

September 20, 2020

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude: “Be Thou My Vision”
-arr. Wood

Welcome

Announcements for September 20, 2020

Heifer International and Quarters

This is a reminder to bring your quarters to church on Sunday morning. The Heifer Quarter Tower is in the sanctuary waiting for them.

Right now, Heifer International has a donor that will TRIPLE any donation made! This is a great time to help someone far away from PA to get their lives back on track by sending a “people” family a family of goats or hens.

If you can't make it to church on Sunday, mail your donations to PUCG, mark the envelope Heifer or contact Heifer International directly at [Heifer.org](https://www.heifer.org) to donate.

Call to Worship

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

One: The Holy One bends low,

ALL: at home with the humble,

One; Taking up residence in the contrite heart

ALL: And forming all people in God's image.

One: Come, let us worship.

ALL: Let us offer thanksgiving and praise to God.

(UCC BOW)

Call to Confession

When we consider our lives, we realize that it is easier for us to complain about the good fortune of others, than to rejoice with them. We find ourselves falling into jealousy, envy, and even bitter rivalry. Surely, we need to repent.

Prayer of Confession

O God,

ALL: We are people of the flesh more than people of the spirit. Our lives are not worthy of the gospel of Christ. We admit our resentment when some people, we deem unworthy, benefit from your generosity. We confess our lack of attention to your laws, your living Word, your prompting Spirit. You alone are our salvation, our healing, our high opportunity to serve. We choose to belong to you. Accept and change us, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

God has offered us a presence we have not recognized and compassion we have not deserved. Let us rejoice in God's amazing generosity, opening our lives to gifts of God, that we might share these gifts with others. Praise be to our generous God! Amen. (from Taught By Love, Lavon Bayler, c1998 United Church Press)

Prayer of Invocation

We come before you, O God,
And wait for the kindling flame of your Holy Spirit,
Calling us into fuller and richer lives.
You have blessed us by the night's rest
And by morning's light.
Open us to your claim on us.
Show us your way,
Let us live in the spirit of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

(UCC BOW)

Matthew 20:1-16

²⁰ “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage,^[a] he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴ and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’

Matthew 20:1-16

⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage.[]] ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. [c]

Matthew 20:1-16

And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³ But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?'

Matthew 20:1-16

¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous? ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Philippians 1:21-30

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Philippians 1:21-30

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Solo: “Let There Be Peace on Earth”
-sung by Dana Heimbach

Sermon: “What Did He Say-the Challenge of
Living in a Manner Worthy of the Gospel
of Christ”

Hymn: “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

A Time For All and Prayer of Dedication

One: When our eyes are heavy, we dream of another world.

ALL: When our spirits are low, we turn to each other.

One: When our anger flares, we need each other's gifts
most.

**ALL: We give our gifts of tithes and offerings to create your
kingdom of heaven.**

One: O God, you have called your laborers to give their gifts.

**ALL: Bless these offerings so that they reflect the work of
the kingdom of heaven.**

With Christ, our servant, we pray. Amen.

Joys and Concerns and Pastoral Prayer

*Benediction (*inspired by Philippians 1:21-30*)

One: Let us continue in our work.

All: Let us live in manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.

One: Let us be in one spirit, striving side by side,

All: Let us find Christ in our struggles,

One: Let us be surprised by the joy in our faith,

All: Let us find you, O God, in all our work.

One: May God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and always.

ALL: Amen.

*Written by the Rev. Elsa A. Cook, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, a budding spiritual director and wandering interim minister. Adapted for online use by Susan Blain. ©2020 Local Church Ministries UCC.

Postlude: “Allegro”
-Scarlatti