

Millburn Congregational—United Church of Christ
19073 W. OLD TOWN COURT. LAKE VILLA, IL 60046 847-356-5237

*Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we worship God
as a spiritually alive church,
welcoming all and reaching out with love as Christ's disciples.*

Rev. Miranda Moeller

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost September 15, 2024 10:00 a.m.

Compassion in Action: Finding Your Voice

Announcements

Greeting and Words of Welcome

Opening Hymn Señor, Yo Quiero Entrar (O God, I want to enter) No. 291

Oh God, I want to enter your temple
And worship you.

Oh God, I want to enter your temple
And worship you.

Give me clean hands and a pure heart,
From vanity save me and teach me to love.

Give me clean hands and a pure heart,
From vanity save me and teach me to love.

***Call to Worship**

One: God, grant that we, like Esther, have courage for our quest,
Many: and use our past experience to serve those not as blessed.

One: Help us to trust you fully that we may find our bliss,
Many: and answer when you call us for 'such a time as this.'

***Prayer of Confession**

**Creating and rescuing God, your power amazes us. Yet even in our
amazement, we take too long to turn to you, forgetting that you are the power**

that makes and saves and sustains us. Even when we claim your power, we often do so for our own success and comfort, ignoring your command to use your power on behalf of the weak, the small, and the vulnerable. In Jesus Christ, you show us that you are on the side of all people, but never at the expense of the weakest among us. Forgive us when we try to hoard you for ourselves and try to control who has access to your love. Forgive us when our greed, our control, and our scandals keep others from knowing you. Redeem us and transform us, O God. Open our hearts, our lives, and our ministries, that we may become a doorway to your realm.

*Words of Assurance

God turns our sorrow into gladness and our times of mourning into celebration. God hears the prayer of faith. Be confident as we pray for one another, for God heals us and forgives us.

Gloria Patri
GLORY BE TO THE FATHER,
AND TO THE SON,
AND TO THE HOLY GHOST;
AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING,
IS NOW, AND EVER SHALL BE,
WORLD WITHOUT END.
AMEN. AMEN.

Passing of the Peace

Anthem

You've Got A Friend

arr. By Mac Huff

Young People's Time

We Hear God's Word

Old Testament Reading (The Message)

Esther 1:1-15, 2:1-11

1 ¹⁻³ This is the story of something that happened in the time of Xerxes, the Xerxes who ruled from India to Ethiopia—127 provinces in all. King Xerxes ruled from his royal throne in the palace complex of Susa. In the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his officials and ministers. The military brass of Persia and Media were also there, along with the princes and governors of the provinces.

⁴⁻⁷ For six months he put on exhibit the huge wealth of his empire and its stunningly beautiful royal splendors. At the conclusion of the exhibit, the king threw a weeklong party for everyone living in Susa, the capital—important and unimportant alike. The party was in the garden courtyard of the king's summer house. The courtyard was elaborately decorated with white and blue cotton curtains tied with linen and purple cords to silver rings on marble columns. Silver and gold couches were arranged on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and colored stones. Drinks were served in gold chalices, each chalice one-of-a-kind. The royal wine flowed freely—a generous king!

⁸⁻⁹ The guests could drink as much as they liked—king's orders!—with waiters at their elbows to refill the drinks. Meanwhile, Queen Vashti was throwing a separate party for women inside King Xerxes' royal palace.

¹⁰⁻¹¹ On the seventh day of the party, the king, high on the wine, ordered the seven eunuchs who were his personal servants (Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas) to bring him Queen Vashti resplendent in her royal crown. He wanted to show off her beauty to the guests and officials. She was extremely good-looking.

¹²⁻¹⁵ But Queen Vashti refused to come, refused the summons delivered by the eunuchs. The king lost his temper. Seething with anger over her insolence, the king called in his counselors, all experts in legal matters. It was the king's practice to consult his expert advisors. Those closest to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven highest-ranking princes of Persia and Media, the inner circle with access to the king's ear. He asked them what

legal recourse they had against Queen Vashti for not obeying King Xerxes' summons delivered by the eunuchs.

2 ¹⁻⁴ Later, when King Xerxes' anger had cooled and he was having second thoughts about what Vashti had done and what he had ordered against her, the king's young attendants stepped in and got the ball rolling: "Let's begin a search for beautiful young virgins for the king. Let the king appoint officials in every province of his kingdom to bring every beautiful young virgin to the palace complex of Susa and to the harem run by Hegai, the king's eunuch who oversees the women; he will put them through their beauty treatments. Then let the girl who best pleases the king be made queen in place of Vashti."

The king liked this advice and took it.

* * *

5-7 Now there was a Jew who lived in the palace complex in Susa. His name was Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish—a Benjaminite. His ancestors had been taken from Jerusalem with the exiles and carried off with King Jehoiachin of Judah by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon into exile. Mordecai had raised his cousin Hadassah, otherwise known as Esther, since she had no father or mother. The girl had a good figure and a beautiful face. After her parents died, Mordecai had adopted her.

8 When the king's order had been publicly posted, many young girls were brought to the palace complex of Susa and given over to Hegai who was overseer of the women. Esther was among them.

9-10 Hegai liked Esther and took a special interest in her. Right off he started her beauty treatments, ordered special food, assigned her seven personal maids from the palace, and put her and her maids in the best rooms in the harem. Esther didn't say anything about her family and racial background because Mordecai had told her not to.

11 Every day Mordecai strolled beside the court of the harem to find out how Esther was and get news of what she was doing.

Sermon

“Reluctant Courage”

Rev. Miranda Moeller

We Respond to God’s Word

*Hymn

If Not Now Tell Me When

Carrie Newcomer

If not now tell me when
 We may never see this moment
 Or place in time again
 If not now if not now tell me when
 I see sorrow and trouble in this land
 I see sorrow and trouble in this land

Although there will be struggle we'll make the change we can

If not now if not now tell me when
 If not now tell me when
 If not now tell me when

We may never see this moment
 Or place in time again
 If not now if not now tell me when
 I may never see the Promised Land
 I may never see the Promised Land

And yet we'll take the journey
 And we'll walk it hand in hand
 If not now if not now tell me when
 If not now tell me when
 If not now tell me when

We may never see this moment
 Or place in time again
 If not now if not now tell me when
 We'll work it til it's done
 Every daughter every son

And every soul that ever longed for something better
 Something brighter

It will take a change of heart for this to mend
 It will take a change of heart for this to mend
 But miracles do happen every shining now and then

If not now if not now tell me when

If not now tell me when
 If not now tell me when
 We may never see this moment
 Or place in time again
 If not now if not now tell me when
 And miracles do happen every shining now and then
 If not now if not now tell me when
 If not now if not now tell me when

Prayers of the People
 Pastoral Prayer, Silent Prayer

Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

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.

Call to Offering

*Doxology

Old One Hundredth

**PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW;
 PRAISE GOD, ALL CREATURES HERE BELOW;
 PRAISE GOD FOR ALL THAT LOVE HAS DONE;
 CREATOR, CHRIST, AND SPIRIT ONE.**

***Prayer of Dedication**

Giving God, we can never match your generosity. When we are in need, you are at our side, present to us even in our darkest moments. You rescue us from harm. Make us into a people who celebrate your goodness, drawing others into the celebration of your many blessings. Receive our offerings, even if they are as small as a drink for someone who thirsts. Transform them into the mystery of your reign here and now on earth, in the name of Jesus, your greatest gift, amen.

Closing Hymn

O Young and Fearless Prophet

No. 669

1 O young and fearless Prophet
 of ancient Galilee,
 your life is still a summons
 to serve humanity;
 to make our thoughts and actions
 less prone to please the crowd,
 to stand with humble courage
 for truth with hearts uncowed.

2 We marvel at the purpose
 that held you to your course
 while ever on the hilltop
 before you loomed the cross;
 your steadfast face set forward
 where love and duty shone,
 while we betray so quickly
 and leave you there alone.

3 O help us stand unswerving
 against war's bloody way,
 where hate and lust and falsehood
 hold back Christ's holy sway;

forbid false love of country
 that keeps us from your call,
 you lift above the nations
 the unity of all.

4 Stir up in us a protest
 against our greed for wealth,
 while others starve and hunger
 and plead for work and health;
 where homes with little children
 cry out for lack of bread,
 who live their years sore burdened
 beneath a gloomy dread.

5 O young and fearless Prophet,
 we need your presence here,
 amid our pride and glory
 to see your face appear;
 once more to hear your challenge
 above our noisy day,
 again to lead us forward
 along God's holy way.

*Commission and Blessing

God has created all things.

God has rescued us from sin and suffering.

Let us go forth, seeking to be on God's side.

Jesus Christ finds us when we wander far from God.

Let us go forth, seeking to be on God's side.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to welcome all
 into the reign of God's love.

**Let us go forth, seeking to be on God's side,
bringing the love of Christ everywhere we go.**

*Congregational Response

No. 312

AMEN. AMEN. AMEN.

Today's Liturgy: Written by Amy B. Hunter at [Ministry Matters™](#) | [Worship Elements: September 26, 2021](#)

Today's Ushers: Thank you Pat Coon and Margie Petroff for serving as ushers this morning.

Celebrating Birthdays: Tricia Mathis 9/12, Lorna Zaloudek 9/12, Nicole Kennedy 9/13, Marsha DeRue 9/22 .

CIRCLE OF PRAYER: We are holding prayer for the following persons (new in italics): All those dealing with mental health crisis; all those struggling with addiction; those impacted by mass shootings and gun violence, those experiencing loss from climate crisis disasters; our LGBTQIA+ youth and children, as they remember they are loved; all caregivers who need support and rest; Ruth Young's cousin David Poczalski dealing with serious health issues; Deb Grandos niece, Susie, as she battles metastatic breast cancer; Doug, a friend of Toot's daughter-in-law, is in stage 4 cancer; prayers for strength and comfort for the Tschannen's, as well as those that will be helping them as they enter a new phase of their journey with Alzheimer's; Tim Chichester for his diabetes struggle; Lorel Chichester for her knee problems, Cindy and Nancy's son, Jacob, as he navigates a mental health crisis; Char's friend, Pam, who was diagnosed with cancer; Georgene's friend, Belinda, as she seeks medical answers; Donna Geary's great nephew, Teddy, a one year-old recently diagnosed with cancer; Ruth Young's nephew, John Young, after receiving a heart pump but may need another; *Ruth's daughter-in-law, Roberta, who had surgery on Wednesday to remove a stomach tumor; and for Lisa Horist's Aunt Joy Ann, who is settling in to her new home.*

Church Office Hours:

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: 8:30-2:00

Wednesday: 8:30-2:00

Thursday: 8:30-2:00

Friday: Closed

*If you need something in the bulletin, please send the information to Susan by **Tuesday**. You can call the office or email Susan at secretary@millburnchurch.org. Thank you for your help.

Pastor Miranda's Office Hours:

Pastor Miranda's ministry often takes her out of the office. While she maintains an office presence Mon, Tues, and Thursday, her hours vary. In order to best meet your needs, feel free to call or email at pastor@millburnchurch.org to schedule a meeting. Do not hesitate to contact her at 860-751-4452, especially in the event of an emergency. She looks forward to supporting you and serving the community at Millburn and beyond.

An Evening with Christine Brewer – Saturday, 9/28, 7:00 p.m. The evening will include appetizers, beverages, a silent auction, and a concert. Tickets will go on sale August 1st and will range in price from \$50-65. Sales will be online, and a link will go live and sent out via email on August 1st. Links to purchase tickets will also be available on Facebook, Instagram, Millburn Church website, and a Fox Valley UCC wide email. Contact Becky Fuller or Pastor Miranda with any questions.

There is a sign up sheet for volunteers who wish to help with the concert that night. Ushers, set up/clean up helpers, etc. If you are unable to help but would still like to contribute, please consider donating items for an Auction Basket or make a monetary gift to offset the expenses of the concert. This is a fundraiser that benefits the Operating Budget of our church, please consider where you can help support it

The Discipleship Committee is making it easier for you to send your thoughts and prayers to fellow church friends. Just stop at the table in Lauren Hall and sign greeting cards to mail to those of the congregation who need support,

encouragement, or who we haven't seen in a while. The process is simple... if you see a card, sign it. If you don't see a card for someone, start one. To ensure delivery, cards will be limited to people listed in the church directory. Remember, it is up to you to help start cards, so we are less likely to overlook someone. If you have any questions, please contact Tricia Mathis.

MILLBURN UCC NEWS SOURCE – Visit the new Linktree for Millburn Church. Get all of your links in one place. To add something to the tree email Rolando Lopez at aflashact@gmail.com. To see the current links, visit: <https://www.linktr.ee/millburnchurch>

Messenger - Do you have a special anniversary or event in your life coming up? Do you want to say thank you to church friends for something they did? Say it in the Messenger! Email your announcements to Kris Franks, psychokittie53@hotmail.com, and she will include in the next month's Messenger. Deadline for submissions is: 9/20, 10/18, 11/15 and 12/20. If you are still receiving the Messenger by "snail mail" and have an email address, we can send the Messenger to your email. Just send an email to the church office, secretary@millburnchurch.org, and request to be added to the list.

Shirts and decals are available for sale. The sign up for them is on the link tree site. T-shirts are \$20 and the window decals are \$10. Please make checks payable to Millburn UCC or cash at worship service. Shirts will be made as orders are received and please allow approximately two weeks for delivery depending on the availability of the supplier.

Coffee Hour Sign-up - We need your help. Please consider providing items for our Sunday Coffee Hours following the 10 a.m. worship service.

Pick a Sunday on the sign-up chart in Lauren Hall, then sign your name in the space for the item(s) you will bring.

Also indicate if you can help with serving and cleanup (a.k.a. host). Coffee, tea, cream, sugar, cups, plates, napkins, utensils are provided at the church. Host(s) will need to make the coffee and hot water for tea, put out items and clean up afterwards.

If you have any questions on how to make coffee, where coffee pot, hot water pot and other items are in the kitchen.

Please feel free to ask other church members. We will gladly show you.

Help Wanted – Seeking men and women ages 15 to 100 to fill several open positions. Contact Becky Fuller and Kris Franks of our Music Department. They are looking for people to join the choir, band, and handbell choir. Even if you think you can't read music, you can be a part of providing praise through music on Sunday mornings. We will show you how! All three groups meet on Wednesday nights: handbell choir at 6:15, choir at 7:15. and band at 8:00. __Stop in to practice and check us out. Practice dates are listed on the church calendar. Come for one and stay for all three!!

Millburn Mentor Program- If you are a person who knows how to do certain things around the church – play the piano, the organ, run the lift, know where keys are, and more – please consider being a mentor. The mentors will teach our new members where and how things operate at church. If you are interested, please see Diane Etienne. Thank you in advance!

UPCOMING EVENTS AT MILLBURN CHURCH:

Council Meeting - 3rd Thursday of the month

An Evening with Christine Brewer – Saturday, 9/28, 7:00 p.m. The evening will include appetizers, beverages, a silent auction, and concert.



Join us for an ENCHANTING evening on September 28th with Christine Brewer the Grammy award winner who will provide a variety of music consisting of Opera, Broadway and Soulful Hymns.

- There will be a Silent Auction, Hors d'oeuvres, and Wine.*
- VIP tickets are invited to a conversation with Christine.*
From 6:00 pm to 6:30 p.m.

Tickets range from \$50 to \$75 and can be purchased at

[HTTPS://WWW.TICKETLEAF.EVENTS/TICKETS/MILLBURN-UCC/AN-EVENING-WITH-CHRISTINE-BREWER](https://www.ticketleaf.events/tickets/millburn-ucc/an-evening-with-christine-brewer)

Doors open at 6:00 p.m. for the silent auction and the concert will begin at 7:00 p.m.

All proceeds will go to the operation of Millburn United Church of Christ.