



## First Christian Church Disciples of Christ

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# Weekly Worship

love all • live spiritually • rejoice in hope • show hospitality

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Week of October 30th, 2022



## Call to Worship

Feel free to follow along with our Call to Worship from today's live-streamed worship service.

One: We gather in awe,

Many: standing in the presence of the One who crafted the stars, the mountains, the seas.

One: We gather in faith,

Many: trusting that the One who held little children cradles our lives in the heart of God.

One: We gather in need,

Many: seeking the One who longs for justice to grace each and every person in creation.

Public Worship will be held at 10:30 am Sunday morning.  
If you are not quite ready to join us for public worship, we invite you to follow along with this printed service.

## Community Prayer

Loving God, help us embrace curiosity about ourselves, others and the world in which we live. Like Zacchaeus, enable us to set aside our assumptions and embrace the invitation to repent. Empower us to change our minds, hearts and actions so they align with the values of your realm. Give us courage to say "Yes" to you as the living God, to peace, justice, mutual solidarity, true community, sharing for abundance, and life" in our words and actions.

AMEN

# Reflection

## “Laying Aside Assumptions”

### *Meditation for Reformation Sunday*

Although I did not grow up going to Sunday School, as a pastor I often heard the well-known children’s song about the central character in our Gospel lesson today.

Zacchaeus was a wee little man and a wee little man  
was he.

He climbed up in a sycamore tree for the Lord he  
wanted to see.

This popular children’s song may have done more to cement this character in our mind than any sermon. Undoubtedly, many of us come to this parable with some strongly held images and assumptions. In his reflections on this text for the denominational stewardship material Disciples pastor the Rev. Dr. Ron Allen invites us to acknowledge and ponder some of our well-loved impressions. Allen commented: “Fred Craddock, a preacher from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and one of the most widely recognized authorities on preaching in Eurocentric circles, was about 5’3” tall. Professor Craddock once asked, “Have you wondered how tall Jesus was?” Craddock went on to note that the construction of the Greek was a bit vague. The Greek may have said that Zacchaeus might have been the short one, or perhaps the physically short man in this story was Jesus. Since Zacchaeus climbed the tree we “assume” that it was because he was too short to see over the heads of the crowd as our children’s song suggested. But, what if the man of short stature was reality Jesus? Perhaps Jesus was too short to be seen over those around him so Zacchaeus climbed the tree for a better look.

While the height of Jesus might actually be one of those esoteric question much like the Medieval question of how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, this line of thought raises some interesting points. Mainly, we often make a lot of assumptions about the parables of Jesus based on conclusions that often stem from childhood or our early days as a believer. What other assumptions have been made about the message of this story as well? As is true for this parabolic style of storytelling, the story was meant to be simple, relatable to those who heard it and full of memorable characters. The other element of this style of storytelling was the desire to communicate a message. As Allen pointed out, the character of Zacchaeus was not as simplistic as our little song would indicate.

While it might be fun to imagine a short man climbing a tree for a better look, Zacchaeus was a character of much more depth. In one short line the author of our Gospel said: “he (Zacchaeus) was a chief tax collector and was rich.” Even though he may have been short of stature he was a person of high-standing in the community. Unlike our character last week, he was not simply a tax collector, Zacchaeus was a “chief tax collector” and had authority over other tax collector. To be recruited by the Romans to serve in this office he was also undoubtedly Jewish. He would have been honored by some and reviled by others. But, we are also told he was rich which also gave him stature in the community. Another very interesting quality about him that was noted by Allen was the fact that he was curious. He set aside his stature in the community to satisfy his curiosity by climbing a tree, a very undignified activity for such a person.

Although all of this was quite remarkable, the events that follow were truly incredible! Jesus saw him in his newly elevated position and initiated contact.

Zacchaeus simply wanted to observe, but Jesus engaged him in a relationship. By acknowledging this sinner, this traitor to his people and accumulator of wealth on the backs of others, Jesus invited him to change the direction of his life. We are told that Zacchaeus repented. Allen pointed out:

As we have noted in connection with other passages in this series, for Luke, repentance is a dynamic, positive action. It means turning away from the assumptions and behaviors of the old world and turning towards values and practices of the realm of God. It means saying “No” to idols, violence, injustice, exploitation, fractiousness, scarcity, and death, and saying “Yes” to the living God, peace, justice, mutual solidarity, true community, sharing for abundance, and life.

Zacchaeus was able to set aside the assumptions made about him by others. More importantly, he was able to set aside the assumptions he had made about himself. He was able to change direction and embrace a new way of living in accordance with the values of God’s realm.

I believe that one of the invitations from our text today is, if Zacchaeus can do that so can we. What assumptions about ourselves, others and the world in which we live can we set aside as well? If Zacchaeus could embrace the values of the realm of God so can we. We can do this as individuals and as a community of faith. Like Zacchaeus we can challenge our assumptions and set them aside. We can also say ““Yes” to the living God, peace, justice, mutual solidarity, true community, sharing for abundance, and life.”

AMEN

# Scripture Reading

## Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

O LORD, how long shall I cry for help,  
and you will not listen?  
Or cry to you 'Violence!'  
and you will not save?  
Why do you make me see wrongdoing  
and look at trouble?  
Destruction and violence are before me;  
strife and contention arise.  
So the law becomes slack  
and justice never prevails.  
The wicked surround the righteous—  
therefore judgement comes forth  
perverted.  
I will stand at my watch-post,  
and station myself on the rampart;  
I will keep watch to see what he will  
say to me,  
and what he will answer concerning  
my complaint.  
Then the LORD answered me and said:  
Write the vision;  
make it plain on tablets,  
so that a runner may read it.  
For there is still a vision for the  
appointed time;  
it speaks of the end, and does not lie.  
If it seems to tarry, wait for it;  
it will surely come, it will not delay.  
Look at the proud!  
Their spirit is not right in them,  
but the righteous live by their faith.

## Luke 19:1-10

He entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.' So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, 'He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.' Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, 'Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.'

# Prayers & Praises

## October 30, 2022

### In Our Church Family:

- Marvin Thurber
- William Deterding
- Vic Burgess
- Jessica Vocasek
- Donna Baker
- Polly Putney
- Lois Frogge
- Joan Dietrich
- Mildred Brockemeyer

### Relatives:

- Friends and Family of *Vic Burgess*
- Roger Christianson, *with stage 4 cancer, father of Brady Christianson*
- Laurie Aufdemberge, *with breast cancer, sister of Kristi Bowker*
- Nicole Lee, *as she recovers in the hospital, mother of Leigh Lestina*

### Friends:

- Cedric Gibb, *healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhart*
- Carson Mousel, *grandson of Bob and Eileen Kunz, from Mildred Brockemeyer*
- Sue Babovec, *recovering from heart surgery*

### Our Timothys:

- Bruce Frogge *at Cypress Creek CC in Spring, TX*
- Glenda Dietrich Moore, *Creative Arts Ministry in Lincoln, NE*

### In the Nebraska Region:

- Nebraska Regional Minister Rev. Chris Morton

### Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Ricardo Mayol serving in Guatemala

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at [www.globalministries.org](http://www.globalministries.org)



# Song of the Week

## A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Text: Martin Luther, 1529

A mighty fortress is our God,  
a bulwark never failing.  
Our helper he, amid the flood  
of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe  
doth seek to work us woe.  
His craft and power are great,  
and armed with cruel hate,  
on earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,  
our striving would be losing,  
were not the right man on our side,  
the man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is he.  
Lord Sabaoth his name,  
from age to age the same,  
and he must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled,  
should threaten to undo us,  
we will not fear, for God hath willed  
his truth to triumph through us.  
The Prince of Darkness grim,  
we tremble not for him.  
His rage we can endure,  
for lo, his doom is sure.  
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers,  
no thanks to them, abideth.  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours  
through him who with us sideth.  
Let goods and kindred go,  
this mortal life also.  
The body they may kill;  
God's truth abideth still.  
His kingdom is forever.