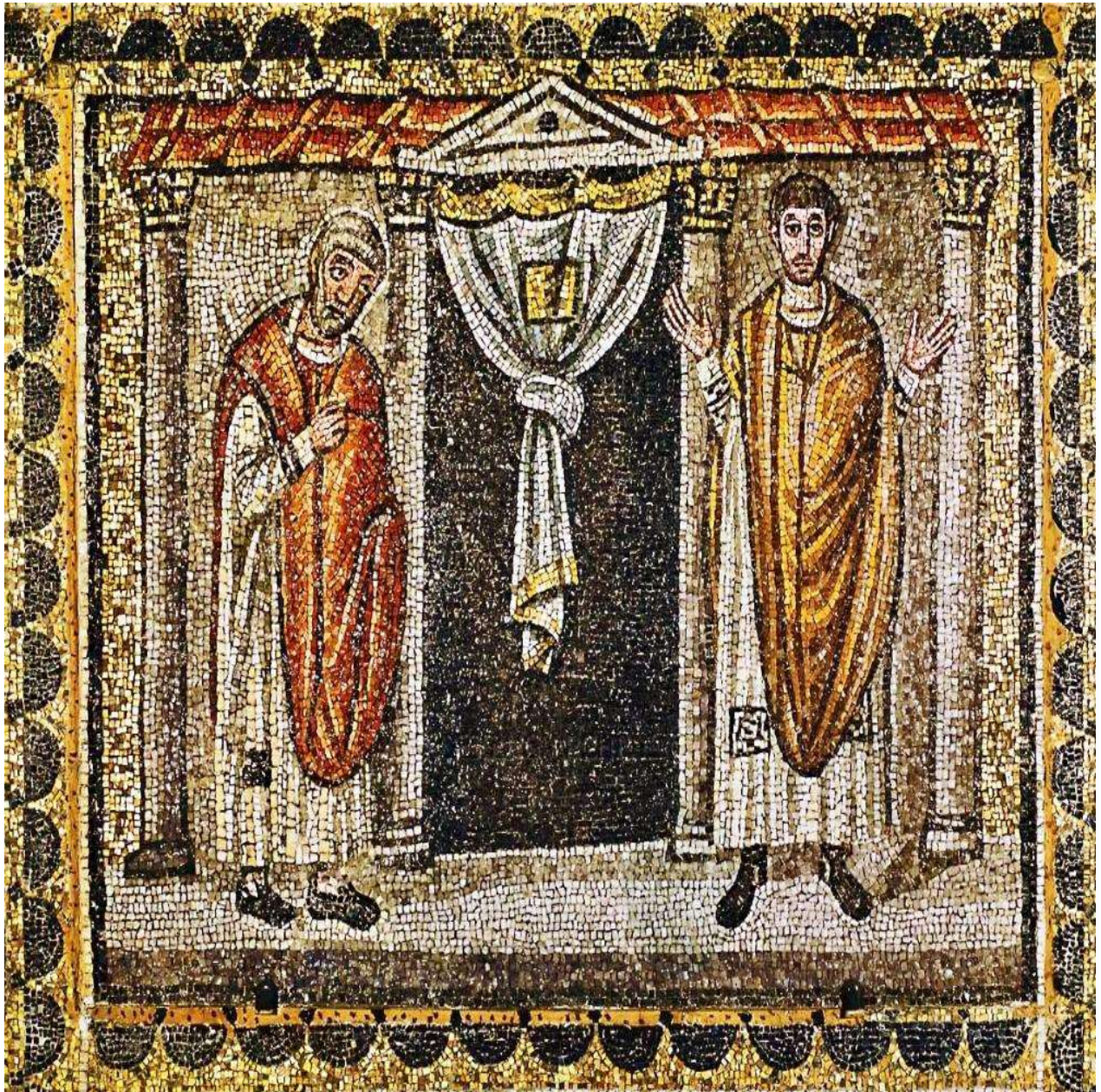


ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

October 23rd, 2022

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

A Service of the Word



“The Pharisee and the Publican”

(Sixth Mosaic on the north wall of the nave)

Mosaic, Basilica di Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, Italy, 6th-c.



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a just world for all

October 23rd, 2022
Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
A Service of the Word

“Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s thinking of yourself less.”
--C.S. Lewis

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

**Please stand as you are able*

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude – *Betty Funk*

*Call to Worship

One: It is a time of good rain, early and abundant,
that renews and does not flood.

**Many: We are the gatherers
of all that nourishes body and soul,
for we work
among a harvest of possibility.**

One: It is a time of good trouble,
bringing justice without violence,
a time of unexpected spirit
bringing new words, understandings.

**Many: We are the Everyone
who receives God’s Spirit,
the Everyone who shares God’s Spirit,
in spoken word and Sign,
in song, text, braille, code, hand-reaching.**

One: You are gatherers, who are not washed away,
the troublemakers of a trouble called love,
the Anyone, dangerously open.

***Gathering Prayer**

**God, we come from years of losses –
pandemic year, disappointment years
hiding years – and from broken days,
wasted hours, painful moments.**

**Yet our hands are out,
expecting love so wide it seeps through our fingers.**

We hold only what we share.

**We receive only what is shared with us –
worship blessings, life blessings, surprising blessings. Amen**

***Hymn NCH 422 Come, O Thankful People, Come**

Come, O Thankful People, Come

Author (st. 2): Anna Laetitia Aiken Barbauld, 1772; alt.

Author (st. 1): Henry Alford, 1844; alt.

St. 3, composite of Alford and Barbauld, alt.

Tune: ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR 7.7.7.7.D.

Composer: George J. Elvey, 1858 - Composer (descant): H. A. Chambers, 1931

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**1 Come, O thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home;
all is safely gathered in
as the winter storms begin;
God our Maker doth provide
for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.**

**2 All the blessings of the field,
all the stores the gardens yield,
all the fruits in full supply
ripened 'neath the summer sky,
All that spring with bounteous hand
scatters o'er the smiling land,
all that liberal autumn pours
from its rich o'erflowing stores.**

**3 These to you, our God, we owe,
source from whom all blessing flow;
and for these our songs we raise,
grateful vows and solemn praise.
Come, then, thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home;
come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.**

A READING OF THE WORD

First Reading: Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22

The Hebrew scripture reading turns to verses in Jeremiah 14. The prophet Jeremiah attempts to intercede on behalf of the people, but God responds to their faithlessness. Jeremiah prayed for God to not abandon them like a stranger who does not know them. Though the people have been rebellious, Jeremiah pleads for God to intervene. Jeremiah argues that God shouldn't be surprised at the people's behavior, because God has been with them. However, God allows the people to live with the consequences of their actions. If they turn away from God, God will not be with them. Jeremiah refuses to give up and pleads again for God to intervene. The people confess they have sinned. They have not been faithful. But there is no other God who can provide for the people, no other God who can bring rain where there is drought. God is their only hope.

14 7 Yes, our sins testify against us.

Have mercy, YHWH, for your Name's sake!

For our apostasies are plentiful
and we have wronged you.

8 Hope of Israel,

our Liberator in time of need,
why be like a stranger in the land,
like a traveler turning in for the night?

9 Must you be like one who is stunned,
or like warriors suddenly powerless to save
themselves?

You are in our midst, YHWH,
and we bear your Name. Do not abandon us!

10 YHWH says of this people:

"They love to wander. They stray from my ways.

They wander where they will. Therefore, YHWH will not accept them,
but will remember their wrongdoing and punish them for their sins."

19 Have you rejected Judah altogether?

Does your very soul loathe Zion?

Why have you struck us down
without hope of cure?

We were hoping for peace, to no avail.

For a time of healing, but in its place came terror.

20 YHWH, we confess our transgressions
and our ancestors' guilt:

we sinned against you.

21 For your Name's sake, do not reject us.

Do not disgrace the judgment seat of your glory. Remember us!

Don't break your covenant with us!

22 Can the worthless idols of the nations make it rain?

Can the skies grant showers?

No, only you can, YHWH!
You are our hope,
for it is you who did all these things.’ ”

Psalm Response: Psalm 84:1-7 (Responsively)

These verses praise God for the beauty of the temple, where God has chosen to dwell among the people. Even birds dwell in the temple of God and sing praise in their way. For those who choose to be in the temple and to make their home with God, they find God’s blessings, and God is known to the people in Zion.

84 1 How I love your dwelling place,
Almighty God!

**2 How my soul yearns and pines
for your courts, O God!
My heart and my flesh sing for
joy to you, the living God.**

3 The sparrow has found its home at last,
the swallow a nest for its young—
on your altars, Almighty God,
my Sovereign, my God!

**4 Happiness belongs to those who live in your house
and can praise you all day long;**

5 and happy the pilgrims who find refuge in you
as they set their hearts on the Ascents!

**6 As they go through the Valley of the Weeper,
they make it a place of springs,
clothed in blessings by the early rains.**

**7 From there they make their way from village
to village,
until each one appears before God in Zion.**

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

The Epistle reading concludes its series in 1-2 Timothy with these verses in 2 Timothy 4. The apostle Paul wraps up his letters to Timothy, knowing that he himself will most likely die in prison, and feels assured that he has done all he can for God’s glory and not his own. Paul was given strength, even in prison, to proclaim the gospel and turn the hearts of Gentiles to Jesus. Paul is assured that he was spared death thus far to do God’s work and he is ready to be with God. He sees his own life as an example and inspiration for Timothy and others to continue the Gospel work on earth.

4 6 As for me, my life is already being poured out like a libation. The time of my dissolution is near. 7 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. 8 Now a laurel wreath awaits me; on that day our God, the just Judge, will award it to me—and not only to me, but to all who have longed for Christ’s appearing.

16 I found myself alone and without a single witness at my first defense. Pray that they not be punished for it.

17 Christ stood by my side and gave me strength, so that through me the proclamation might be completed and all the nations might hear the Gospel. That's how I was saved from the lion's jaws.
18 Christ will continue to rescue me from all attempts to do me harm, and will bring me safe to the higher realm. To Jesus Christ be glory forever and ever! Amen.

Gospel Reading: Luke 18:9-14

The readings in Luke focus on parables for a second week in a row. Last week was the parable of the widow and the unjust judge, this week it is the parable of the two men who went to pray in Luke 18. One was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. In this story, Jesus uses the Pharisee as an example of someone who is smug in their own religiosity. It is always a good reminder that Jesus did not see all Pharisees this way, and back in Luke 13:31 some Pharisees warned Jesus to steer clear of Jerusalem because Herod wanted to kill him. But in this parable, Jesus is flipping the common narrative on its head. A tax collector would be despised in society as someone who was working for the Roman government to extort money. One of their own people working for the very empire. The Pharisee would be seen as someone holy, working for God. Instead, it is the Pharisee who fills the temple with empty words attempting to justify himself and the tax collector who shows true repentance before God. It is important to look at verse 9 for the context: Jesus was telling this parable to those among his own followers who thought they were holier than others.

18 9 Jesus spoke this parable addressed to those who believed in their own self-righteousness while holding everyone else in contempt: 10 “Two people went up to the Temple to pray; one was a Pharisee, the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed like this: ‘I give you thanks, O God, that I’m not like others—greedy, crooked, adulterous—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week. I pay tithes on everything I earn.’

13 “The other one, however, kept a distance, not even daring to look up to heaven. In real humility, all the tax collector said was, ‘O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’ 14 Believe me, the tax collector went home from the Temple right with God, while the Pharisee didn’t. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, while those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Choral Response – His Name is Wonderful

Music by Audrey Mieir, 1959
Choir: Keith Konet, Barbara Rossington and Bob Bucklew
Accompanist: Betty Funk

Reflection—Is Confession Good for the Soul? – Rev. Scott Rosenstein

WE RESPOND

***Prayer of Response**

God of Transformation, as the seasons change, we give you thanks that things do not stay

the same. That we ourselves cannot stay static.

You change the world around us and you change our hearts within. May we be open to the ways the Spirit is moving us to change, O God. May we be open to the need to change for others, to make space and room for those who have not had places made for them.

May we take notice of what is growing and what is dying, and give thanks for both, O God, for out of death comes new life. Even as we grieve what we have known, you are making all things new.

Transform our hearts, O God, to be ready for what you are preparing to make new. Amen.

***Hymn of Response - NCH 207 Just as I Am**

Just as I Am

Author: Charlotte Elliott, 1836; alt.

Tune: WOODWORTH L.M.

Composer: William B. Bradbury, 1849

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**1 Just as I am, without one plea
but that your blood was shed for me,
and that you called inviting me,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

**2 Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

**3 Just as I am, you will receive,
will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because your promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

**4 Just as I am, your love unknown
has broken every barrier down;
Now to be yours, and yours alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings

We are invited to repay the grace we have received with our resources, time, abilities, compassion from a deep and wide place of gratitude. These gifts are for prophecies, dreams, and hopes of the future from all your children .Be generous, my friends, with repaying, repraising, repairing. Amen

The Offertory – Betty Funk

***Presentation of Offerings and Doxology**

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

***Blessing of the Gifts**

God, you who have everything, we bring our offering and enter your spirit. This is your generosity to us — we can share with you in the giving and receiving of gifts. May these be blessed for each use, and may we be blessed by letting go plenty and learning need. Amen.

Choral Hymn- Praise the Lord! Ye Hea'vns Adore Him

Words: verses 1-2, unknown, 1796. verse 3 Edward Osler, 1836.
Music: 'Austria (Haydn)' or 'Austrian Hymn' Franz Joseph Haydn, 1797

Choir: *Keith Konet, Barbara Rossington, and Bob Bucklew*
Accompanist: *Betty Funk*

The Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer – using “debts” and “debtors”

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 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,
for ever and ever. Amen

GOING FORTH

***Parting Hymn - NCH 436 God of Grace and God of Glory vv. 1, 2, 3, 5**

God of Grace and God of Glory

Author: Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930; alt.
Words used by permission of Elinor Fosdick Downs
Tune: CWM RHONDDA 8.7.8.7.8.7.7.
Composer: John Hughes, c. 1907

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**1 God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your power;
crown your ancient church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.**

**2 From the evils that surround us
and assail the Savior's ways,
from the fears that long have bound us -
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.**

**3 Cure your children's waring madness;
bend our pride to your control.
Shame our reckless, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
make our broken spirits whole,
make our broken spirits whole.**

**5 Save us from weak resignation,
to the evils we deplore;
let the search for your salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving you whom we adore,
serving you whom we adore.**

***Commissioning and Benediction**

One: We have offered praise and prayer to our God,

Many: who sends us out to offer peace and hope to others.

One: We have heard the call of Jesus in the silence and singing,

Many: and we will join him in speaking for the voiceless.

One: Filled by the Spirit with faith and trust,

Many: we go to serve others, humbly and lovingly. Amen.

***Postlude – Betty Funk**

* * * * *

Credits

- (1) Commissioning and Benediction are adapted from *Liturgy w/communion for October 23rd, 2022 (Pentecost 20/Trinity 19– Proper 25, Ordinary 30- C)*, written by the Rev. Thom M. Shuman, and posted October 17th, 2022, to his blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. [Http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com](http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com)
- (2) The Gathering Prayer, Call to Worship, Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings, and the Blessing of the Gifts are adapted from: *Repay the years for the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost* written by Maren C. Tirabassi a UCC pastor, author of fiction and non-fiction, and also a hiker in autumn leaves and a lover of fireside moments in the company of dogs, reading poetry and novels and finding myself praying. All rights reserved.
- (3) The Prayer of Response is adapted from *Worship Resources for October 23rd, 2022*, written by the Rev. Mindi Welton-Thomas, and posted on October 14th, 2022, on her blog, *Rev-o-lution*. <http://rev-o-lution.org/>.
- (4) Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #A-736636. All rights reserved.

Ministers, *All of Us*
Scott Rosenstein, *Pastor*
Betty Funk, *Pianist and Music Director*
Keith Konet, *Council President*



NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

God is Still Speaking...

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you will find a spiritual home in this United Church of Christ congregation. WELCOME!

Tithes and Offerings - Checks and Money Orders can be made payable to: "Zion United Church of Christ" and placed in the offering box or mailed to:

Zion United Church of Christ
c/o Keith Konet
1039 Bridlewood Drive
Copley, OH 44321
Questions: Contact Keith Konet at 330.604.6939

Our Church's Website Address is: zionchurchtremont.org.

Check out our website and Facebook page for updates and news!

Zion's Administrative Assistant, Beverly Wurm

Beverly began a part-time position with us. She will be keeping some limited Office Hours at church/home. The days and hours are:

Monday – 9am – 1pm

Wednesday – 10am-2pm

Thursday – 9am – 1pm

Beverly can be reached at: zionchurchtremont@gmail.com or by phone at: 216-273-7561 (church) or 216-310-6810 (mobile).

Season after Pentecost - Ordinary Time

The longest season of the liturgical calendar is filled with Sundays called "Ordinary Time." **The season - called the Season after Pentecost or Ordinary Time - began with Trinity Sunday and ends with Reign of Christ Sunday (the Sunday before the start of Advent).** If you're like me, you might hear "ordinary time" as "boring time." But that's not the case! The word "ordinary" most likely means "numbered" here (think ordinal numbers), because the Sundays of Ordinary Time are numbered. **In this season we move from concentrating on the event of Christ in the world to focusing toward the impact of being in Christ in the world. A life in the unity of the Trinity is one of being shaped and sent daily in the image and in the purpose of Holy Love.** The liturgical color for this season is green. During the Season after Pentecost, we focus on the life of the Church as it grows in the midst of the world.

*"When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it—always."
— Mahatma Gandhi*

Upcoming Holidays and Gospel readings

| | | |
|-------------------|---|----------------------|
| October 30 | Reformation Sunday – Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost | Luke 19:1-10 |
| November 6 | All Saints Sunday - Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost | Luke 20:27-38 |

Reformation Day is a Protestant Christian religious holiday celebrated on October 31st, by tradition the anniversary of the day the German monk Martin Luther is said to have posted his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany (October 31, 1517). The 95 Theses were propositions for debate calling for theological and ecclesiastical reform (particularly regarding a church practice at the time known as indulgences - a distinctive feature of the penitential system of both the Western medieval and the Roman Catholic Church that granted full or partial remission of the punishment of sin).

Luther originally had no intention of breaking from the Roman Catholic Church, assuming that his call

for reform would be heard, and ordinarily his theses would have been of interest only to professional theologians. However, various political and religious situations of the time, and the fact that printing had been invented, combined to make the theses known throughout Germany within a few weeks.

The practice of dating the beginning of the Protestant Reformation from the date that the Ninety-five Theses were supposedly posted did not develop until after the mid-17th century.

The holiday is celebrated among various Protestants, especially by Lutheran and Reformed Churches. Due to ecumenical movements, some other Christian groups now tend to acknowledge or co-participate in church services celebrating Reformation Day. That includes the Roman Catholic Church, as well as various Protestant denominations that are neither Lutheran nor Reformed, i.e. lack a direct connection to religious events of the 16th century Europe. **In the United States churches often transfer the holiday, so that it falls on the Sunday (called Reformation Sunday) on or before October 31st, with All Saints' Day moved to the Sunday on or after November 1st.**

All Saints' Day, also known as All Hallows' Day, the Feast of All Saints, the Feast of All Hallows, the Solemnity of All Saints, and Halloween, is a Christian solemnity celebrated in honor of all the saints of the church, whether they are known or unknown.

The festival was retained after the Reformation in the liturgical calendars of the Lutheran Churches, Anglican Church, and some Reformed Churches. In some churches it is moved to the first Sunday of November. It is celebrated by Lutheran and Anglican Churches - and also celebrated by other Protestants, such as the United Church of Christ and various Methodist congregations. **In the United States churches often transfer the holiday, so that it falls on the Sunday on or after November 1st.**

Protestants generally commemorate all Christians, living and deceased - both past and present. In some congregations, the festival is marked as an occasion to remember the dead. The names of those who have died from the congregation within the last year are read during worship and a bell is tolled, a chime is played or a candle is lit for each name read. **While the dead are solemnly remembered during worship on All Saints' Sunday, the festival is ultimately a celebration of Christ's victory over death.**

Please Remember in Prayer

- The Universal Church, its members and mission,
- The nation and all in authority, the leaders of our nation - federal, state, and local.
- For democracy and our democratic institutions and norms in the United States.
- The welfare of the world and the concerns of the local community,
- The interrelationship of Gospel values and civic engagement
- Our 155th Anniversary as a community of faith of Zion Church on May 15th, 2022.
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.
- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including our Living Water Association UCC, Association General Minister, The Rev. Nayiri Karjian, and Association Faith in Action Minister, The Rev. Michael Howard.
- The ministers and missionaries of the world.

- Those who are refugees and immigrants.
- For children separated from their parents at detention camps along our southern border.
- For racial and religious justice and reconciliation in the United States and around the world.
- Mother Earth and the global reflection on climate disruption
- For peace, justice, and freedom throughout the world and particularly for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and the United States.
- The people of Afghanistan, Venezuela, Syria, Yemen, Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Kurdish people and the Christians of northern Syria - for peace, nutrition, and justice.
- **The people of Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, western Cuba, eastern Canada-along with the people of Florida and the Carolinas profoundly impacted by the recent hurricanes. Be with all who grieve and mourn the loss of loved ones, homes, businesses, and infrastructure. Please help the survivors to process and move through the trauma, and to rebuild their lives and communities.**
- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive, a total of 546 mass shooting incidents have occurred in the US as of October 19th, 2022. In 2021 a total of 693 mass shooting incidents occurred across the US, in 2020 a total of 611, in 2019 a total of 417, with 337 incidents in 2018. While we pray for the families and friends of those whose lives have been taken in violent acts – and we pray for those injured in body, mind, soul, and spirit – and for their neighborhoods and communities across the United States - We know that our words and prayers are not enough. We must repent for our collective inaction and commit to tirelessly working toward meaningful gun violence prevention.
- For those affected by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and the omicron variant surge: for all those who are infected and/or sick, and those who are grieving, for all who are affected, all around the world, for essential workers and frontline workers...we pray for comfort, for safety, for health, and for wholeness.
- The residents and management of the San Sofia Apartments who share a campus with us.
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments
- Those living in assisted living or in a nursing home
- Those who are homebound and those who are caregivers
- Those who suffer or are in any trouble, and the departed.
- Those on our church prayer list:
 - Patti Augustine and family
 - Robert O. Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) in Alliance, Ohio
 - Betty Funk (*our Minister of Music*)
 - Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob; friend of Elaine – health concerns*)
 - Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, Barbara, and Michael Reed.
 - Jocelyn Paulette and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui Konet
 - Keith Konet and his brother who suffered a broken humerus from an injury caused by a fallen branch.
 - Marcia Leslie (*friend of Zion – health concerns; new Senior housing*)

- **Elaine Lukacs (has moved to: *Altenheim Skilled Nursing Facility: 18627 Shurmer Road, Room 408 Strongsville, Oh 44136*) 440-238-3361 ext. 5071**
- Linda and James Mortach (*Elaine Lukacs' sister & brother-in-law*) & Linda's daughter
- Patricia Matheny (prayers also for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray)
- Lee Matsos and family
- Barbara Rossington (*move to a new senior housing community*)
- Henry Senyak (*resident community leader – cancer*)
- The family of Michael O'Brien particularly his wife, Debbie Webb (*following Michael's death last Fall. Our love and sympathy to Debbie and Michael's family*). **Debbie has recently fallen and suffered a fracture to her femur. She is at home recovering.**
- **Beverly Wurm-- great grandson, Orion (4 yrs.) has undergone tests and referred to Texas Children's hospital where he will undergo surgery after treatment with medication for 12 weeks.**

Help for Ukraine

Gifts made to UCC **Ukraine Emergency Appeal** will provide shelter, food, and other care to war refugees and internally displaced people.

Donate online with the link below:

<https://support.ucc.org/global-h-o-p-e/ukraine-emergency-appeal>

Or designate a check for Ukraine Relief and mail to:

United Church of Christ,
P.O. Box 71957
Cleveland, OH 44194.

Gifts made to **Sharing America's Resources Abroad (S.A.R.A)** provide food, clothing, and sanitary items for refugees fleeing to Hungary.

Donate online with the link:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=QC5P9F6Z9LT32

Or designate a check for **S.A.R.A. - Donations for Ukraine Emergency Fund** and mail to:

SARA
c/o Heartland Conference UCC
P.O. Box 1230
Worthington, OH 43085.

Please know that your gifts of any size make a difference in this critical time.

Pakistan's 'dire' flood crisis is subject of UCC emergency appeal

The United Church of Christ has issued an emergency appeal for relief-and-recovery gifts in response to what it called "massive flooding" across most of Pakistan.

The most pressing needs are for food, clean water and sanitation, and emergency housing.

People can donate electronically at this page: <https://tinyurl.com/ya8msm3n> by selecting "International Emergency" as the option and entering "Pakistan response" as the specific appeal.

Gifts by check can be made payable to United Church of Christ, with "Pakistan Response Fund" noted in the memo section, and mailed to P.O. Box 71957 Cleveland, OH 44194.

Hurricanes 2022 Emergency Appeal

The United Church of Christ is issuing an appeal to support immediate needs for families and communities affected by Hurricanes Fiona and Ian. To read more, visit visit: <https://tinyurl.com/5n6kpt24>

While this year's hurricane season started slow, later developments have made it clear just how dangerous and destructive these storms can be. With wind speeds topping out at 130 miles per hour and 155 miles per hour, respectively, Hurricanes Fiona and Ian have left devastation in their wake. Fiona's winds left all of Puerto Rico in the dark, many people remain without power. Communities remain in crisis mode as the delivery of food, drinking water, and medical needs is challenged in hard-to-reach places cut off by downed trees, mudslides, and washed away bridges.

Millions have lost power and access to clean drinking water. The need for emergency food support, medical care, and temporary shelter is high.

Hurricane Ian raged, with widespread damage in Cuba, flooding and wind damage, storm surge and in-land flooding across Florida, and flooding threatening Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia.

Emergency response personnel are active. Relief agencies are meeting immediate needs where they can gain access to communities hard hit by the storm. United Church of Christ partners through National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster who focus on relief are implementing their plans. Global Ministries Area Executive for Latin America Angel Luis Rivera is in touch with bilateral partners. Conference leaders and Conference Disaster Coordinators are making contact, assessing needs, and communicating with the Global H.O.P.E. team so that help can be channeled, now and for the long term.

Your generous financial support will be used by our partners in the areas of greatest need, for relief and long-term recovery. Donate online: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7bd3e2>

If you prefer, you may mail a check payable to the United Church of Christ, PO BOX 71957 Cleveland, OH 44194. Please be sure to note "Hurricanes 2022 Fund" in the memo section.