



**DOUGLAS UCC**  
A JUST WORLD FOR ALL

**Order of Service for Sunday, October 1, 2023**

## **Eighteenth 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.**

**Congressional Responses in Bold**

**Prelude**     *We Gather Together*  
**Peter Black**  
(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**

**Exodus 23**

**Reader: Tom Fahlstrom**

One: For six years you are to sow your land and gather in its produce.

***Many: But in the seventh year you must leave it alone.***

One: This is done so that the poor of your people may eat.

***Many: And what they leave, any animal in the field may eat.***

One: You must do likewise with your vineyard and your olive grove.

***Many: Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest.***

One: You shall observe the Festival of Harvest, the first fruits of your labor.

***Many: Celebrate the Festival of gathering your crops from the field. Amen.***

## **\*Opening Hymn,**

*We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky*

(Black New Century Hymnal No.563)

(Find Music at the end of this program)

## **Unison Prayer**

from *Cycles of Life* by Edward Hays

***O sacred season of Autumn, be my teacher, for I wish to learn the virtue of contentment. You are the season of retirement, of full barns and harvested fields. I live in a society that is ever-restless, always eager for more mountains to climb, seeking happiness through more and more possessions. As a child of my culture, I am seldom truly at peace with what I have. Teach me to take stock of what I have given and received. May I know that it's enough that my striving can cease in the abundance of God's grace. May I know the contentment that allows the totality of my energies to come to full flower. May I know that like you, I am rich beyond measure. As you, O Autumn, take pleasure in your great bounty, let me also take delight in the abundance of the simple things in life which are the true source of joy. With the golden glow of peaceful contentment may I truly appreciate this autumn day. 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 from Stewards of Eden by Sandra Richter**

Israel's Sabbath law protected the long-term fecundity of the land. The sustainable farming practices this law encouraged - which limited short-term yield but helped to ensure long-term productivity - were understood as "righteousness" in the Old Testament. Of interest is that current agricultural science is demonstrating that our modern failure to provide for long-term soil fertility is indeed leading to disaster - in the form of decreased fertility, poor nutrition, and, in many parts of the world, sterility. This failure also has a devastating effect on those living on the margins. Although I would never suggest that present-day farmers return to the agricultural methods of the Iron Age, I would suggest that in Israel's fallow law we find a critical ideological principle that should continue to guide our approach to the stewardship of agricultural land: It is not acceptable for any populace to take from the land everything that it can. Rather, as the law of Israel teaches us, God's people are commanded to operate with the long-term well-being of the land as their ultimate goal. They are instructed to leave enough so that the land might be able to replenish itself for future harvests and future generations - even though such methods will cut into short-term profits. Why? The answer offered in Leviticus is short and direct: "because I am Yahweh says your God" and "the land is mine". In Deuteronomy, the answer comes from a different direction but is equally compelling: so that "you shall prolong your days in the land." In other words: because this is Yahweh's land and Yahweh's produce, and because Yahweh intends that his land be fruitful for the next generation of tenants. In sum, the constitution of ancient Israel taught that economic security or growth was not a viable excuse for the abuse of the land, and that true economic well-being would come only from careful stewardship of it.

# Fruits of the Harvest

## The Words of Holy Scripture

One: A Reading of Scripture from Genesis 1:26-31

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 9:35-38

*Many: Glory to you, O Christ.*

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

*Many: Praise to you, O Christ.*

## Homily

“A Heart for the Harvest” Rev. Salvatore Sapienza

## Offering

### & Offertory Song

*Creation Calls*

Jeff Spangler, Lauri Donaldson, Peter Black

Composer: Brian Doerksen

## Joys & Concerns/Tibetan Prayer Bell

One: Thanks be to God!

**Many: *Alleluia!***

One: O God,

**Many: *Hear our prayer.***

## \*Doxology

*Hold Me in Your Arms, Mother Earth*

*Hold me in your arms, Mother Earth. Let me see the wonders you share. I will hold you in my heart, Mother Earth. Bless the land, the water, the air. For the forest, green and tall, ever breathing, sheltering. Home to creatures, great and small, I give thanks, praise I sing. Hold me in your arms, Mother Earth. Let me see the wonders you share. I will hold you in my heart, Mother Earth. Bless the land, the water, the air.*

## **\*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**

*The Harvest of Justice (refrain, v 1-3, refrain)*  
(Green Gather Hymnal No.711)  
(Find Music at the end of this program)

### **Benediction**

### **Postlude**

*Harvest Moon (Neil Young)*  
**Peter Black**

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

[www.douglasucc.org](http://www.douglasucc.org)

<https://www.youtube.com/douglasucc>

<https://www.facebook.com/douglasucc>

<https://www.instagram.com/douglasucc>

## We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky

John 10:10

Ruth Duck, 1984; rev. 1989

1 We can - not own the sun - lit sky, the moon, the wild - flowers  
 2 When bod - ies shiv - er in the night and, wea - ry, wait for  
 3 God calls hu - man - i - ty to join as part - ners in cre -

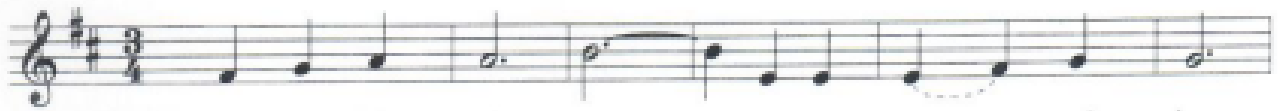
grow - ing, for we are part of all that is with -  
 morn - ing, when chil - dren have no bread but tears, and  
 a - ting a fu - ture free from want or fear, life's

in life's riv - er flow - ing. With o - pen hands re -  
 war - horns sound their warn - ing, God calls hu - man - i -  
 good - ness cel - e - brat - ing. That new world beck - ons

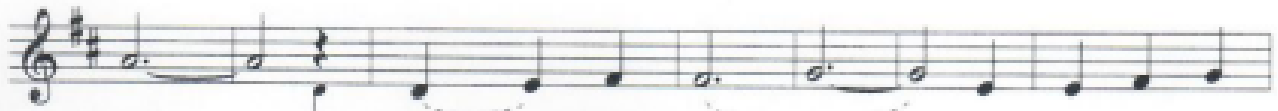
ceive and share the gifts of God's cre - a - tion, that  
 ty to wake, to join in com - mon la - bor, that  
 from a - far, in - vites our shared en - deav - or, that

all may have a - bun - dant life in ev - ery earth - ly na - tion.  
 all may have a - bun - dant life in one - ness with their neigh - bor.  
 all may have a - bun - dant life and peace en - dure for - ev - er.

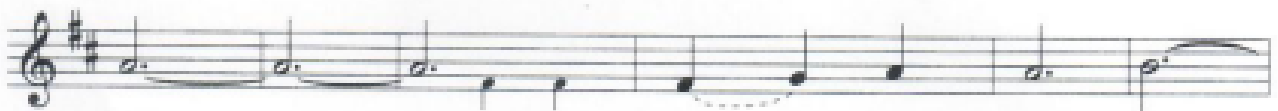
## 711 The Harvest of Justice



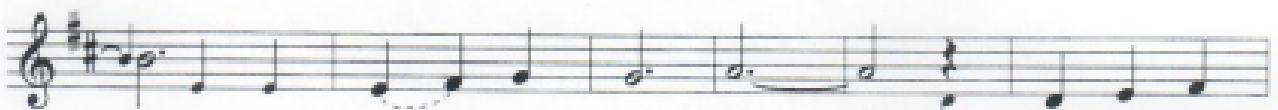
(Refrain) May we find rich - ness in the har - vest of jus -  
 1. Gath - er with pa - tience † for those who have noth -  
 2. For to have mer - cy † on those for - got -  
 3. For to have lit - tle is to be in a - bun -



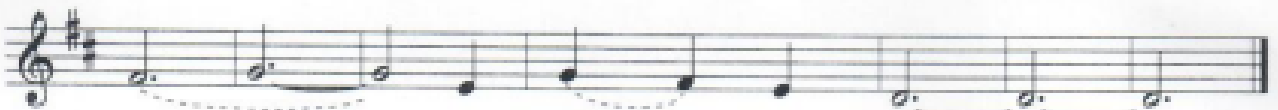
tice which Christ Je - sus has rip - ened for  
 ing. Leave them your rich - es, and you will re -  
 ten, this is my true law, this is my com -  
 dance. To give what re - mains, to give all we



us. Bread for the jour - ney,  
 ceive. Make room for the poor ones,  
 mand: Clothe the na - ked,  
 have, is to walk with the poor ones,



bread for the hun - gry, all for the  
 make way for the stran - ger; for I am the  
 be home for the or - phan, be hope for the  
 and be - come the stran - ger, one with the



glo - ry and praise of God.  
 Lord, the Lord your God.  
 wid - ow, and wel - come the lost.  
 Lord, the Lord our God.