

# IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Organist: Karen Cain  
October 17, 2021

Pastor: Rev. Dana Schindler  
Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

"Extending God's love with the work of our hands and hearts..."

## GATHERING MUSIC

### WELCOME

Welcome to worship today at Immanuel United Church of Christ in Hamel, IL, where our mission is "Extending God's love with the work of our hands and hearts..."

We are pleased that you are here to worship with us today!

For those who are worshipping online with us, please leave a comment to let us know you are here. Also note any joys and concerns you may have and feel free to greet each other in Christian love.

Music used is covered under our CCLI livestreaming license # 4012842.

Today for our service, you will need paper, and a pen.

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### PRELUDE

*Karen Cain*

### POINT TO PONDER

*"When we lose one blessing, another is often most unexpectedly given in its place."*

C.S. Lewis

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Bless the Lord, O my soul,

**All: And all that is in me!**

One: Bless the Lord, O my soul,

**All: I will remember all the Lord has done for me.**

### \*PRAYER OF INVOCATION

God of grace, we give thanks this day for our many blessings, blessings we have done nothing to deserve, blessings provided through your love for us. Remind us that you are always present, always the source of our blessings, always ready to help us through the trials of life. Help us to be a blessing to others we meet. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

### \*OPENING HYMN

**"On Eagle's Wings"**

# 77 Chalice

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord

Who abide in His shadow for life

Say to the Lord, "My Refuge

My Rock in Whom I trust."

[Refrain]

And He will raise you up on eagle's wings  
 Bear you on the breath of dawn  
 Make you to shine like the sun  
 And hold you in the palm of His Hand

You need not fear the terror of the night  
 Nor the arrow that flies by day  
 Under his wings your refuge  
 His faithfulness your shield  
 For to His angels He's given a command  
 To guard you in all of your ways  
 Upon their hands they will bear you up  
 Lest you dash your foot against a stone

[Refrain]

And He will raise you up on eagle's wings  
 Bear you on the breath of dawn  
 Make you to shine like the sun  
 And hold you in the palm of His Hand

## **FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART**

### **PRAYER**

#### **Reading of the Holy Scriptures**

Old Testament Reading                      Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Epistle Reading                      Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for

they will see God. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## **SERMON**

### **“You’re blessed’ *Rev. Dana Schindler***

Our reading from Matthew is better known as The Beatitudes. It is a message of hope for those who had little hope for life to get better. The Roman soldiers who occupied their land were living the good life. They had everything they needed, including much of what belonged to the people Jesus was talking to on the mountain side.

The religious leaders were also doing pretty well for themselves. They had what they needed and held a place of honor in society, so their lives were ok.

But these people that Jesus spoke to on this particular day, were not doing so well. They were slaves or poor enough that most of what they were able to earn was taxed and confiscated by the Romans or required as tribute to God by the religious leaders. They were raking and scraping to get by. Life was quite harsh.

What must they have thought when Jesus told them they were blessed? Did they think he was crazy or deluded? They certainly didn’t FEEL blessed.

I’d like to use The Message Bible translation as I present the sermon to you. It makes the meaning a little more clear I think.

**When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:**

**“You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of YOU there is more of GOD and his rule.”** Have you ever been at the end of your rope? This is the time when you seriously consider just how desperate you are. You consider whether or not it is worth the effort to hold on or whether you should just let go. When we are desperate, we are more likely to turn to God and pay attention to what God tells us to do.

Otherwise, we think, I've got this. I can do this on my own. I'm gonna put on my big kid pants and get the job done. No, this is that time when we just have no clue what to do or where to go. This is when we recognize that we DON'T have it and perhaps that we never did. This is when we rely completely on God and God's grace. This is when we have to tie a knot in the rope and pray for help. And when we do that, help comes. Perhaps we should learn to ask before we get to crisis stage.

**"You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you."**

When everything is gone, when our friends don't answer our calls or recognize us on the street, when we need a pork chop around our necks for the dog to pay attention to us, we are blessed. THEN we are ready to let God hold us, to let God comfort us and tell us everything will be ok. THEN we are ready to trust God to make everything ok.

**Jeremiah 29:11**

**For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.**  
GOD'S got this.

**"You're blessed when you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought."**

When we can be happy with what we have, when enough is really enough, then we have everything we need. We are blessed when we stop working for more stuff, when we don't need the latest gadget, or a better car/house/job, etc. We can be happy and blessed when winning the lottery would only be something we would think about so that we could give it away to others. We are blessed when we realize that the things we want and need aren't THINGS at all.

**"You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat."**

We are blessed when our true hunger is for God. That is when we can allow God to fill us and open our eyes to the world and the people around us, when we can recognize God in others, and love them as God does.

**“You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for.**

We are blessed when we care for others. When we do good things for other people, we get blessings back. They say thank you, they smile, we can see that what we do is making a difference in their lives. Perhaps those we help are not accustomed to anyone caring about them at all. We can actually see the other person bloom, just knowing that someone, anyone actually cares about them. Helping others makes us feel good.

**“You’re blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.**

We have to take care of ourselves. We have to get our priorities straight. We have to understand what is the most important thing in our own lives. We have to understand that everything isn’t about us. And once we can do that, then we can see God. We can see God in the beauty of the earth and the birds and the animals and plants and trees and lakes and even snow. We can see God in the smiles of children, in the humility of the poor and the helpless, in those who work to help others, even in those we don’t particularly like.

**“You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family.**

We are blessed when we can show people a better way. When we can join in solidarity to work for a common goal. When we can put aside our differences and work together to help the poor, or the school kids, or the animals, or clean up the water, or house the homeless, or give medical care to those who need it. When we can work together, we are blessed by better living conditions and peace of mind.

**“You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom.**

**“Not only that—count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer,**

**even!—for though they don't like it, I do! And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.**

We are blessed when we commit ourselves to God. We may be considered nut cases, or fools. We may not get into clubs or be voted most likely to succeed. We may lose friends. Family may start acting weird. But the fact that someone would start persecuting us, means that we are even closer to bringing about God's kingdom here on earth. That is a scary thing for a lot of people, especially those with a lot of "stuff" they might lose. Because God's kingdom is a kingdom of peace, not wars fought over something someone else has. And that is threatening to some.

Our psalm tells us that our help is in the Lord. That God's got this. We are blessed and God's got this. So why should we worry?  
We ARE blessed. Amen.

### **PASTORAL PRAYER**

Holy One, our words of gratitude can never match the magnificence of your blessings. Help us to remember our blessings, even as we pray for blessings for others. For those who are ill in body and spirit, we ask your healing touch. For those who grieve, we ask for your comforting presence. For those who live in violence, we pray for peace. For those who are poor, we pray for guidance to help provide for their needs. For those who are oppressed, we pray for the will to achieve justice. For those who battle demons we cannot imagine, we pray for strength. For those who lead, we pray for wisdom. For those who serve us, we pray for strength and perseverance. For everyone we know and for those we don't, we pray for peace, joy, love, and the opportunity to know you. All these things we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray, saying: **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, the power, the glory forever Amen.**

### **HYMN**

#### **"Count Your Blessings"**

**When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,  
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,  
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.**

**Refrain:**

**Count your blessings, name them one by one;  
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;**

Count your blessings, name them one by one;  
Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.

Are you ever burdened with a load of care?  
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?  
Count your many blessings, ev'ry doubt will fly,  
And you will be singing as the days go by.

Refrain:

Count your blessings, name them one by one;  
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;  
Count your blessings, name them one by one;  
Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.

So, amid the conflict, whether great or small,  
Do not be discouraged, God is over all;  
Count your many blessings, angels will attend,  
Help and comfort give you to your journey's end.

Refrain:

Count your blessings, name them one by one;  
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;  
Count your blessings, name them one by one;  
Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.

### GIVING OUR GIFTS

As we consider our response to God's amazing love for us, let us look within ourselves, at our many gifts of time, talents, and treasure, and give with grateful hearts. Offerings may be placed in the offering plates outside the sanctuary or mailed to Immanuel United Church of Christ at 5838 Staunton Road, Edwardsville, IL 62025.

### HYMN OF THANKS

The Doxology

# 382 HFG

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

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Gracious God, we give our gifts with joy. Bless them and use

**them to strengthen your kingdom of peace and joy here on earth. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN**

**"Because He Lives"**

**# 562 Chalice**

**God sent his son  
They called him Jesus  
He came to love, heal and forgive.  
He bled and died  
To buy my pardon  
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives.**

**Because He lives  
I can face tomorrow.  
Because He lives  
All fear is gone.  
Because I know he holds the future  
My life is worth the living just because He lives.**

**GOING FORTH TO SERVE** As we go forth to serve, please remember our opportunities this week. Join us for:

PARKFEST is today at LeClair Park. After worship we will meet in the Fellowship Hall to package desserts for sale. Many thanks to all who donated desserts for this event.

**HITZ AUXILIARY ANNUAL MEETING** Monday, October 18<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00 AM.

**CONFIRMATION** will meet Monday, Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm on Zoom.

**PRAYER GROUP** will meet this Wednesday at 10 am on Zoom. Please take time during the week to pray for our church, our members/family/friends, our leaders and our community.

**FAITHQUEST MOVIE FOR ALL AGES** next Sunday, Oct. 24, we will show the movie How to Train Your Dragon in the Fellowship Hall after worship. Our theme for the day is bullying. The movie is 1 hour 38 minutes.

**VISION TEAM** will meet Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> @ 7 pm on Zoom. All will receive an invitation and are urged to attend and discuss ministries of the church.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** We would like to resume having acolytes and liturgists each week. Anyone with a cell phone could be a liturgist since they could even record from home and send the video to Dave for upload during the service. This would be a good way to include those who cannot come to church for any reason.

**HELP NEEDED FOR LIVESTREAMING AND POWERPOINT** Folks who volunteered to be part of the Livestreaming Team are needed. Dave S. will be happy to set up a time to teach you what you need to know and Mark and Frank will be happy to mentor you through the process. Ruth will be happy to provide training for PowerPoint.

**TREATS FOR THE TRICKED** Many people have been "tricked" by hurricanes, floods, and fires. We would like to "treat" them to much needed cleaning supplies. We will be



collecting supplies to make cleaning buckets. Please purchase and donate items from the list or make a financial contribution by October 31<sup>st</sup>. Then on November 14<sup>th</sup> after worship, we will meet to fill our cleaning buckets to send to those in need. We have buckets for this purpose.

### **ITEMS NEEDED FOR EACH BUCKET:**

- Four scouring pads
- Seven sponges, including one large
- One scrub brush
- Eighteen reusable cleaning towels (e.g. Handi Wipes or Easy Wipes)
- One 50 oz. or two 25 oz. bottle(s) of liquid laundry detergent
- One 16-28 oz. bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap
- One 12-16 oz. bottle of household cleaner that can be mixed with water (no spray bottles)
- One package of 48-50 clothespins
- Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.
- Five dust masks
- Two pairs heavy-duty, waterproof dish washing gloves (Latex-free, non-surgical)
- One pair work gloves, cotton with leather palm or all leather
- 24-28 heavy duty or contractor type 30-45 gallon trash bags on a roll and removed from carton
- One 6-9 oz. bottle of non-aerosol insect repellent

All cleaning items must be new – all liquid items must be capped and securely tightened. Place all items into the bucket, making sure they are packed securely to avoid damage during shipment. Snap the lid on tight and seal with packing tape.

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### **UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

#### **OCTOBER**

**BOOK CLUB** will meet Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm at Wang Gang restaurant in Edwardsville. We are reading The Violinist of Auschwitz by Ellie Midwood.

#### **NOVEMBER**

**CHURCH COUNCIL** will meet Wednesday, Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

**TOTENFEST** will be observed Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>.

**PORK SAUSAGE DINNER** @ Marine UCC on Sunday, Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am-5:30 pm. Menu: Whole Hog Pork Sausage, Mashed Potatoess & Gravy, Sauerkraut, Green Beans, Apple Pie. Fresh meat sale will be held on Saturday, Nov. 6 from 8 am-3 pm and Sunday, Nov. 7 from 11 am-5:30 pm. For info on raffles tickets and fresh meat sale please call 618-887-4465 or check church website [www.marineucc.org](http://www.marineucc.org)

**PPRC** will meet Thursday, Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm on Zoom. Please contact Rev. Reiter if you would like to join this meeting.

**HANGING OF THE GREENS** will be November 21<sup>st</sup> following worship.

**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT** is November 28<sup>th</sup>.

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**THE BREAD OF LIFE FOOD PANTRY** in Hamel is open on Mondays from 9:00am till

10:30am. All who need assistance are welcome.

### **FOOD PANTRY NEEDS**

Canned Corn	Canned Green Beans	Pancake mix
Syrup	Sugar	Flour
Chef Boyardee Ravioli	Pie Filling	Tomato Paste
Bars of soaps	Shampoo	Dish Detergent
Rice	Coffee	Evaporated Milk
Baked beans	Laundry detergent	
empty egg cartons and plastic bags		

### **CONCERNS**

Maria S.	Harry S.	Lillie H.
Kathie R.	Martha K.	Carole G.
Tomiko J.	Sherri R.	Sherri's Sister
Rose O.	Roger W.	Kathleen L.
Michelle L.	Kristy K.	Dorothy D.
Jane B.	Mary Ann C.	Jake G.
Diane B.	Rich R.	Wayne S.
Ray	Jim	Schoeber Family
Our Church	Our Church Council	
Hitz Home workers and residents	Our country as we deal with pandemic	
Disaster Victims	Pastor Dana, as she leads	

### **E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

Ruth:	<a href="mailto:officeiucc@gomadison.com">officeiucc@gomadison.com</a>
Pastor Dana:	<a href="mailto:pastoriucc@gomadison.com">pastoriucc@gomadison.com</a>

### **BENEDICTION**

And now, until we meet again, may each one be held safely in the palm of God's hand. Amen.

### **POSTLUDE**