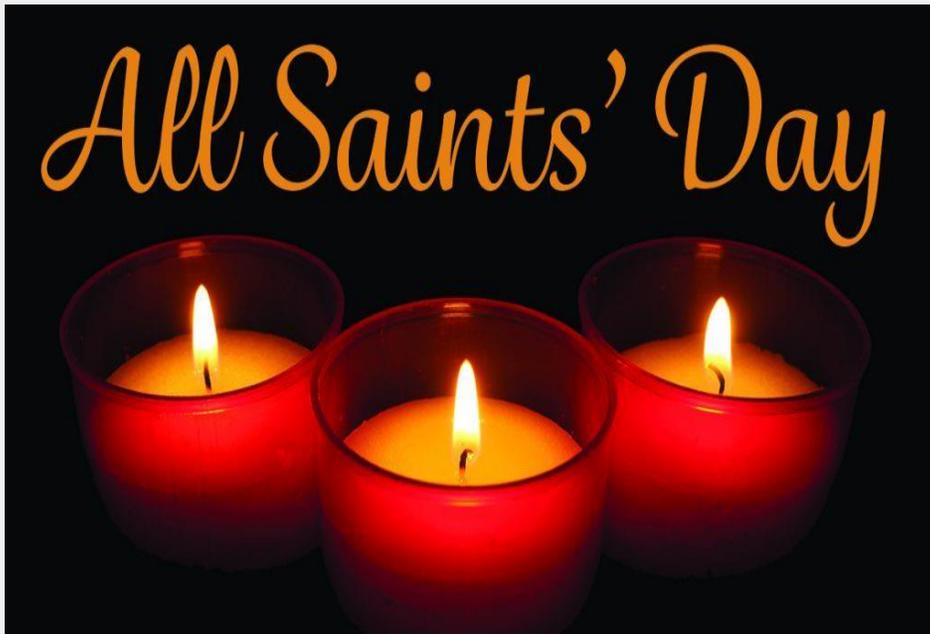


Lakewood Congregational Church

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Sunday, November 1, 2020



An Order of Worship to be followed in your home, along with our
worship video on your own
Preferably at 10:00am

Welcome and Announcements

Welcome to worship on this Sunday.

We are glad you're worshipping with us today. Welcome to our
Virtch service today!

At Lakewood Congregational Church, we strive to be people of
extravagant welcome. Whether you are young or old, gay or
straight, single or partnered, happy or sad, confused or inspired,
street smart or college-educated, whether you can't pay your
bills or you have more than enough to share—no matter who you
are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here in
this place, to worship the God who welcomes us all.

Today is All Saints' Day, and I'm also going to lead you in a time
of reflection, so you need some supplies. Communion elements:
bread and grape juice, a cracker and wine, whatever you have
that is right for you today. You also need paper and pencil or a
pen, something to write with and on. I suppose you could use your
phone or device, but if you're screened out like me, you might
find it more meaningful to write on a piece of paper.

Today is also a bit of a "Worship for All Ages" Sunday, so hopefully
our children and youth can participate in our reflection activity
and you'll also get to see two of them reflect together in our God
Moment. And we'll begin our service with a tradition our children
are accustomed to:

"We light this candle and watch it glow. God's love is with us
wherever we go." and they always say, "I'm here, you're here,
God is here."

Say, "May the Peace of Christ be with you"

Offering and Contribution Collection

Please consider fulfilling your pledges during this time. Financial gifts are always welcome, and our church feels the call to respond to the needs around us as they arise. Financial stability allows us to do so more effectively. So, let us give generously of our time, talent, treasure to further the work of God in our community. You can do so in the following ways:

- Writing and mailing a check to Lakewood Congregational Church, 1375 W. Clifton Blvd., Lakewood, OH 44107
- Texting STEWARD to 44-321
- Sending a gift through your bank's online bill pay
- By using the donate button on the church's website www.lcc-church.org
- Call the church office at (216) 221-9555 to discuss other options

Prelude

For All the Saints by James Mansfield
Ben Malkevitch, organ

The images displayed are all paintings inspired by All Saints' Day or communion of saints.

Call to Worship

One: We remember...

Many: ...teachers and storytellers who made God's stories come alive for us and we give thanks!

One: We remember...

Many: ...choir members, praise bands, organists and all the musicians who sang and played your praises and we give thanks!

One: We remember...

Many: ...preachers and lay leaders who led our worship through the years and we give thanks!

One: We remember...

Many: ...parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters, brothers and siblings who sat with us on Sundays and lived out their faith all week long and we give thanks!

One: We remember...

Many: ...our church families - this one and others we have loved. We remember all those who have been a part of this faith family and we give thanks!

One: We remember...

Many: ...our ancestors in the faith whose courage enables us to be here today. For our siblings in the faith whose names are remembered only by God, we give thanks!

Prayer for Election Week

Holy God, We come to you today in prayer, full of emotions. Election seasons always seem to bring that out in us— Worry and hope, fear and frustration. The list could go on. So today we bow our heads and ask for guidance. Open our ears to hear the groans of creation. Open our eyes to see the needs of others. Open our hearts to make room for empathy. Give us the wisdom to navigate challenging conversations. Give us the patience to disagree with grace. Give us the compassion to make decisions for the greater good. And when all else fails, bring us back to love. Bring our hearts and our hands, Our dreams and our hopes, Our anger and our frustration, Our hurt and our fear, All back to love. With hope we pray, With hope we are sustained. Amen.

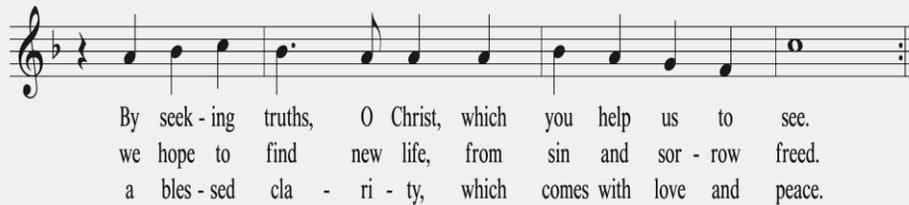
Hymn

Ben Malkevitch, baritone and piano

Blessed Are the Pure in Heart

Refrain: Matthew 5:8
Verses: Ben Malkevitch

Music: Ben Malkevitch



Pastoral Prayer

You have blessed us
with saints all of our lives,
God of the ages:
those who put up with us,
and those who prepared us for discipleship;

those who have touched us with their compassion,
and those who illumine the way for us.

Through the valleys and over the hills,
down the dusty streets of every village,
saints traveled with you,
Jesus, Child of grace and glory:
those who impetuously chased after you,
and those whose feet longed to turn back;
those who jostled for your attention,
and those who made sure little children
were able to meet you.

You surround us with saints,
even when we don't recognize
or much less appreciate them,
Spirit of wonder:
some live down the corner from us,
while others are on the other side of the world;
some run to catch the leaves spiraling to the ground,
while others make a meal for a sick neighbor's family.

For all the saints of every age, especially our,
we give you our gratitude and praise,
God in Community, Holy in One.

Bless us, and bless us, and bless us again. Bless us as we grieve,
bless us as we worry, bless us as we ache. Lighten our burdens,
and turn us towards you. We pray this in the name of the one
who taught us to pray...

The Lord's Prayer

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 debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

Let us praise God with our gifts of tithes and offerings.

Dedication Prayer

Thank you, O God, for the gifts of your people. Help us that we rely not on our own understanding in the use of these gifts, but to seek your wisdom. Knowing that as we do, your will be revealed and your people near and far will be blessed. Amen.

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts:
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Scripture Reading, read by

Matthew 5:8

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Philippians 4:4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with

thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Message

***We've included this transcript for the benefit of people who do not have audio access on their computer. Please keep in mind that it is written in a way it's spoken, so the grammar/sentence structure may feel a bit awkward to read. Even so, this feels like the best way to communicate to as many people as possible.

Everyone I talk to is anxious these days: anxious about the election this week and all the many dynamics that surround it. Anxious about the rising COVID numbers and the sun setting so early. Full of cabin fever and a travel itch we can't scratch. Anxious about job security, financial security, housing security. Anxious about the widening achievement gap for our disadvantaged children and youth. Anxious about our own health and the health of those we love, and when we'll get to embrace our loved ones again. Anxious about the way people are acting because we're all anxious.

Paul's letter to the Philippians is primarily a calming, grateful, pastoral letter to an anxious people. In the passage Karen read today, he writes, "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." I believe that journaling and writing are an

act of prayer, and in this time when the world around us feels particularly chaotic, perhaps we can create together a time of still, gentle reflection. We can try it at least, right?

So I want you to actually get your paper and pencil and take some time to write with us. We've created time in the video for you to write, but if you need more time you can certainly pause. We're going to have a total of four prompts to write about. The first one is simply in response to Paul's suggestion: "Do not worry about anything... Let your requests be made known to God." so I invite you simply to make a list, just stream of consciousness if you can, a list of the worries on your heart.

Question: Paul says, "Do not worry about anything... let your requests be made known to God." List the worries on your heart that you need to hand over to God.

Today we celebrate All Saints' Day. In a while, in our service of Holy Communion, we will read and speak aloud the names of Saints who have gone before us in this past year. You might speak names of Saints who have gone long before. Often, people are Saints in our lives because they have advised us and inspired us about how to live through difficult and anxious times. Take some time to think about advice you've received from Saints in your life- they can be living or passed. What advice might those saints give to you today? You might even be able to hear the voice of a loved one speaking to you. Write what that voice is saying.

Question: Think of a Saint in your life who set an example for how to live through anxious times. What advice would that Saint offer you today?

We are several weeks into our series on the Beatitudes. Today's Beatitude is, "Blessed are the Pure in heart, for they will see God." In the curriculum Rachel has been using for Faith

Formation, the Beatitude is defined in this simple way: "To be pure in heart is to show love for God, neighbor, and yourself in how you act, speak, and think. Our integrity is an important part of this. You are a person of integrity when your outside actions match the person you are on the inside. Integrity means working toward wholeness for yourself and creating that same kind of wholeness in our world."

Think of the Saints in your life again, living or passed, and write about the ways they were pure in heart; the ways they lived with integrity. It can be the same saint you wrote about before or a different one. How did they show love for God, neighbor, and self? How did they work towards wholeness for the world?

Question: How have the Saints in your life showed love for God, neighbor, and self? How did they work towards wholeness for the world?

Our final writing prompt for today is to invite you to think of the ways you are "pure in heart" and the ways you can build upon and grow in that way. More often than not, the worries we have and carry around in our minds are not things that we can control. We worry about the actions, behavior, and decisions of others. We worry about how communities are functioning and behaving. We worry about the decisions and behaviors of our elected officials and we worry about who our next elected officials will be. These concerns are valid and they matter, but they also invoke the serenity prayer: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

There are some things we can change today and some we can't. We can vote, of course. We can share our voice in letters and phone calls. But the thing we have the most control over is our own integrity and pureness of heart: aligning our actions with our words. We can grow in our own integrity, become more pure in

heart, amplify the memory of our saints in our own behavior, and be the change we wish to see in the world.

The Poet Mark Nepo says, “When we heal ourselves, we heal the world. For as the body is only as healthy as its individual cells, the world is only as healthy as its individual souls.”

So, how are you pure in heart already? And what might you do, rather than worrying about the things we can’t change, to grow and heal yourself for the health of the world?

Question: How are you pure in heart already? And what might you do to grow and heal yourself for the health of the world?

In a moment we’ll share together in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. I encourage you to continue journaling, either right now or after our service is complete. And I also offer a challenge to you for this week: call someone you miss at church and reflect together about what you wrote. Tell them about your saints and ask them about theirs. And if you’d like to send me or call me about some of your responses, I’d absolutely love that.

Finally I’ll end our time of reflection by repeating the Pastoral words of Paul in his letter to the Philippians:

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Amen.

God Moment by Evelyn Richards

Service of Holy Communion

The invitation is simple: come and eat of the feast. Not a meal to nourish the body, but to feed the soul. We receive the bread and wine connected to the ages:
To the saint of old who felt unworthy,
To the seeker eager to know God,
To the teenager who wonders what it’s all about,
To the child who eats with unburdened faith.
Woven into this time, the hopes and tears of generations.
There is great joy here. No one is turned away for God is the host!

Communion Prayer

One: God is in this place.

Many: And in our hearts.

One: Open yourself to the nudging God.

Many: We feel the breath of the Spirit.

One: Remember God made flesh.

Many: Jesus, who taught us a new way.

(A moment of silence)

One: Tender, transforming God, you have invited us to gather at this table.

Many: To taste the feast, the same abundant promises offered to our ancestors in faith.

One: Time and time again, you’ve offered your grace.

Many: Even as we have stepped away, you continue to call us to be your people.

One: You have never left us.

**Many: We praise you for second, third, and fourth chances.
You are ever-patient, always faithful.**

One: We give thanks for this time of celebration.

**Many: For the One this meal remembers. For the life,
ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

One: With those who have gone before us,

**Many: Whose hands touched the bread, whose lips embraced
the cup, we worship you, we glorify you.**

Remembering

We remember those who have died in the past year. We celebrate their lives, even as we continue to grieve. We remember:

Suzie and I name my stillborn nephew, Daniel Joseph D'Agostino

Walter Waitt

Jimmy Callihan

Dick Ganim

Karen Blesse

Kathleen Armstrong

Jack Ott

Dorothy Troph

Ceil Fernandez

Wayne Robinson

Donald Shultzaberger

Elizabeth Sangree

Terry Spencer

Elizabeth Speicher

Wilbur Schult

Carol Smith

Esty Parlanti

Joe Raabe

Sid Grisell

Pat Bresien

Keith Rasey

Mark Tudron

Jane Harris

(Please speak aloud the names of others who have died in the past year.)

And we remember all those who have gone before us. This is the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine

Gathered with his friends, Jesus took bread, broke it and said:

“This is my body, broken for you. Take and eat.” And pouring the wine: “This is my blood, spilled out for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Prayer for the Holy Spirit

One: God of all, send your Spirit to this place, so that those gathered here, in this sacred moment, may know your presence. As we eat the bread and drink of the cup, make one with the saints, and with our siblings in faith around the world.

**Many: Be with us God, not only here but in every moment of our lives. Help us to know you, to be guided by the Holy Spirit, and to live in Christ. Now and forever.
Amen.**

Call to the Feast

This is the feast prepared for you. Come and share for all is ready.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)

Creative, connecting God, you have sent your Spirit and made us the body of Christ; from child-like faith, to youthful energy, from middle-aged mindfulness, to elder's wisdom.

We thank you for this time, this remembrance. Increase our faith. Help us to love. Encourage us to act. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Benediction

Beloved, go forth from this place as a blessing to the world. Being a saint in the lives of others as others have been a saint in your life. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God Mother of us all. Amen

Postlude

Reflections on "Endless Song" by Michael Ryan
LCC Handbell Choir

Paula Deal, Michael Komperda, Ben Malkevitch, Bob Paraska,
Cathy Spicer, Robert Wenz, Jan Young

Our Mission Statement proclaims our common goal.

*We strive to be a welcoming,
worshipping community of faith,
helping people discover and deepen
their relationship with God, growing as
disciples of Christ, and reaching out in
faith and loving service.*

***In keeping with the spirit of our Mission Statement,
Lakewood Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ,
is an Open and Affirming congregation.***

*We welcome people of all sexual orientation,
ages, differing abilities, and ethnic, economic,
and racial backgrounds into
the full life and ministry of our church.*

***We declare this in the name of the Still Speaking God,
whose Son, Jesus Christ, welcomed
all people into God's circle of grace.***

