

Celebration of the Saints  
June 10, 2023 8:30AM  
Penn West Conference Annual Meeting

Prelude

Hear these words of Jesus:

I am the resurrection and the life; all who believe in me, though they die, yet shall they live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

From the Apostle Paul we read: When we were baptized into Christ Jesus, we were baptized into Christ's death. By our baptism, then, we were buried with Christ and shared Christ's death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from death by the glorious power of God, so too we might live a new life. For if we have been united with Christ in a death like Christ's, we shall certainly be united with Christ in a resurrection like Christ's.

As we enter into prayer, I would invite those who are on zoom to write in the chat those saints who have passed into eternal life this year whom you would like to remember this day, and when I pause in the prayer, we will read those names aloud. Following this, those of who are present in the room can speak aloud the names of the saints whom you would like to lift up in prayer and celebration.

Silence

Let us pray:

God of the living, we are reminded of our community this day: those who are sitting together now, those who are present by way of technology, those who have left us recently or long ago. You call all your faithful people saints, and even in our imperfection, we are grateful to be called to worship you with honor.

Let this day be not only a time for memories, but a time for celebration of our connection throughout the years. In this hour we remember those who lives have touched the Penn West Conference and those who have faithfully served your church that is covenanted together as the United Church of Christ. We remember especially this day your servants who entered into eternal life since we last gathered. We remember those faithful servants in our local churches, people who have touched our lives and who through us, have touched the lives of many others. We come before you speaking the names of these beloved ones who have impacted the church and the world in ways that we know and in the many ways that have yet to be known to us but that are certainly known to you.

Let us now speak aloud the saints whose lives we celebrate.

***Read the names in chat***

***Participants in the room speak aloud names.***

May we bring here our sacrifice of thanks and praise for your sake, and for the sake of all your saints throughout time. Amen.

Music-“Great is Thy Faithfulness”

From Paul's letter to the Romans:

We believe there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, and we know that in everything God works for good with those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose. We are sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

The apostle Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus words that we might take to heart:

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

Benediction:

And now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Go in the peace of Christ,

Postlude