

# ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

May 12th, 2024

Seventh Sunday of Easter/Ascension Sunday

Festival of the Christian Home/Mother's Day

A Service of the Word



*Resurrection Icon* (acrylic on panel), Hacker, Sophie (Contemporary Artist) / Cotgrave Church, Nottinghamshire, UK / Commissioned by All Saints Church Cotgrave, Nottinghamshire / Bridgeman Images



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**A Service of the Word**

**"Prayer is the medium of miracles. It is a means of communication of the created with the Creator.  
Through prayer love is received and through miracles love is expressed."**

**-Helen Schuchman-**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

### **Lighting of the Christ Candle**

### **Prelude – Adam Petrosino**

#### **\*Call to Worship**

One: From comfortable pews,  
from tricycle seats,  
from easy chairs in front of TVs:

**All: God gathers us in, giving us the  
words with which to proclaim the gospel.**

One: At kitchen sinks,  
at laptops and whiteboards,  
at nursing stations:

**All: Christ calls us to share  
in serving all creation.**

One: In communities gathered to pray,  
in memories of those who served,  
in families grilling in the backyard:

**All: The Holy Spirit fills us with God's joy.**

**\*Gathering Prayer**

Ever-present God, we are grateful that you meet us right where we are. Speaking our language and giving us the blessed assurance that you are with us. We look forward to the glory that awaits us, trusting that Christ will guide us to our heavenly home. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

**\*Gospel Reading: Ascension of Jesus Christ: Luke 24:44-53**

**24** 44 Then Jesus said to them, "Remember the words I spoke when I was still with you: everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the psalms had to be fulfilled."

45 Then Jesus opened their minds to the understanding of the scriptures, 46 saying, "That is why the scriptures say that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead on the third day. 47 In the Messiah's name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of all this.

49 "Take note: I am sending forth what Abba God has promised to you. Remain here in the city until you are clothed with the power from on high."

50 Then Jesus took them to the outskirts of Bethany, and with upraised hands blessed the disciples. 51 While blessing them, the savior left them and was carried up to heaven. 52 The disciples worshiped the risen Christ and returned to Jerusalem full of joy. 53 They were found in the Temple constantly, speaking the praises of God.

**\*Gathering Hymn: NCH 301 - "Crown With Your Richest Crowns" vv. 1, 2, 3, & 5**

**A READING OF THE WORD**

**First Reading: Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26**

*For the seventh Sunday of Easter, the Revised Common Lectionary readings begins in Acts 1, when Peter speaks in front of the gathered believers. At this time, before the day of Pentecost, there are only one hundred twenty left. Peter declares that they need someone to replace Judas. Two names were brought forward, and they cast lots. Matthias was chosen to be added to the disciples to be among the twelve, though Matthias is not mentioned elsewhere in the scriptures.*

**1** 15 One day Peter stood up in the midst of the believers, a gathering of perhaps a hundred and twenty. 16 "Sisters and brothers," he said, "the saying in scripture, uttered long ago by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David, was destined to be fulfilled in Judas, the one who guided those who arrested Jesus. 17 He was one of our number and had been given a share in this ministry.

21 “It is necessary, therefore, that one of those who accompanied us all the time that Jesus moved among us, 22 from the baptism of John until the day Jesus was taken up from us, should be named as witness with us to the Resurrection.”

23 At that, they nominated two—Joseph, called Barsabbas or Justus, and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed, “O God, you can read the hearts of people. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25 to occupy this apostolic ministry, replacing Judas, who turned away and went his own way.” 26 They then drew lots between the two. The choice fell to Matthias, who was added to the eleven apostles.

**\*Psalm Response: Psalm 1 (Responsively)**

*Psalm 1 is a wisdom psalm, reminding the listener/reader that those who meditate on God’s instructions and find delight in living into God’s ways are blessed and happy, like trees who are nourished by streams of water. Those who are foolish and wicked are like chaff blown about in the wind, and will not stand in the congregation of the faithful. God watches over those who live into God’s ways; those who are foolish will fall away*

- 1** Happiness comes to those  
who reject the path of violence,  
who refuse to associate with criminals  
or even to sit with people who belittle others.
- 2** Happiness comes to those  
who delight in the Law of God  
and meditate on it day and night.
- 3 They’re like trees planted by flowing water—  
they bear fruit in every season,  
and their leaves never wither:  
everything they do will prosper.
- 4** But not wrongdoers!  
They’re like chaff that the wind blows away.
- 5 They won’t have a taproot to anchor them  
when judgment comes,  
nor will corrupt individuals be given a place  
at the Gathering of the Just.
- 6** God watches over the steps  
of those who do justice;  
but those on a path of violence and injustice  
will find themselves irretrievably lost.

**Gospel Reading: John 17: 6-19**

*Jesus prays for the disciples in these verses of John 17. As part of his final discourse with the disciples, Jesus prays for God's protection to be with them as he is returning to God. Jesus prays that they would be one, as he is one with God. Jesus has sent them out into the world with God's word, and the world has hated them, but they do not belong to the world, they belong to God. However, Jesus prays that they might be sanctified in truth and protected, for he knows his own betrayal, arrest, and death are coming.*

- 17** 6 I have manifested your Name  
to those you gave me from the world.  
They were yours, and you gave them to me;  
and now they have kept your word.
- 7 Now they know that everything you've entrusted to  
me does indeed come from you.
- 8 I entrusted to them  
the message you entrusted to me,  
and they received it.  
They know that I really came from you;  
they believe it was you who sent me.
- 9 And I am asking on their behalf;  
not for the world,  
but for these you've given me—  
for they are really yours,
- 10 just as all that belongs to me is yours,  
and all that belongs to you is mine.  
It is in them that I have been glorified.
- 11 I am in the world no more,  
but while I am coming to you,  
they are still in the world.  
Abba, holy God,  
protect those whom you have given me  
with your Name—  
the Name that you gave me—  
that they may be one,  
even as we are one.
- 12 As long as I was with them,  
I guarded them with your Name  
which you gave me.  
I kept careful watch,  
and not one of them was lost,  
except for the one who was destined to be lost  
in fulfillment of scripture.

- 13 Now I am coming to you;  
I say all this while I am still in the world  
that they may have my joy  
fulfilled in themselves.
- 14 I gave them your word,  
and the world has hated them for it  
because they don't belong to the world  
any more than I belong to the world.
- 15 I don't ask you to take them out of the world,  
but to guard them from the Evil One.
- 16 They are not of the world,  
any more than I am of the world.
- 17 Consecrate them—  
make them holy through the truth—  
for your word is truth.
- 18 As you have sent me into the world,  
so I have sent them into the world;
- 19 I consecrate myself now for their sakes,  
that they may be made holy in truth.

**Reflection – “A Hope and a Prayer” - Rev. Scott Rosenstein**

### **WE RESPOND**

#### **\* Prayer of Response**

**Loving God, Mother and Father and Creator of us all, we give thanks for all the ways you have nurtured and cared for us, knowing each flaw, each hurt, each tender and sore space. You care for us as a parent cares for their children. You guard our hearts like a mother hen gathers her chicks for protection. May we know your love and care, Gentle and Fierce God, and may we love wildly and fiercely. May our love drive us to demand the world to change, for those who are oppressed and marginalized, those who are the most vulnerable among us. May we be fierce in our call for justice against systems of oppression, and gentle in our treatment of each one made in your image. May we be open to your transformative love in our lives and in our world. Amen.**

**\*Hymn of Response: NCH 403 - "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"**

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

**One:** From the abundance of God's generosity, all are invited to offer a portion of our gifts.

**All:** We offer these offerings to Christ's church.

One: Remembering the great love that Christ has for all people,  
**All: We give these gifts to further spread the love of Christ in the world.**

One: Blessing those who gave, and those unable to give.  
**All: We receive joy in this moment of giving.**

One: May these offerings help fulfill our hope to be Christ's love and light in the world.

### **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 host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

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

**Faithful God, we thank you for every gift. We delight in returning a portion of what we have been given back to Christ's church. Your generous love and care for all creation knows no bounds. Like Christ who offered himself, let these offerings symbolize the fulfillment of your love by bringing a healing balm of hope, peace, and justice to everyone, everywhere. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.**

#### **Choir Hymn: "O Christ When You Ascended"**

***(sung to the tune of NCH 245 - "The Day of Resurrection")***

**"O Christ, When You Ascended"**

**Author: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2007**

**Included in Songs of Grace: New Hymns for God and Neighbor (Upper Room Books, 2009), I Sing to My Savior: New Hymns from the Stories in the Gospel of Luke (2022), and Worship and Song (Abingdon Press, 2011).**

**Tune: LANCASHIRE 7.6.7.6.D.**

**Composer: Henry T. Smart, 1836**

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**Choir: Barbara Rossington, Bob Bucklew, and Keith Konet**

**Accompanist: Adam Petrosino**

1 O Christ, when you ascended, you took your rightful throne;  
Your time on earth had ended — yet we weren't left alone.  
You reign o'er earth and heaven; your Spirit guides our way.  
Your prayers uphold your people; you lead your church each day.

2 We look at earthly rulers and see what they command:  
We note their years of power, the borders of their land.  
Yet, Lord, you are not bounded by things like time and space;  
Your reign is never-ending, you rule in every place.

3 We're tempted. Lord, to leave you in stories nicely told;  
Sometimes we don't believe you and say your ways are old.  
Sometimes we feel so lonely and live in doubt and fear —  
But your ascension means, Lord, you're present with us here.

4 It's often quite a challenge to follow in your Way;  
We're easily distracted! It's hard, Lord, to obey.  
Sometimes we give you Sundays — an hour, maybe two —  
But your ascension means, Lord, all life belongs to you.

### **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,  
forever.  
Amen.**

### **GOING FORTH**

**\*Parting Hymn: NCH 247 - "God Made From One Blood"**

**\*Commissioning**

One: From the comfort of this place,  
to the discomfort of discipleship,  
**All: we will go to serve your people,  
Loving God.**



One: Weeding community gardens  
which feed those who are hungry,  
tutoring children after school,  
**All: we will go to wrap others in your grace,  
Jesus our Brother.**

One: Listening to the stories of those who are ignored,  
learning the language of our newest neighbors,  
**All: we will go to discover the truth  
you share in every moment, Spirit of Wisdom**

**\*Benediction**

Go, now in peace. May the love of God surround you, everywhere you may go.” **Amen.**

**Postlude - Adam Petrosino** (*please be seated for the Postlude*)

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Credits**

- 1) The Gathering Prayer, Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offering, Blessing of the Gifts, and the Benediction are adapted from *Chosen and Appointed: Fulfilled: Service Prayers for the Seventh Sunday of Easter*, written by The Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey, Pastor of Union Congregational United Church of Christ. Permission given to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All rights reserved.
- 2) The Prayer of Response is adapted from *Worship Resource for May 12<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, Ascension Sunday, Mother's Day* by Rev. Mindi Welton-Thomas and posted on May 3, 2024, on her blog, Rev-0-lution. <http://rev-v-lution.org/>.
- 3) The Call to Worship and Commissioning are adapted from *Liturgy and Communion for, May 12th, 2024, Easter 7-B*, written by Thom M. Shuman, and posted May 5th, 2024, on the blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>.
- 4) Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE License #A-736636. All rights reserved.

**All of Us, Ministers**  
**Scott Rosenstein, Pastor**  
**Adam Petrosino, Music Director and Pianist**  
**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!

**Zion United Church of Christ of Tremont** is committed to reaching out to all people with the saving "Good News" of God's Love. To do this, we strive to attain a covenant relationship with people of all races, colors, ethnic origins, ages, sexual orientations and gender identity. We are also committed to grace-filled inclusivity in our worship, programs, membership, mission and social activities. We very strongly believe in outreach and community involvement, as well as ecumenical spiritual involvement within the surrounding community. We are committed to listening to history while joining with the future.

**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

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

We are so pleased to welcome Adam, and his partner, Kiel, to our community of faith here at Zion United Church of Christ of Tremont. We're grateful to you sharing your presence, faith, and your musical gifts with us. 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 is keeping some limited Office Hours at church (2700 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street/home. The days and hours are:

### Spring Schedule:

Tuesday– 9am – 1pm

Wednesday – 10am-2 pm

Thursday – 9am – 1pm

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

## 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 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 – and for an end to violence and bloodshed particularly for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Israel and Gaza.
- The people of Haiti.
- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive a total of 185 mass shooting incidents occurred in the US in 2024 as of May 9th.
- **Mass shooting incidents in the past 10 years in the US:**  
*2023 – 656 (While mass shooting incidents increased slightly since 2022, 2023 has shown an 8-10% overall DECREASE in deaths and injuries from gun violence. Some cities saw 20%+ decreases.)*

2022 - 646

2021 - 689

2020 - 610

2019 - 414

2018 - 335

2017 - 247

2016 - 383

2015 - 332

2014 - 272

- 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 their 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 including Noah, Kate, Lucy, and Max along with Patti's brother Dave doing well after another procedure ).
  - Robert O Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) is residing in Senior Living.
  - The family, loved ones, and friends of Betty Funk.
  - Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob*)
  - Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, and Nancy Moore's neighbor - also Ivory, Ken's downstairs neighbor.
  - Maddie Sommer (the young daughter of Scott's friend) prayers for her, her parents, Rachel and Ron, and her younger brother.
  - Keith Konet and family (including granddaughter, Jocelyn Paulette, and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui - and for Keith's brother -in-law Bob Naugle
  - The family, loved ones, and friends of Elaine Lukacs.
  - Patricia Matheny Kellogg and family (*including prayers for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray*). Also Patricia's friends, Sue Renovitz and Heather.
  - Our Music Director & Pianist, Adam Petrosino, and his partner, Kiel.
  - Our Pastor Scott Rosenstein
  - Barbara Rossington and Barb's cousin, Robert
  - Debbie Webb
  - Beverly Wurm and family and her friend, John.

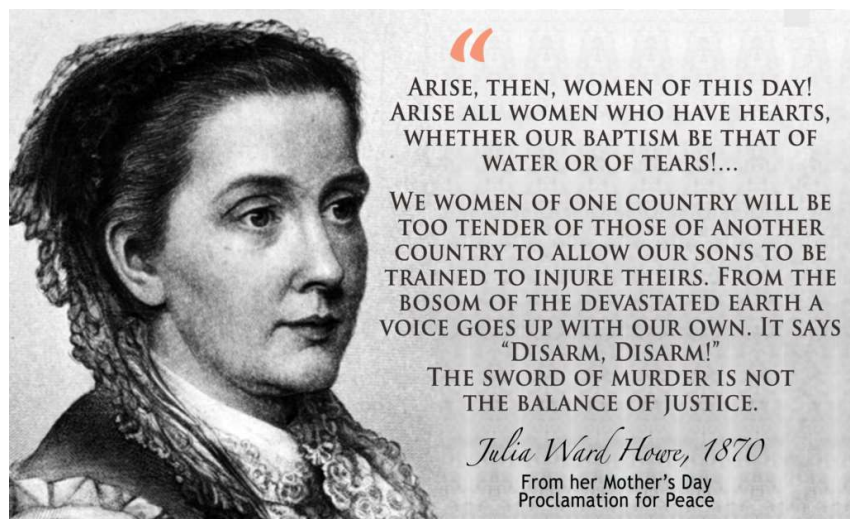
## A True Mother's Day

Adapted from an online article by Michael Neuroth | published on May 12, 2022  
Policy Advocate for International Issues on the website of the United Church of Christ

This Mother's Day brought with it a range of emotions. While Mother's Day is often a complicated holiday, this year it seemed even more so given ... the suffering being experienced by so many around the globe and in our own communities. So often, our observances are out of touch with the lived reality of many who mother, such as those who grieve infertility or who experience strained relations. But this year, the disconnect between the historical legacy of Mother's Day as an intersectional call to action and anti-war movement and our current Hallmark-driven celebrations seems greater than ever.

The irony of celebrating mothers with cards and candy while we watch news of bombs falling on Ukrainian *[and Palestinian]* mothers and children, Afghan women and girls getting denied jobs or education...highlights how little progress has been made. For the early founders of what we observe today as Mother's Day, our contemporary celebration would smack of superficiality, materialism, and indeed, patriarchy.

Ann Jarvis, considered the founder of Mother's Day, called for a "Mothers Work Day" in 1858 to address maternal and child health conditions that were afflicting her West Virginian town. During the Civil War, she organized a "Women's Friendship Day" to care for soldiers on both sides and ultimately seek an end to the war. Inspired by Jarvis' legacy, the prominent abolitionist and suffragist Julia Ward Howe called for a day in 1870 in which mothers would work for peace in accordance with a "Mother's Day Proclamation" that drew new attention to the effort:



Like so many movements, the radical and fierce edge of Jarvis and Howe's vision was dulled as its popularity grew. In 1914, Congress passed a law declaring the second Sunday of

May as Mother’s Day, and the next year President Woodrow Wilson described it as a day for “public expression of our love and reverence for all mothers.” You’re welcome, Hallmark.

Throughout history, men have controlled the fate of women, of children, of soldiers and weapons, and even the Earth itself. For the future of our world, for the possibility of peace, this must change. We must renew the vision of Jarvis and Howe and link arms with our contemporary leaders like Yvonne Delk, Bernice Powell Jackson, Linda Jaramillo, Traci Blackmon, *[Karen Georgia Thompson]* and others—all voices for peace with justice in our church and in our world. Let us indeed celebrate Mother’s Day every day, but not with more candy and cards. Rather, let us honor those who mother, and all who identify as women, by joining them in the struggle at the front lines of movements for Just Peace, for bodily autonomy, for equality in the workplace, for the livelihood of all God’s children, and for the sustainability of the Earth itself.

## **Pentecost Sunday is Sunday, May 19, 2024**



The Christian holiday of Pentecost is celebrated on the 50th day from Easter Sunday. It commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1–31).

Pentecost is one of the Great feasts in the Eastern Orthodox Church, a Solemnity in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church, a Festival in the Lutheran Churches and the United Church of Christ, and a Principal Feast in the Anglican Communion. Many Christian denominations provide a special liturgy for this holy celebration.

The term Pentecost comes from the Greek Πεντηκοστή (Pentēkostē) meaning "fiftieth". It refers to the Jewish harvest festival of Shavuot celebrated on the fiftieth day after Passover. It is also known as the "Feast of Weeks" and the "Feast of 50 days" in rabbinic tradition.

**The events of Acts Chapter 2 are set against the backdrop of the celebration of Pentecost in Jerusalem.** The author begins by noting that the disciples of Jesus "all met in one place" on the "day of Pentecost" (ἡμέρα τῆς Πεντηκοστῆς).[Acts 2:1] The verb used in Acts 2:1 to indicate the arrival of the day of Pentecost carries a connotation of fulfillment.

**There is a "violent, rushing wind" (wind is a common symbol for the Holy Spirit) and "something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire" [Acts 2:3]. The gathered disciples were "all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as she enabled them" [Acts 2:4]** .Some scholars have interpreted the passage as a reference to the multitude of languages spoken by the gathered disciples [Acts 2:6–11], while others have taken the reference to "tongues" (γλῶσσαι) to signify ecstatic speech [1 Corinthians 14]. In Christian tradition, this event represents fulfillment of the promise that Christ will baptize his followers with the Holy Spirit [Acts 1:5; John 14:16–17].

**The main sign of Pentecost in the West is the color red. It symbolizes joy and the fire of the Holy Spirit.** Clergy and choirs wear red vestments, and in modern times, the custom has extended to the lay people of the congregation wearing red clothing in celebration as well. Red banners are often hung from walls or ceilings to symbolize the blowing of the "mighty wind" and the free movement of the Spirit. Other congregations have incorporated the use of red balloons, signifying the "Birthday of the Church". These may be held by the congregants, decorate the sanctuary, or released all at once.