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Nov

Witnesses

Always Give Thanks

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, YEAR A

First, we are chosen, then we are tested. Now, we witness.

REFERENCES

Joshua 3:7-17

Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13

Matthew 23:1-12

COLORS

White

CALL TO WORSHIP

We are chosen children of God, bound together by the Holy Spirit.

We belong to God, and through God, we belong to one another.

As we gather to remember the saints who formed us in the faith, we give thanks for their living witnesses to God's love, showing us that:

We belong to God, and through God, we live as family in Christ, bound together by Love.

We give thanks for the influence of the saints in our lives who demonstrated God's love and saving grace, so that we could know in our bones that:

We belong to God, and through God, we are saved to love one another.

Come, let us worship God who blesses us with witnesses to divine love that we may be witnesses of Love with everyone we meet.

We come to worship God who chooses us, empowers us, and inspires us to live as witnesses of Love in communion with the saints of every age. Amen.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, July 2026.

OPENING PRAYER

God, our Teacher, please instruct us in the ways of humility and love. Help us to live in community with one another rather than in competition with each other. Give us your heart for serving our neighbor. Assure us of your abiding presence and release us from the hierarchies of this world. May your kin-dom come with power and gentleness as we strive to live as embodied witnesses of the good news in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Adapted from Cheryl A. Lindsay on the Worship Ways website of the United Church of Christ at <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-23a-november-5/>.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Beloved, we are God's children now,
but what we will be in the fullness of our time
has not been revealed.

What we do know is this:
we will be like Jesus the Christ and saints of God.
Let us consider how Jesus was revealed among us
and pray to be more like the Christ in every way.

Jesus embodied the unconditional love of God...
We pray, **may we be more like Jesus.**

Jesus fed those who were hungry...
We pray, **may we be more like Jesus.**

Jesus drew near to those living on the margins and excluded...
We pray, **may we be more like Jesus.**

Jesus brought healing and wholeness to those in need...
We pray, **may we be more like Jesus.**

Jesus hungered and thirsted for righteousness...
We pray, **may we be more like Jesus.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Beloved, through the love shown to us by Jesus,
we can be sure that we are God's children now.
The Spirit of Christ is among us in this gathering,
and the nature of Christ is revealed within us.
We are becoming more and more like Christ each day,
Living witness to the good news of God's grace.
Therefore, let us live joyfully as God's people,
saints and instruments of God's way.

Adapted from "All Saints Day (Year A)," posted on **Seasons Online**.. Reposted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2017/10/prayer-of-confession-1-john-3-1-3.html>.

BENEDICTION

May God bless you with reminders of the saints who have gone before, so that, inspired by their witness, you may live as witnesses to Love here and now. And may God surround you with the assurance that nothing—neither life, nor death, nor anything else in all creation—can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

Living God, our Guide and Guardian,
Who sits on the throne and delivers us into eternal life,
we give you thanks for the saints whose witness has shaped our lives
who now rest in the shelter of your embrace.
As we remember those saints
Who have died and entered into glory
during the last twelve months,
we remember their witness to your love and grace
with joy and gratitude.

As each name is called, ring a bell and/or light a candle in honor of each person. Where possible, have family members or close friends of the person named come forward to light a candle or rise where they are sitting.

We bless you for the life and love of these dear saints,
and rejoice that they have entered
into the fullness of life in your presence.
We also remember those saints who
We hold in our hearts who have not been
With us for some time, yet whose life and witness
Continue to form and shape us as your disciples.
We honor them now by lifting their names aloud or in our hearts.

Allow space for people to speak names aloud from where they are seated.

On this All Saints Sunday, we remember
that we too are living saints,
members of the family of God
with all the saints of the past, the present, and the future.
And so, we proclaim:
**We are God's children,
witnesses of God's word that is at work in us
and in the saints who have gone before.
Today and every day,
may we put on Christ and live as saints
who tend the poor,
comfort the mourners,
learn from the meek,
affirm those who seek righteousness,
offer mercy alongside the merciful,
and work for peace with the peacemakers
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast as the family of God
at Christ's heavenly banquet. Amen.**

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