

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LACONIA
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SEPTEMBER 1, 2024 9:00 A.M.

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING AND JUST PEACE CHURCH



Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship**

In deep gratitude we come to worship God.

We recognize God as the source of all goodness.

All good gifts come from the Spirit of God:

love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, gentleness are all of God.

We come with grateful hearts, not for things, but for who God is.

We gather to show our gratitude in song and prayer.

***Hymn 73**

Enter, Rejoice and come In

Prayer of Confession***

Gracious, inviting God, you continually provide us with opportunities to practice generous hospitality. But our fear of difference, reluctance to share, and desire to be in control make our welcome appear weak and insincere. Because we long for what is familiar and comfortable, we have difficulty honoring the stranger as a sacred guest who bears the face of Christ. Worn out and irritated by the work we think we must do, we miss opportunities to receive the gifts that such guests offer us.

Forgive us, O God, for focusing on the wrong things. Show us how to do what is right.

Moment of Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon***

God hears the difficult truths we have named aloud and in the silence of our hearts.

Now let the wonderful gift of God's forgiveness flow through you.

May the abundance of God's mercy and grace set you free to serve God with love.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Sung Response:

Special Music

Scripture: James 1: 19-27

¹⁹You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. ²²But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they

are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. ²⁶If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Sermon

Prayers of the People

Invitation to the Table

Jesus calls us to the well, inviting us to drink of the Living Water, and the life eternal.

Jesus calls us out of the shadows to be entirely known, and entirely filled with God's presence.

Jesus calls us all: all who were made in God's own image, all who breathe the breath of God's spirit.

Jesus calls us to the table, to the meal that nourishes our bodies and binds our dry bones into one Body, living in Christ.

Jesus calls us, here and now. Come to this table, you who are beloved in Christ. Come, not because you must, but because you may.

Communion Prayer

Holy God, source of all being, you are greater by far than our human thoughts can comprehend. With all that you have created, you abide; weeping with us in grief and pain, rejoicing with us in life and love. You are everywhere in this very moment; holding the entirety of living experience and weaving us together in the great and intricate tapestry of Creation. Creator God, parent of us all, in your holy love you took on our limitations. Born of a body, bound within a body, you know the whole of this human experience.

Learning to communicate with words; teaching us to communicate with presence. Learning the fears that wring us dry; teaching us of the love that nurtures us back to life. Everlasting God, you are everywhere and right here. As close as the air we breathe, the air which binds us one to another and all to your beautiful creation. You are as close as the sunlight on our skin, as close as the rain that drips from our hair; the wind and the water that push us and lead us and call us again and again into relationship with one another and with you. Holy Spirit, divine Advocate, guide and encourage us. Stir within our hearts, that we may speak anew the familiar words that Jesus taught us...

Prayers of Our Savior

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 sins, as we

forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Blessing of the Elements

Sharing of the Elements

All of the elements are gluten-free and non-alcoholic. To receive, please come forward one row at a time up the center aisle. Take a piece of bread, dip it into the chalice, and partake; then return to your seats via the side aisles.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the love of the Holy Spirit, that continually creates us in one Body, together with you. Amen.

Mission in Motion Moment

Special Music

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

Holy one, bless all that we bring before you, that our gifts might be used to your glory. Bless us in our offering, that we may more fully become the one Body to which you call us, blessed and beloved, holding within ourselves your holy image. For your love is our strength and our call, now and always. Amen.

Hymn 12

I Sing the Mighty Power of God

Benediction

Postlude

**posted on *The Presbyterian Church in Canada* website. <http://presbyterian.ca/>

***written by Rev. Heather A. Moody. Posted on the United Church of Christ's **Worship Ways** website. <http://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/>

Altar Flowers

In Loving Memory of their mothers, Marie Salvage Duff & Quida McCoy Intorcio
given by Shawn & John Intorcio

Book Club September 25, 2024: [Dutch House](#) by Ann Pratchett

Women's Breakfast September 18th, 8:30am at the Water Street Cafe

Men's Breakfast September 6th & 20th at the Water Street Cafe