



Urbandale  
United  
Church of  
Christ

God is still speaking 9

“No matter who you are or where you are on  
life’s journey, you are invited and welcome  
here.”

*A Just Peace and Open and Affirming congregation*

September 27, 2020

10:00 a.m.

## SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

### PRELUDE

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- You may wish to have the bulletin to follow along.
- You can pull up the bulletin for this service by going to [urbucc.org](http://urbucc.org).
- If you want to take a moment to prepare your space for whatever helps you pray, meditate, or be mindful of God’s presence, please do that. Perhaps it is a candle or a cross.
- We will be asking you to jot some things down, which you may be able to do on the device you are using to watch this or get a pad of paper and pen/pencil.
- Later in the service we will read from the **Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 21**, so if you have a Bible handy you might want to get it and turn to that passage. We will be reading from the Common English Bible, so you can compare it with your translation.

### GREETING

“Some, in an effort to protect and preserve the gospel message, have become like the guards in a museum, fueled by fear that its treasures could be damaged or stolen if they are not vigilant in their watch. They have mistaken the good news for an ancient artifact that needs to be protected. But that is not its nature. This kingdom is a lot more like a tree. God is looking for gardeners, not guards. A guard is trained in a defensive stance of fear and suspicion. A gardener is motivated by love and creativity”

Shane Hipps, *Selling Water by the River*

### CALLING OUR ATTENTION TO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

There are so many voices telling us what to do, how to feel and what to think. We are bombarded with messages that leave us feeling confused, angry and questioning our beliefs. God, we seek your Still Speaking voice in the midst of so many messages. We take a collective deep breath, feel our bodies and lean into you. You have been here all along. You surround us with people who care about us with the love of Christ. Help us, O God, to count our blessings. Point us beyond our complaints that we might realize our capacity to act in your name for the sake of others. As we wrestle with issues of faith and authority help us to risk our false security for the sake of all your people. AMEN

### SPECIAL MUSIC

“Praise God’s Holy Name”  
Adult Choir (recorded 2018)  
Dr. James Thompson, Soloist

arr. Keith Hampton

### TAKING STOCK OF OUR BLESSINGS AND RESOURCES

“Donate” tab at [urbucc.org](http://urbucc.org)

The United Church of Christ is providing Disaster Relief funds to areas hard-hit by the storms of August 10. If you would like to know more, or contribute to the Disaster Relief fund, go to [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org).

Neighbors in Need Offering – help for our communities and our neighbors. Money from this fund is being used to enable our response to the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Jot down what you have that you can share with others, sidewalk messages, a sign in a window, a card or letter or e-mail, fabric for masks or toilet paper of which you may have more than enough.

Think about how you might reveal the Presence of the Holy to the world through the sharing of your gifts and resources that you have at your disposal.

## PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

God of unconditional love, you remind us time and again that we are yours. You call to us and equip us with the faith of our ancestors and the power of parable. You tell us to stop clinging to false notions of authority and to trust in your goodness because you provide all we need. God of hope, you call us to create safe and sacred spaces, where all find a place at the table and are truly embraced. Speak through us and help us hear your assurance so we can joyfully and without hesitation, share your love and peace with others. We are grateful for your Good News that sustains us as we continue to work for justice and for your will to be done. Bless us as we continue to hear your Still Speaking voice. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE

**Matthew 21:23-32** (The Common English Bible)

<sup>23</sup>When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came to him as he was teaching. They asked, “What kind of authority do you have for doing these things? Who gave you this authority?”

<sup>24</sup>Jesus replied, “I have a question for you. If you tell me the answer, I’ll tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things. <sup>25</sup>Where did John get his authority to baptize? Did he get it from heaven or from humans?”

They argued among themselves, “If we say ‘from heaven,’ he’ll say to us, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ <sup>26</sup>But we can’t say ‘from humans’ because we’re afraid of the crowd, since everyone thinks John was a prophet.” <sup>27</sup>Then they replied, “We don’t know.”

Jesus also said to them, “Neither will I tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things.

<sup>28</sup>“What do you think? A man had two sons. Now he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’

<sup>29</sup>“‘No, I don’t want to,’ he replied. But later he changed his mind and went.

<sup>30</sup>“The father said the same thing to the other son, who replied, ‘Yes, sir.’ But he didn’t go.

<sup>31</sup>“Which one of these two did his father’s will?”

They said, “The first one.”

Jesus said to them, “I assure you that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering God’s kingdom ahead of you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you on the righteous road, and you didn’t believe him. But tax collectors and prostitutes believed him. Yet even after you saw this, you didn’t change your hearts and lives and you didn’t believe him.

## MEDITATION

“By What Authority?”

Rev. Amy Murray

## HYMN

“Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer”

Hymnal 18

## PASTORAL PRAYER

Take a moment now to check your own prayer list. Add the names that need to go on it, review the names of those for whom you have been praying. Has an answer or resolution come? If so, make gratitude known to others.

## LORD’S PRAYER

## CLOSING HYMN

“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”

Hymnal 304

## BLESSING

## POSTLUDE

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Abba 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.

## **“Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer”**

**Hymnal 18**

Guide me, O my great Redeemer,  
pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but you are mighty;  
hold me with your powerful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,  
feed me till I want no more, feed me till I want no more.

When I reach the River Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside.  
Death of death, and hell's destruction,  
land me safe on heaven's side.  
Songs of praises, songs of praises  
I will ever sing to you, I will ever sing to you.

## **“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”**

**Hymnal 304**

All hail the power of Jesus’ name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
and crown Christ servant of all.  
Attend the Savior’s sovereign claim,  
and crown Christ servant of all.

All heirs of Israel’s chosen race,  
now ransomed from the fall,  
Proclaim the wonders of God’s grace,  
and crown Christ healer of all.  
Proclaim the wonders of God’s grace,  
and crown Christ healer of all.

Before the cross, with heaven’s throng,  
we on our knees shall fall;  
We’ll join the everlasting song,  
and crown Christ savior of all.  
We’ll join the everlasting song,  
and crown Christ savior of all.

# URBANDALE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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[www.urbucc.org](http://www.urbucc.org)

[www.facebook.com/UrbandaleUCC](https://www.facebook.com/UrbandaleUCC)

*"We welcome into this community of faith, and affirm the participation in all aspects of church life, persons of every age, race, gender identity and expression, nationality, ability, and sexual orientation. We will continue our efforts toward inclusiveness, and stand against all forms of discrimination. We will empower ourselves, our children, and one another to be fully present in the world, living in Christ's image and striving for justice and peace."*

## **Staff**

The Rev. David P. Sickelka, Senior Pastor..... david.sickelka@urbucc.org  
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## **Ministry Leaders**

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At Large Members: Kathy Marean, Jennifer Gardner, Wesley Keeler

### **Other Contacts:**

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Social Media Team ..... Sandy Gahn ..... social.media@urbucc.org

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Church Office hours are Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

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*For pastoral care, please contact Rev. Amy Murray at  
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