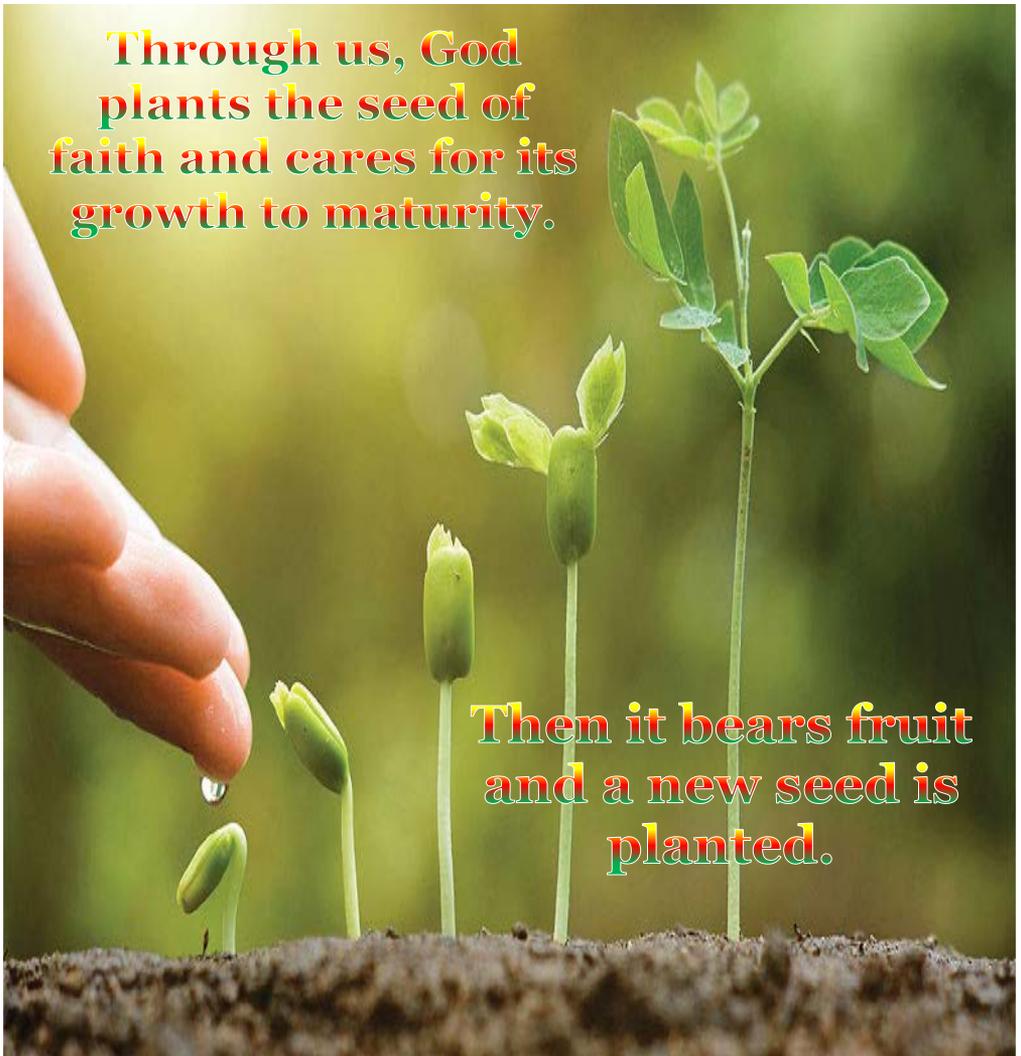




Through us, God  
plants the seed of  
faith and cares for its  
growth to maturity.

A close-up photograph of a hand watering a row of five green seedlings growing out of dark soil. A single drop of water is falling from the hand's index finger onto the first seedling. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

Then it bears fruit  
and a new seed is  
planted.

### Greetings

Welcome to the community in Christ at Zion United Church of Christ. We believe that all people are children of God and rejoice that you have chosen to worship God with us today. If you are visiting our community, we wish to extend our hand in Christian fellowship and hope that you will take a moment to visit with us after the service. If you have any questions prior to the service, please ask anyone in the community. We have all been visitors at some time in our life, and we are eager to assist you in any way.

May the Holy Spirit fill us and guide us as we worship God together.

\*Amplified hearing devices are available through our ushers.

July 12, 2020

The Seed

9:30 am

\*Please stand as you are able

Church Bell Welcome and Announcements

*We Prepare to Worship God*

Prayer & Prelude "Dream God's Dream" by Bryan Sirchio

*We Gather Around God's Word*

A reading from Matthew 13

**Call to Worship:** (responsive)

One: God visits the earth and waters it,

**Many: Thus God enriches the earth.**

One: God waters the earth, softening it with showers,

**Many: Thus God blesses the earth.**

One: Along with the hills, the meadows, and the valleys,

**Many: Let us lift our joy together with great thanksgiving!**

Prayer of Invocation: (in unison)

**Loving God, you created life in us and all around us.**

**Open us to receive your gifts of your world and your word that we may be not just hearers of the word, but doers as well. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Assurance of Grace

Pastor: Sisters and Brothers, because the Spirit of God dwells in us, let us claim what the apostle Paul teaches...we are forgiven and free in and with Christ Jesus.

**Many: Let us believe and live in Christ. Praise be to God! Amen.**

Musical Interlude: "Bring Forth" by Marty Haugen

We continue the reading from Matthew 13

The Passing of Christ's Peace in Community

Pastoral Prayer a sharing of community and world prayers

## Affirmation of Faith

One: We are not alone; we live in God's world.

**All: We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## *We Engage God's Word*

### Scripture Readings

Isaiah 55:1-3b

Matthew 13:18-23

Our Multigenerational Lesson

Sermon "We Care for the Seed"

Musical Interlude "Stuttgart"

### Offering Declaration

Let us rejoice, because we have been given the opportunity to give of our time, talent, or treasure to Christ's church. Thank you for your gifts to God because you are supporting the ministry of Jesus Christ and the mission of God!

### Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)

Gracious God, filled by your generosity, we are hopeful that we can be as generous to others as you are to us. Accept from us our gifts as we commit our lives to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## *We Are Sent into the World*

\*The Lord's Prayer (using "debts" and "debtors")

# \*Commissioning & Benediction

Postlude "Full Organ Fanfare" by John G. Barr

## Serving Today

Liturgist: Makayla Schluter

Organist: Carter Horman

Ushers: Church Council

Video: Aaron Horman

Disciples: All God's People

Pastor: Rev. Steve Stepp

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Our website address is [www.zionucclouden.org](http://www.zionucclouden.org)

Secretary: Linda Behrens Office: Tues., Wed., Thurs. 8:30-12:00

**Zion office phone** #563-941-7726

**Pastor Steve Stepp** email: [zionpastor@fbcom.net](mailto:zionpastor@fbcom.net)

Phone Office: 563-941-7529 Home: 563-941-5476

Office hours...Monday thru Thursday 9:00am-1:00pm

or set up a time that works best for you.

## ZION PRAYER LIST

Joan Weimann	Blake Proesch	Pastor Scott
Luann Gottschalk	Brian Hoffmeier	Marlene Wiedenhoff
Rose Horman	Gladys Conrad	Daniel Johnson
Roger Huffman	Viola Thomas	Chad Minor & fmlly
Carol Boedeker	Neal Mess	Kylee Schmalfeldt
Donna Breneman	Bruce Hoffmeier	Florence Deerberg
Helen Gottschalk	Berniece Minor	Pearl Huffman
Marcus Barnes	Rick & Mary Balke	Evelyn Unteidt
Elda Doermann	Nancy Loeffelhol	Mark Winder
Rhonda Scholenfelder	Marilyn Klahn	
The family of David & Vickie Boettcher		
p.s. "Dear God, pull us together in Jesus Christ!"		

## **Matthew 13:1-9**

<sup>1</sup> That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. <sup>2</sup> Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. <sup>3</sup> Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. <sup>4</sup> As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. <sup>5</sup> Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. <sup>6</sup> But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. <sup>8</sup> Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. <sup>9</sup> Whoever has ears, let them hear."

## **Matthew 13:10-17**

<sup>10</sup> The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

<sup>11</sup> He replied, "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. <sup>12</sup> Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. <sup>13</sup> This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see;

though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

<sup>14</sup> In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

“ ‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding;  
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

<sup>15</sup> For this people’s heart has become calloused;  
they hardly hear with their ears,  
and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,  
hear with their ears,  
understand with their hearts

and turn, and I would heal them.’ [a]

<sup>16</sup> But blessed are your eyes because they see, and  
your ears because they hear. <sup>17</sup> For truly I tell you,  
many prophets and righteous people longed to see  
what you see but did not see it, and to hear what  
you hear but did not hear it.

### **Isaiah 55:1-3b**

1 “Come, all you who are thirsty,  
come to the waters;  
and you who have no money,  
come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without cost.

<sup>2</sup> Why spend money on what is not bread,  
and your labor on what does not satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,  
and you will delight in the richest of fare.

<sup>3</sup> Give ear and come to me;  
listen, that you may live.

## **Matthew 13:18-23**

<sup>18</sup> "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: <sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. <sup>20</sup> The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. <sup>21</sup> But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. <sup>22</sup> The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. <sup>23</sup> But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."