



November 5, 2023
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

Halloween and All Saints Day have a confusing connection. Suffice it to say that the end of October was a special time in pre-Christian religious understanding. Halloween literally is The Evening before All Hollows Day or All Saints Day; the day on which all the Saints are hallowed. In some Christian traditions, a vigil of prayer is conducted on All Hollow's Eve to prepare for All Saints Day. Thus, the Christian who is focused on God can enjoy Halloween's fall fun as an occasion to celebrate that in Christ the "devil" is ultimately defeated.

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Bless the Lord at all times.

Praise God's holy name.

Magnify the Lord with hearts full of devotion.

Sing of God's glory with tongues full of song.

Seek the Lord of love.

We will worship the living God.

* *Invocation*

God of mercy and grace, shower us with your loving kindness.

Fashion us into the saints you call us to be. Love us abundantly,
that others may see your kindness and joy reflected in our lives.

Bless us with your abiding presence, that we may shine as saints of
your holy love. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* "*O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*" VH #23

Prayer of Yearning

We yearn to be counted among the saints of old,

but the journey is long and difficult.

We long to love others as we should,

even when they revile and hate us.

We seek to forgive those who wrong us,

even when it means swallowing our pride.

We strive for the openness of spirit,

**to pray for those who persecute us, even when we want to
hold onto our wounds.**

Guide us on this journey of discipleship,

**That we may grow as your children and live as saints of your
love. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Beloved children of God, even when we fail, God's love never fails. What we will be has not yet been revealed, but we know that we will be like Christ one day. Until that day, trust that we are surrounded by the love and tender mercies of our God.

Epistle Reading

1 John 3:1-3 NIV

¹ See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Matthew 5:1-12 NIV

Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.)

TH #497

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and
falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice
and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the
same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* “*It Is Well With My Soul*”

VH #270

Today's Message



All Saints' Sunday Prayer

Lord, we give you thanks, O God, for all the saints who ever
worshiped you

Whether in brush arbors or cathedrals,

Weathered wooden churches or crumbling cement meeting houses

Where your name was lifted and adored.

We give you thanks, O God, for hands lifted in praise:

Manicured hands and hands stained with grease or soil,

Strong hands and those gnarled with age

Holy hands used as wave offerings across the land.

We thank you, God, for hardworking saints;

Whether hard-hatted or steel-booted,

Head ragged or aproned,

Blue-collared or three-piece-suited

They left their mark on the earth for you, for us, for our children to
come.

**Thank you, God, for the tremendous sacrifices made by those
who have gone before us.**

Bless the memories of your saints, God.

**May we learn how to walk wisely from their examples of
faith, dedication, worship, and love. Amen.**

Honoring the Saints

We often talk about the Church as a community. In our western individualized society, it is sometimes hard to realize just how interrelated we are with other people. And yet, our lives are intertwined with the lives of others in ways that we are sometimes unaware. Whether we like to admit it or not, we are social creatures.

Yet, if we are honest, much of what we are as human beings we owe to other people. Especially in the Church, most of us have fathers and mothers figures in the Faith. Sometimes those are our own parents. Sometimes they are people who loved us and were patient with us when we were teenagers. Some were teachers, pastors, youth ministers, Sunday School teachers who in small or large ways helped us grow and nurtured us, in life and in the Faith.

We always stand in a larger community than just those who are around us daily. For those who are older, many of those people who shaped our spiritual journey are gone now. But this is the time of year, the time near All Saints Day, that the Church calls us to remember our father and mothers in the Faith. We truly are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, the Church and its people across the centuries that were faithful to God and to us.

We remember and entrust to you, all those of our fellowship, family, and friends whom we now name:

Donna Finnegan	November 10, 2022
Jean Gordon	January 1, 2023
David Burket Jr	August 8, 2023
Judy Walter (Grace)	August 18, 2023
Bob Wees (Grace)	October 28, 2023

** 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, and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

Declaration of Faith

Praise God for his Good News of Salvation!

**Our faith is in Christ whom God raised from the dead, and
who now reigns with him in heaven!**

And that glory shall be ours by the same power of God which
raised Christ from the dead!

**Glory be to God! By his Spirit we know we are his and we
rejoice in the salvation of all the saints!**

*I invite the congregation to come forward
and light a Candle of Remembrance for your departed loved ones*

Blessing for All the Saints

**Almighty God, your saints are one with you in the mystical
body of Christ: give us grace to follow them in all virtue
and holiness until we come to those inexpressible joys
which you have prepared for those who truly love you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.**

** All Saint' Sunday Hymn "For All the Saints" PH #306, vs. 1,4*



* *The Apostle's Creed*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hades; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic/Christian church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

* *Sung Response* *“Hear Our Prayer, O Lord”* TH # 501

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

Offertory (MH)

* Doxology TH # 551

* Offertory Prayer

Gracious one, you offer us the bread of life and the living water of Christ. We come before you to offer our hearts and the riches we have received from your hand. Bless these gifts, that they may bring the Spirit’s comfort to those whose eyes are wet with tears. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn* *“When We All Get to Heaven”* VH #443

* *Benediction*

Blessed are you, beloved children of God.

We will walk in the love given to us.

Be a blessing to all God's children.

We will serve others with the grace we have received.

Walk in the footsteps of the saints of old.

**We will step gently upon the earth and leave puddles of light
for others to follow.**

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

The Abingdon Worship Annual 2023 By B.J. Beu and Mary Scifres