Community Congregational Church
of Clinton Heights, UCC

**October 1, 2023**

**The Reverend Sarah A. Bowen**

### Welcome

### Call to Worship

One: We gather to worship together,

**All: Different people, different lives, different histories,**

One: Yet all children of the same Holy One,

**All: Created lovingly by the Source of all life!**

One: We gather to reconnect with one another,

**All: Different people, different lives, different histories,**

One: Yet all disciples of one Teacher.

**All: Jesus, the Word made flesh, dwelling among us.**

One: We gather with different joys and sorrows, different hopes and fears….

**All: Different people, different lives, different histories,**

One: Yet united as one today, in faith and fellowship.

**All: Let us open ourselves to the presence of God at work in us, among us, and through us.**

Opening Prayer
*Attributed to Clement of Rome, Apostolic Father of the Church*

**You, LORD, through your works have revealed the everlasting structure of the world. You, LORD, created the earth. You are faithful throughout all generations, righteous in your judgments, marvelous in strength and majesty, wise in creating and prudent in establishing what exists, good in all that is observed and faithful to those who trust in you, merciful and compassionate; forgive us our sins and our injustices, our transgressions and our shortcomings.**

Hymn

Children’s Sermon
*On Praising & Blessing God’s Creatures*

Scripture Reading

*Psalm 148*

**1**Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord from the heavens;
    praise him in the heights!
**2**Praise him, all his angels;
    praise him, all his host!

**3**Praise him, sun and moon;
    praise him, all you shining stars!
**4**Praise him, you highest heavens
    and you waters above the heavens!

**5**Let them praise the name of the Lord,
    for he commanded and they were created.
**6**He established them forever and ever;
    he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%20148&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-16378a)]

**7**Praise the Lord from the earth,
    you sea monsters and all deeps,
**8**fire and hail, snow and frost,
    stormy wind fulfilling his command!

**9**Mountains and all hills,
    fruit trees and all cedars!
**10**Wild animals and all cattle,
    creeping things and flying birds!

**11**Kings of the earth and all peoples,
    princes and all rulers of the earth!
**12**Young men and women alike,
    old and young together!

**13**Let them praise the name of the Lord,
    for his name alone is exalted;
    his glory is above earth and heaven.
**14**He has raised up a horn for his people,
    praise for all his faithful,
    for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!

Hymn

Sermon

*Why We Praise*

Hymn

Prayers for Others & Ourselves

Lord’s Prayer
(using debts/debtors)

Offering

Doxology

Hymn

Announcements

Commission and Benediction Postlude

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**Manage your giving online:**

Community Congregational Church is excited to announce that you can now manage your giving online! Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Simply follow these easy steps:

1) Visit the church website at **www.clintonheightsucc.org**,

2) Click on the **Donate Now** button,

3) Click on the **Create Profile** button, then

4) Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your recurring contribution.

Matthew 13:1-8, 18-23
New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

**The Parable of the Sower**

**13** That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. **2** Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. **3** And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. **4** And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up.**5** Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. **6** But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. **7** Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. **8** Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

### The Parable of the Sower Explained

**18**“Hear, then, the parable of the sower. **19**When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. **20**As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, **21**yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. **22**As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of thisage and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. **23**But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”