



**Welcome to
Zion United Church of Christ**

**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 17, 2023**

*Stand in body or spirit.

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

Prelude

Coming Together to Share the Light

Greeting & Proclamation

"The only real reason to forgive is because we want back a relationship that has previously been broken."

~Barbara Brown Taylor, 21st Century

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Sunday Celebration

Sing songs of hope and peace.

God's love and power have lifted us.

Sing songs of mercy and grace.

God's mercy and forgiveness frame our lives.

Thanks be to God for all God's love and mercy.

Praise be to God for the healing power God extends to each one of us.

Morning Prayer

The Prayer of Jesus

(All are invited to use whatever language and wording is 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/trespasses*, 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 Worship # 21**

"Let the Whole Creation Cry"

Prayer for Our Humanity

...Teach us to be humble and merciful.

Remind us of the many ways in which you have offered, time and time again, your forgiving love to us. Heal our wounds and bind up our brokenness. For we ask this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. AMEN.

Silence for Reflection

Assurance of Pardon

...May the peace of Jesus Christ be with us all.

Thanks be to God! Alleluia! AMEN.

Message in Music

First Scripture Lesson

Romans 14:1-12

The Psalter #753 w/R

Psalm 103:1-5, 11-18

***Gospel Lesson**

Matthew 18:21-35

Meditation

Pastor Craig

***Hymn of Reflection # 487**

"Help Us Accept Each Other"

Invitation to Joyful Giving

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, the love we all may share;
Praise God, the beauty everywhere;
Praise God, the hope of good to be;
Praise God, the truth that makes us free. AMEN.*

Sharing Our Joys & Concerns

A Prayer for Sunday

***Closing Hymn #65**

"A Mighty Fortress is Our God"

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

Musicians: Thad Paulhamus & Clinton Adams

Message in Music: Zion Handbell Choir

In Our Thoughts and Prayers...

Bryan Barbalace, Kevin Barbalace, June Bocek*#, Les & Vivian Bowser, Les Bowser Jr, Casey Brewer, Jody Cirigliano#, Walt Clawson, Betty Cornes, Shirley Dalgo, Anna Denoe*#, Al Dufour, Joan Edwards*, Anna Golden, Gloria Jean Golden, Kim Grimes, Marie Kachinski, Henry & Gerri Krotee, Janice Lane, Barbara Langenfelder*, Henrietta Loveland, Patricia Moxham, Joyce Murphy, Mary Murphy, Gloria Nethkin, Betty Nolte*#, Judith Panian*#, Barbara Ridenour, Joann Ringsdorf, Shirley Ritter*, Elaine Roberts, Jim Roeder, Ken Rubright#, Audrey Ruby, Bruce Simon, Chip Swayne#, Dina Thomakos, Doris Wengler, Kerri Wilcox, Nancy Zaharis, service men & women, Ukraine, Peace on Earth. (*Shut-ins) (#Zion Kelso)

Looking ahead at Zion...

- 18:** Busy Hands Crafters (10 am) Upper Hall
Turner Seniors (11 am) Lower Hall
October Messenger Deadline – All Articles Due!
- 19:** Bible Study (6 pm) Gathering Place
Choir Rehearsal (7 pm) Sanctuary
N.A. "Stronger Ties" (7 pm) Lower Hall
- 20:** N.A. "Sink or Swim" (7 pm) Lower Hall
- 24:** Worship with Pastor Craig (10 am)
Sunday School meets in Gathering Place

Today is the All-Church Picnic...

The fun begins at 1 pm in the Pavilion. There will be food, fun, and fellowship for all. Grilled food and beverages will be provided. Please bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share. Feel free to bring your favorite lawn or picnic activity.

Crabtober Raffle to benefit Cabin Restoration...

It's time once again for Crabtober! Please support the cabin project by purchasing a raffle ticket for a chance to win a bushel of crabs donated by Vince's Crab House. (Vince has been very generous over the years to Zion and the Boy Scouts). Tickets are \$5 each. Please see Jane Anderson in the Gathering Place after church or call her at 410-598-2110. The drawing will be held after worship on Sunday, October 15th in the Gathering Place.

The Turkey Dinner Returns...

After an absence of several years, this long-standing Zion Golden Ring tradition is making a comeback in 2023! Mark your calendars for Saturday, November 18... more details will be available in the coming weeks.

Usable Glasses Can Make a Difference!

Zion UCC is now a Lions "Recycle for Sight" collection point. Deposit your used glasses, including sunglasses and reading glasses in the box located in the narthex.

UCC MISSION MOMENT

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 14:19-31 Road to Freedom

Even if you have not spent much time in church or in Bible study, the story of the crossing of the Red Sea is probably a little familiar. Look at the story with new eyes today, reading it through a lens that is new to you. What new message or insight do you get from this story by reading it in this new way?

A **literary** reading considers the story from the point of view of literature. How does the plot arc and flow keep you, as the reader or listener, engaged? What are some of the literary devices, such as use of language? Who are the characters and how are they developed? What

is your point of view as a reader or listener? How does the story change if you consider it from another point of view?

A **historical** reading considers the story from the point of view of its place in history. Consider the place and time that the story takes place. What is the culture of God's people and of Pharaoh's people at the time? What are other forces at work in these societies?

Another way to read a Bible story is as a story of **God's work in the world**. In reading this way, pay attention to where God is and what God is doing. What is God like in this story and how does this compare to God's presence in other stories? How does God look and sound? In what ways does God circumvent expected or natural law to accomplish Divine goals?

You may also want to read a scripture story **devotionally**, to intentionally deepen your walk with God. In reading this way, read the story slowly three times. The first time, pay attention to any words or phrases that jump out at you and make note of them. The second time, read while asking God to show you God's purpose in the world. The third time, read asking God to reveal something that you need for your own faith walk.

Yet another way to read the Bible, and perhaps a particularly helpful one on this Just Peace Sunday (<https://www.ucc.org/just-peace/>), is through a **liberation theology** lens. Liberation theology is based on the fundamental value that God's preference is always for the marginalized and oppressed. As you read this way, look for clues that God is working for freedom for the enslaved, and disruption of systems of oppression.

**Zion will be hosting an
Outdoor Community
Flea Market
on Saturday, October 14th
from 8:00 AM-12:00 PM**

Spaces are available in advance for \$20.

Food will be available for purchase.

Rain date... October 21, 2023

To reserve your space, please call 410-687-0980
or send an email to: info@zionuccmd.com

We need volunteers to help with event set up
and takedown, marking off vendor spaces,
vendor check in, parking lot guides, food
preparation, serving and clean up, food service
cashier, vendor runners and other tasks. Please
consider lending a hand!

You can also help by giving flyers to family,
friends, neighbors, and groups you belong to...
or posting them at area businesses (with their
permission) and sharing this event on your
social media pages.

if you are willing to assist us in any way, please
call

Tim Dalgo at 410-608-1670, the church office at
410-687-0980, or send an email to
[*info@zionuccmd.com*](mailto:info@zionuccmd.com) Thank you for your
support!

Zion UCC Church Staff

Ministers	All members of Zion UCC	
Craig S. Sparks	Pastor	443-896-6815 Email: <i>pastor@zionuccmd.com</i>
Tim Dalgo, Sr.	Administrator	410-608-1670 Email: <i>info@zionuccmd.com</i>
Joan Jordan	President (Golden Ring)	443-791-7344 Email: <i>doosmom2@gmail.com</i>
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Jane Anderson	Congregational Care	410-598-2110 Email: <i>janeanderson8@comcast.net</i>
Thad Paulhamus	Music Director	443-610-7844
Clinton Adams	Musician	
Rev. C. Larry Fisher, Rev. Hugh Nash	Pastor Emeriti	

Administrative Office: 410-687-0980

- * Press 1 to leave voicemail message
- * Press 2 for Pastoral Services
- * Press 3 to contact Council President
- * Press 4 to contact Cemetery
- * Press 6 to contact Congregational Care

Pastor Craig will be in the office on Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. The phone and email continue to be monitored, and all incoming mail is processed daily. For your convenience, you may leave envelopes or correspondence in the locked mailbox on the office porch. Messengers, Bulletins, and Upper Room Devotionals are also available.

If you require pastoral services, please call the church office, and press #2; email to *pastor@zionuccmd.com* or call Pastor Craig directly at 443-896-6815.

Zion United Church of Christ
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