

# ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

October 1st, 2023

18th Sunday after Pentecost

(Pentecost 18/Trinity 17/Ordinary 26-A)

A Service of the Word and Holy Communion

World Communion Sunday



## *World Communion Art*

*By Stushie*

*A Scottish Pastor, ministering in East Tennessee*

*Stushie Art-Church bulletin covers. Unique crayon, markers and digital worship art*

*<https://stushieart.com>*



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**"Nothing strengthens authority so much as silence."  
- Leonardo Di Vinci**

**WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY**

*\*please stand as you are able*

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Prelude – Adam Petrosino**

**\*Call to Worship**

One: We gather as God's people to celebrate the beauty of our diversity.

**All: Let us love each other as God loves us beautifully and wonderfully made in God's image.**

One: We give thanks for who we are, Beloved of God.

**All: Let us open our hearts to God's spirit of love and unity.**

One: We celebrate the gifts of all gathered here today.

**All: Let us worship God with all we are and celebrate the beauty of all God's creation.**

**\*Invocation**

**God, open our eyes to see the beauty in each person we meet. Help us freely share your love with all your creation. We give thanks for beautifying your creation and for making a diverse world. Help us to be kind, compassionate, and loving to all. We thank you, O God, for allowing us to grow in our welcome and learn about other cultures as we share your amazing grace and love with each other and the world. Amen**

**\*Hymn – NCH 21 – God Reigns o'er All the Earth**

## A READING OF THE WORD

### First Reading: Ezekiel 18: 1-4, 25-32

*The reading from the Hebrew scriptures turns to the prophet Ezekiel A troubling passage, the first four verses of Ezekiel 18 use a common saying among the people that Jeremiah 31:29-30 also questions, about parents eating sour grapes and children suffering for it. In short, the idea that children would suffer because of the sins of their parents is put to rest by these two prophets. Those who sin will be responsible for the repercussions of their actions. In Ezekiel's view, everyone has sinned, and everyone is responsible, not God, for the consequences of their actions. Verses 25-32 continue this discourse. The people say that God's ways are unfair, but they are the ones breaking from God's ways repeatedly. In God's view, the people's ways are unfair because they are still unjust and irresponsible—all of them. But if the people repent and turn back to God, they will find life. This is what God desires—that they find a new heart and new spirit. God does not desire destruction and death, but life.*

**18** 1 The word of YHWH came to me: 2 “What do you mean by repeating this proverb about the land of Israel:

‘Parents eat sour grapes  
and their children’s teeth  
are set on edge’?

3 “As I live, says Sovereign YHWH, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel. 4 For every living soul belongs to me—the parents as well as the child; both alike belong to me. It is only the person who sins who will die.

25 “Yet you say, ‘The way of YHWH is not just.’ Listen, you Israelites! Am I unjust? It is your ways that are unjust. 26 If those who are just turn from their integrity, take to evil ways, and die, it is because of their evil ways that they die. 27 If sinners give up their evil ways and do what is just and right, they preserve their life. 28 They acknowledged their sins and turned their backs on all their wrongdoing, and they will live. 29 ‘YHWH is not just,’ say the Israelites. No, it is you, Israel, who is unjust, not I!

30 “Therefore, House of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to your ways, says Sovereign YHWH. Repent! Turn from your evil. Otherwise, your corruption will be your ruin. 31 Rid yourself of your offenses, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. Why should you Israelites die? 32 For I take no pleasure in anyone’s death, says Sovereign YHWH.

### Psalm Response: Psalm 25:1-9 (Responsively)

*Psalm 25 is an alphabet acrostic poem, with each verse beginning with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Verses 1-9 is a plea to God to not allow their enemies to overtake them, and for God to make known God's ways. The psalmist desires for God to lead them because they want to follow God all their days. The author seeks forgiveness for the sins of their youth and to remember God's faithfulness and steadfast love. God is a good teacher, leading sinners in the right way, and teaches those who are humble in the ways of justice.*

1 To you, O God,  
I lift up my soul.

**2 My God, I trust in you;  
don't let me be ashamed,  
don't let my enemies triumph over me.**

3 No—none who hope in you will be ashamed,  
but shame will come to the wantonly treacherous.

**4 Show me your ways, O God!  
Teach me your paths!**

5 Lead me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation. I wait all the day long for you.

**6 Remember your mercies, O God, your love—  
your ancient and unwavering love!**

7 Pardon the sins of my youth  
and my rebellious ways;  
remember me because of your love,  
because of your goodness, God!

**8 And how good and upright you are, God!  
You instruct sinners in the path,**

**9 you guide those who are humble in what is right,  
and teach them your way.**

### **Second Reading: Philippians 2:1-13**

*The Epistle reading continues its series in Philippians with these verses in chapter 2. A theme of the apostle Paul's letter to the church in Philippi is to be of the same mind and to have the same love. This doesn't mean one necessarily agrees with everything, but that they remember their purpose is to follow Jesus Christ. Verses 6-11 contain an ancient confession of Christ, the one who was equal to God but did not exploit his power, emptied himself and became humble to the point of death on the cross. Because of Christ's humility, we all ought to humble ourselves before the name of Jesus Christ, who has been exalted by God. Verses 12-13 contain encouragement for the people of Philippi to know Christ's salvation personally in their lives, because God is at work in each of them. The urging of unity comes with the understanding that each person has a relationship with Christ, and that in humility, we serve and worship Christ together.*

**2** 1 If our life in Christ means anything to you—if love, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness or sympathy can persuade you at all—2 then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing that would make me completely happy. 3 There must be no competition among you, no conceit, but everybody is to be humble: value others over yourselves, 4 each of you thinking of the interests of others before your own. 5 Your attitude must be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

6 Christ, though in the image of God,  
didn't deem equality with God  
something to be clung to—  
7 but instead became completely empty  
and took on the image of oppressed humankind:  
born into the human condition,  
found in the likeness of a human being.  
8 Jesus was thus humbled—  
obediently accepting death, even death on a cross!  
9 Because of this, God highly exalted Christ  
and gave to Jesus the name above every other name,  
10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee must bend  
in the heavens, on the earth and under the earth,  
11 and every tongue proclaim to the glory of God:  
Jesus Christ reigns supreme!

12 Therefore, my dear friends, you who are always obedient to my urging, work out your salvation with fear and trembling, not only when I happen to be with you, but all the more now that I'm absent. 13 It is God at work in you that creates the desire to do God's will.

### **Gospel Reading: Matthew 21:23-32**

*Jesus's authority is challenged in these verses in Matthew 21. Jesus doesn't come from a recognizable group, and so members of other first-century Jewish groups want to know who he is. Jesus, in turn, asks them a question about John the Baptizer's authority, knowing that the crowd would have strong opinions about it because they liked John. So when those who questioned Jesus refuse to respond, Jesus also refuses to respond directly. Instead, Jesus tells a parable about a landowner's two children and who obeys God. Is it the one who said they would do something and failed to do it, or the one who refused but later changed their mind? A good question for us today is who really has the authority—the people who claim the moral high ground but don't think it applies to their own personal lives, judge others and treat others poorly, or those who know they struggle and are not perfect, but attempt to live into justice and compassion for all?*

**21** 23 Jesus entered the Temple precincts and began teaching. The chief priests and the elders of the people came to him and said, "By what authority are you doing what you do? Who gave you this authority?"

24 "And I," replied Jesus, "will ask you a single question; if you give me the answer, I will tell you my authority for these actions. 25 What was the origin of John's right to baptize? Was it divine or was it human?"

They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'divine,' he will respond, 'Then why did you refuse to believe him?' 26 But if we say 'human,' we have the people to fear, for they regard John as a prophet." 27 So they replied to Jesus, "We don't know."

Jesus said in reply, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."  
28 Jesus continued, "What do you think? There was a landowner who had two children.

The landowner approached the elder and said, 'My child, go out and work in the vineyard today.'  
29 This first child replied, 'No, I won't,' but afterwards regretted it and went. 30 The landowner then came to the second child and said the same thing. The second child said in reply, 'I'm on my way,' but never went. 31 Which of the two did what was wanted?"

They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "The truth is, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. 32 When John came walking on the road of justice, you didn't believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you didn't repent and believe.

### **Choral Response – NCH 283 – Spirit of the Living God**

*Author and Composer: Daniel Iverson, 1926*  
*© 1935, 1963 Birdwing Music (A Div. of the Sparrow Corp.)*  
*Choir: Keith Konet, Barbara Rossington, and Bob Bucklew*  
*Accompanist: Adam Petrosino*

### **Reflection – A Wholly Integrated Life - Rev. Scott Rosenstein**

#### **WE RESPOND**

#### **\*Prayer for World Communion Sunday**

**Almighty Creator, we give you thanks and praise.  
On this World Communion Sunday, we are reminded that you made us all in your image,  
all with different gifts, but the same Spirit.**

**In all parts of the earth we have come to know you in different ways through our cultures  
and traditions and teachings, but we are united in your love for us, demonstrated in the life, death,  
and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Savior.**

**In these symbols of the cup and of the bread, these simple gifts of nourishment,  
we recognize that we are one.**

**We may all eat, we may all drink. We eat and drink of you because you are the one  
who created, redeems, and sustains us.**

**As we share these gifts from you, in humility we show our gratitude for your creation.  
We give our thanks for your wondrous diversity that breathes in each of us.  
And we share together our common humanity, and our common hope that is found in you,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

#### **\*Hymn of Response – NCH 386 – The Church's One Foundation vv. 1, 2, & 3**

#### **Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings**

God, we open our hearts to give generously 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.

## **The Offertory – Adam Petrosino**

### **\*Presentation of Offerings - Doxology**

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

### **\*Blessing of the Gifts**

**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!**

### **\*Call to Reconciliation**

What do you think? Someone is always saying, 'sorry,' while doing the same foolish thing over and over. Another never thinks they are wrong, but then God's grace transforms them and they do the completely unexpected. Which is faithful to God's hopes for them? Let us reflect for a few moments in silence, and then pray together the words for forgiveness.

### **\*Prayer of Forgiveness**

**We could do what you hope, God of our salvation, but we get so distracted, we don't. We continue to fill ourselves with temptation's empty calories, and wonder why we are still hungry. We put ourselves first, and so never notice those behind us who struggle in life.**

**Forgive us, Mercy of our lives. May we complete your love by caring deeply for those who make life so difficult for us. May we complete your hope, by reaching out to those in need. May we complete your grace, by emptying ourselves for all around us, just as Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, did for us.**

*-Silence is kept-*

### **\*Assurance of Pardon**

**One:** Plant this good news deep in your thoughts: God loves you; God forgives you;  
God strengthens you for service.

**All:** **May God's compassion make us more passionate to serve;  
may God's forgiveness make us more merciful;  
may God's love make us more loving to everyone. Thanks be to God. Amen**

**COMMUNION LITURGY**  
**A CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION ON WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY**

**Invitation**

One: Jesus prayed that we might be one.

One in spirit

One in mission

In union and communion with each other and with you.

**Many: Today, God, we confess fumbblings and failures in accomplishing unity, as we set aside yet another day to remind ourselves of the task.**

**On this World Communion Sunday, give us eyes to recognize your reflection in the eyes of Christians everywhere.**

**Give us a mind to accept and celebrate our differences.**

**Give us a heart big enough to love your children everywhere.**

**We thank you for setting a table with space enough for us all! Amen.**

**\*Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Leader: God be with you.

**Unison: And also with you.**

Leader: People of God, lift up your hearts.

**Unison: We lift them to the One who cradles our hearts in loving hands.**

Leader: People of God, let us give thanks to the God who sets a Table for us.

**Unison: We praise the Lord our God who welcomes us with open arms.**

*(Allow silence to speak for a few moments)*

*Leader:*

How lonely was chaos, Gardener of the Universe,  
until you spoke a Word, and your Spirit created:

leaves that burnish gold and red in autumn,

snow that drifts lazily in winter skies,

frozen brooks that burst in spring,

ponds splashing with children in summer.

You planted the seeds of joy in our ancestors

hoping they would pass them onto us,

but they walked sin's lonely streets

and drank the bitter tears death offered.

Though the prophets came

to remind us of your great faithfulness,

we continued to feast on the

wormwood and gall offered by the world.

But you would not forget us,

and so sent Jesus to bring us home to you.



Therefore we join our voices,  
as we proclaim your mercies  
made fresh in every moment

**Unison:**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of God.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Leader: As we remember the Lord Jesus' grace and love,  
as we dare not forget his sacrifice for us,  
we proclaim that mystery we call faith:

**Unison: When we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
We proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,  
Until you come in glory.**

**Table Prayer**

**Praised be you, Holy Spirit,  
blowing through time  
to enliven your people, the church,  
to live as Christ's body,  
in God's ministry of repairing our broken world.  
Come hover over us now  
with your bright brooding wings  
in the breaking of bread  
and in the celebration of this cup,  
that our eyes may be opened  
to recognize Christ among us  
and in all who share in this feast.  
Knit us more closely together  
in the fellowship of your sovereign Way.  
We offer ourselves, our lives, our resources,  
to be your hands reaching into the world  
with your unfathomable compassion.  
Fill us like breath fills flutes  
to be instruments of your peace.  
Where there is lack of regard for your creation  
prod us to speak up.  
Where people fail to see the dignity of all persons,  
open unseeing eyes.**

Where there is silence about others being hurt,  
impassion us with a desire for justice.  
Lord, your creation groans under abuse.

Renew the earth with goodness.  
Your children are starving across this globe.  
for those who hunger  
give bread.  
And to those who have bread  
give hunger for justice.  
People languish in prisons,  
some unjustly,  
some without repentance,  
and some for standing up for your Way.  
Release the captives, Lord.

O God, our Sovereign, leaders in all lands  
take bribes and afflict their peoples.  
Topple oppressive powers with your rule  
and send those who are rich empty away.  
Your church luxuriates in the comfort of faith;  
Send us to be your servants in service to the world.  
Those who are sick suffer forgotten in pain.  
Heal their hurts in body, mind, and spirit.  
In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

**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,  
forever.  
Amen.

## **Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine**

Leader: Gathered with his friends, Jesus took bread, broke it and said:  
"This is my body, broken for you. Take and eat."

And pouring the wine:  
"This is my blood, spilled out for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

## **Call to the Feast**

Leader: This is the feast prepared for you.  
Come and share for all is ready.

## **\*Sharing of the Elements**

Leader:  
Let us receive the gift of God, the Bread of Heaven.

**Unison:**  
**We are one in Christ in the bread we share.**

Leader:  
Let us receive the gift of God, the Cup of Blessing.

**Unison:**  
**We are one in Christ in the cup we share.**

## **\*Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**O God,  
for the healing you have given us  
in the brokenness of bread  
and the pouring out of cup,  
we thank you.  
For the community that you have restored  
in us through the sharing of life,  
we thank you.  
For the courage and strength  
that you have promised to us,  
even as we have honored  
the ones of courage in our own past,  
we thank you.  
Send us forth from this place in love,  
letting justice be worked out  
with gentleness and power  
known in the presence of your Spirit.  
Amen.**

## GOING FORTH

### **\*Parting Hymn – NCH 395 – In Christ There Is No East or West**

### **\*Commissioning and Benediction**

One: Let us have the same mind as God.

**All: We will see each person as God's child.**

One: Let us have the same justice as Jesus.

**All: We will stand with each person who struggles.**

One: Let us have the same hope as the Spirit.

**All: We will put others before us in all we do. Amen.**

### **Postlude - Adam Petrosino (\*\*please be seated during the Postlude\*\*)**

***Worship ends at the last note of the postlude as it begins at the first note of the prelude.***

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Credits**

- (1) The Call to Worship, Invocation, Invitation to Share our Tithes and Offerings, and the Blessing of the Gifts, are adapted from *Going Ahead in God's Leading: Service Prayers for the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Celebrating Communion Sunday and Hispanic/Latine Heritage Month)*, was written by the Rev. Persida Rivera-Mendez, retired UCC pastor. Permission is given for congregations to use in worship or educational settings, including streaming.
- (2) The Prayer of Response is adapted from *WA Prayer for World Communion Sunday Worship Resources for October 1, 2023*, written by Rev. Mindi Welton- Mitchell, posted September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 on her blog, *Rev-o-lution*. <http://revo-o-lution.org/>
- (3) The Call to Reconciliation, Prayer of Forgiveness, Assurance of Forgiveness, Prayer of Thanksgiving, and the Commissioning and Benediction are adapted from *Alternate Liturgy and Communion from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 (Pentecost 18/Trinity 17/Proper 21/Ordinary 26A)*, written by Thom M. Shuman, and posted September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023, on the blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>
- (4) The Invitation for Communion is adapted from A Prayer for World Communion Sunday, from the *Africana Worship Book, Year B*, (Discipleship Resources, 2007.) Used with permission. Posted for January 28, 2010, on the website of Discipleship Ministries – The United Methodist Church. <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/a-prayer-for-world-communion-sunday>
- (4) Portions of the Communion Liturgy – Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Table Prayer - are adapted from *Great Prayer of Thanksgiving for World Communion Sunday*, written by The Rev. Thom Shuman, and posted September 26, 2023 on the blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>
- (5) Portions of the Communion Liturgy - Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine and Call to the Feast - are adapted from *Liturgy w/communion for December 5, 2021 (Advent 2-C)*, written by The Rev. Thom Shuman, and posted December 1, 2021 on the blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>
- (6) A portion of the Communion Liturgy - the Sharing of the Elements - is adapted from *Online Communion for Palm Sunday*, written by The Rev. Maren C. Tirabassi. ©2020 Maren Tirabassi, all publishing rights reserved. Permission is given for congregations to use in worship or educational settings, including streaming.
- (8) The Prayer of Thanksgiving following Communion is reprinted by permission of the publisher from *Touch Holiness*, ed. Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassii, p. 149. Copyright © 1990 The Pilgrim Press.
- (9) Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE License #A-736636. All rights reserved.

**Ministers, All of Us**  
**Scott Rosenstein, Pastor**  
**Adam Petrosino, Music Director**  
**Keith Konet, Council President**  
**Beverly Wurm, Administrative Assistant**



## **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 basket 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

### **Welcome to Adam D. Petrosino, Our New Music Director/Pianist**

Adam can be reached by e-mail at [A.D.Petrosino@gmail.com](mailto:A.D.Petrosino@gmail.com) and by phone at 234.205.9397.

## **Administrative Assistant, Beverly Wurm**

Beverly keeps some limited Office Hours at church (2700 W. 14<sup>th</sup>) and at home. The days and hours are:

### **Fall Schedule :**

Tuesday– 9am – 1pm

Wednesday – 10am-2 pm

Thursday – 9am – 1pm

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



## **World Communion Sunday**

On the first Sunday in October, United Church of Christ congregations join many Christian churches across the globe in celebrating World Communion Sunday.

World Communion Sunday began as World-Wide Communion Sunday at Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1933. The Rev. Hugh Thompson Kerr and his congregation sought to demonstrate the interconnectedness of Christian churches, regardless of denomination.

Rev. Kerr appropriately chose the sacrament of Holy Communion to symbolize this unity.

In 1940, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (now the National Council of Churches), which included all of the predecessor denominations of the United Church of Christ, adopted World-Wide Communion Sunday. The global celebration occurs on the first Sunday in October.

Today, the United Church of Christ celebrates World Communion Sunday with congregations all over the globe. Followers of Jesus Christ in large churches and small, on farms and in cities, in ornate buildings and under tents, gather to receive the bread and cup of Holy Communion.

Some will receive cubes of bread. Some will tear from a common loaf. Some will receive a wafer.

Some will drink from a common chalice. Some will dip a piece of bread into the cup. Some will have individual glasses. Some will use wine; some juice. Some will offer both.

Pastors will lead a variety of liturgies, in many languages. Clergy will dress traditionally, formally, and casually.

Despite the differences in our denominations and traditions, we celebrate our unity in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

## Sunday Worship Services Schedule

*There will be No Sunday Worship Service at Zion Chapel on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Weekly Sunday Worship Services at Zion Chapel resume on October 15<sup>th</sup>.*

## Worship Services on Zoom

*We are discontinuing streaming worship services on Zoom at this time. The option for Worship Services via the Zoom platform will resume in the Winter months and by request as needed.*

## 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://tinyurl.com/yc6aesk4>



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://shorturl.at/efijp>

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.**



## Responding to Wildfires on the Hawai'an Islands

Read more in a UCC News Digest story: "Amid wildfires devastation, UCC makes appeal for Hawaii" - <https://www.ucc.org/amid-wildfires-devastation-ucc-makes-appeal-for-hawaii/>

**We are grateful** for the gracious generosity of all who are donating to the Hawai'i 2023 Wildfires Relief Fund. Immediate assistance is already being distributed to those in need through our local UCC churches and related channels. **The United Church of Christ Global H.O.P.E. team is launching an appeal to provide support for victims of the wildfires in addition to the appeal of the Hawai'i Conference UCC.**

We encourage all UCC folks outside of Hawai'i to give through Global H.O.P.E. by going to: <https://support.ucc.org/hawaii-wildfires>.

### 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
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.



- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. We also pray for 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 Turkey and Syria: more than 50,000 people have died following two devastating earthquakes. Turkish authorities say some 13.5 million people have been affected in an area spanning roughly 280 miles from Adana in the west to Diyarbakir in the east, and 186 miles from Malatya in the north to Hatay in the south. At least 44,374 deaths have been reported in Turkey, while 5,800 951 people have died in Syria.
- We pray as well for the people of Vermont, upstate New York, and the Canadian province of Nova Scotia affected by catastrophic flooding.
- In early August 2023, a series of wildfires broke out in the U.S. state of Hawai'i. Affecting the island of Maui, and to a lesser extent Hawai'i (also known as the Big Island), the wind-driven fires prompted evacuations, caused widespread damage, and killed at least 96 people in the town of Lahaina. The proliferation of the wildfires was attributed to dry, gusty conditions created by a strong high-pressure area north of Hawaii and Hurricane Dora to the south. By August 9, the state government of Hawaii issued a state of emergency for the entirety of the state. On August 10, President Biden issued a federal major disaster declaration. The typical area burned by wildfires in Hawaii has increased in recent decades, almost quadrupling. Experts blame the increase on the spread of non-native vegetation and hotter, drier weather.
- On September 8, 2023 an earthquake with a moment magnitude of 6.8–6.9 struck Morocco's Marrakesh–Safi region. The earthquake's epicentre was located 45.6 miles southwest of Marrakesh, in the Atlas Mountains. At least 2,946 deaths were reported, with most occurring outside Marrakesh. Damage was widespread, and historic landmarks in Marrakesh were destroyed. The earthquake was also felt in Spain, Portugal, and Algeria. It is the strongest instrumentally recorded earthquake in Morocco, the deadliest in the country since the 1960 Agadir earthquake, and the second-deadliest earthquake of 2023 after the Turkey–Syria earthquake. A total of over 2.7 million people from Marrakesh and areas surrounding the Atlas Mountains were affected, including 100,000 children.
- On Monday, September 11, 2023 heavy rainfall brought by Storm Daniel caused two dams to burst in the city of Derna, Libya destroying entire neighborhoods as well as major roads and bridges. Officials estimate that over 6,000 people have died while thousands more are missing. Tens of thousands of people have also been displaced and the damage is so severe that there is no prospect of going back home. Years of civil war, corruption and institutional neglect left residents of the North African state at the mercy of Mediterranean storm Daniel's extreme weather. While the water brought death to Derna in a devastating and sudden rush for many residents, the floods were preceded by a litany of unheeded warnings. But years went by as cautionary reports piled up and restoration efforts either failed to get off the ground or were

abandoned in the chaos of civil war. And all of it only highlights a glaring issue facing the world: The effects of climate change are making acute weather phenomena like Daniel more frequent, placing additional stress on flawed structures — and states. Climate change is increasing weather extremes, stresses infrastructure and makes management and preparation all the more important. Timely prediction of the storm and a response like the swift opening of the dam gates might have helped prevent such a disaster, experts said. But failing to identify the threat to Derna despite all the warnings was the ultimate failing.

- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive a total of 520 mass shooting incidents have occurred in the US as of September 28th, 2023. In 2022 a total of 648 mass shootings. In 2021 a total of 693 mass shooting incident 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 various variant surges: 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 (*health concerns*) and family. *Patti's brother Dave is recovering from recent open-heart surgery.*
  - Robert O. Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) is residing at Mapleridge Senior Living
  - Willoughby, OH. Robert recently celebrated his 91st Birthday.
  - The family and loved ones of Betty Funk.
  - Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob – health concerns*)
  - Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, Barbara Reed, Nancy Moore's sister has passed away.
  - Jocelyn Paulette and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui Konet - prayers for recovery.
  - Keith Konet and family.
  - Marcia Leslie (*friend – health concerns*)
  - The family and loved ones of Elaine Lukacs.
  - Patricia Matheny and family (*including prayers for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray*).
  - Our new Music Director, Adam Petrosino, and his partner, Kiel Nunn.
  - Barbara Rossington (*Prayers for Barb's cousin, Robert, for tests and procedures*).
  - Debbie Webb (*continued prayers*)
  - Beverly Wurm (*prayers for family*)