



**Immanuel United Church of Christ
Ferguson, Missouri
October 1, 2023**

Order of Worship

**Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost
9:30 a.m.**

* Please stand if you are able

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***RINGING OF THE BELL and CHIMES**

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Melinda Schuster

My heart is steadfast, O God!

I will sing and make melody with all my being!

Awake, O harp and lyre!

I will awake the dawn!

I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the peoples;

I will sing praises to You among the nations.

For Your steadfast love is great above the heavens;

Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!

Let Your glory be over all the earth!

***HYMN**

“Leaning on the Everlasting Arms“

#560

***INVOCATION (In Unison)**

We turn to You today to ask for Your guidance during this time of change. We know that times are often difficult, and nothing is free from hardships, yet it is always about the way we approach it and choose to react towards it that enables us to make positive strides. As we look for better ways to move our lives forward, give us insight to find the courage and strength to keep our resolve strong. Show us the power of realizing that transformation within our lives and the church does not have to come in the form of a grand gesture, but small steps for continual forward-motion. Grant us the wisdom to understand that time is of the essence with any change that we collectively embark on. Lord, fill us with hope to realize that together, we are all capable of making a difference. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

*Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.*

READING OF MATTHEW 21:23-32

²³ When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴ Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these

things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ He answered, 'I will not,' but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you; the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE (In unison)

Lord Jesus, we come before You, acknowledging our shortcomings and ask for Your forgiveness. We confess that we have not always treated others with respect and acceptance, and we have not cared for the least of these as You have called us to do. We recognize that too often, we have taken the easier path instead of striving to see the potential in ourselves and others, as You do. We humbly ask for Your mercy and forgiveness for all that we have done that is outside of Your will for us. Help us to live according to Your ways, and to love and care for others as You have called us to do. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

If there is one thing above all else that we want to be sure of in this Christian walk of life, it is assurance of pardon. Assurance of pardon refers to our belief that God forgives us, that we trust in God for that forgiveness, and that the Divine will heal all.

HYMN

"Open My Eyes, That I May See"

#586

SERMON

"It's Time For A Change"

Rev. Deon A.

McKenzie

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

(We invite all who profess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior to partake of the Holy Communion. For those who prefer, grape juice is in the center ring of each tray. Gluten-free wafers are individually wrapped.)

COMMUNION HYMN

***“Let Us Break
Bread Together”***

#425

INVITATION

Pastor: This table is open to all who confess Jesus as the Christ and seek to follow Christ’s way. Come to this sacred table not because you must, but because you may. Come not because you are fulfilled, but because in your emptiness you stand in need of God’s mercy and assurance. Come not to express an opinion, but to seek a presence and pray for a spirit. Come to this table, brothers, and sisters as you are.

People: In company with all who hunger for spiritual food, we come to this table to know the risen Christ in sharing this life-giving bread.

Pastor: God be with you.

People: And also, with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

COMMUNION PRAYER

Pastor: God, we gather at this table representing all people in all places in our world. We bless and pass the bread and cup as Christ passed it to his friends. Please allow these elements to remind us of the good you have done and inspire us to do the good Christ calls us to do. We thank You for making us in Your image, forgiving us when we act as though You have no claim on us, and keeping us in Your steadfast care. May we leave this table revived and refreshed, having

sipped from the cup of bold courage to challenge all forms of injustice and pain. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pastor: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "*This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.*" In the same way, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying: "*This cup is the new Covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*" By eating this bread and drinking this cup, we proclaim Christ's death, celebrate Christ's resurrection, and await Christ's coming again.

People: Amen, Come, Christ Jesus!

BLESSING OF ELEMENTS

Pastor: Gracious God, as we break bread and drink from the cup, we ask for Your blessings to pour upon us, oh gracious God. May Your Holy Spirit fill us with the strength and courage to be the body of Christ, and to be the salt, and light that spreads Your word throughout the world. With every sip and every bite, may we be reminded of Your love and mercy, and may we carry that love and mercy with us in all that we do. Let this meal be a symbol of our unity as the church, and let it strengthen our faith in You. Amen.

People: Amen, Come, Holy Spirit.

Pastor: Through the broken bread, we participate in the body of Christ.

Through the cup of blessing, we participate in the new life Christ gives.

Alleluia! Christ, our Passover is offered for us.

People: Therefore, let us keep the feast.

Pastor: The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (In Unison)

We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for another, and let us show forth Your praise in our lives. Through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

God, we open our hearts to give generous of the abundant blessings we have received from You. All that we have comes from You; therefore, we give our offerings and tithes in gratitude for all You have done for us.

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

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

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison)**

Holy One, we ask that You bless these offerings and tithes so they can multiply to be a blessing for our community, our mission, and worldwide. Accept our offerings and tithes, O God, as a testimony of Your goodness in our lives. Amen!

***HYMN**

"Blessed Assurance"

#543

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**



Rose Bollinger
Ron Caguin
Melba Holtgrewve
Carol Lewis
Lois Schuette
Joanne Schuster
Sue Schuster
Christine Struble
Barbara Thompson
Edward Viehmann
Joe Walsh
Sheila Wedemeyer
Bonnie White

“Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.” James 5:14

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COFFEE & DONUTS will be served 9:00-9:30 a.m. and immediately after worship from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- CONFIRMATION – Today, during worship.
- FESTIVAL OF SHARING – Today is the last day to collect kits for Festival of Sharing. The kits will be taken to the East Region (St. Louis) Sharefest on October 7. Thank you for your donations.
- ADULT FAITH EXPLORATION – Today, after worship, Reception Room.
- BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION - Tuesday, Oct. 3, 7:00pm, Library.
- QUILTING – Wednesday at 9:00 a.m.

- IMMANUEL FELLOWSHIP - Thursday, Oct. 5, 11:00am, Reception Room.
- COOKIES FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS – Saturday, Oct. 21, 9:00am, Fellowship Hall.
- BON APPETIT – Saturday, Oct. 21, noon, Fox Farm located between Bowling Green and Louisiana, MO. RSVP by Oct. 16 to Karen or Terry Fox.
- ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – Sunday, October 22, after worship.
- ATTENDANCE – Please sign and note your attendance in the black folder located in each pew, towards the center aisle.
- TODAY'S USHERS – Karen & Terry Fox, Cathy & Charlie Miller, John Viehmann, Richard Viehmann.