



**October 31, 2021**

**St. John's United Church of Christ**

*As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.*

**Called by God  
Sharing with the World**

**October 31, 2021**

**23rd Sunday after Pentecost**

## **Meditation**

The word for today is “encouragement.” In preparation for worship, reflect on how you can be an encouragement to those around you. And may this worship service encourage you today!

## **Chimes**

## **Prelude**

*Leaning on the Everlasting Arms- E Hoffman  
Gale Sterner, percussion*

## **Welcome and Announcements**

## **✠ Opening Hymn**

*Ancient Words*

Holy words long preserved  
for our walk in this world,  
They resound with God's own heart  
Oh, let the ancient words impart.

Words of Life, words of Hope  
Give us strength, help us cope  
In this world, where e'er we roam  
Ancient words will guide us Home.

Ancient words ever true  
Changing me, and changing you.  
We have come with open hearts  
Oh let the ancient words impart.

Holy words of our Faith  
Handed down to this age.  
Came to us through sacrifice  
Oh heed the faithful words of Christ.

Ancient words ever true  
Changing me, and changing you.  
We have come with open hearts  
Oh let the ancient words impart.

## **Lifting up our Joys**

## **Passing of the Peace**

### **✠ Call to Worship (Congregation reads bold print)**

Come, take refuge in the Lord, for God is good.

**From the storms and struggles of life we come.**

Come, rejoice in the Lord, for God will provide peace for you.

**From fear and anxiety, we come to find peace.**

Come, open your hearts to the Lord and you will be given blessing.

**Thanks be to God for the many ways in which we are blessed. Amen.**

### **✠ Opening Prayer**

Pastor Jeff

### **✠ Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

**Helper God, be the hope that overcomes our despair; be the love that overcomes our hatred; be the mercy that overcomes our sin. Set us free from the prisons of our own making, and release us from the bonds that bind us. Forgive us and watch over us. Welcome us home into the loving arms of your mercy. In Christ's name, we pray.**

*Silent pause for reflection*

**Amen.**

### **✠ Assurance of Forgiveness** (*read responsively*)

You are not far from the kingdom of God, for in Christ we are given grace and forgiveness. Praise God for this marvelous gift! **Amen!**

*(the congregation may be seated)*

**Bible Reading**

*Ruth 1: 1-18*

Michelle Sterner-McNutt

**Special Music -**

*Gabriel's Oboe - Ennio Morricone*  
*Carol Aulenbach, oboe*

**Children's Message and Blessing**

Susan McCartney

**Pastor's Message**

*"Ruth: Loss, Loyalty, and Love"* Pastor Jeff

**Music of Response**

*How Great Thou Art*  
*Carol Aulenbach, oboe*

**✠The Apostle's Creed (unison)**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, 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, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.** *(from the UCC Book of Worship)*

**✠Giving our Gifts to God**

**✠Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God all creatures here below.  
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People**

**The Lord's Prayer** *(unison)*

**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**

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*✠ All who are able shall stand*

from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.  
Amen

✠ Closing Hymn

*A Mighty Fortress*

A mighty fortress is our God,  
a bulwark never failing;  
our helper he, amid the flood  
of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe  
does seek to work us woe;  
his craft and power are great,  
and armed with cruel hate,  
on earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,  
our striving would be losing,  
were not the right Man on our side,  
the Man of God's own choosing.  
You ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is he;  
Lord Sabaoth his name,  
from age to age the same;  
and he must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled,  
should threaten to undo us,  
we will not fear, for God has willed  
his truth to triumph through us.  
The prince of darkness grim,  
we tremble not for him;  
his rage we can endure,  
for lo! his doom is sure;  
one little word shall fell him.

That Word above all earthly powers  
no thanks to them abideth;  
the Spirit and the gifts are ours  
through him who with us sideth.  
Let goods and kindred go,  
this mortal life also;  
the body they may kill:  
God's truth abideth still;  
his kingdom is forever!

✠ **Sending Forth and Final Blessing**

✠ **Chimes/Meditation**

**Postlude**

*Preludium in G minor - J S Bach*



*The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God,  
in memory of loved ones,  
Presented by Connie Blood*

***Worship Leader: Pastor Jeff Johnson***

