



November 22, 2020

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**

November 22, 2020
Thanksgiving Sunday

Gathering

Meditation

*“Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today,
and creates a vision for tomorrow.”*

Melody Beattie

Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Give Thanks - arr. Jeff Bennett

Tracey Holler, flute & Gale Sterner, percussion

Opening Song

Come Ye Thankful People Come (v 1,2)

Come ye thankful people come
Raise the song of harvest home
All is safely gathered in ere
The winter storms begin
God our maker doth provide
For our wants to be supplied
Come to God's own temple come
Raise the song of harvest home

Come ye thankful people come
All the world is God's own field
Fruit unto His praise to yield
Wheat and tares together sown
Unto joy or sorrow grown
First the blade and then the ear
Then the full corn shall appear
Lord of harvest grant that we
Wholesome grain and pure may be

Lifting up our Joys

Passing of the Peace

✠Call to Worship

Leader: Come, let us celebrate the wondrous gifts that God has given us.

People: Throughout all our lives, God has blessed us with love and hope.

Leader: Praise be to God who provides for us.

People: May our hearts be truly grateful, and may we show our gratitude by the ways in which we live and care for others.

Leader: Hallelujah!

All: Amen.

✠Opening Prayer

✠Prayer of Confession *(read responsively)*

As we approach Thanksgiving let us take this opportunity to take stock of God's blessings, and to reflect on our response to those blessings. Our Creator, you have made an intricate and diverse world, and set us to cultivate it reverently and responsibly:

Forgive us when we forget our connection with all of creation.

Our Creator, you have made a world of abundance and intend for us to share so that all may have their "daily bread".

Forgive us when we lose the sense of hospitality and community.

Our Creator, you have sent us Jesus, the "Bread of Life" to satisfy our spiritual hunger and thirst.

Forgive us when we do not respond to his justice and mercy.

Every day and all day let us celebrate your goodness.

Forgive us when we fail to turn to you in prayer.

Every day and all day let us shape our very lives by focusing our minds on what is beautiful and worthy of praise.

Forgive us when we forget that you make all things possible. Amen.

Silent pause for reflection

✝ Assurance of Forgiveness

We have offered to God the concerns of our hearts and minds. We trust that God not only hears our prayers but in God's almighty wisdom and awareness of our needs does answer our prayers. We are a forgiven people.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

Bible Readings *Deuteronomy 26: 1-11; Philippians 4: 4-9*

Children's Message and Blessing

Pastor Jeff Johnson

Today's Message

“Dancing for Joy!”

Pastor Jeff Johnson

✝ UCC Statement of Faith

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify: He calls the worlds into being, creates man in his own image and sets before him the ways of life and death. He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through prophets and apostles. In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself. He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races. He calls us into his church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory. He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Prayer of Our Savior *(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
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory
forever. Amen**

✠ Giving our Gifts to God

✠ Doxology *(recited)*

**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.**

✠ Sending Forth and Final Blessing

Closing Song *Come Ye Thankful People Come (v.3,4)*

For the Lord our God shall come
And shall take His harvest home
From His field shall in that day
 All offenses purge away
Give His angels charge at last
 In the fire the tares to cast
 But the fruitful ears to store
 In His garner evermore

Even so Lord quickly come
To Thy final harvest home
Gather Thou Thy people in
Free from sorrow free from sin
 There forever purified
 In Thy presence to abide
Come with all Thine angels come
Raise the glorious harvest-home

Worship Leader:

Pastor Jeff Johnson

Blessings to you from St. John's United Church of Christ in Orwigsburg.

Make Handwashing a Time of Prayer: Washing our hands for 20 seconds is one of the ways to reduce the spread of the COVID virus. How long is 20 seconds? That is sometimes hard to track. However, there is a way that combines adequate handwashing and praising God. The Doxology that we sing during worship, (it starts with "Praise God from whom all blessings flow....") takes approximately 20 seconds to sing. By choosing to sing the Doxology each time we wash our hands we mentally shift our focus from the challenge of living within a pandemic to thoughts of gratitude and the blessings God has bestowed. Focusing on these positives in the midst of our challenges improves our health and wellbeing. Thanks be to God.

The Bible Study for women: "Tis well: walking away from anxiety and into God's world" will now be done as an email study. We will post some readings and reflections once a week and people can respond to all on the email list for discussion. We have heard from a number of people who do not do zoom but who are interested. Please email Kay Jones at kjones8022@aol.com to participate. The day and time will be set by those who join.