



"Jesus Welcomes All" a Sudanese Mural.

Christ Church **UNITED CHURCH** OF CHRIST

Rev. Dan Stark, pastor
and Matthew Lawrenz, musician

www.uccmke.org

In this fourth week after the Pentecost event, we continue our sermon series, Unordinary Times, with an exploration of Genesis and Matthew. This week's reading from Genesis continues our journey with Abraham, Sarah, Hagar and their descendants. Today we hear the disturbing story of the (near) sacrifice of Isaac. In Matthew's Gospel we hear Jesus' brief but poignant words about God's way of life: hospitality and welcome. Jesus explains that whenever one welcomes the disciples, they welcome Christ into their midst. This way of life centers on welcoming God into our space by welcoming others – a refreshing word in the divided and hostile world we live in today.

Words of Welcome

A Song for Today

Arietta

arr. Viner

Musician, Matthew Lawrenz

Opening Litany

UCC Worship Ways

God calls into our midst those who are beloved
in all their diversity:

People: We welcome them.

God calls into our midst all those who are vulnerable,
In need of teaching, healing, shelter

People: We welcome them

God calls into our midst all those with a word of challenge
That proclaims God's kin-dom for all

People: We welcome them.

Let us worship God, who calls us to be
prophets of welcome:

People: Alleluia!

Prayer for Today

Holy One, who calls us into community,
and invites us to welcome your prophets and messengers,
let us experience your welcome to us
gathered in various places but joined in this moment.
Show us that we are beloved
and honored in your presence and in this community.
Show us how to put our resources at the service of all,
help us know that the cup of water given in your name
nourishes the one who gives and the one who receives.
Satisfy our thirst to know your presence here and now.
Amen.



"Sacrifice of Isaac" by Gerhardt Reutern.

Susan A. Blain

Old Testament

[Genesis 22:1-14](#)

This week's reading from Genesis continues to follow the family story of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and their descendants. In this scripture, Abraham hears God call him to take Isaac, his "only son," to the land of Moriah and sacrifice him. He brought his son to the land God commanded, bound him, and drew a knife. Just as Abraham was about to sacrifice him, a messenger of God told him to stop and provided a ram instead.



"Abraham Preparing to Sacrifice Isaac" by William Blake.

Prayer of Confession

God of all, you call us into obedience to the ways of life and holiness,
To honor your image in all whom we meet.
When we ration your welcome to a very few:

People: Lord have mercy.

God of abundance, you call us to stop clinging to things,
To trust in your goodness to provide all we need.
When we grasp and hoard and do not share,

People: Christ have mercy.

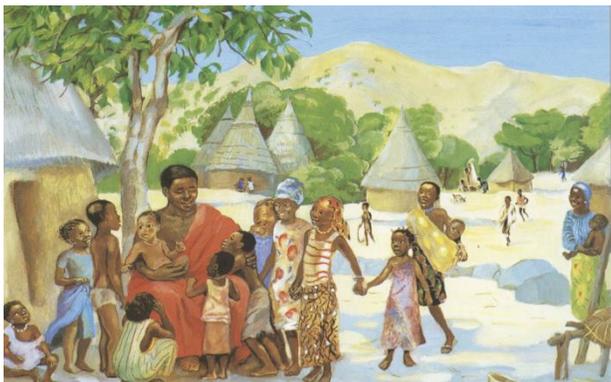
God of hope, you call us to imagine a future "kin-dom"
where all find a place at the table,
A safe and joyful welcome to neighbors, children, creation.

When we stop short of your vision of your world of mercy and justice for all,

People: Lord have mercy.

Words of Assurance

Holy One, who is still speaking through our words,
Help us to hear your assurance in the peace we share together.
You will always welcome us by name. Amen.



"Jesus Welcomes the Children" by Jesus Mafa.

New Testament

[Matthew 10:40-42](#)

In this brief Gospel lesson from Matthew, Jesus speaks about what it means to welcome Christ. Previously Jesus taught his disciples about the unwarm welcome they might receive simply for following him. In this scripture, Jesus teaches his disciples that whomever welcomes *them* welcomes him. Whenever we welcome one another, we welcome Christ into our lives. How we show hospitality towards the *other* is how we welcome God into our lives. When we are hostile towards people who do not look, speak, pray, love, vote, or dress like us, Jesus' words about welcome are both an important reminder for us and an indictment of us.

Homily

UNordinary Times: A New Way of Life

Rev. Dan Stark

Song of Response

You Raise Me Up

**arr. Josh Groban
Musician, Erin Schoemann**

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Passing the Peace

Although we cannot be physically close to one another at this time, we can be relationally close. This Sunday morning, you are invited to pass the peace with your church family and loved ones by taking a moment to text, write, call, or message the people in your church family to let them know you are thinking of them. May the peace of Christ be with you.

Closing Song

Fanfare

arr. Purcell

Sending

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If you should need to contact Pastor Stark, please email pastor@uccmke.org.
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You can make your offering to Christ Church through [PayPal](#) or by mailing a check to Christ
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