



*"The Days Are Surely Coming"* painting by Mike Moyers, 2012.

# **Christ Church** UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rev. Dan Stark, Pastor  
Matthew Lawrenz, Musician  
Pam Kothrade, Choir Director  
[www.uccmke.org](http://www.uccmke.org)

November 8th, 2020

The month of November is traditionally a stewardship season for churches in North America. Everybody has a story about money and possessions. Make no mistake – these are sacred stories that have to deal with how we understand God’s provenance and activity in the world. This week as we continue our stewardship sermon series, *OUR MONEY STORY*, we focus on the theme of “release.” We are reminded that our lives and resources are gifts given to us by God. During a Memorial Sunday ritual, we remember our loved ones and release our memories and the ways they impacted our lives to God. This stewardship season, you are invited to remember, release, reimagine, and restore your stories so we can write the one God is begging us to live into.

Prelude

*Chorale and Fugue*

Willan

Words of Welcome

Opening Hymn

*All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name!*

- 1. All hail the power of Jesus’ name! Let angels prostrate fall; bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all; bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all!**
- 2. Ye chosen seed of Israel’s race, ye ransomed from the fall, hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all; hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all!**
- 3. Let every kindred, every tribe on this terrestrial ball, to him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all; to him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all!**
- 4. O that with yonder sacred throng we at his feet may fall! We’ll join the everlasting song, and crown him Lord of all; we’ll join the everlasting song, and crown him Lord of all!**

Opening Litany

**WEEK TWO: RELEASE**

Sarah Are

One: Through Moses, God said,

**All: “Let my people go.” (Ex.9:1)**

One: In scripture, the law declares:

**All: “In the seventh year, you must cancel all debts.” (Deut.15:1)**

One: With grace, Jesus said:

**All: “Give one coat away.” (Luke 3:11)**

One: With honesty, Jesus taught:

**All: “Sell what you have, give that money to the poor.” (Matt. 19:21)**

One: Faith has always involved letting go, releasing, setting free, Dropping our nets, giving to others, and following.

**All: So in this hour of worship, may we release that which binds us.**

**May we worship with open, untamed, and porous hearts, so that we can walk freely with God.**

One: Let it be so.

**All: Amen.**

*Written by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org*

**Opening Prayer**

Pastor Dan Stark

**The Gloria**

*Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me, and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen. World without end, without end. Amen. World with-out end, without- end Amen. World with-out end, with-out end. Amen. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.*

*Music and Words: Paul Vasile, ©2008, Paul Vasile. Permission granted by the composer for use in worship.*

**Prayer for Illumination**

Sarah Are

Gracious God,

We release our hearts to you.

First, we remove the pressure,

For release requires the freedom to be moved.

Then we allow our hearts to return to their original resting position –

In sync with you, with the rhythm of summer cicadas, and this whole wild creation.

Then, we pray that you will find our hearts available –

Not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually.

So, like the mockingbird releases her song,

We release our hearts to you.

Move in them.

Stir us awake.

Speak to us now.

We are waiting.

**Amen.**

*Written by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org*

**Old Testament**

Psalm 24:1-10

Psalm 24 is an entrance liturgy that was designed to accompany a procession into the Temple. This poem declares the Lord as the creator of all and makes the assertion that everything belongs to the Lord. As such, we enter the Lord's space when we are born. Everything we have, including the loved ones and friends we make in our loves, belong to God. The psalm essentially declares the Lord as Lord of all and the earth and everything within it as the Lord's good creation.

It is difficult for us to remember this during times of grief and loss, but ultimately the people we have loved in this life have been a gift to us from God. Today as we remember our loved ones and ritually release them back to God again, may we remember the ways they were a blessing to this world and to each of us.

### **Candle Lighting Ritual**

#### **Remembering Our Loved Ones**

*Marion Schoenfeld*

*Luise Stojanovic*

*Frederick "Fritz" Jorgenson*

*Roland "Rollie" Senderhauf*

*Randy Oleson*

*Linda Imig*

*David W. Stelski*

*Jose Perez*

*Clifford Sheldon*

*Lawrence Fisher*

*Todd Pethke*

*Karen Spitzer*

*Mark Malavsky*

*Joan Esser*

#### **Affirmation of Faith**

**All: We believe that on the first day,  
God released love and creativity over a void;  
and that void became mountains and rivers, sunsets and starry nights.  
We believe God released  
God's people from the grips of slavery,  
liberating us day in and day out.  
We believe God laid down with death  
and was released from its grip,  
knowing suffering and freeing us from this fragile life.  
And we believe God invites us –  
day in and day out –  
to release our fears,  
let go of assumptions, tear down walls,  
throw open the doors, and walk closer to love.  
May it be so.  
Amen.**

#### **RELEASE: BUT FIRST**

I want to practice being free.

I want to unstitch my heart

From the edge of my sleeve  
So that I can give it a life of its own—  
A real chance to love and be known.  
I want to practice opening  
My mind, my doors, and window panes,  
Anything with a hinge, everything with a frame,  
Until the breeze carries through—  
A new point of reference, truth, and you.  
I want to practice a holy escape,  
Losing track of my minutes that turn into days  
Because the only time that matters now  
Is time with you and this golden hour.  
I want to practice release,  
Removing the stones that weigh down my wings—  
Stones of fear, shame, and grief,  
Stones that build walls between you and me.  
I want to do all of these things—  
Be untamed and wild, open and free,  
The first to give and the last to hold tight,  
Because gratitude and clenched fists never felt right.  
And I am just starting to see  
That this life is a river, a holy stream.  
And if life is a river then God is the sky,  
Touching everything at once and inviting us to try  
Letting go of the raft, to float on our backs,  
So that we and God can be eye to eye—  
A lifetime of baptism and nothing but sky.  
But first, you have to release.

*Written by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org*

**Sermon**

**RELEASE: LETTING GO**

Rev. Dan Stark

**Song of Response**

*Lord of the Dance*

**Refrain: Dance, then, wherever you may be; I am the Lord of the Dance, said he. And I'll lead you all wherever you may be, and I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he.**

**1. I danced in the morning when the world was begun, and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth. At Bethlehem I had my birth. Refrain.**

2. I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee, but they would not dance and they would not follow me; I danced for the fishermen, for James and John; they came with me and the Dance went on. Refrain.
3. I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame, the holy people said it was a shame; they whipped and they stripped and they hung me on high; and they left me there on a cross to die. Refrain.
4. I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black; it's hard to dance with the devil on your back; they buried my body and they thought I'd gone, but I am the Dance and I still go on. Refrain.
5. They cut me down and I leapt up high, I am the life that'll never, never die; I'll live in you if you'll live in me; I am the Lord of the Dance, said he. Refrain.

### Prayers of the People

#### *Hear Our Prayers, O God...*

For health & healing: *God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*

Ps. 147:3

- ~Our country during these divided and uncertain times.
- ~Nancy Charles' work facility, as it has been struck with a COVID outbreak.
- ~Pam and Dean Kothrade as they navigate Pam's brain tumor and health journey.
- ~Continued prayers for Ernestine Faja, who is having medical issues.
- ~Continued prayers for Emily, daughter of Paul and Doris Mayeshiba as she has is tolerating her radiation treatment well.
- ~Maureen, friend of Sue Klockow, who has breast cancer.
- ~Jerry and Michelle whom have been displaced from their home.
- ~Jean, sister of Doris Piacentine and her niece who is recovering from COVID.
- ~Kathy, Ken Klockow's sister who is hospitalized with a serious infection..
- ~Dan, friend of Molly Pufall Brown, who is very sick with an undiagnosed illness. Prayers also for his wife and 2 young children.
- ~Kelley, friend of Nancy Charles as she navigates through her breast cancer diagnosis.
- ~Bernee, friend of Nancy Kaye who has end-stage lung cancer.
- ~Joe and Laurie, son in law and daughter of Jackie Struck. Prayers for continued healing.
- ~Linda, daughter of Jackie Struck, as she receives wound care. Prayers for continued healing.
- ~Dawn, daughter in-law of Laurel and wife of Brad Dayton, as she has health issues from complications of diabetes. Continued prayers are requested.
- ~Tracy, daughter of Nancy Kaye, who is at home with Nancy awaiting liver and kidney transplants. She is doing well.
- ~Nick, Brad and Nancy Charles nephew, who is struggling with addiction and transitions. Prayers for his family.
- ~Family of Ken and Sue who live in California close to the wildfires.

~Julene Flanagan's nephew, who is struggling with mental health issues.  
~Julene Flanagan's family member who is struggling with health issues related to kidney disease.

**Prayer Song** *Eternal Spirit of the Living Christ, verses 1&2*

1. **Eternal spirit of the living Christ, I know not how to ask or what to say; I only know my need, as deep as life, and only you can teach me how to pray.**
2. **Come, pray in me the prayer I need this day; help me to see your purpose and your will, where I have failed, what I have done a miss; held in forgiving love, let me be still.**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**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 and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Invitation to the Offering**

**Prayer of Dedication**

Holy God,  
It is not always easy to give what we have.  
We count pennies.  
We weigh the pros and cons.  
We calculate what we have given before,  
And we remind ourselves what we are giving to now.  
We all have our money stories.  
And yet,  
Even though it can take work for us to practice release,  
We trust that you can take these gifts –  
However freely or reluctantly given –  
And use them to build a more beautiful world.  
For that is who you are.  
You are forever building castles out of sand,  
Disciples out of people, and new life out of cautious gifts.  
We believe; help our unbelief.  
In Christ's name we pray,  
Amen.



*"Money for Nothing" by Sahand Hoseini |  
unsplash.com @Sahand\_Hoseini*

**Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below*

*Praise God above ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.  
A-men.*

**Sacrament of Communion**

**Virtual Choir Anthem**

**Kum Bay Ya**

**Invitation to Communion**

**Telling the Story and Prayer of Consecration**

*Holy, Holy, Holy Lord*

**Holy, holy, holy lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are filled with your glory: Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Sharing the Elements**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Closing Song**

*Christ, Be My Leader*

- 1. Christ be my leader by night as by day; safe through the darkness, for he is the Way. Gladly I follow, my future his care, darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.**
- 2. Christ be my teacher in age as in youth, drifting or doubting, for he is the Truth. Grant me to trust him; though shifting as sand, doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.**
- 3. Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife; death cannot hold me for he is the Life. Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain can touch my salvation: with Jesus I reign.**

**Sending Blessing**

**Postlude**

*Epilogue*

Gilbert

**Happy Birthday to these wonderful people!**

Joanna Gerow November 8

Laurel Dayton November 12

Katie Hardesty November 12

Evan Berger November 14

**CHRISTMAS GIFTS/HAT AND MITTEN TREE/COOKIE DONATIONS**

The social concerns committee would like to let you know that we will once again be doing Christmas gifts for children and adults through the Bayview Community Center. Watch for upcoming details in newsletters and bulletins. We will also be collecting hats and mittens that will be donated to the Bayview Community Center.

As in previous years we will donate cookies to be distributed to seniors. They are requesting this year that cookies be wrapped by the dozen in a bag or container. This is so that there is minimal handling of the baked goods Thanks, Debbie Hansen, Mary Ann Mowery, Sara Rogers and Randene Wick.

--

If you should need to contact Pastor Stark, please email [pastor@uccmke.org](mailto:pastor@uccmke.org).  
Christ Church UCC, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.

We are currently gathering in person for worship with safety and sanitation protocols in place. Learn more here. <https://www.uccmke.org/covid-19>

You can make your offering to Christ Church through [PayPal](#) or by mailing a check to Christ Church, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.

