



*Serve him in*  
**SINCERITY**  
*and in*  
**FAITHFULNESS.**

JOSHUA 24:14

**Sunday, November 8, 2020**  
**Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

We are pulled in many directions.  
Many duties and tasks seem to lay claim on our lives.  
This day, in this place, let service to God be your choice.  
This day, in this place, we open our hearts and spirits to God.  
Blessed be the God of creation who has called us here.  
Praise be to God who sustains and nurtures our lives. Amen.

**GATHERING SONG**

**GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.  
O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**FIRST READING: Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25**

*The reading may be announced:*

A reading from Joshua.

*In the Near East, covenant means “agreement” or “alliance.” It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.*

<sup>1</sup>Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. <sup>2</sup>And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. <sup>3a</sup>Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.

<sup>4</sup>“Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>5</sup>Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

<sup>6</sup>Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; <sup>7</sup>for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; <sup>8</sup>and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

<sup>9</sup>But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. <sup>10</sup>If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good.” <sup>11</sup>And the people said to Joshua, “No, we will serve the LORD!” <sup>12</sup>Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” <sup>13</sup>He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel.” <sup>14</sup>Then the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey.” <sup>15</sup>So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

*The reading may be concluded:*

The word of the Lord.

*The assembly responds:*

**Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALM:**

<sup>1</sup>Be pleased, O God, to de- | liver me;  
O LORD, make | haste to help me.

<sup>2</sup>**Let those who seek my life be put to shame | and confounded;**  
**let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and | be disgraced.**

<sup>3</sup>Let those who say to me “Aha!” and gloat | over me

turn back because | of their shame.

**Let all who seek you rejoice and be | glad in you;**

**let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great | is the LORD!"**

But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quick- | ly, O God.

You are my helper and my deliverer; O LORD, | do not tarry.

## **SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

*The reading may be announced:*

A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

*Some of the Thessalonians are worried that dead Christians will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them with the word of hope that all Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.*

<sup>13</sup>We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. <sup>15</sup>For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage one another with these words.

*The reading may be concluded:*

The word of the Lord.

*The assembly responds:*

**Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 25:1-13**

*The gospel is announced.*

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus tells a parable about his own second coming, emphasizing the need for readiness at all times.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; <sup>4</sup>but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup>But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' <sup>7</sup>Then all

those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' <sup>9</sup>But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' <sup>10</sup>And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' <sup>12</sup>But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' <sup>13</sup>Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

*The gospel concludes:*  
The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON**

<https://1drv.ms/v/s!Alrwdlq5YZa1hRkalqo3QmIOb6A9>

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

Holy God, rouse us to deep praise as we gather for worship. Enliven our worship with sincere and heartfelt song. Sustain the work of all church musicians and artists who lead us in praise and prayer. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy Creator, surprise and delight us with the beauty of the world you have made. Bless the work of landscapers, architects, and artists whose work invites us into harmonious living with your creation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy Judge, let justice roll down like waters over this world. Reign over the courtrooms of every land, in the hearts of those who guard the law and those who stand accused of crimes. Be present in cases where we long for both justice and mercy to prevail. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy Companion, console those who feel lonely or abandoned. Share the hours of those who live and eat alone. Comfort those who have few friends or who struggle with their identity and place in this world. Bless all who are ill with your healing presence, especially Klaus, Jack, Peter, Anne, Mervyn, Ken, Mary, Katana, Connor, Robert, Neil, Maria, Ralph, Beryl, Rose Marie, Nya, Muriel, Karen, Ron, Brian, and Kolby. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy Protector, be with our nation as we observe Remembrance Day this week. Guard the lives of active duty and retired military personnel. Comfort all who mourn those who have died in the line of duty. Heal the wounds, both physical and mental, experienced by service members. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy and Immortal One, we pray in thanksgiving for the lives of all who have died. Remind us of the frailty and shortness of our own lives and inspire us to use them for the building up of your kingdom. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

**Amen.**

**PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,  
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,  
who preached good news to the poor,  
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,  
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,  
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,  
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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 trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

### **COMMUNION**

The body of Christ, given for you.

**Amen.**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favour and + give you peace.

**Amen.**

**SENDING SONG: "LORD OF ALL FAITHFULNESS"**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE: "TRUMPET TUNE"**

**J. STANLEY**





## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*\* PLEASE REMEMBER \*\***

**TO BOOK IN ADVANCE FOR "LIMITED" SUNDAY WORSHIP**

By calling the office (519-271-8527) Monday to Thursday 8:00 am to 1:30 pm and Friday 8:00 am to 1:00 pm.

**For the recorded version of Pastor Jeff's Sermon of today**

**Visit our website at**

**[www.zionstratford.com](http://www.zionstratford.com)**



A special "THANK YOU" to Franklin Famme for volunteering to share his musical talent with us today playing the final hymn "Lord of all Faithfulness" along with a postlude entitled "Trumpet Tune" by J. Stanley.

### **STRATFORD HOUSE OF BLESSING**

On the next page is a handout we received from Stratford House of Blessing outlining their needs at the present time.

Please note that due to COVID-19 their need is greatest in the areas of both:  
financial support and food.

Any support you can give is GREATLY appreciated!!

Thank you for your generosity!!!



### Stratford House of Blessing's Most Needed Items

However, please note that due to COVID-19 our need is greatest in the areas of both: financial support and food.

Stratford House of Blessing

423 Erie St. Stratford, ON N5A 2N3

Phone: 519-273-3433 Email: [info@shob.org](mailto:info@shob.org)

Web: [shob.org](http://shob.org) Media: @StratfordHOB

Charitable #: 119200020RR0001

As we have been unable to do grocery store food drives, we rely on people like you, to donate.

Your financial donations are especially helpful because they allow us to see where the gaps are and make bulk purchases as well as pay expenses related to running a food bank: maintenance of building, refrigeration, delivery vehicles, and food banking equipment; and costs of transportation (fuel), heat, hydro, staffing, sanitation products and communications to the most vulnerable in our community. You can donate securely online at [shob.org/donation-form](http://shob.org/donation-form).

#### FRESH FOOD

- Root vegetables like carrots, onions and potatoes
- Squashes
- Fresh fruit
- Fresh vegetables
- Frozen vegetables and fruit
- Frozen Meals
- Fresh and frozen meat directly from the grocery store
- Lunch meats
- Cheese and yogurt
- Fruit juice

#### **Remember:**

- We will gladly accept extras from your garden
- We partner with local farmers, butchers and grocery stores
- Connect with us:  
email: [operations@shob.org](mailto:operations@shob.org)  
call: [519-273-3433](tel:519-273-3433) x 205

#### NON-PERISHABLES

- Healthy school snacks
- Peanut Butter
- Canned vegetables and fruit
- Canned fish - tuna and salmon
- Canned meat - ham, chicken, turkey
- Canned soups, stews and chili
- Pasta and Sauce
- Baked beans
- Hot and cold cereal
- Side dishes (KD, Sidekicks, stuffing, instant potatoes)
- Rice
- Gluten Free and Vegetarian foods
- Toilet paper
- Tampons and Pads

**Most needed for populations who are homeless and/or who lack adequate cooking, refrigeration, and storage:**

- Meals in a can like stew, chili, baked beans and pasta
- Canned meats with pull-back lids
- Peanut Butter
- Healthy snacks and snack bars
- Fruit cups and applesauce
- Healthy beverages
- Nuts and sunflower seeds
- New can openers
- New plastic utensils

#### PROGRAM SUPPLIES

All of these programs only accept **NEW** products.

#### **Christmas Toy Program:**

- Toys (0-16 age)
- Gift Cards suitable to teens
- Puzzles
- Board Games
- Craft Kits
- Pajamas (sized infant to adult)
- Stocking stuffers
- Books and colouring books
- Stuffed Animals

#### **Baby Welcome to the World Baskets:**

- Baby hygiene products
- Clothing 0-24 months (onesies, sleepers, outfits, socks)
- Baby toys, rattles, teethingers
- Baby blankets, receiving blankets, towels, wash cloths, and bibs

#### **Off to School Smiling Program:**

- Backpacks
- Calculators (regular and scientific)
- Math Kits
- School Supplies: crayons, markers, scissors, glue sticks, rulers and erasers

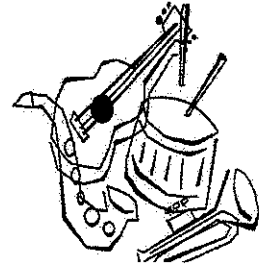
***We thank you for your support in providing emergency help to people in their immediate time of need.***

***We couldn't do it without you!***

**VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS WELCOME !!**  
**DO YOU PLAY AN INSTRUMENT? CAN YOU SING?**



*Due to COVID numbers increasing of late, it is clear that singing, one of the most basic activities we have used for centuries to celebrate our faith, may still not be allowed for many months to come. The very early stages of returning to gathering at Zion began in September with appropriate social distancing. Music will still be a part of this new beginning as we are fortunate to have our regular accompanists, Sandra Mogensen and Marco Burak and I certainly hope to contribute as often as needed.*



**In this new Amber phase, which commenced in September, we are allowed to include solo singers and instrumentalists in our services. I am putting out the call to anyone who may be willing to contribute their talents in these areas to bring some joy and healing to our regular 10:00 a.m. services. If you are nervous, please don't be as I will work with you until you are comfortable.**

*I will also occasionally be bringing in other local musicians who may not be members of our congregation. Please leave your contact information with Jane in the church office if you feel that you could participate in our services in this way. I look forward to hearing from you,*

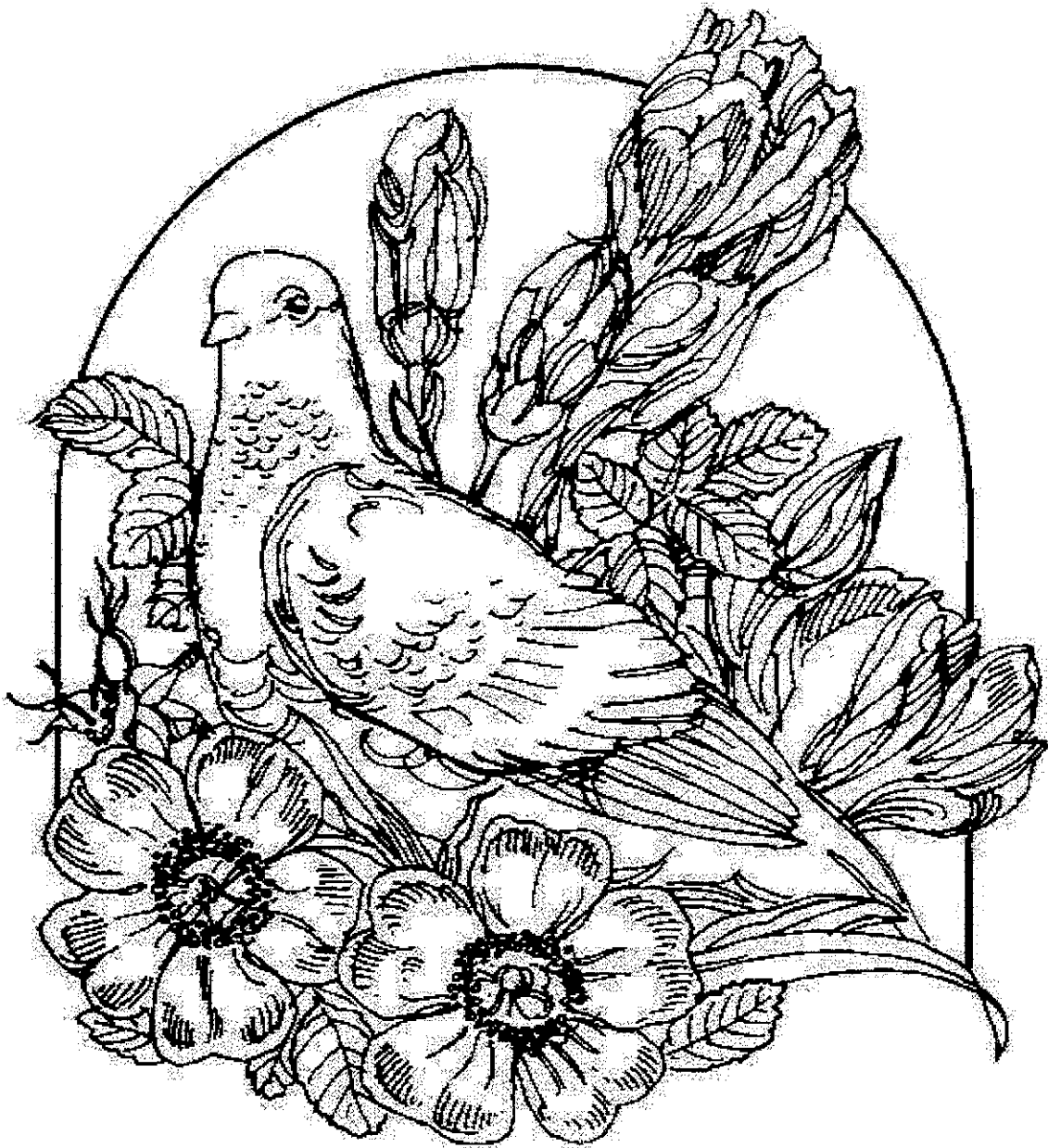
Minister of Music — Paul Shilton

**ETERNITY FOR TODAY**

The list of subscribers to "Eternity For Today" has been misplaced. If you subscribe, or wish to subscribe, could you please call Jane in the office at 519-271-8527 in order for us to make up a new list. Office hours are Monday to Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Thank you!





*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*Romans 15:13*