

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship Celebration

September 27, 2020, 10:30 A.M.



No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

251 Union Ave, Rutherford, NJ 07070

(201) 438-6324

www.rccucc.com

Rev. Ronald E. Verblauw, Pastor
(201) 838-4254

pastorron@rccucc.com

Susan LaFever, Director of Music
Muriel Corradino, Office Administrator

susanlaf@optonline.net
muriel@rccucc.com

WELCOME

Welcome to worship with the Rutherford Congregational Church. We extend you a warm welcome and pray that you will find worship this morning meaningful, your faith renewed and nourished, and that you are inspired to go out and ...

“do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.”

For your benefit, a link to the PDF of this morning’s order of worship is posted on the church’s home page, www.rccucc.com.

Here in this local congregation of the United Church of Christ, now more than ever:

*‘No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome here.’*

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IMPORTANT NOTES

For Those Attending In-Person Worship

1. Everyone joining us for in-person worship must sign in.
2. Please use hand sanitizer upon entering the building.
3. Masks are mandatory; without a mask, you will be asked to leave.
4. Temperatures will be scanned prior to admission into the sanctuary.
Anyone with a temperature greater than 99.4 F will not be admitted.
5. Sit only in designated pews (marked with green tape).
6. Social distancing is required and will be enforced by the Worship Implementation Team.
7. There will be no singing or in-person responsive readings.
8. No food or beverages will be served at any time.

CENTERING MUSIC

“May the Angels Lead You Into Paradise”
Gerald Near

CALL TO WORSHIP

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

One: In autumn beauty blue sky and golden land are clothed.
Apple-gathering children and nut-gathering squirrels
alike prepare for winter.

**All: In our tradition, harvest is a time of rejoicing
in God’s natural bounty and the ingathering of our lives.**

One: We praise God for all we have received.
Seasons turn but God’s love is changeless.

**All: We praise God for all we have received.
Maple leaves dancing, crisp breezes blowing,
the good news stories of Jesus’ sojourn in Galilee,
and the restless winds of the Spirit rushing through our lives –
all these assure us of God’s faithful presence.**

INVOCATION

HYMN

“God Is Here! As We Your People Meet” (vv. 2 & 4)
Tune: *Abbot’s Leigh*
The New Century Hymnal (70)

[Music: Susan LaFever will play the hymn through once.]

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace;
Here are table, font, and pulpit, here the cross has central place.
Here is honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech,
here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.

Sovereign God, of earth and heaven, in an age of change and doubt
Keep us faithful to the gospel, help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day’s dedication, all we have to give, receive;
we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

[Spoken by Liturgist]

**Gracious God, we confess
that our hearts are closed tight against your love and mercy.
We hold on to un-love for ourselves,
resentment against those for whom we care
anger at our helplessness,
and complicity in the structures of society.
We have protected ourselves emotionally, socially, and spiritually;
and our selfishness has nourished the pain of the world
rather than its hope.
Open, loosen, and unbind us, God.
Enable our frozen hearts to love,
our clenched hands to help,
and our stifled spirits to breathe and pray,
in the name of Christ Jesus. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

[Spoken by the Pastor]

MUSIC

“I Need You to Survive”
Words and Music: David Frazier

[Lyrics provided for reflection during the playing of this selection.]

I need you, you need me, we're all a part of God's body,
stand with me, come be with me, we're all a part of God's body.
It is God's will that ev'ry need be supplied,
you are important to me, I need you to survive,
you are important to me, I need you to survive.

I'll pray for you, you pray for me, I love you, I need you to survive,
I won't harm you with words from my mouth,
I love you, I need you to survive.
It is God's will that ev'ry need be supplied,
you are important to me, I need you to survive,
you are important to me, I need you to survive.

READING FROM THE GOSPELS

Matthew 18:15-20 (NRSV)

¹⁵ “If another member of the church^[a] sins against you,^[b] go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.^[c] ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

Footnotes:

- a. [Matthew 18:15](#) Gk *If your brother*
- b. [Matthew 18:15](#) Other ancient authorities lack *against you*
- c. [Matthew 18:15](#) Gk *the brother*

SERMON

“Loving One Another”
Rev. Ronald E. Verblauw

HYMN

“Draw Us in the Spirit’s Tether”
Tune: *Union Seminary*
The New Century Hymnal (337)

[Music: Susan LaFever will play the hymn through once.]

[Spoken by Liturgist & Pastor, alternating:]

Draw us in the Spirit’s tether, for when humbly in your name,
two or three are met together, you are in the midst of them;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Touch we now your garment’s hem.

As disciples used to gather in the name of Christ to sup,
then with thanks to God the Giver, bread the bread and bless the cup,
Alleluia! Alleluia! So now bind our friendship up.

All our meals and all our living make as sacraments of you,
that by caring, helping, giving, we may be disciples true.
Alleluia! Alleluia! We may serve with faith anew.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys & Concerns
Pastoral Prayer

[Spoken by Pastor]
[A time of silence is kept after each petition.]

Through God's steadfast compassion for us,
God has filled us with concern for our world.
Therefore, we pray for what we need, saying,
God of compassion, **hear our prayer.**

...

[Spoken by Liturgist]

All our prayers and petitions we bring before you
in the name of Jesus the Christ, who taught us to pray, saying:

Prayer of Our Savior

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

A TIME OF OFFERING

Invitation

Music

“Savior of the Nations, Come”
Johann Michael Bach

Prayer of Dedication

[Spoken by Liturgist]

**Ever-present God, just as Jesus promised to be among us
when two or three gather in his name,
be among us now that these offerings
may become instruments of your love and justice.
In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“Community of Christ”
Tune: *Leoni*
The New Century Hymnal (314)

[Music: Susan LaFever will play the hymn through once.]

[Spoken by Pastor & Liturgist, alternating:]

Community of Christ, who make the Cross your own,
live out your creed and risk your life for God alone:
The God who wears your face, to whom all worlds belong,
whose children are of every race and every song.

Community of Christ, look past the church’s door
and see the refugee, the hungry, and the poor.
Take hands with the oppressed, the jobless in your street,
take tow’l and water, that you wash your neighbor’s feet.

Community of Christ, through whom the word must sound –
cry out for justice and for peace the whole world ‘round:
Disarm the p’wers that war and all that can destroy,
turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish into joy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

[*Open for announcements from the congregation.*]

BENEDICTION

My friends, life is short, and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who make this earthly pilgrimage with us, so be swift to love and make haste to be kind.

+ May the blessing of God,
our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
who made us,
who loves us,
and who travels with us,
be with you all, now and forever more.
Amen.

POSTLUDE

“Vivace”

J.S. Bach

Resources used in preparation of this week’s liturgy and the devotional materials following were:

Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi, Eds., *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship, Updated*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2012).

Kimberly Bracken Long, Ed., *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 2*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014).

The New Century Hymnal, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1995).

Joys & Concerns

Sunday, September 20, 2020

Prayer Concerns-

- Alycia Desmond asked for prayers for her school district since there is one positive case of COVID and she is hopeful that it does not spread. She is concerned that the school might have to be shut down and the children would then need to have virtual school at home.

Thanksgivings -

- Alycia Dammers enjoys the children in the Sunday School.

May we remember and pray for the health and concerns of:

Catherine (Cat) Desmond
Carin Fougner
Carol MacPhail
Autumn O'Shea
The DiNapoli Family

Nora Esposito
Monica Fisher
Ruth Simpson
Chuck & Eileen Eastham

God, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For the week of Sunday, Sep 20, 2020

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Giving Revenues (Pledged Income, Member Gifts, Non-Member/Misc. Gifts, and Open Plate):			
For Sunday, 09/20/20:	\$ 1,655	\$ 1,850	\$ 195
YTD Giving Revenues as of 09/20/20:	62,890	74,183	11,293
YTD All Other Revenues as of 09/20/20:	32,754	15,741	(17,013)
	<u>95,644</u>	<u>89,924</u>	<u>(5,720)</u>
Anticipated annual deficit per approved budget:			<u>(23,344)</u>
			<u>(29,064)</u>
\$ Gifts In Kind This Week:		0.00	
\$ YTD Gifts In Kind, as of 09/20/2020:		1,474.14	
Attendance 09/20/2020:		<u>Streamed</u>	
Attendance Average:		<u>50</u>	