. WE are anxious to get back to “normal”, however the illness is still with us. Give us patience and caution that we do our best to stay well and safe in this pandemic.

We pray all these things and all those things we can not speak of. Thank you for giving us a prayer we can say together. . .

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.

OFFERING:

Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love. May we give a fragrant offering (*Ephesians 5:1*). The fragrance of the bread of life rising and baking among us is a wonderful reminder of the new life which is arising in our beloved community. Let us give generously as we experience the fragrance of God’s life rising in us.

OFFERTORY: “Jesus, Name above All Names”

Naida Hearn

***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:**

God of love, we give thanks and ask for blessings on all our gifts. May they be pleasing in your sight.

***SENDING HYMN: NCH 454**

“Lord, I Want to Be a Christian”

BENEDICTION:

Jesus said, I am the bread of life.

May we go forth nourished by the bread of life within us. Our spiritual hunger and thirst is satisfied when we honor the God within us. Life is short. Be kind to one another

POSTLUDE: “Postlude in C” George Blake

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