



“Christian Love!”

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

August 30, 2020

Spirit-Led Living

9:30 am

*** Please stand as you are able**

Church Bell Welcome and Announcements,

We Prepare to Worship God

Prayer & Prelude "Be Thou My Vision" *arr. Jason Tonioli*

We Gather Around God's Word

A reading from Exodus 3

Call to Worship (responsive)

One: We who dwell in the shelter of the Most High

All: Seek God here.

One: We who come to be inspired and changed

All: Seek God's Spirit here.

One: We who know how little we know

All: Seek God's Word here.

***Prayer of Invocation:** (in unison)

God, you are made known to us in the rustling wind that blows, in the blazing fire that does not consume, in the face of the good, in the deep of the unknown. We meet you here. We accept your greeting. We welcome your inspiration. We await the change you have in store for us. Draw us in to you. Inhabit our spirits. Focus our attention. Bring us to you – you who are already with us. Help us to be as you would have us be. Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, here and everywhere, now, and always. Amen.

Musical Interlude "Here I Am, Lord" *by Daniel L. Schutte* 2x

The Passing of Christ's Peace in Community

Pastoral Prayer & Prayer of Confession:

One: As we prepare for confession, let us consider questions inspired by the Apostle Paul.

Is our love always genuine? *Silence*

Do we resist the evil we see? *Silence*

Do we consistently seek to serve God? *Silence*

Are we hospitable to strangers? *Silence*

Do we offer blessings to our enemies? *Silence*

Do we have close relationships with people who are really different from us? *Silence*

Do we seek revenge on those who have wronged us? *Silence*

One: Good friends, we need to do these things, and do them often. Maybe not all at once, but we must strive to make them a part of our Christian life, so we do not turn away from the love God always offers us.

In this time of confession, God invites us to examine all this, and to repent – which really just means to turn back.

Let us confess and turn back to our God...

Everyone: God of mercy and forgiveness, we confess that: our love isn't always genuine. We see evil and close our eyes instead of resisting it. We do not find more ways to serve you. We turn our back on strangers who could benefit from our hospitality. We do not love our enemies. We associate with people who are like us. We relish fantasies of revenge. For all this, and for all that burdens our heart today, O God, we seek your forgiveness. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers...

Silence

Assurance of Pardon:

Pastor: God's mercy extends beyond the bounds of even our collective imagination. God's love seeps through any wall we could ever put up. God's goodness holds more power than the sum of all sin. So, because of that extensive, seeping, powerful and bold love, we can rejoice in our forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

All: Praise be to the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sustainer of all people. Praise be to our Triune God! Amen!

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

Exodus 3:7-15

Romans 12:9-21

Multigenerational Lesson

Sermon: *"Christian Love!"*

We Respond to God's Word

Offering Declaration

One: Sisters and Brothers, if we pay close enough attention when we look around, we can see the

need is real. But is that how you think God sees it? God looks around, God sees need, yes, but God also sees great abundance. God sees all the gifts God has already given us, and God sees opportunity. As a church, we are invited to look around through the same lens –seeing opportunity, gifts, possibilities around us while acknowledging the deep needs that surround us. Each person here has something to give. And, each person has a need. I invite you to prayerfully reach within yourself acknowledging a need you bring today recognizing that every person around you brings a need, as well. As a church, it is our job, our calling, to join together and meet those needs. I thank you for both your earthly gifts and your spiritual gifts. Amen.

***Prayer of Reception**

O God, in your Creation, we stand on the holiest of ground. May these gifts be a blessing to all that you have made. May the church, organizations and people that receive them act as your hands. May needs be seen and met, and may the giving fit the need. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who models infinite giving. Amen.

The Celebration of Communion #48 1x

Musical Interlude "YISU NE KAHA" arr. Francis B. Westbrook

Communion Prayer:

"Together, we are blessed by being here."

Invitation to the Lord's Table:

Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine

Sharing of God's Gifts

We will take the bread first after all have received it as one community of Christ, then we will take the wine in the same manner.

***Prayer of Thanksgiving:** (In Unison)

Ever-Creating God, You have never stopped Your loving work upon this earth. You work within our hearts. You work within our congregation. You work within the world. Send us from this table prepared and recharged to carry the Good News of Jesus Christ to all those who look for your great love. Amen

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

Commissioning

Musical Interlude "Dream God's Dream" by Bryan Sirchio 2x

A Time of Passage and Farewell

Association Representative: On October 23, 2011, this local church called Rev. Stephen Stepp to serve as their settled pastor.

Pastor Steve: I thank Zion United Church of Christ, its members, and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown me these last 8 3/4 years. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

People: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

Pastor Steve: I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

Vows of Release

AR: Do you, the members, and friends of Zion United Church of Christ release Rev. Stephen Stepp from the duties of pastor of this church?

People: We do, with the help of God.

AR: Do you offer your encouragement for his ministry when it begins as Pastor of Church of Peace, United Church of Christ?

People: We do, with the help of God.

AR: Do you, Rev. Stephen Stepp release this local church from turning to you and depending on you?

Pastor Steve: I do, with the help of God.

AR: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here and on the relationship with another who will come to serve?

Pastor Steve: I do, with the help of God.

Witness of the Association and Church Leaders

AR : On behalf of the Eastern Iowa Association, the Iowa Conference, and the United Church of Christ, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness, and release. The member churches of our association and conference hold each of you in prayer. We pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service.

People: Thanks be to God!

Sending Prayer: AR: O God, we give thanks for remembered times when we, together, have shared the life of faith. We thank you for the moments we have shared with this person in worship, in learning, and in service. We pray that Pastor Steve will be aware of your Spirit's guidance as he moves to a new place in the name of Jesus the Savior. And all God's people said...**Amen.**

We Are Sent into the World

Benediction

Association Representative: Go now, surrounded by our love, and led by the promises of God, the presence of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Postlude "Fanfare" *Jacques Lemmens*

SERVING TODAY:

Organist: Carter Horman

Liturgist: Jean Stepp

Ushers: Church Council Videographer: Aaron Horman

NEA Representative: Jacqueline Burnett

Disciples: All God's People

Pastor: Rev. Steve Stepp

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ZION PRAYER LIST

Joan Weimann	Blake Proesch	Pastor Scott
Luann Gottschalk	Briana Terlisner	Marlene Wiedenhoff
Rose Horman	Gladys Conrad	Daniel Johnson
Roger Huffman	Viola Thomas	Chad Minor & fmlly
Carol Boedeker	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	Terry & Doris Bilsland	
The family of Marilyn Klahn The family of Neal Mess		
p.s. "Dear God, help us to love like Jesus!"		

Pastor Steve & Jean thank everyone in Zion United Church of Christ, Lowden and all the surrounding areas for their love and support over the years. You have been a blessing to us. May God bless you as you reflect the life of Jesus Christ by the way you live and love in the world.

Exodus 3:1-6

¹ Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ³ So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

⁴ When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

⁵ "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

Exodus 3:7-15

⁷ The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. ⁸ So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing

with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ⁹ And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

¹² And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you^[b] will worship God on this mountain.”

¹³ Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’”

“This is my name forever,
the name you shall call me
from generation to generation.

Romans 12:9-21

⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.^[a] Do not be conceited.

¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Sun	M	Tues	Wed	Th	Fr	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
9:30 am Farewell Worship Service For Pastor Steve		8:30- 12:00 Office open	8:30- 12:00 Office open	8:30- 12:00 Office open		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:30 am Worship Service		8:30- 12:00 Office open	8:30- 12:00 Office open	8:30- 12:00 Office open		

HACAP mobile food pantry is schedule to be in Bennett on September 8 from 3:30 to 4:30 pm at Bennett Ambulance Bldg.

MISSION COMMITTEE

The Missions Committee would like to thank everyone who donated school supplies or monetary donations towards our back to school drive. We had a great response and had multiple families who were very grateful for the supplies. We will be putting a few supplies in our food pantry as well as a couple other locations so that if anyone else needs something once school starts it will be available. We also received a grant from Theisen's that we will be using to purchase supplies for teachers in the North Cedar District that they would normally be paying for out of their own pockets. We hope that everyone has a safe and great year of school.

In September, the Missions committee will be collecting cleaning supplies to help Bonnie out throughout the church. Some of the supplies that will be needed include Clorox wipes, paper towels, toilet paper, 5 oz. paper cups for the bathroom dispenser, Swifter Sweeper refills, toilet bowl cleaner, garbage can liners in 13 gallons and 33 gallon size, Kleenex tissues, Hand soap.