

For the Living of These Days

2026 Stewardship Campaign Weekly Devotional

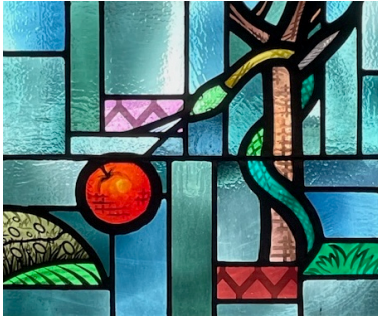


October 19-November 23

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

— Romans 8:18

For the Living of These Days



*“Lo! The hosts of evil round us scorn Thy Christ, assail His ways!
From the fears that long have bound us, free our hearts to faith
and praise. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of
these days, for the living of these days.”*

—God of Grace and God of Glory,
Harry Emerson Fosdick

Dear Friends,

For many of us, this verse of Fosdick’s hymn feels painfully apt right now. It is hard to live as Christians when the powers that be would have us believe that our neighbors are now our enemies. Closer to home, UPC—long a source of stability and permanence for us—is grappling with how to maintain an old building, grow its congregation, and keep its missions relevant to the community around it. We sense that this time is different, that this moment is critical, but it’s hard to articulate why. And yet, the hymn reminds us that God stays by our side, even in the chaos. As Matt recently preached, God is still with us and isn’t letting go.

So, what is the wisdom we need for “the living of these days”? How do we muster the courage to keep doing the work Christ calls us to do, both today and in the months ahead? How do we meet this moment, even when the future seems uncertain? For the five weeks of this devotional, we’ll be asking ourselves that question: how do we—as disciples, as friends and family, as neighbors, and even as a whole church—how do we recommit ourselves to building-up the Kingdom of Heaven, even here and now? And we’ll ask ourselves how we should commit our time and gifts to God so that the ministries of UPC can meet this strange and beautiful moment with the fullness of God’s grace and glory.

To do that, we need you. We need your commitment to the life of this congregation, especially for this time. Obviously, we need your financial support to make our ministries possible: to sustain our staff, to grow our programs, to provide runway for the broad imagination of our Property Vision Team. But we also need your involvement and participation in our church ministries. If you can cook, clean, answer the phone, greet a stranger, organize a classroom, hold a note, or swing a hammer: we need you. If you’ve ever thought “I can help with that,” know that now is a critical time to commit to UPC’s mission.

So as you read and pray, be open to the ways you might be called. After five weeks of reflection, we’ll publicly commit to discipleship and stewardship on November 23 and celebrate those commitments by sharing a meal with each other. Until then, may God’s word and our own meditations serve us well for the facing of this hour.

Week of October 19: Living as disciples of Christ



He established a decree in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach to their children; that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.
—Psalm 78: 5-7

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. —1 Peter 2:4-5

You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people, who will be able to teach others as well. —2 Timothy 2:1-2

Reflection

- What do these verses from scripture reveal about what discipleship?
- How should we prepare ourselves to follow Christ and preach his word?
- Scripture states that we should pass God's teachings on to future generations. How will we teach the next generation? What will we do to make God's word relevant to contemporary audiences?

Consider a commitment to . . .

- attend or teach Sunday School, Bible study, or Vacation Bible School
- serve on the Christian Formation committee
- sponsor a confirmand or help lead the youth

Commit your financial resources to help us . . .

- fund a part- or full-time Christian Formation director
- train our college students to lead and grow their ministry and outreach in West Campus

Prayer (Adapted from "Today We Are All Called to Be Disciples" by H. Kenn Charmichael)

God, you made the world and ordained us to live as stewards of the earth. Yet our pride and vanity distract us, and our hatred and rancor threaten your precious creation. Call us again to be your disciples, to set the captives free, to end war and cultivate the earth instead, so that we can feed the hungry, serve the poor, and house the homeless rather than feed our own desires. Call us to serve You, to act out the faith we profess, and to proclaim your love to a world that desperately needs to hear it. As stewards of that faith, equip us for the mission of restoring peace and harmony to the world that You created. Amen.

Week of October 26: Living as Friends and Family



Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

— 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

— Galatians 6:2

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one

than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. — John 15:12–13

Reflection

- How will we make sure that no one in our church family is alone or unsupported?
- How will we celebrate our joys and carry each other's concerns?
- How will we support each other, even when we disagree?
- How will we make amends when we hurt each other?

Consider a commitment to . . .

- pray daily for our congregation and the larger world
- introduce yourself to people in the congregation you don't know or contact someone whom you haven't seen in a while
- "adopt" a college student
- attend a church retreat or fellowship opportunity
- serve as a deacon or join one of the church's support groups

Commit your financial resources to help us . . .

- fund staff support to track Covenant Care Partners needs
- fund a part-time Communications and Social Media position

Prayer: (Adapted from "Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace" by St. Francis of Assisi)

O Lord,

As you console me in times of need, teach me to likewise console others;

As you forgive my wrongdoing, give me grace to forgive those who've wronged me,

As you love me, teach me to love everyone unconditionally.

When I doubt, guide me to have faith in you.

When others are sick or injured, teach me to heal and comfort them.

When people despair, let me bring them hope.

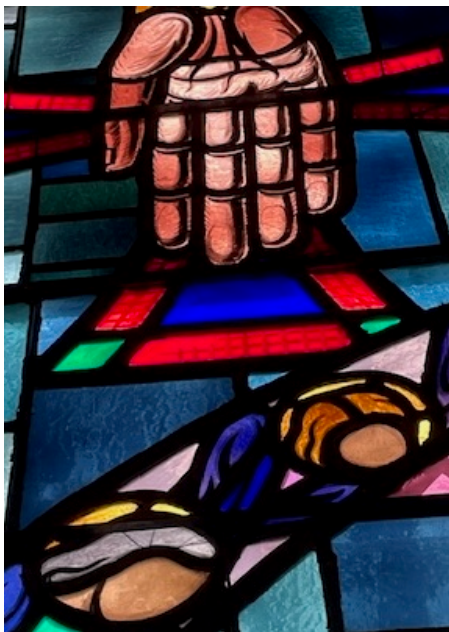
When there is darkness, let me shine your light.

When there is sadness, let me bring joy.

When others show hatred, let me show love.

O Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Amen

Week of November 2: Living in Community



The community is to have the same rules for you and for the foreigner residing among you; this is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You and the foreigner shall be the same before the Lord. —Numbers 15: 15

Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” —Luke 14:12–14

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” —Galatians 5:13–14

Reflection

- What does my community look like? Who in that community needs a voice?
- How well do I love people I do not know?
- What keeps me from being a better neighbor?
- How do I use my freedom to lift up the poor and protect the oppressed?

Consider a commitment to . . .

- get to know and work more closely with UKirk students (provide dinner, help with planning for UKirk Sunday)
- assist our staff in reaching out and connecting with the West Campus neighborhood and identifying new areas of need or service
- volunteer for UPLift, Micah 6, Habitat for Humanity, or the Border Mission Trip

Commit your financial resources to help us . . .

- support new and existing ministries that serve our neighbors such as UPLift, Micah 6, the Border Mission Trip, Habitat for Humanity, and pastoral care for students

Prayer: (Adapted from “Come! Live in the Light!” by David Haas)

Dear God,

You call us to act with justice and walk humbly with you. You call us to love tenderly and serve one another. You call us to be hope for the hopeless and light for the kingdom. Teach us to open our hearts and to live in the light. Equip us to shine with joy and shower our love upon our neighbors. Amen.

Week of November 9: Living into the Church



Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.
— Acts 20:28

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone. — Ephesians 2:19–20

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. — Galatians 6:10

Reflection

- What does it mean to be a church in the West Campus neighborhood in 2026?
- How will we support the pastors and staff in doing the work of the church?
- How will we maintain our existing structure as we envision its future?
- How do we stay focused on ministry and mission now, even as we think about how they might need to change?
- How do we think God wants us to reimagine our ministry and mission to keep them relevant?

Consider a commitment to . . .

- attend Property Vision Team events to discern the church's long-term vision and mission
- volunteer to help maintain the church building and grounds
- serve on the Finance, Staff and Strategy, or Stewardship committees

Commit your financial resources to help us . . .

- cover the staff and operational expenses of the church to provide cost-of-living increases for full-time staff, extend Allen's contract, and defray the costs of the Property Vision expenses

Prayer: "Jesus, With Thy Church Abide" by Thomas Benson Pollock

Jesus, with thy church abide; be her Savior, Lord, and Guide,
while on earth her faith is tried: we beseech thee, hear us.

Keep her life and doctrine pure; grant her patience to endure,
trusting in thy promise sure: we beseech thee, hear us.

May she one in doctrine be, one in truth and charity,

winning all to faith in thee: we beseech thee, hear us.

May she guide the poor and blind, seek the lost until she find,
and the broken-hearted bind: we beseech thee, hear us.

May her lamp of truth be bright, bid her bear aloft its light
through the realms of heathen night: we beseech thee, hear us.

Week of November 16: Living into the Kingdom

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, When did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

—Matthew 25:35–40



But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.—Matthew 6:33

Reflection

- What does the kingdom of God look like in the here and now?
- What work will we do in the coming year to bring about the kingdom of God?
- What keeps us from living into the kingdom?
- What will help us get past the hurdles?

Consider a commitment to . . .

- regularly attend worship services in preparation for service to the larger world
- participate in worship as a lay leader (set up/serve/clean up communion, lead the congregation in music)
- be active in this church’s efforts to address social injustice

Commit your financial resources to help us . . .

- support new and ongoing social outreach and programming at UPC
- celebrate Juneteenth with our neighbors in West Campus
- add banned books to our church library
- provide honorariums to speakers who educate the congregation on Christian Nationalism and other social justice topics

Prayer (Adapted from “Live into Hope” by Jane Parker Huber)

Heavenly Father,

Help us live into the hope that the poor will be fed, the blind will see, and the captives will be freed. Help us live into the hope that all people will have the right to speak, the right to live, and the right to be without the threat of violence, famine, or greed. Help us build your Kingdom, so that all your children will live in love and peace. Amen.