



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*

November 15, 2020

10:00 a.m.

## TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- If you can have multiple tabs or windows open on your device, you can pull up the bulletin for this service by going to [urbucc.org](http://urbucc.org), words to The Prayer of Jesus and Closing Hymn will be on your screen as we go through the service.
- If you want to take a moment to set up your space for whatever helps you pray, meditate, or be mindful of God’s presence, please do that. A candle or cross or Bible or whatever helps you. Also, minimize distractions, like phones or alarms.
- We will be asking you to jot some things down, which you may be able to do on the device you are using or find a pad and pen/pencil.
- Later in the service we will read from the **Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 25**, so if you have a Bible handy you might want to get it and turn to that passage. We will be reading from the Inclusive Bible, so you can compare it with your translation.

### GREETING

“We were put on this earth to do something! If you stop using your brain, at any age, it is going to stop working. It’s like if you stop using your hand, it will atrophy. I think doing nothing is a curse.”

*Iris Apfel, American businesswoman, interior designer, and fashion icon*

### CALLING OUR ATTENTION TO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Why are you here? By that I mean, why are you watching this live-stream worship service? There are other things you could be doing, or you could be doing nothing at all. What hungers and longings have made you do this? Why are you here? Now I mean, why are you in this situation? Stuck at home, wearing masks, wondering what the future holds. What decisions and denials have gotten us to this place? Why are you here? Now I mean, what is your life’s purpose? What gets you out of bed in the morning? What work does God have for you to do? Is the work you are doing keeping you from something more crucial? Why are you here?

### SPECIAL MUSIC

“You Say”  
Alex Kimzey, Vocalist

Lauren Dangle

### TAKING STOCK OF OUR BLESSINGS AND RESOURCES

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

The United Church of Christ provides Disaster Relief funds to areas hard-hit by the storms, fires, and other natural and human-caused disasters. If you would like to know more, or contribute to the Disaster Relief fund, go to [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org).

Today is the last day of our stewardship campaign, the theme of which is, “Beloved, Love.” I John 4. We will celebrate today how God makes use of all that we have and are to make our love concrete and real. If you have not yet made your pledge, the form can be found on our website: [urbucc.org](http://urbucc.org).

Jot down what you have that you can share with others - sidewalk messages, a sign in a window or yard, a card or letter or e-mail to someone who is having a hard time. Allow the Spirit to guide your thoughts.

Think about how you might prepare for the future by sharing what you have today.

## PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

Loving and Generous God, what abundance fills our world! What beauty surrounds us in our daily living! We have only to open our minds to the wonder and complexity of what you have created for the gratitude to well up within us. Thank you, God! Keep us from taking what you provide for granted, for seeing it as nothing special or worse, for believing it is our due – that somehow we are entitled to it. Keep us from begrudging our neighbors of the things we enjoy, as if they were ours to squirrel away and hoard. Open us to the joys of sharing and the satisfaction of working, not just for our own satisfaction, but for the good of our communities. Remind us of the needs that are within our ability to meet. Give us a creative and rebellious spirit, so that we never limit ourselves to conventional wisdom or to what has always been. Because if we are to have any hope of recognizing your realm when it comes, we need adventurous spirits. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE

**Matthew 25:14-30** (The Inclusive Bible)

<sup>14</sup>“Again, it’s like a wealthy landowner who was going on a journey and called in three workers, entrusting some funds to them. <sup>15</sup>The first was given five thousand dollars, the second two thousand, and the third one thousand, according to each one’s ability. Then the landowner went away. <sup>16</sup>Immediately the worker who received the five thousand went and invested it and made another five. <sup>17</sup>In the same way, the worker who received the two thousand doubled that figure. <sup>18</sup>But the worker who received the one thousand instead went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried the money.

<sup>19</sup>“After a long absence, the traveler returned home and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>The one who had received the five thousand came forward bringing the additional five, saying, ‘You entrusted me with five thousand; here are five thousand more.’

<sup>21</sup>“The landowner said, ‘Well done! You are a good and faithful worker. Since you were dependable in a small matter, I will put you in charge of larger affairs. Come, share my joy!’

<sup>22</sup>“The one who had received the two thousand then stepped forward with the additional two, saying, ‘You entrusted me with two thousand; here are two thousand more.’

<sup>23</sup>“The landowner said to this one, ‘Cleverly done! You too are a good and faithful worker. Since you were dependable in a small matter, I will put you in charge of larger affairs. Come, share my joy!’

<sup>24</sup>“Finally the one who had received the one thousand stepped forward and said to the landowner, ‘Knowing your ruthlessness – you who reap where you did not sow and gather where you did not scatter – <sup>25</sup>and fearing your wrath, I went off and buried your thousand dollars in the ground. Here is your money back.’

<sup>26</sup>“The landowner exclaimed, ‘You worthless, lazy lout! So you know that I reap where I don’t sow and gather where I don’t scatter, do you? <sup>27</sup>All the more reason to deposit my money with the bankers, so that on my return I could have had it back with interest! <sup>28</sup>You there! Take the thousand away from this bum and give it to the one with the ten thousand.’”

<sup>29</sup>“Those who have will get more until they grow rich, while those who have not will lose even the little they have. <sup>30</sup>Throw this worthless one outside into the darkness, where there is wailing and grinding of teeth.”

*The word for the three people entrusted with money in this story is from the Greek word “doulos” which was a word used to refer to a number of different kinds of work. It is sometimes used to refer to enslaved people and sometimes used to refer to day laborers and sometimes used to refer to trusted long-time employees. Servants, even those who were enslaved, often held positions of great responsibility and enjoyed the status of their boss. As in this parable, they could use their own initiative and operate business concerns in the name of their “master.”*

## MEDITATION

“Entrusted or Encrusted”

Pastor David Sickelka

## 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

“God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

Hymnal 565

## BLESSING

May you spend your days investing in the people around you, risking failure and loss for the dividend of relationships. May your work be rewarded for the fruit that God delights in more than the things the world values. And may your assets and abilities never be buried in a hole or locked away from others, but deployed boldly for all to see and celebrate and enjoy. Amen.

## POSTLUDE

## THE PRAYER OF JESUS

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 and ever. Amen, Amen.

Forever and ever. Amen, Amen.

## **“God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”**

**Hymnal 565**

God, whose giving knows no ending,  
from your rich and endless store,  
Nature’s wonder, Jesus’ wisdom,  
costly cross, grave’s shattered door:  
Gifted by you, we turn to you  
offering up ourselves in praise;  
Thankful song shall rise forever,  
gracious donor of our days.

Skills and time are ours for serving,  
that your will on earth be done:  
All at peace in health and freedom,  
races joined, the Church made one.  
Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone;  
Born with talents, make us servants  
fit to answer at your throne.

Lend your joy to all our giving, let it light our pilgrim way;  
From the night of anxious keeping,  
loose us into generous day.  
Then when years on earth are over,  
and we’ve lived our human span,  
God, fulfill beyond our dreaming,  
all our stewardship began.

# URBANDALE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

3530 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Urbandale, IA 50322

Phone: 515-276-0625 ▪ Fax: 515-276-2451

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

[www.facebook.com/UrbandaleUCC](http://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  
The Rev. Amy Murray, Ministry Program Coordinator ..... amy.murray@urbucc.org  
Steven Linn, Music Program Director ..... steven.linn@urbucc.org  
Bobby Stinnett, M.M., Organist,  
Children/Youth Choirs and Handbell Director ..... bobby.stinnett@urbucc.org  
Sophiap Eng-Swanson, Office Coordinator ..... staff@urbucc.org  
Sadmira & Umihana Omerhodzic, Custodian ..... sadmira.omerhodzic@urbucc.org

## **Ministry Leaders**

### **Caregiving Ministries:**

Caregivers, Homebound ..... Rachel Siegel ..... caregivers.1@urbucc.org  
Care Connectors ..... care.connectors@urbucc.org  
Listening Room ..... listening.room@urbucc.org  
Prayer Circle ..... prayer.circle@urbucc.org  
Prayer Shawl Ministry ..... prayer.shawls@urbucc.org

### **Leadership Team:**

Moderator ..... Jon Greising ..... moderator@urbucc.org  
Vice-Moderator ..... Diane Dornburg ..... vicemoderator@urbucc.org  
Treasurer ..... Jim Nervig ..... treasurer@urbucc.org  
Financial Secretary ..... Steve Looney ..... financial@urbucc.org  
Recording Secretary ..... Becky Swift ..... uccrecorder@urbucc.org  
Ad Ministry Liaison ..... Adam Dirks ..... ad.ministry@urbucc.org  
Christian Growth Liaison ..... Chris Jordan ..... christian.growth@urbucc.org  
Membership Team ..... Carol Leadingham ..... membership.team@urbucc.org  
Small Groups Liaison ..... Rachel Siegel ..... small.groups@urbucc.org  
Worship Team ..... Patricia Goldberg ..... worship.team@urbucc.org  
At Large Members: Kathy Marean, Jennifer Gardner, Wesley Keeler

### **Other Contacts:**

Building & Grounds ..... B&G.team@urbucc.org  
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 Pastor Dave at 276-0625 (church office), 720-6389 (cell) or david.sickelka@urbucc.org.  
Pastor Dave is off on Mondays but will still respond to emergencies if you call or text.*