

# **Venice United Church of Christ**

**October 5, 2025**

**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**World Communion Sunday**

**Rev. Barbara Dickason, BCC**

**Sermon: “Preparing Supper”**

**United in Christ’s love,**

**A just world for all**

**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost  
World Communion Sunday  
October 5, 2025**

**Singing Prelude    Sing a New Song (2x)    Shutte**

**Sing a new song unto the Lord;  
Let your song be sung from mountains high.  
Sing a new song unto the Lord,  
Singing, “Al-le-lu-ia.”**

**Sing a New Song**

*Refrain (Unison)*

Sing a new song un - to the Lord; let your song be  
sung from moun - tains high. Sing a new song  
un - to the Lord, sing-ing, “Al - le - lu - ia.”

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## Welcome and Announcements

Good morning, Venice United Church of Christ. Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus who welcomes each and every one of us into this sacred space this morning. I am Pastor Barb, Gayle Davis. will be our liturgist today and will be assisting with communion. Today is a very special day here, as we are celebrating World Communion Sunday with followers of Christ around the world. This is a very special time of connection, of awareness, and reminder that we are all a part of the same body of Christ.

Beautifying our sanctuary today, we have flowers given by Dave Van Nortwick: "In loving memory of my bride of 58 years who left us 5 years ago" and by Dee Rogers: "In loving memory of Bob Dube (doo-bee). On our Anniversary and always, you'll be in my heart."

We are also thankful for the ongoing attentiveness of Victoria Augustine for the decoration of our sanctuary and communion table, as well as the preparations for our communion performed by Suzi Benscoter.

Here at Venice UCC, we welcome, affirm, and choose good trouble throughout the year, and also honor this special time of lifting up the unique and beautiful ways in which God has created us all.

For those of us who are worshipping online, whether today or some point in the future, I invite you to like us, share us, and let

your presence be known in the comments so that we can keep each other in prayer. I also invite those of you who are worshiping online to take this opportunity to head to your pantry to find something to eat and drink so that when we bless, break, and share the bread of life and cup of God's new promise, that what you have gathered might also be blessed as you join us at Jesus' table wherever your table may be.

For those of us here in this space of stained glass and compassionate friendship, if you have a prayer request or a joy to share, please make sure that you let us know, whether through the app or by contacting the office, as I want to make sure that we can lift up everyone's prayers as we worship.

For some of you, this is your first time joining us. I hope that you have been warmly greeted and have notated your presence at our welcome table. We are excited to get to know you. We also have an exciting new gift for you, these gorgeous blue stainless steel water bottles.

For in this holy, wonderful, ordinary space,  
as Venice United Church of Christ,  
we empower and invite everyone  
to join us in this divine place  
that we share on line and in person.

For when we gather, everyone is invited,  
no matter who you are  
or where you are on life's journey,  
and no one is turned away.

We do have a few announcements this morning.

Following Worship, everyone is invited to gather for a time of fellowship across the lane in Naar Hall. Many thanks today for Wendy Seeley and Barbara Talmage for organizing refreshments. *(We are invited to join Rev. Ryan and Stacy for cake as they celebrate their anniversary and several family birthdays.)* We are always looking for volunteers to sign up to host; it usually involves being willing to put out cookies from the freezer ahead of time and being able to stay long enough to wipe down the tables after.

So, while you are in Naar Hall, please stop on your way to the table of treats and check out the information and sign-up table. The Fall Sign up lists are out for many volunteer positions, and the sooner you sign up the more likely you are to have your preferred date available.

After you grab your treats, for those you are having technical questions regarding the roll-out of the new app, how to attend a zoom meeting, or how the new buttons for prayer requests work in the app, find Sharon, and she will do her best to help with your questions.

As we do each week, there are two opportunities to gather for Bible Study. Tomorrow, 'Spirit Fed', our Zoom Bible Study, meets at noon. The link is in Friday's Connect and in the app. For those who prefer to gather in person, Wednesday's Bible study continues to meet at 10 in the Conference room. Our Library is also open on Wednesdays for those who would love to check out

our newest reads. On Friday, Men's Coffee welcomes anyone who would like to stop by on Friday mornings at Panera and the Knit-Wits are gathering at 9 for those seeking a similarly minded endeavor into the fiber arts.

We are also preparing for our next new member opportunity. If you have been thinking about being a new member for a while or are just curious what it is about, our first Meet and Greet will be next week, October 12, following worship, followed by two additional get-togethers and new member Sunday on November 9. Hope to see you there!

Whether through worship, meetings, events, or fun activities, there are many ways to connect. For We come to worship a generous, steadfastly loving God, who created and names each of us a beloved child of God.

So Come, beautifully authentic, humbly transforming, faithfully Good-news following body of Christ, and let us Worship God!

## **We Approach God's Presence**

### **Bringing in the Light of Christ**

*Bread of the World*

Bourgeois

### **Responsive Call to Worship**

Come and worship!

In wonder and awe let us unite as Christ's body as we seek the heart of God.

In a world that remains divided and in conflict,  
God is inviting us, to make us one.

**Today we gather around one table, in answer to God's will.**

What do we find at today's table?

**God's love, which endures all things and connects all things.**

What is not at today's table?

**Everything that seeks to divide and separate us from God's love  
and the gift of God's community that we discover in each other.**

Thanks be to God! Make us witnesses of Your love.

**Together let us worship God, who makes us one.**

### **Prayer of Global Invocation**

*video* Pastor General Miguel Tomás Castro

This morning, we are worshipping and celebrating World Communion Sunday with congregations around the world. My dear friend and colleague, Pastor General Miguel Tomás Castro, pastor of la Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel in San Salvador invites us all to join together in our morning prayer of invocation.

*Dear sisters and brothers in Global Ministries, and on World Communion Sunday with the churches, Disciples of Christ, and the United Church in Christ in the United States. From El Salvador, this sister church, Emmanuel Baptist Church, joins you in this moment of witness. Let us pray.*

*God of all mercy, who has blessed us in your son Jesus, Messiah, Redeemer, we want to thank you for all that Jesus has taught us and all that Jesus has bequeathed to us. We are grateful that He exhorts us to remain in this communion of faith and hope, so that we may be one family, one people, proclaiming that Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. We believe that your Holy Spirit will make us more fraternal, more of a family, more of your people, to proclaim the precious message of the Kingdom of God on this earth and in this history.*

*Bless all the work and witness of Global Ministries, as well as all its counterparts in Latin America and throughout the world. May honor and glory be to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer, Amen*

Please rise in body or in spirit to sing *Morning has Broken*:

**\*Hymn**

*Morning has Broken*

Farjeon/Grotenhuis

**Morning has broken  
Like the first morning,  
Black-bird has spoken  
Like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing!  
Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing  
Fresh from the Word!**

**Sweet the rain's new fall  
Sunlit from heaven,  
Like the first dewfall  
On the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness  
Of the wet garden,  
Sprung in completeness**



Where God's feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight!  
Mine is the morning  
Born of the one light  
Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation,  
Praise every morning,  
God's re-creation  
Of the new day!

### Morning Has Broken

The musical score for 'Morning Has Broken' is written in 9/4 time. It features a treble and bass staff with a piano accompaniment. The melody is simple and gentle, with a range of one octave. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The score is divided into three systems. The first system contains the first line of the song. The second system contains the second and third lines. The third system contains the fourth and fifth lines. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat signs.

C Am Dm G Dm G C

1. Morn - ing has bro - ken like the first morn - ing, black - bird has  
2. Sweet the rain's new fall sun - lit from heav - en, like the first  
3. Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing born of the

Em Am Em F G C Am F C

spo - ken like the first bird. Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the  
dew - fall on the first grass. Praise for the sweet - ness of the wet  
one light E - den saw play! Praise with e - la - tion, praise ev - ery

Am G C G Am Dm GW C

morn - ing! Praise for them, spring - ing fresh from the Word!  
gar - den, sprung in com - plete - ness where God's feet pass.  
morn - ing, God's re - cre - a - tion of the new day!

WORDS: Eleanor Farjeon, 1931  
MUSIC: Gaelic melody; arr. Dale Grotenhuis, 1985

BUNESSAN  
55.54D

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## **\*Prayer for Transformation and New Life<sup>1</sup>**

Let us pray our prayer for transformation and new life responsively, as we join our hearts and voices with God's children across the world:

Spirit of Encouragement,  
You thrive in our times of doubt.  
Your work takes root even if the drought of fear destroys our fertile soil.  
Yet we allow our mistrust of you and our neighbors  
to disturb our growth.

**We ask you to increase our faith when we are refusing to cultivate it.  
Motivate us to seek new ways of exploring our faith.  
Embolden us to trust even when fear creeps into our minds. Amen**

## **\*Words of Grace<sup>2</sup>**

Hear these words of Grace:

In seasons of drought and rains,  
God is still giving us the encouragement to grow in faith.  
Know that through the grace of God,  
we will continue to find the strength  
to stretch ourselves and expand our faith.

**Rejoice! Give thanks to God!**

**\*Response**

*Rejoice*

Plumptre/Messiter

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks and sing!**

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<sup>1</sup> **Increase Our Faith: Service Prayers for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost** was written by Rev. Michelle L. Torigian , an ordained UCC minister in Belleville, Illinois. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-17c-october-5/>

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## **We Encounter God in the Word**

### **First Reading**

John 17:20-23

*The Voice*

Hear these foundational words from John 17:20-23 that we deeply love and return to often as we seek to be faithful followers of Jesus together:

20-23 I am not asking solely for their benefit; this prayer is also for all the believers who will follow them and hear them speak. Father, may they all be one as You are in Me and I am in You; may they be in Us, for by this unity the world will believe that You sent Me.

All the glory You have given to Me, I pass on to them. May that glory unify them and make them one as We are one, I in them and You in Me, that they may be refined so that all will know that You sent Me, and You love them in the same way You love Me.

**The Word of God. Thanks be to God!**

**Story for Young People**    *Children of God*

Martin

**Children of God, let's love one another.**

**Love is a gift, a blessing of God.**

**Love one another, sisters and brothers.**

**Love is a gift of God.**

### **Story**

Interactive Activity: **Globe or world map with sticky notes.**

- **Ask kids to write the name of a country they know, or draw a symbol, and place it on the map.**

**Message:**

**In the scripture we just heard, Jesus prayed that His followers “may all be one, just as He and God are one.” That means we’re connected with**

Christians everywhere. On World Communion Sunday, when we share the bread and the cup, we join a worldwide family at the same table. Every sticky note reminds us that believers are gathering there too, and we are united with them.

Discussion Questions:

- How does it make you feel to know kids your age in other countries are also taking Communion today?
- Why do you think Jesus prayed for us to be one?
- Can you think of a time when working together with others made something better or easier?
- What are some ways we can show unity with people who live far away from us?

Prayer:

God, thank you for our worldwide family. Help us remember that we are joined together by your love, no matter where we live. Amen.

**Reprise**

**Anthem**

*A Communion Invitation*

Martin/Courtney

## Second Reading

Luke 17:1-10

*NRSVue*

1-4 Jesus said to his disciples, “Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come! It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to sin. Be on your guard! If a brother or sister sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive. And if the same person sins against you seven times a day and turns back to you seven times and says, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive.”

5-6 The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” The Lord replied, “If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.

7-10 “Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, ‘Come here at once and take your place at the table’? Would you not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me; put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink’? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, ‘We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!’ ”

The Word of our Messiah. **Thanks be to God!**

## **Sermon** “Preparing Supper” Rev. Barbara Dickason

May the words of my mouth  
and the meditation of all of our hearts  
Be acceptable to you, O God,  
Our Steadfast cornerstone.

“I’m hungry. What’s for supper?”

You know, I have heard that question so many times in my life that sometimes I feel like I get indigestion every time I hear it. Growing up, I may have even asked it a few times, although I was usually the child who was so busy playing that I didn’t notice it was supper time.

Now growing up in the mountains, both of my parents worked outside the home, so they decided upon their division of labor early on — mom took care of the stuff inside, and dad took care of the stuff outside. So, mom had the cooking, cleaning, laundry, and homework assistance while dad had mechanical and household repairs, as well as mowing the lawn, making hay, making sure we had enough cords of wood for the long cold winters, and taking care of the animals. They shared the gardening, and assigned each of us kids out to whatever we did best. But because I was the youngest, that often meant that I was free to wander and observe, as long as I practiced the piano.

It also meant that as my brothers began leaving to go to college and roles shifted when we moved off the farm, I was often the kid around to hear ‘Help me fold these clothes’ or ‘Hand me the crescent wrench’ from dad or ‘I’ll need you to cook supper because I have a late meeting tonight,’ from mom.

I will never forget the look on dad's face at the table the night I first prepared supper for just the two of us, when he took the first bite of the stroganoff I prepared, and my own surprise when I realized that I had mis-measured the black pepper. I will always remember the look on his face as he took his second bite, and his third... Let's just say Dad had much more fortitude than I did.

Most often, however, when evening rolled around each night I was to be found on the kitchen stool by the counter, doing whatever odd jobs mom passed my way, telling her about my day as she was preparing supper and dad was finishing up odd jobs around the house or preparing for an evening meeting at church.

Because for our family, supper was always a time set aside for coming together around the table and sharing about our day, learning about life from each others' experiences and thanking God together for the food on our table.

And instead of asking "What's for supper?" By the time I went off to college the question that rested in me was instead, 'What is supper for?' And naturally, at that age of my life's development, I knew what it was for. It was for building a beloved community and for being family around a table together. After all, I was also around when, due to an illness my freshman year, my doctor restricted me from eating anything but the green beans and the salad in the college dining hall after we read through all the labels in their pantry and discussed all the recipes they made with the kitchen manager. And I was around when they began discussing my options, and I mentally reassured them and myself that I would be fine on my own. But, my heart still knew what supper



was for. And, in order to stay in school, I was required to prepare my own breakfast, lunch and supper and then usually, eat alone.

So it when now comes time for me to prepare supper, while I am proficient enough, it is more often performed out of a sense of obligation rather than joy. Out of duty rather than fulfillment. Out of the need for nourishment rather than in anticipation of fellowship.

And so imagine my surprise when, in studying this scripture for today, ‘preparing supper’ was the sermon title that jumped out to me to be shared.

And then I realized... just as I need to keep working to reframe the ‘What’s for supper’ question into ‘What’s supper for?’, so too, Jesus is trying to help the disciples in our scripture today reframe their plea for more faith which is inherent in the question, ‘How much faith is enough?’ Into ‘What is faith for?’

And our passage this morning, this passage in which Jesus turns from telling the Pharisees parables to instructing his disciples, only includes verses five through ten in many lectionaries. The lectionary starts here, with this question wrapped up as a plea: ‘What is faith for?’

And we could start there, in fact, that is where I just started. But only because in Luke’s chiastic structure, what is usually most important is in the middle. But that also means that in order to make any sense of this question, we have to go back a both to the last several weeks of scripture and to the first five verses of today’s passage that some simply want to leave out.



Now, in the past several weeks in the passages and parables immediately preceding Jesus' teaching to the disciples today, Jesus has been trying to help the pharisees understand that their love of money, the gilding of the synagogues and their use of purple robes is not the devotion that God is seeking. For when they allow the poor to starve, they are serving their own lusts rather than serving God. For while their self-aggrandizement and self-deification feels glorious at the time, it results in a chasm opening between them and the divine that simply can't be crossed. As Jesus put it, "You can't have two masters — you can't serve mammon and God both."

Now, we heard the New Revised Standard Version, updated edition's translation of all ten verses of our passage from Luke 17 this morning, and they have some pretty heavy duty scholarship behind them. But, the scholars also are translating a dead language in which the words are often defined in respect to how they are used in contemporary 1st century texts, and extrapolated from there.

So, I went back to the Greek this morning for those first five verses, to the Mounce interlinear, because for some reason I just kept getting stuck in the phrasing of these verses. And this is what I heard:

"It is impossible for misery and stumbling blocks not to come, but it is a calamity if you help bring them about. It is better that a millstone be hung about your neck and you be scattered into the sea than be the reason that a little one is miserable or stumbles.

"Be attentive! If your sibling misses the mark, help them see the consequences. If they have a change of heart and of practice,

then forgive, placing it all behind you. And if they are in error seven times a day, and each time they work to change their heart and behavior, you must forgive them.”

For as Jesus turns to his disciples to teach them in this week’s passages, he is reminding them while their choices may be different than the choices the Pharisees must make, they must also choose who they are serving, and they must faithfully serve once they have chosen. As the son of Man, however, Jesus is also acutely aware of humanity’s frailty and inconstancy. And so Jesus teaches his disciples how to be both vulnerable enough to ask for help and human enough to offer to help hold each other accountable whenever they slip up. For with the deep compassion, steadfast love, and gifts of healing that that they will inherit from Christ, they will be tested to use their new gifts in ways that don’t glorify God, just as Jesus was similarly tested in the wilderness. And lest they fall into eternal self-abnegation, righteous self-justification, or communal shame, they must learn to forgive, and forgive, and forgive, and forgive, and forgive, and forgive, and forgive.

And in thinking about how hard it is to actually forgive, day in and day out, moment by moment and memory by memory, the disciples cry out, “Increase our faith!”

But Jesus knows that while this sounds like a plea for more faith, it is really a plea wrapped in doubt, a disguised question: When, O Lord, will we ever be faithful enough to forgive like that?

And Jesus uses a metaphor to demonstrate that even when someone feels like their faithfulness may be simple and small,

they already have enough faith for God to use them to create miracles.

And then Jesus concludes this section with a story about a master and the master's slave, which poses all sorts of crazy contemporary problems for us if we were to actually read it literally in our current context. Nevertheless, it is in this story that Luke pulls together all of the past several weeks of teachings to the Pharisees and Jesus' instruction to the disciples: by explaining what faithfulness is for. And yes, behind this short story are all sorts of assumptions and understandings about the world and how it works that were held in Jesus' time, so let's do a quick review.

When God created humanity, God called God's creation 'good'. God rested, then walked in the garden with them, and built covenants with them, and promised to steadfastly love and care for them, but in humanity's fickleness and their propensity to grumble, some either forget their creator or went looking for someone or something else to make them happy. Throughout their journey together, God has fed them, clothed them, freed them from injustice, led them through perilous wilderness experiences, and promised to steadfastly love them intimately... not like those other gods of other nations whose inattention and capriciousness leave their people to either fend for themselves or even worse, be used as pawns in the games the gods played. No, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Elijah, Elisha, Samuel, David, and Solomon, of Rahab, Tamar, Deborah and the midwives who refused the Pharaoh's orders to kill babies in Egypt thus allowing Moses to be born... that God, who created and loves all that is and ever will be ... the God has built a covenant between God'self and humanity. And foundational to Jesus'

teaching here is the reminder to his disciples that ultimately, there is nothing greater than God's original blessing for all of humanity, for all who choose first to glorify God. Jesus is reminding them, and us all, that God's blessing is more than enough.

And so, when we turn back to this parable, we must hold two things in tension: that while Jesus loves everyone just as God steadfastly loves us all and is actively working to transform the lives of God's beloved people by offering healing, working for justice and teaching equity throughout Luke's narration of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, in this parable specifically, Jesus lifts up an every day truism of their time in order to illustrate to his disciples that just as it is a slave's daily work to obey, it is their daily work to forgive. And this is where we arrive at the heart of these ten verses. For as Jesus teaches, faith is necessary for forgiveness.

Jesus' disciples begged him to increase their faith. But just as the slave had what was needed to perform their duties, so do we as disciples, also, for it is not the quantity or display of our faith that matters: it is that we practice it by offering forgiveness. Again, and again, and again, and again... And whenever we fail to faithfully practice the spiritual discipline of forgiveness, that is when we, in our own turn, will also stumble. For both faith and forgiveness are part and parcel of God's blessing of shalom, God's blessing of wholistic well-being as the beloved community.

For just as we prepare supper so that we might all eat at the communal table together, Jesus is preparing us to faithfully forgive and forgive and forgive, so that we might be the beloved community together.

## We Respond to God's Grace

### **Prayer Concerns and Sharing Gratitude**

#### **Joys:**

each beautiful new day, slow mornings, the depth of human creativity and spirit, skilled medical professionals, friendship, safe travels, gathering together to study God's word, rebirth and recreation in communities that empower and hold us as we ask tough questions of God and each other, those who pitch in and help out, birthdays, anniversaries, milestones...

#### **Intercessions:**

Gay	Paula's sister	Jean	
Dave	Helen	Marian	Eleanor
Vicki, Jack, Pam, Marge, Clark, Pastor Attila.			

We pray for those people who have lost their jobs and their means of supporting their families, and for pets who have lost their people.

Everyone impacted by the decisions of governments that choose violence and war instead of diplomacy; all essential workers and all frontline healthcare workers; everyone impacted by recent hurricanes, fires, tornadoes, and flooding;

and

The staff and participants of Word Made Flesh in Sierra Leone, Immokalee Farm Workers, black and brown fathers and their sons, everyone living through domestic violence, people of all religions who are being persecuted because of their faith, all who struggle with or are affected by mental illness and depression. We also pray for law enforcement officers, service men and women, missionaries and rescue workers doing God's work in dangerous places.

First Sunday... debts and debtors sung; rise as able to sing Lord's prayer

### **Silent Prayers**

## **Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer (sung)**

God of steadfast love and abundant generosity,

We are so grateful for the supper that you first prepared for us so many years ago, and that you are preparing still. The supper in which everyone can gather around the table and, when the bread is blessed, bear witness to your spirit among us as the bread of life is broken and shared among us. We are so grateful that when the cup is shared, we are reminded that the blessing that you offered at humanity's creation is still offered to us today — that you will be our God, and that we may be your people. Help us, O Lord, to use the faithfulness that you have already planted within us to build bridges instead of divisions, to uproot what isn't working so that something new may grow in unexpected places, so that we forgive and forgive and forgive, rather than letting our pride get in the way.

Be with us, O God, as we honor the path you have set before us. Hear our prayers for those who are grieving, for those who are suffering, for those who are sitting in that place of waiting and not knowing. Soothe our fears, nourish our bodies, and feed our souls with the bread and cup of your compassion and mercy.

We praise you for your vision of a new heaven and a new earth, in which everyone treats each other as your beloved children, and together we rise in body or in spirit to sing the prayer that you have taught us:

**Our Father which 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.

### **We Share God's Love**

#### **Story of Connection**

As we practice the spiritual discipline of joy, one of the essential components of our practice is: how we choose to connect. So this morning, as we celebrate World Communion Sunday, I would like to share two stories from the many resources and stories that have been offered to us by Global Ministries, a joint ministry initiative of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ that we help support, for this celebration of World Communion Sunday.

In March, Margaret Kofron, a Global Missions intern with the Middle East and Europe, finished up three months with Mediterranean Hope, an organization dedicated to providing migrant families with essential services and instruction in Italian



while fostering connection and understanding in a diverse region of Italy. She tells wonderful stories of learning Italian with migrant families and reaching out into the community to keep building bridges. She was headed next to the Forum for Development, Culture, and Dialogue in Beirut to learn about working for a non-profit in the middle East. Let's give thanks for her willingness to go and the ways in which she is able to share God's love and compassion with those who are vulnerable.

Alex Maldonado-Lizardi and Xiomara Cintron-Garcia serve with the Christian Centre for Justice, Peace and Nonviolent Action (Justapaz), Bogota, Colombia. They tell a story of their Amazon community in which the neighborhood's priest, Father Campo Elias de la Cruz goes into the jungle to celebrate mass, teaching from Luke's Sermon on the Plain about how our actions should be driven by love. Following in the footsteps of a predecessor who was working for justice for the entire Amazonian community, Father Campo tells this story to and for that same community in the place where his predecessor was assassinated about 15 years before:

"You decided not to plant coca and chose other seeds. The day we run out of seeds, we will die. The day we run out of water, we will die. The presence of God is in the Amazon....And while the multinationals are draining the life out of the territory, it is important to look with God's eyes at what is happening to the world. The rich, the companies, the corporations... will have money but no food, no seed. This is how we must stubbornly



believe in the dream of Jesus of Navareth. Our biggest tree is to believe, to promote harmony, food, and seed. To live the cosmic Eucharist.”<sup>3</sup>

We give thanks for the ways that we have been invited to partner with faithful disciples all around the world. For, whether in Europe or Africa, Australia or Asia, the Pacific Rim or Latin America, Global Ministries has ministry partners and staff around the world working to help create lasting peace, opportunities for restoration and justice, feeding the hungry, caring for God’s creation and reaching out with the love of God by living within and accompanying communities around the world. There are many more stories where these came from at the UCC’s Global Ministries website, where you can connect with many amazing people and ministries that our churches support whenever we truly choose to live out of Christ’s blessing and hope that we be a united and uniting people of God.

## **Invitation to Generosity<sup>4</sup>**

This morning, we also give thanks for the many ways in which we are able to break the bread of God’s communion with brothers, sisters and friends around the world. As we journey with God, we listen to God’s still-speaking voice asking us to have faith in all we share. The Spirit of God asks us to live into our faith as we share our treasures, talents, and time with all of creation.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.globalministries.org/the-mass-of-the-amazonian-world/>

<sup>4</sup> **Increase Our Faith: Service Prayers for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost** was written by Rev. Michelle L. Torigian , an ordained UCC minister in Belleville, Illinois. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-17c-october-5/>

*(Offering plates are found by each doorway for your use.)*

**\*Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
praise God all creatures here below,  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication<sup>5</sup>**

**Bread of Life and Vessel of Endurance,  
Fill us with all that we need each day to share your amazing  
joy and love with the world. Encourage us to stretch  
ourselves in our giving. Help us to see that we have all the  
faith we need to keep co-creating with you. Amen.**

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<sup>5</sup> Increase Our Faith: Service Prayers for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost was written by Rev. Michelle L. Torigian , an ordained UCC minister in Belleville, Illinois. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-17c-october-5/>

## **Invitation to Holy Communion<sup>6</sup>**

Today, we join Christians around the world who gather at Christ's table in many languages, cultures, and traditions. On this World Communion Sunday, we remember that though we come from many places, we are one body, sharing one bread and one cup in Christ.

Like a sower, God scatters, and God will give growth.

**God scatters life across the earth.**

God scatters people in every land and nation.

**God scatters disciples far and wide.**

Like a shepherd, God gathers.

**God gathers people into families of faith.**

God gathers people into communities of love.

**God gathers people into the body of Christ.**

Today, on this World Communion Sunday, God gathers us at one table with disciples of every language, culture, and tradition. From cathedrals and chapels, from huts and houses, from fields and cities, God gathers us in many places and makes us one in Christ. At this table, we remember the cost of discipleship and rejoice in the richness of Christ's gifts poured out for the whole world.

Let us pray,

Creator of the Universe, Maker of mountains and rivers, deserts and seas, vineyards and wheat fields, we praise you for the life you have given us and for all living things around us!

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<sup>6</sup> Prepared for us by the Global Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ and The United Church of Christ. <https://www.globalministries.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/WCS-Communion-Liturgy.pdf> accessed 09/29/2025.

From the seeds you scattered, you gathered the people of Israel, giving them your covenant and your promise. In the fullness of time, you came to us in Jesus of Nazareth, child of Mary and the Promised One of Israel. We honor his teachings, we weep at his suffering, and we rejoice in his risen life. With angels and archangels, with our ancestors in faith, and with our brothers and sisters who gather at your table across every continent and island, we ask your blessing on this bread and this cup. May these gifts of Christ's body and blood strengthen us to be the gathered and scattered Church in the world—many in culture and expression, yet one in Spirit, one in truth, one in faith, one in love. Gather your scattered seeds into your home of grace and peace, where all creation is renewed in you. Amen

As you prepare to come forward to share in God's promise, the ushers will dismiss from the rear of the sanctuary and direct you so that everyone may safely share in God's bounty. For those of you who would like assistance in your seat, please let the ushers know so that we can share God's promise with you where you are.

Come, for the meal is ready!

*(The ministers and servers will prepare the elements;  
the congregation is then invited to come  
and receive the bread and the cup.  
If you cannot come but wish to receive,  
the servers will come to you.)*

**Communion Meditation**

*Hymne*

**Vangelis**

## Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

**We thank you, generous God,**

**For the nourishment of this table and  
the living presence of Christ among us.**

**We thank you for the gift of**

**growth and grace in this life-renewing feast.**

**We thank you for the company of**

**your great cloud of witnesses,  
here in this place, in every land,  
and throughout the generations.**

**Take your gathered people and scatter us again**

**into the world—renewed, invigorated, and committed—  
that, so nourished, we may take root  
and bear life-giving fruit**

**to feed, heal, clothe, and comfort,**

**In Jesus' name. Amen.**

## \*Hymn

*I Eat this Bread*

Owens

**I eat this bread, I eat this bread,  
I eat this bread in remembrance of you.  
I eat this bread, I eat this bread,  
I eat this bread in remembrance of you.**

**I drink this cup, I drink this cup,  
I drink this cup in remembrance of you.  
I drink this cup, I drink this cup,  
I drink this cup in remembrance of you.**

**I praise your name, I praise your name,  
I praise your name, I praise your name.  
I praise your name, I praise your name,  
I praise your name, I praise your name.**

*Please Rise in body or in spirit to sing:*

Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!  
Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!  
Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!  
Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!

## **We go to carry the light**

### **\*Blessing and Benediction<sup>7</sup>**

We have been guests of Jesus Christ. We have received God's good gifts. Now we go out in the energy of the Spirit to our homes, to our neighborhoods, to our workplaces ready to put Jesus' words and being into action: to be the salt of the earth, to be light to the world, to seek justice, to make peace, to preserve the creation, to gain life for all. It's time to prepare supper, y'all.

The Blessing of the God we know as Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit be upon us all, today and every day. Amen.

**\*Sending Blessing**      *Threefold Amen*      Danish

**\*Postlude**      *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*      ELLACOMBE

**Please remain seated in silence for the Postlude as the  
Light of Christ is carried into the world.  
The worship has ended; our service begins.**

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### **Supporting Our Service Today**

**Liturgist:** Gayle Davis      **Acolyte:** Allison Rowe  
**Communion Steward:** Suzi Benscoter

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<sup>7</sup> Rev. Dr. Ian Alexander, Church of Scotland. <https://www.globalministries.org/resource/world-communion-sunday-resources/>

**Welcome Table:** Sandy Barrie    **Greeter:** Janet Beardsley  
**Head Usher:** Nancy Bennett    **Usher Team:** Sue Atkinson,  
Sandy Barrie, Jim Daugherty, Knancy Knudson, Howard Taylor,  
Kausie White

**Technology Team**

(Live Streaming, Camera, and Sound Technicians)  
Gary Woodrum, Debra Mosely, Maria Groody,  
David Jack, Linda Newton, Wally Davis, Patty Fjetland

The **Lord's Table** was decorated by Victoria Augustine

The **Sanctuary Flowers** are given by Dave Van Nortwick:  
“In loving memory of my bride of 58 years who left us 5 years ago”  
and by Dee Rogers “In loving memory of Bob Dube: On our  
anniversary and always, you'll be in my heart.”

The **Church Sign** was changed by Faye Newton and Lisa Sclafani

**Sunday Librarian:** Ellen Schleicher

**Fellowship Time:** Wendy Seeley and Barbara Talmage

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web: [www.veniceucc.org](http://www.veniceucc.org)

**Senior Minister**

**Rev. Barbara Dickason**

**Other Staff**

**Gary Leidheiser:** *Custodian*

**Barb Quinn:** *Office Assistant*

**Music Staff**

**Barbara Quinn:** *Music Director*

**Lynda Weston:** *Bella Handbell Director*

**This Week at a Glance**

**Monday, October 6**

12:00 PM SpiritFed!

(via Zoom)

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83576594637?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83576594637?pwd=U2024sKmOPiy3CyMqV4OarYUtofaom.1)  
[pwd=U2024sKmOPiy3CyMqV4OarYUtofaom.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83576594637?pwd=U2024sKmOPiy3CyMqV4OarYUtofaom.1)

Meeting ID: 835 7659 4637

Passcode: 913882

3:30 Pastoral Relations Committee—Parlor

**Tuesday, October 7**

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

6:00 PM Girl Scouts

**Wednesday, October 8**

9:00 AM - Noon Library Hours

10:00 AM Bible Study—CR

11:00 AM RCSSC — Naar Hall

6:30 Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, October 9**

10:00 AM AAUW — Naar Hall

1:00 Church Family Life Committee — Parlor

6:00 PM Girl Scouts

**Friday, October 10**

8:30 AM Men's Weekly Coffee—Panera

9:00 AM KnitWits

4:30-7:30 PM SCDC Naar Hall

**Saturday, October 11**

10 - 11:30 AM CARE Ministries Organizing Meetings — Naar Hall  
Part Two: Blueprints and Initiating Construction

**Sunday, October 12**



9:00-9:45 AM Library Hour  
10:00 AM Worship in person and virtual  
11:00-11:15 AM Library Time  
11:00 AM Fellowship Time  
11:00 AM Meet and Greet for those exploring Membership

**The church office is open M-Th, 9-1.**

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