



DOUGLAS UCC
A JUST WORLD FOR ALL

Order of Service for Sunday, November 19, 2023

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Thank you for joining us today.

For Announcements, Birthdays, Anniversaries, and Prayer List, [visit this week's E-Pistle here](#), where you can also subscribe to receive it by email, if you like.

***- stand if you wish to, and are able.**

Congregational Responses in Bold

Prelude *We Fall Down*

Michael Hulett

(Please use this time for quiet reflection and preparation for worship)

Welcome & Announcements

Lighting of Altar Candles & Ringing in the Hour

Let us recognize the light of the world within us and ring in the hour of worship.

Introit (please stand) *In This Place*

*In this place among these people,
God is worshiped, God is praised.
We have seen the signs and wonders,
the lost are found here; the dead are raised.
We are living the gospel story,
lives are changed and mountains moved.
Won't you come and work among us?
You are welcome, you are loved.*

Call to Worship

Psalm 90

Reader: Chris Clark

One: O God, you have been our dwelling-place in all generations.

Many: From everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

One: The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;

Many: So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

One: For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday.

Many: When it is past, you sweep them away like they are a dream.

One: Like grass that is renewed in the morning; we are renewed.

Many: In the morning, we are flourished and refreshed.

One: O God, you have been our dwelling-place in all generations.

Many: From everlasting to everlasting, you are God. Amen.

Opening Hymn *God, Who's Giving Knows No Ending*
(Black New Century Hymnal No.565)

Unison Prayer

for Transgender Day of Remembrance by Rev. Mike Schuenemeyer

God of creation, as we observe Transgender Day of Remembrance, we pray for those whose lives have been cut short by fear, hatred, and violence because they were perceived to be different, because they had the courage to live their lives with integrity and openness, because they did not conform to someone else's view of how they should live. We remember and give thanks for the seasons of their lives, for the love and friendships they shared and the ways in which their living has been a gift to us all. Send us out into the world with courage that we may work in solidarity with one another to build your community of welcome, justice and peace. Amen.

Assurance of Grace and Peace

One: Peace be with you.

Many: *And also with you.*

One: Let us offer one another a sign of Peace.

Passing the Peace *Send Your Spirit*

Send your Spirit to set us free.

Send your Spirit to set us free.

Fill our hearts and minds,

loose the chains that bind.

Send your Spirit to set us free.

Words of Integration & Guidance

Sr. Joan Chittister

Life is not about going through the motions from birth to death. Life is about trusting our talents and following our gifts. But how? Olive trees hint at the answer even today. Psalm 52 says, "I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God." Olive trees are a very important and very meaningful image in Jewish literature. To the Jewish mind, to "grow like an olive tree" is no small thing. It isn't easy to grow trees in the Middle East. Yet, there is one tree with a natural talent for life in the middle of nowhere. The olive tree grows hard wood on barren ground, with little water, for a long, long time. To "grow like an olive tree," then, means to grow without much help, to grow hardy, to grow long and to grow on very little nourishment. The olive tree has a talent for life. There are some olive trees in the Garden of Olives, in fact, that scholars estimate were there the night of the Last Supper when Christ went there to pray. Startling, isn't it? In this culture, in this age, on the other hand, the temptation is to think that everything—including our own natural abilities—ought to come easily. We want fast service and quick results. We want a lot for nothing. We want the greatest degree of return for the least amount of effort. And we want out of whatever doesn't work the first time. There is very little of the focused, the hardy, the persistent olive tree in us. There is very little talent for talent in us. Yet talents that lie dormant in our souls destroy us from the inside out. If we do not learn to slowly, patiently, painfully, if necessary, let them come to life in us, we risk our own robotization. We give ourselves over to the pain of a living death. Talent is the gift that will not go away.

Extravagant Opportunity

The Words of Holy Scripture

One: A Reading of Scripture from 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Lesson

One: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 25:14-30

Many: Glory to you, O Christ.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

“Gifts and Talents”

Rev. Salvatore Sapienza

Offering & Offertory Song

“You Are So Beautiful”

Michael Hulett

Joys & Concerns/Tibetan Prayer Bell

One: Thanks be to God!

Many: Alleluia!

One: O God,

Many: Hear our prayer.

***Doxology** *Give Thanks*

*Give thanks, with a grateful heart,
give thanks to the Holy One.*

*Give thanks, because God's given
Jesus Christ, the son.*

*And now, let the weak say I am strong,
let the poor say I am rich*

*Because of what the Lord has done,
for us, give thanks.*

***Celebration of Holy Communion**

One: God be with you.

Many: *And also with you.*

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: *We lift them up to God.*

One: Let us give thanks to God.

Many: *It is good to give God thanks & praise*

***Creation's Praise** *You Are Holy*

You are holy, you are whole.

*You are always ever more
than we ever understand.*

You are always at hand.

Blessed are you coming near,

*Blessed are you coming here
to the church in wine and bread;
raised from soil, raised from dead.*

You are holy, You are wholeness,

You are present, let the cosmos praise you God!

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah our God.

(Please be seated)

Breaking of the Bread *We Share a Hunger*

*We share a hunger: a hunger for justice in our world,
that all may find joy, all may find wholeness, all may find peace.*

*We share a hunger: a hunger to feel the light of Christ
shining through us, shining on all, bringing God's reign.*

Sharing of the Bread & Cup

(grape juice only on both sides of the aisle)

Receive the Bread of Life. *Amen.*

The Cup of Love, the Drink of Compassion. *Amen.*

***The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Mother/Father, always and everywhere, 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.*

***Hymn of Sending**

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ
(Black New Century Hymnal No.347)
(Find Music at the end of this program)

***Benediction**

Postlude

The Storm
Michael Hulett

Keep up with the Douglas UCC community
and the work of our service groups here:

www.douglasucc.org
<https://www.youtube.com/douglasucc>
<https://www.facebook.com/douglasucc>
<https://www.instagram.com/douglasucc>

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

Robert L. Edwards, 1961; alt.

1 God, whose giv - ing knows no end - ing, from your rich and
 2 Skills and time are ours for serv - ing, that your will on
 3 Trea - sure, too, you have en - trust - ed, gain through powers your
 4 Lend your joy to all our giv - ing, let it light our

end - less store, Na - ture's won - der, Je - sus' wis - dom, cost - ly cross, grave's
 earth be done: All at peace in health and free - dom, rac - es joined, the
 grace con - ferred; Ours to use for home and kin - dred, and to spread the
 pil - grim way; From the night of anx - ious keep - ing, loose us in - to

shat - tered door: Gift - ed by you, we turn to you
 Church made one. Now di - rect our dai - ly la - bor,
 gos - pel Word. O - pen wide our hands in shar - ing
 gen - erous day. Then when years on earth are o - ver,

of - fering up our - selves in praise; Thank - ful song shall
 lest we strive for self a - lone; born with tal - ents,
 as we heed Christ's age - less call, Heal - ing, teach - ing,
 and we've lived our hu - man span, God, ful - fill be -

Robert L. Edwards, an ordained United Church of Christ minister, has served several churches in Connecticut. He wrote this text for a

Tune: AUSTRIAN HYMN 8.7.8.7.D.
Franz Joseph Haydn 1797

rise for - ev - er, gra - cious do - nor of our days.
make us ser - vants fit to an - swer at your throne.
and re - claim - ing, hon - oring you by lov - ing all.
yond our dream - ing, all our stew - ard - ship be - gan.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff at the top and a bass clef staff at the bottom. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are printed between the two staves, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The lyrics are: "rise for - ev - er, gra - cious do - nor of our days. make us ser - vants fit to an - swer at your throne. and re - claim - ing, hon - oring you by lov - ing all. yond our dream - ing, all our stew - ard - ship be - gan."

HOLY COMMUNION

347

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

Luke 10:1-9

Fred Kaan, 1975; alt.

C F G Dm G C G

1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:
 2 Christ is a - ble to make us one, at his ta - ble he set the tone,
 3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,

C F G Dm7 C G C

bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.
 teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.
 gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im - man - u - el) ev - ery - where!

Refrain (first time p, second time f)

C C7 F Dm G C F C

Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

This hymn came into being when composer Doreen Potter asked

Tune: LINSTEAD L.M. with refrain