



Kent United Church of Christ

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING, ACCESSIBLE TO ALL, and W.I.S.E. CONGREGATION

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 25, 2022

PRELUDE

Here I Am to Worship

Hughes

GREETING

Jeff Roeger, moderator

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Pam Quellhorst, liturgist

Come to this place and time of promise.

We are becoming the house of hope, the field of sunflowers, the vineyard of great caring.

Come to a shared commitment to abundance possible for all people.

We are an earthenware jar, to keep safe the tomorrow of children. Our security question is – the word of God, and our password is love.

*OPENING HYMN #436

God of Grace, God of Glory

CWM RHONDDA

*INVOCATION

Pam Quellhorst

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST
May that peace be with you today and always.
And also with you.

CHILDREN'S SNAP CHAT

"Jesus Loves the Little Children" is sung to bless our children as they depart



Je - sus loves the lit - tle chil - dren, All the chil - dren of the world. Ev' - ry
co - lor, shape and size, they are pre-cious in his eyes. je - sus loves the lit - tle chil - dren of the world.

A READING FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE
Luke 16:19-31

Here ends the reading from God's Word.
Thanks be to God, who is still speaking.

Pam Quellhorst

SERMON

If They Do Not Listen

Rev. Michael Howard
Faith in Action Minister
Living Water Association, UCC

SPECIAL MUSIC

He Shall Feed His Flock
Emily Roeger, soloist

John Ness Beck

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Jackie Peck, chair of diaconate

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Creator
who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom,
and the power and the glory forever, Amen.**

HYMN OF COMMITMENT #539 *Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?*

SERVANT SONG

FROM BREAD AND CUP TO FAITH AND GIVING

Stewardship Committee

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Jeff Roeger

VOLUNTARY

Faith

Hayes

*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

*BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

*CLOSING HYMN #295

I Sing a Song of the Saints of God

GRAND ISLE

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Michael Howard

POSTLUDE

Praise to the Lord the Almighty

Ritter



*Our service has ended. Now our service begins.
We are the body of Christ, and the whole world awaits us.*



Behold!

Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you...

James 5:4

Leviticus 25 (NRSV) and/or James 5:4 (NRSV)

Start by reading above passage(s), before you begin with study questions.

Take a moment to pray the “**Prayer of Illumination**” * – (repeat 3X)

What has happened to US wages? Where has the wealth gone?

Does greed influence a capitalist economy? If so, how does this occur?

How does scripture advise us to be wary of debt and the snare of it?

Is establishing a Jubilee system doable in our capitalist economy?

In our justice system?

a. Wage Theft/fraud – *Unfortunately it is quite common for employers to steal wages from workers, that is to fail to pay employees all they earn. Up to two-thirds of workers in low-wage industries are victims of wage theft each week. Failure to pay for all hours worked or for overtime are just some examples of the ways employers steal wages. View and discuss How Black Americans Were Robbed of Their Land*

b. Work to end wage theft in your community. *Work to end wage theft in your community. Learn more. Low-wage workers are high-value people, created in the image of God. Examine the role of a debt-based economic system, income and wealth gaps. Further examine Biblical Debt Jubilee and Debt Cancellation as a Biblical Norm. God's reign does not stop at the door to the workplace but extends to all aspects of life including our work live. View and discuss the Cash Bail Bond Reform Sketch.*

What is God calling you and your faith community to do?
What are your goals and timeline for completion?

Reparatory Justice Series: Housing Land and Debt
Community UCC advocacy efforts
After Cash Bail: A Framework for Re-Imagining Retrial Justice

Creator God,
We welcome you in this space
May your liberating spirit
Saturate and transform this physical/virtual space and enliven our Covenant
Open our hearts and minds to receive, reflect, and redress
Engage our senses
Engage our bodies
Engage our souls
We are yours.
Transform us together now and always
In community we pray,
Amen.

With your support, the United Church of Christ
through the **Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering**, helps
its members put their beliefs into action via acts of service.
Please donate today!

**For more resources and to share and learn best practices for
economic justice/change, join the UCC Economic
Justice Champions, [here](#).**

ucc.org/nin.





Our Stewardship theme, "From Bread and Cup to Faith and Giving," connects God's generosity and our stewardship. What would it mean for our lives to embody God's abundance?

Receiving the bread and the cup—also known by names such as Lord's Supper, communion, holy communion, Eucharist, breaking of the bread, sacred meal, and simply "the table"—provides a focus to Christian community.

At the table, God uses the loaf and the cup as visible signs of God's pure, unbounded love for us and for all. The everyday ingredients become symbols of God's abundance. Love that invites everyone in. Food enough for all. Cups shared, even when not everyone agreed. In all the different ways we celebrate it in our congregations, communion allows us to taste and imagine God's gracious providence.

Too often, our minds get stuck on thoughts of scarcity. "There will never be enough," we tell ourselves. And if there's not enough, we want to control who gets what. Perhaps that's why the word sparse (meager) contains the word parse (divide). Fears of scarcity divide us.

Our fears make God's table manners ever more crucial. God invites. God provides. God pours – until our cup overflows.

Such abundance allows our hearts to imagine a new way of living. We can embrace God's unconditional love as the basis for our lives as individuals and communities.

Stewardship ponders this question: how can we reflect God's abundance with what we have? This question can help us think about ways to connect our experience of God's generosity with the choices we make in our lives.

Jesus, however, saw abundance. He chose generosity fueled by innovative thinking and actions. He invited them to consider what was already available and reconfigure their structure to make the miraculous (re)distribution of food possible so that everyone could eat satisfyingly and have leftovers. That's what the disciples would've remembered.

Anytime we approach the sacred meal, let Jesus' generosity also flood our remembrances of him so that our very lives might also be transformed and inspired to innovate our thinking and actions. Indeed, there is enough and so much more for all of us!

CONSIDER YOUR PLEDGE AS A PERCENT OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	63	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042
150,000	12,500	250	375	500	625	1250
200,000	16,667	333	500	667	833	1667

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity. Giving even 1% more of annual income to charity would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in our community.

