



Welcome to Zion UCC
"Courage for Community"

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 29, 2024

*Stand in body or spirit.

*(Join in speaking aloud the **bolded** portions.)*

Prelude

Coming Together to Share the Light

Greeting & Proclamation

“Isn’t it amazing that we are all made in God’s image, and yet there is so much diversity among his people?”
~ *Desmond Tutu, 20th Century*

Welcome and Announcements

Litany of Sunday Celebration

Jesus has called us here this day.

We are here, although for some of us it was not an easy choice.

Often what we say and do are very different.

Help us follow God’s will, not with lip service, but with true humility.

Come, now is the time to worship.

Now is the time of healing, restoration, and hope. AMEN.

Prayer of Invocation

The Prayer of Jesus

(All are invited to use whatever language and wording are most comfortable.)

Our Father, who art in heaven, 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 sins/debts/trespases, as we forgive our debtors/those who sin/trespass against us.* **And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. AMEN.**

A Lesson for All Ages

*** Hymn of Celebration # 261**

"Sweet, Sweet Spirit"

Prayer for Our Humanity

... Forgive us when we try to hoard you for ourselves and try to control who has access to your love.

Forgive us when our greed, our need for control, and our scandals keep others from knowing you. Redeem us and transform us, O God. Open our hearts, our lives, and our ministries, that we may become a doorway to your realm. In your name we pray. Amen.

Silence for Reflection

Assurance of Pardon

... for God heals us and forgives us. **Thanks be to God! Alleluia! AMEN.**

Message in Music *"I Hear My Shepherd Calling"*

First Scripture Lesson Esther 7:1-6,9-10; 9:20-22

Psalter Lesson # 731 w/R Psalm 19:1-10

***Gospel Lesson** Mark 9:38-50

This is the Gospel of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Meditation

Pastor Craig

***Hymn of Reflection # 390**

"Lord of Our Highest Love"

Invitation to Joyful Giving

The wonderful works of God surround us. How will we show our gratitude? The generosity of God exceeds all our limits. How will our manner of life reflect the abundance of God's mercy? Surely our offerings are one measure of our response. Let us present them with joy and thanksgiving to further the work of Zion United Church of Christ.

Offertory

***Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise him all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host:
praise Father Son, and Holy Ghost.*

***Sung Prayer of Dedication** (sung to tune above)

*Praise God from whom all grace flows forth!
Praise Life, all creatures here on earth!
Praise Light who guides us on our way!
Praise Love who forms us day by day! AMEN.*

Celebrations of Life and our Joys & Concerns

A Prayer for Sunday

***Closing Hymn # 404** *"A Hymn of Joy We Sing"*

Benediction

Bring Light out into the World

Postlude

We Focus on Our Life Together...

Thank you for choosing to worship with us this morning. No matter who or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! Please join us downstairs in The Gathering Place for refreshments and fellowship following this morning's service.

Leader: Pastor Craig Sparks

Music Director: Thaddeus Paulhamus

Musician: Clinton Adams

Message in Music: Zion UCC Choir

The flowers on the altar are dedicated to the Glory of God in loving memory of Barbra Pflugrad by daughter, Jane Anderson

In Our Thoughts and Prayers...

Bryan Barbalace, Kevin Barbalace, Charlene Berk, Cheryl Blackburn, June Bocek*, Les & Vivian Bowser*, Les Bowser Jr, Casey Brewer, Asher Dalgo, Anna Denoe*, Anna Golden, Tom Hayman, Marie Kachinski, Henry & Gerri Krotee, Barbara Langenfelder*, John Langenfelder, Barbara Makin, Pete Mitchell, Joyce Murphy, Betty Nolte*, Amanda O'Neil, Judith Panian*, John Pflugrad, Shirley Ritter*, Elaine Roberts, Carol Shrader, Emily Sturm, Mary Sturm, Barbara Thompson, service men & women, the people of Israel, Palestine, and Ukraine. Peace on Earth. *Shut-ins

This week at Zion...

- 30:** Busy Hands (10 am) Upper Hall
Turner Seniors (11 am) Lower Hall
- 01:** Bible Study (6 pm) Gathering Place
Choir Rehearsal (7 pm)
N.A. "Stronger Ties" (7 pm) Lower Hall
- 05:** Fall & Holiday Craft Show 9 am-1 pm) Hall
- 06:** World Communion Sunday (10 am)
Sunday School during worship!
Gathering Place follows service (downstairs)

Harvest Home and Open House...

On Sunday, October 13th, we will celebrate Harvest Home during our morning worship. This beautiful long-standing Zion tradition of decorating the chancel with the fruits of the season and thanking God for our harvest blessings is a wonderful occasion to invite your friends and neighbors to join us for worship. From 11:30 – 1:30 we be holding an "Open House" for our members, friends, and the community. All are invited to tour the newly renovated Caretaker's house, visit the Scout Cabin to check out the ongoing restoration project, stroll our campus, and see Pastor Craig's new office. The Miss Twist Ice Cream Truck will be onsite too.

Sunday School News...

Sunday School meets during worship in the Church Nursery/Sunday School Room on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. Children are invited to join us downstairs after the "Lesson for All Ages" to make a small craft, listen to a bible story, and have some little people fellowship. Join us next Sunday!

Bible Study News...

Please join us for our weekly Bible Study every Tuesday evening at 6 p.m. in "The Gathering Place". Each week focuses on a different scripture, come when you are able. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Craig. All are welcome!

Fall and Holiday Craft Show...

Saturday, October 5th - 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM in the education building. Food will be available for purchase & the Book Sale will be open. Please help us get the word out to your friends and neighbors! Flyers and posters are available in the narthex. We still have one vendor space available. We are looking for a few volunteers on Saturday 10/5 to help us with set-up (8 am) and breakdown (1 pm). We could also use some help with the tables on Friday evening. Please see Mary Ann Bantz or Tim Dalgo with any questions. Hope to see you on 10/5!

Please support our Cabin Fundraiser...

Why spend \$5 for a 7-ounce bag of peanuts?

- Because they are delicious!
- Because there is a coupon for a free appetizer at Texas Roadhouse attached to it!
- Because \$4 of each \$5 bag of peanuts goes directly to the cabin fund!

The bags of peanuts are in a basket on the table in the narthex. They are self-serve, just place your \$5 in the can and take a bag. If you are willing to sell some to family or friends, call Jane at 410-598-2110 or send email to janeanderson8@comcast.net.

Coming up: A Concert of Hymns...

The Zion Music Ministry and friends will present a concert of newly composed hymn melodies in our sanctuary on Sunday, October 6 at 5:00 p.m.

These hymns, comprised of well-known hymn texts, sung to new and different tunes, will be sung by members of the Zion Choir, along with additional singers.

Anyone who likes to sing in the congregation, or is a friend of the Church, is invited to come and be an additional singer. We hope the project will be a good time for all who sing as well as all who listen.

Preparation for the concert will be held this evening (Sunday, September 29), with a final run-through on Saturday, October 5th. All practices will take place at 5:00 p.m.

It is hoped that the new melodies may bring the noble, traditional texts into new focus, so that the prayers of these poems may find a renewed meaning to those who sing and hear them. We hope that everyone who takes part in this exercise will find the effort enjoyable, and the music meaningful.

With this performance, our Music Director, Thad Paulhamus (who has composed the tunes) will officially begin his sixty-first year of service as a sacred musician. Come, join the celebration!

UCC MISSION MOMENT
19th Sunday after Pentecost
Courage for Community
Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22

An ad sponsored by the Foundation to Combat Antisemitism, which ran during last winter's Super Bowl, reminded viewers that silence isn't golden when others are being persecuted.

It featured Clarence B. Jones, a civil rights activist and draft speechwriter for Martin Luther King Jr., who, as images of hate flashed on the screen, spoke these words, "All hate thrives on one thing: silence."

A Jewish woman named Esther, who would become Queen of Persia, knew all about speaking up for the good of a community. Her story, recorded in the Book of Esther, tells of the Jewish people living in exile in Persia after the destruction of the First Temple. Under the reign of King Achashverosh, a royal advisor named Haman concocted a plot to wipe out the Persian Jewish community. Esther, along with her guardian, Mordechai, were able to foil Haman's plot and save the Jewish community.

At the climax of this story, when the Jewish community of Persia is facing imminent destruction, Mordechai calls on Esther to speak up on behalf of the Jewish people. Esther hesitates at first for she fears her own safety, being a Jew herself in the inner court. Mordechai reminds her

that she is forever tied to the Jewish people and that her voice needs to be heard.

In the end, Esther speaks up and her people are saved. To this day, Esther is remembered and celebrated as a hero and an advocate on the Jewish celebration known as Purim.

The need to speak is great, yet still so very scary for many of us as we fear for our own safety and security. Throughout history, though, God calls for voices like Esther's, like Clarence B. Jones' — like yours — to speak for those whose voices are not being heard.

Ask God for the courage to do so and trust the words to come.

Loving God, give us the courage of Esther to speak up when we see communities hurting. May our words not be confrontational or hateful. Rather, may they be filled with love and point to your glory. Amen

Zion UCC Church Staff

Ministers	All members of Zion UCC	
Craig S. Sparks	Pastor	443-896-6815 Email: <i>craigssparks@gmail.com</i>
Tim Dalgo, Sr.	Administrator	410-608-1670 Email: <i>info@zionuccmd.com</i>
Joan Jordan	President	443-791-7344 Email: <i>doosmom2@gmail.com</i>
Thad Paulhamus	Music Director	443-610-7844
Clinton Adams	Musician	
The Rev. Hugh Nash	Pastor Emeritus	

Administrative Office: 410-687-0980

- * Press 1 to leave voicemail message
- * Press 3 to contact Council President
- * Press 4 to contact Cemetery

Pastor Craig will be in the office on Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30 to 4:00 pm. The phone and email continue to be monitored, and all incoming mail is processed daily. For your convenience, you may leave your offering envelopes in the locked mailbox on the office side porch. Messengers, Bulletins, and Upper Room Devotionals are also available.

If you require pastoral services, please call Pastor Craig Sparks at 443-896-6815 or send an email to *craigssparks@gmail.com*.

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Website: www.zionuccmd.com
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**Zion United Church of Christ
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proudly presents our

**FALL & HOLIDAY CRAFT SHOW
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2024
from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM**

Food will be available for purchase!

**Zion Women's Guild Used Book Sale will also be
open for browsing & buying!**



**Very limited vendor space is still available. For
more information or to reserve your space:
send an e-mail to info@zionuccmd.com, or
leave a voicemail message at 410-687-0980.**

**Invite your friends and neighbors ... share on
your Facebook page ... take some flyers from the
narthex & ask local businesses to post them.**