



**Welcome to Zion UCC**

**“Great Service”**

# Zion United Church of Christ

## Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

October 20, 2024

\*Stand in body or spirit.

*(Join in speaking aloud the **bolded** portions.)*

### **Prelude**

### **Coming Together to Share the Light**

### **Greeting & Proclamation**

"We are closer to God when we are asking questions than when we think we have all the answers." ~Abraham Joshua Heschel, 20<sup>th</sup> Century

### **Welcome and Announcements**

### **Litany of Sunday Celebration**

We come before God as equal in God's sight.

**God knows us thoroughly and loves us completely.**

None of us is perfect and without blemish.

**Yet God has called us God's children and asked us to be compassionate and responsible in our caring and witness.**

We are called to joyful obedience in God's realm.

**Thanks be to God who trusts us and pours God's abundant love on us. AMEN.**

### **Prayer of Invocation**

### **The Prayer of Jesus**

*(All are invited to use whatever language and wording is most comfortable.)*

**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 sins/debts/trespases*, as we forgive *our debtors/those who sin/trespass against us*. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. AMEN.**

### **A Lesson for All Ages**

#### **\* Hymn of Celebration #66**

*"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"*

#### **Prayer for Our Humanity**

...but rather that we should cherish it and make sure that all receive from its bounty.

**Forgive our overwhelming greed and selfishness. Help us to let go of the petty desires for wealth, position, and power, and bring us into a ministry which proclaims your love and justice for all your people. These things we pray in the name of the Servant of all, Jesus Christ, our Savior. AMEN.**

*Silence for Reflection*

#### **Assurance of Pardon**

Live in God's love.

**Thanks be to God! Alleluia! AMEN.**

#### **Message in Music**

**First Scripture Lesson**

Job 38:1-7

**Psalter Lesson #754 w/ R**

*"Psalm 104:1-13"*

**\*Gospel Lesson**

Mark 10:35-45

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Meditation**

Pastor Craig

**\*Hymn of Reflection # 77**

*On Eagle's Wings"*

**Invitation to Joyful Giving**

**Offertory**

**\*Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host:  
praise Father Son, and Holy Ghost.*

**\*Sung Prayer of Dedication** (sung to tune as above)

*Praise God, the love we all may share;  
praise God, the beauty everywhere;  
praise God, the hope of good to be;  
praise God, the truth that makes us free. AMEN.*

**Sharing Our Joys and Concerns**

**A Prayer for Sunday**

**\*Closing Hymn # 651**

*"God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens"*

**Benediction**

**Bring Light out into the World**

**Postlude**

## **We Focus on Our Life Together...**

Thank you for choosing to worship with us this morning. No matter who or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! Please join us downstairs in The Gathering Place for refreshments and fellowship following this morning's service.

**Leader:** Pastor Craig Sparks

**Music Director:** Thad Paulhamus

**Musician:** Clinton Adams

**Message in Music:** Zion Handbell Choir

## **In Our Thoughts and Prayers...**

Bryan Barbalace, Kevin Barbalace, Charlene Berk, Cheryl Blackburn, June Bocek\*, Les & Vivian Bowser\*, Les Bowser Jr, family of Gino Brasille, Casey Brewer, Anna Denoe\*, Anna Golden, Tom Hayman, Marie Kachinski, June Kinnear\*, Henry & Gerri Krotee, Barbara Langenfelder\*, John Langenfelder, Barbara Makin, Pete Mitchell, Joyce Murphy, Betty Nolte\*, Amanda O'Neil, Judith Panian\*, John Pflugrad, Shirley Ritter\*, Elaine Roberts, Carol Shrader, Mary Sturm, Barbara Thompson, service men & women, the people of Appalachia, Florida, Israel, Palestine, and Ukraine. Also, all those affected by Hurricanes Helene & Milton, Peace on Earth.

### **This week at Zion...**

- 21:** Busy Hands (10 am) Upper Hall  
Turner Seniors (11 am) Lower Hall
- 22:** Bible Study (6 pm) Gathering Place  
Choir Rehearsal (7 pm) Sanctuary  
N.A. "Stronger Ties" (7 pm) Lower Hall

### **Sunday School News...**

Sunday School meets downstairs during worship in the Nursery/Sunday School Room (located behind the Gathering Place) on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays each month. Children are invited to make a small craft, listen to a bible story, and have some little people fellowship. Come join us this morning!

### **Bible Study News...**

Please join us for Bible Study on Tuesday evenings from 6-7 p.m. in "The Gathering Place". Each week focuses on a different scripture, come when you are able. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Craig. All are welcome, come whenever you can!

### **Mission Committee News...**

The Mission Committee is currently collecting new coats, gloves and hats for several schools in our area. We need boys' and girls' coats in sizes from 5-18. If you wish to make a monetary donation, special envelopes are available. We will continue this project through January 5, 2025. See the October Messenger for more information. If you have any questions, please see Jo-Ann Taylor, Cissy Sparks or Lois Randall. Thanks for your support!

## **Flag Retirement Ceremony...**

On Sunday, November 10th, at 11:30 a.m., a flag retirement ceremony will be held at the Cabin fire ring in honor of Veterans Day. All are welcome to attend and anyone who wishes to retire a flag will have an opportunity to do so.

## **Back Bay Mission Project...**

Once again, Joan Jordan will be teaming up with Sara Miller Kaufman's Evansville, Indiana UCC Association to volunteer at the Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi. Their team will be onsite from November 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup>, repairing and building homes, working in the food pantry, serving meals to the disadvantaged, working with homeless citizens, etc. Joan and the Zion Mission Committee would like to present Back Bay Mission with a gift of \$500.00 during their time there. We are asking the congregation to help us meet this goal... can you help? Special Envelopes marked "Back Bay Mission" can be found in the Narthex through October. Checks may also be mailed to the church office. Please put "Back Bay" on your check's memo line. Thanks in advance for your consideration of this special project.

## **UCC MISSION MOMENT**

**22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Great Service Mark 10:35-45**

The committee tasked with updating the church's mission statement gathered in the drafty fellowship hall. They had been sitting in rickety wooden chairs much longer than they

had wanted, getting nowhere with a statement that would miraculously guide them towards a future full of hope. Back and forth the suggestions went.

*A church for worshipping God and loving others.*

Good, but what about ... *We seek to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.*

Scratch it. The church down the block says that.

How about ... *Empowered by God to reach others for God.*

Some heads nodded "yay"; others nodded "nay." Silence ensued.

Finally, a teen invited to the group to share their youthful viewpoint, spoke softly, suggesting: *We have come to serve, not to be served.*

Eyes lit up. Smiles smoothed wrinkled frowns. A new mission statement — echoing Jesus' words in Mark that the "Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve" — was adopted, putting the church on a path of revival where the needs of others came before their own.

Sometimes we forget that the church was not established to serve us nor cater to our whims — singing hymns we love or keeping those antique pews rather than replacing them with folding chairs.

Even before the church became an institution, James and John, followers of Jesus, found themselves caught up in the "What's in it for me?" mentality.



The brothers of Zebedee pulled Jesus aside requesting positions of influence in Jesus' new order. One wanted to sit at Jesus' right side, the other on his left.

They didn't understand yet that the kingdom Jesus' was proclaiming was one built on a foundation of selfless love, with bricks and mortar of sacrifice and suffering.

Are you willing to drink the cup I will drink? Or be baptized in the baptism I will be baptized in? Jesus' questions of the brothers were referring to his death on the cross.

Jesus still asks the question today: Are we willing? Can we sacrifice our own gain or comfort for the betterment of others?

There once was a church which replaced the exit sign over the main door with one that read, "Servant's Entry." The congregation was perplexed until the pastor explained that when worship ended, they were all to exit the church building as servants now entering the world as the hands and feet of Christ.

*Loving God, may today we leave Your house of worship remembering that we are called to continue the work of our Suffering Servant — selflessly caring for all we encounter on our paths. Amen.*



# Zion UCC Church Staff

Ministers	All members of Zion UCC	
Craig S. Sparks	Pastor	443-896-6815 Email: <i>craigssparks@gmail.com</i>
Tim Dalgo, Sr.	Administrator	410-608-1670 Email: <i>info@zionuccmd.com</i>
Joan Jordan	President	443-791-7344 Email: <i>doosmom2@gmail.com</i>
Thad Paulhamus	Music Director	443-610-7844
Clinton Adams	Musician	
The Rev. Hugh Nash	Pastor Emeritus	

## **Administrative Office: 410-687-0980**

- \* Press 1 to leave voicemail message
- \* Press 3 to contact Council President
- \* Press 4 to contact Cemetery

**Pastor Craig** will be in the office on Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30 to 4:00 pm. The phone and email continue to be monitored, and all incoming mail is processed daily. For your convenience, you may leave your offering envelopes in the locked mailbox on the office side porch. Messengers, Bulletins, and Upper Room Devotionals are also available.

**If you require pastoral services**, please call Pastor Craig Sparks at 443-896-6815 or send an email to *craigssparks@gmail.com*.

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# Zion Women's Guild Fundraiser!



Keep these custom reusable totes on hand for those last-minute shopping trips! This tote folds into its own 4-1/2" x 5-1/2" interior hanging pocket for easy storage. T-shirt style bags fit over supermarket checkout frames, making it easier for loading with your groceries.

They also make great gifts.

Bags are available for \$5.00 each in the Narthex and Gathering Place. See Terry Reed or any member of the Guild!