



DOUGLAS UCC
A JUST WORLD FOR ALL

Order of Service for Sunday, September 24, 2023

Seventeenth 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 *Shall We Gather at the River*

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

Psalm 105

Reader: Jeremy Lund

One: O give thanks to God, and call upon God's name.

Many: Make known God's deeds among the peoples.

One: Sing to God. Sing praises to the Lord.

Many: Tell the world of all God's wonderful works.

One: Give glory to God's holy name.

Many: Let the hearts of those who seek God rejoice.

One: Call upon God and seek God's strength.

Many: Seek God's presence continually.

One: Remember the wonderful works God has done.

Many: Make known God's deeds among the peoples. Amen.

***Opening Hymn,**

Come to the Water

(Green Gather Hymnal No.502)

(Find Music at the end of this program)

Unison Prayer

Loving God, the faith of Jesus is the faith to which we aspire. Let us, as did Jesus, acknowledge the Truth of Your Divine Power within us. Let us, as did Jesus, acknowledge Your unconditional love for us. Let us, as did Jesus, acknowledge Your willingness to bestow on us "life to the full": prosperity, success, happiness, joy, peace, and wisdom. Let us take the faith of Jesus as our standard at all times and under all circumstances. May our faith be as strong as the faith of Jesus. 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****by Rev. Thomas Shepherd**

It says so much about our human consciousness that many find today's gospel story of the laborers in the vineyard to be the most challenging of all Jesus' parables. In the story, those who labor only a few hours are given the same pay as those who have worked all day. Our sense of fair play is outraged, and we easily feel the indignation of those workers who toiled all day. There must be something more to the story – and indeed, there is. Jesus is talking about the kingdom of heaven and how it isn't a question of "deserving." No one truly deserves the kingdom. No one earns it according to who he is, or the work he does. The men in the parable all do one important thing: they accept the invitation of the landowner to labor in his vineyard. It's not the work that is rewarded; it's the choice to accept the invitation. Many people – then and now – believe that God maintains a kind of hierarchy. Those who are born into the right religion or class or family are entitled to more. Those who are religiously obedient for all their lives will be favored in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus is saying that we have to leave those human concepts behind. When we make the choice to enter into kingdom consciousness, our reward is full and complete. The Love of God is unconditional; none of the men is denied his share of the blessings, and none of the men receives more than another. All are rewarded for accepting the invitation. From a human perspective this may seem unfair; but it is very good news. There is no hierarchy in the kingdom of heaven. There is only God's unconditional love, made available to all who accept the invitation.

Tensions in the Wilderness

The Words of Holy Scripture

One: A Reading of Scripture from Exodus 16:2-15

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 20:1-16

Many: Glory to you, O Christ.

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

Many: Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

Rev. Marchiene Rienstra

Offering & Offertory Song

Peter Black

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**

Soon and Very Soon

(Green Gather Hymnal No.770)

(Find Music at the end of this program)

Benediction

Postlude

A Wonderful Day Like Today

Peter Black

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>

Come to the Water 502



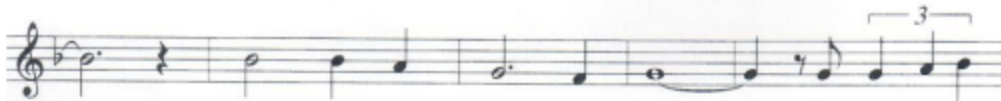
1. O let all who thirst, let them come to the
 2. And let all who seek, let them come to the
 3. And let all who toil, let them come to the
 4. And let all the poor, let them come to the



wa-ter. And let all who have noth-ing, let them
 wa-ter. And let all who have noth-ing, let them
 wa-ter. And let all who are wea-ry, let them
 wa-ter. Bring the ones who are lad-en, bring them



come to the Lord: With-out mon-ey, with-out price.
 come to the Lord: With-out mon-ey, with-out strife.
 come to the Lord: All who la-bor, with-out rest.
 all to the Lord: Bring the chil-dren with-out might.



Why should you pay the price, ex-cept for the
 Why should you spend your life, ex-cept for the
 How can your soul find rest, ex-cept for the
 Eas - y the load and light: 7 come to the



Lord?
 Lord?
 Lord?
 Lord.

770 Soon and Very Soon



1. Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,
2. No more cry - in' there we are goin' to see the King,
3. No more dy - in' there we are goin' to see the King,
4. Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,



- Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,
 No more cry - in' there we are goin' to see the King,
 No more dy - in' there we are goin' to see the King,
 Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,



- Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,
 No more cry - in' there we are goin' to see the King, Hal - le -
 No more dy - in' there we are goin' to see the King,
 Soon and ver - y soon we are goin' to see the King,



lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, we're goin' to see the King!



Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu -



jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah.