Community UCC
We're worth our words
Welcoming Progressive Community
Vibrant Messengers of Hope

Champaign, Illinois Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A November 8, 2026

Thoughts before worship:

We are here to get to the heart of the matter, discerning and confessing to God the truth of our lives. Away from applause, attention, platforms, clicks, and views, God whispers to us, "Who do you say that I am?" As we answer the question of who Jesus is, God also invites us to search our hearts for who *we* are. We are beloved children of God. Do our lives reflect that? Where are our hearts today? - Rev. Amber Neuroth

Prelude

Introit *Bambelela* Traditional South African, adapted by Mairi Munro & Philip Jakob

Welcome, a Word About Worship, and an Opportunity to Check-In

***Call to Worship**

Who do the sun and stars say that I am?
The light of the world!
Who do the birds say that I am?
A mother that keeps them safe in the nest.
Who do the trees say that I am?
The wind that blows through their leaves.
Who did Peter say that I am?
The Messiah, the Christ.
And who do you say that I am?
We seek your name again today. Amen.

We welcome you to our service this morning. Celebrating the diversity of creation, Community United Church welcomes persons of any age, ability, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, or life condition. May the Divine Presence become real to you through this time of worship. We hope you come back!

***Note:** Our worship services are live streamed. If you prefer not to have the back of your head seen on the live stream worship, please do not sit in the first seven pews on the left side (organ/piano) of the sanctuary.*

Note 2:** The congregation responds to the liturgy parts in **BOLD.

Note 3: If you would like to color, draw, or fidget during worship, no matter your age, feel free to pick up a coloring page, blank paper, or play dough, from the white table in the back. You can also use a finger labyrinth, located on the credenza in the back.

*Everyone is invited to rise in body or in spirit.

***Invocation**

Together, let us pray:

God of love, open our hearts to each other and to you. Give us the courage to call you by name as you call us. Give us the wisdom to see ourselves as we truly are even if that is challenging. Work your transforming love within us that we may know your will and serve you with joy. Amen.

***Opening Hymn** *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus* See Insert

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Together, let us pray:

Holy God, sometimes we are afraid - afraid of what people will think of us; afraid that people will hurt us; and afraid that nobody sees us, even You. We are afraid to share our real gifts because hiding them is safer. Comfort us and challenge us in our fear. Remind us that to follow you means taking risks, but that we do not take those risks alone. Strengthen us to share our hearts for your ministry of love and justice. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Together, let us pray:

God has already risked God's own heart in creating us and in sending God's son, Jesus, to live, suffer, and die with us. In God's risks, we are known, forgiven and loved. Rest assured in God's abundant love for you. Amen.

***Passing the Peace**

Today's Steward *Tina Cowsert, Share the Care*

Anthem *Ave Verum Corpus* W. A. Mozart

Ave verum corpus natum de Maria Virgine;
Vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro homine.
Cujus latus perforatum fluxit aqua et sanguine.
Esto nobis praegustatum in mortis examine.

Hail the true body, born of the Virgin Mary,
You who truly suffered on the cross for us,
From whose pierced side flowed water and blood.
Be a foretaste for us in the trial of death.

Call to Prayer

Later in the service, we will offer up our joys and concerns. Your prayer requests will be offered aloud. Whether you are sitting here in the sanctuary or worshipping with us remotely, you are invited to add your joys and concerns to the prayer list: go to community-ucc.org/pray (a Google Form), or scan the QR code found here, or you can fill out a prayer card and hand it to an usher.

Prelude to Scripture

Whether we take what is written in the Bible as fact, metaphor, myth, or story, let us listen now for the meaning it might hold for us on this day.

Sacred Reading from Gospels Mark 8:27-38

27 Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and on the way he asked his
disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" 28 And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others,
Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." 29 He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?"
Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." 30 And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone
about him.
31 Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected
by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. 32 He
said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and
looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your
mind not on divine things but on human things."
34 He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any wish to come after me, let them
deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For those who want to save their life
will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.
36 For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? 37 Indeed, what can
they give in return for their life? 38 Those who are ashamed of me and of my words[d] in this
adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in
the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Response to the Reading

God's word inspires us and sustains us.

May we build communities of generosity.

God's word challenges and provokes us.

May we build communities of justice.

God's word renews and heals us.

May we build communities of the heart.

***Hymn** *We Would Be Building* NCH 607

Message *Hidden Treasures, Open Cross*

Silent Meditation

Community Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Response *The Lord Will Listen* John L. Bell

Call to Offering *Tom Ward & Sue Fristoe, Sound & Ethical Practices Ministry Team*
You may place offerings in the plates or give them online at community-ucc.org/donate by clicking "Donate." Our ushers will now come forward to receive our offering.

Offertory *Come with Me into the Journey* Mark A. Miller
Annelise Jimenez, soloist

Come with me into the journey; come and see where I abide.
Come, for I am there among you; come, my arms are open wide.
Come and feel the wind that's blowing. Come and taste the bread and wine.
Come and go where Word meets action; come and live this Way of mine.

Come and serve the poor and hungry. Come and hear our neighbors' cries.
Come and stand with me for justice. Come and see, the dead will rise.
Come and help me turn the tables. Come, speak truth to all we meet.
Come, the feast of life is ready; come, and I will wash your feet.

Come, stand by as friends forsake me; come, where I am laid in earth.
Come, but do not fear the shadows; come, for I will bring new birth.
Come, the promised day is dawning. Come and see, and come and dare:
dare to trust that I am leading; dare to trust that I am there.

Prayer of Dedication
Together, let us pray:

Generous God, you have given us many voices to call you by many names. We are blessed every time someone professes faith in you. Today you have drawn us together into Christ's body, the church. May the gifts of our money, time, and talents support the ministry of your church, transforming us and the world in which we live. Amen.

Commissioning of the Community

***Sending Hymn** *Lead Us from Death to Life* NCH 581 v.1.3

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response** *We Will Go Out With Joy* Andrew Donaldson, Hilary Seraph Donaldson

We will go out with joy in the Spirit, we will go out with God.
We will go out with joy in the Spirit, we will go out with God.
Alleluia! We will go out with joy!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
We will go out with joy in the Spirit, we will go out with God.

Postlude

Please join us in the Parlor for the afterparty

Acknowledgements
Liturgy by Rev. Amber Neuroth
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Serving Today

Ministers: The Community of Community UCC
Preacher and Presider: Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser
Liturgist: Phoebe Condill
Ushers:
Accompanist: Andrey Ivanov **Music Director:** Kathy Lee
Audio/Video: Susan Pawlicki, Elizabeth Shack, Sean Walker

Community United Church of Christ Staff

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Your Ministry Team Leaders

Moderator: Beth Hogan*
Past Moderator: Susan Pawlicki*
Incoming Moderator: Bill Gropp*
Clerk: Jeff Radek*
Pastoral Relations Committee: Cara Finnegan
Personnel Committee: Stephen Kolderup
Community Building: Peg Wade*
- **Care Team:** (Coordinator Open)
  - **Prayer Shawls:** Elena Kasper
  - **Meal Train:** Jennifer Robbenolt
  - **Driver's Ministry:** Mary Bunyard
  - **Visitor & Healing Music Ministry:** Marilou Hinrichs
  - **Card Ministry:** Peg Wade

Health & Wellness Team: Chase Skye, Kelly Tull
Hospitality Team: Rocio Arroyave Jamison & Dennis Jamison
Children & Family: Alison Anders*, Jennifer Johnson
Finance: Roger Wade* (treasurer), David Willcox (financial secretary)
Identity: Keri Evans* (open)
Mission: Jeanne Ward* & Patty Gropp
Sound & Ethical Practices (SEP): Sue Fristoe*, Shane Brownfield
Buildings & Grounds: Tom Ward, Marla Elmore
Contracts & Insurance: Andrew McClure
UCC Campus Ministry Liaison: Ilsa Kantola*
Worship: Mara Smith*, Sebastian Major
Sound Coordinator: Roger Wade

*denotes Church Life Board Member

United Church Foundation (UCC Campus Ministry)

Director of Campus Ministry: Izzy Collazo | izzy@ucccampusministry.org
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