



*Matthew 16:24-28*

**TAKE UP YOUR CROSS**

**September 3, 2023**

**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**

**September 3, 2023**

**14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost- Communion**

## **Meditation**

One way to prepare for worship is to simply sit quietly for a while and notice your breathing. It will help you to create a peaceful space and to be attentive to God's presence during the service.

## **Chimes**

## **Prelude**

*Until Then*

## **Welcome and Announcements**

### **✠ Opening Hymn #71**     *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!  
Come, all who hear; now to his temple draw near,  
join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, above all things so wondrously reigning;  
sheltering you under his wings, and so gently sustaining!  
Have you not seen all that is needful has been  
sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;  
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.  
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,  
if with his love he befriends you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.  
Let the Amen sound from his people again;  
gladly forever adore him.

## Lifting up our Joys

### September Birthday Blessings

### Passing of the Peace

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

We gather as a community of compassion and hope.

**Jesus calls us to care for each other tenderly and willingly.**

By this caring and sharing we will be known as followers of Jesus.

**By our example others may be led to lives of peace.**

Lord, open our hearts and minds this day to your word.

**Teach us to serve you with all our gifts and talents.**

#### ✠ **Opening Prayer**

Pastor Jeff

#### ✠ **Prayer of Confession**

**Gracious Giver of all that we have and are, we confess that we are often slow to give thanks and to share, and to forgive. Sometimes we deny our oneness with all your creatures, and seek only after our own interests. Challenge us with a vision for all people, that we may commit our lives to your mission in the world; for we belong to you.**

*Silent pause for reflection*

**Amen.**

#### ✠ **Assurance of Forgiveness**

God is compassionate and does not deal with us according to our sins, but casts them as far away from us as the east is from the west. Free of the mistakes of the past, we can begin again. **Thanks be to God!**

#### **Bible Readings**

*Isaiah 55:6-11; Matthew 16:21-28*

Elaine Miller

#### **Choir Anthem**

*Bread of Life - Joel Raney*

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✠ *All who are able shall stand*

**Children's Message**

Pastor Jeff

**Pastor's Message**

*"Making It or Faking It?"*

Pastor Jeff

### **✠ The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### **Giving our Gifts to God**

**Offertory**

*Devotion - Paul Dom Benoit*

**✠ 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.**

## **Sacrament of Holy Communion**

**✠ Communion Hymn #479** *Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross (vs1)*

Jesus, keep me near the cross,  
There a precious fountain;  
Free to all, a healing stream,  
Flows from Calvary's mountain.

In the cross, in the cross  
Be my glory ever,  
Till my ransomed soul shall find  
Rest beyond the river.

**✠ Invitation to the Table**

**✠ Communion Prayer**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Nourished at this table, O God, may we know Christ's redemptive love and live a new life in him. Help us who recognize our Lord in the breaking of bread to see and serve him in all whose lives are broken. Give us who are fed at his hand grace to share our bread with the hungry and with the hungry of heart. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes in final victory, and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm. Through Christ, all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, now and forever.

Therefore we join our voices with all the saints and angels and the whole creation to proclaim the glory of your name:

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*✠ All who are able shall stand*

## †Sanctus

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of thy glory, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!**

*(the congregation may be seated)*

## Words of Institution

Hear the words of the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ...Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

**All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

## The Blessing of the Elements

Pastor Jeff

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

**Amen**

The gifts of God for the people of God. Prepare your hearts for all things are ready.

## Partaking of the Elements

Take and eat; this is the body of Christ, broken for you. **Amen!**

Take and drink; this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you. **Amen!**

## †Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your spirit to give ourselves for others. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**

**✠ Closing Hymn #589**    *O Master Let me Walk With Thee*

O Master, let me walk with thee  
in lowly paths of service free;  
tell me thy secret: help me bear  
the strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move  
by some clear, winning word of love;  
teach me the wayward feet to stay,  
and guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me thy patience--still with thee  
in closer, dearer company,  
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,  
in trust that triumphs over wrong;

In hope that sends a shining ray  
far down the future's broadening way,  
in peace that only thou canst give,  
with thee, O Master, let me live.

**✠ Sending Forth and Final Blessing**

**✠ Threefold Amen**

**✠ Chimes/Meditation**

**Postlude**

*Postlude in G Major - J S Bach*