

**SERVICE OF WORSHIP
TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AUGUST 23, 2020**

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE: *IN THEE ALONE, O CHRIST, MY LORD* - J. Pachelbel

A PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Mothering God, midwife of all our experiences and dreams, we thank you for the ways you have brought us into new life over and over again. We praise you for your protection of us when the threats of life ensue. We honor you for the cunning and ingenuity with which you have crafted our opportunities to grow and thrive. In humble devotion, we remember your rescuing intervention when the way has been difficult, and the light has grown dim. Gathered as your people, wonderful and diverse, we join as one body in worship – remembering your saving Spirit and embodying your creative purpose. Make yourself known to us as we worship, we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

SENTENCES OF ADORATION

OPENING HYMN: *SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER*

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Pastor: Hidden in the quiet of our morning there is a blessing for us today.

Unison: Sheltered amidst the reeds of a busy world there is new life awaiting our care and attention.

Pastor: Floating above the currents of trial and tribulation, a peaceful possibility approaches.

Unison: Swaddled in the love and compassion of God's grace, a new beginning is preserved.

Pastor: People of God, the embracing and affirming arms of God are reaching toward us with joy.

Unison: For we are God's children, holy and beloved.

Pastor: Come, let us welcome God's embrace as we begin a new journey.

Unison: Let us worship with the confidence of God's abiding presence and rescuing love.

REJOICING IN GOD'S GRACE

CALL TO AND CONFESSION OF SIN:

Pastor: Creator of All, like the Egyptians who had power, yet feared those who were oppressed by it, we confess that there are times when we do not recognize the power and privilege you have given us.

Unison: Loving Parent, there have been times when our people have been ruthless and oppressive in our treatment of other peoples, based on race, culture, class, or background.

Pastor: We confess that we have not always been creative in seeing a way out of what seems like “no way.”

Unison: We confess that we have not always been willing to risk going against the powers of our world to enable life to thrive.

Pastor: We confess that there have been times when we have imagined ourselves to be small and without agency.

Unison: And we confess that we have allowed the sins of others to define the world in which we live. Forgive us and remind us of the ways of those who respond with hope, creativity, and cunning, rather than despair and listless resolution when the world seems constructed with malice. Show us the hidden blessings floating through the rivers of our fatigue and despair. Embolden us to resist the oppression that may be commanded or expected. Forgive us our sins, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON:

Sandy Sosnowsky, lay reader

Old Testament: Exodus 1:8 – 2:10

New Testament: Matthew 16:13 – 20

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON: *At the End of the Day, Compassion Always Wins*

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD’S WILL AND WORK

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

**Jesus Christ, brother of Light,
I believe.**

**I believe
that in the beginning was the Promise
and the Promise was with God
and the Promise was God.**

**I believe
in the infinite, nurturing creativity of God,
in the incarnate, crucified humility of God,
in the intimate, inspiring liberality of God.**

**Jesus Christ, brother of Light,
I believe.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: O God, there are ways in which we have felt pressed down and hopeless, threatened by the realities of our times.

Unison: Protecting God, be with us as we drift amidst the waters of injustice, struggle, and pain.

Pastor: Abiding Presence, there are times when our futures seem dim, and the possibilities feel limited.

Unison: Protecting God, deliver us to a new shore.

Pastor: Sustaining Life, there are places in our world in need of your transforming grace.

Unison: Protecting God, give us the compassion and courage to share our blessings with others.

Pastor: Providing Parent, people are suffering and striving for new life.

Unison: Protecting God, help us to reach out with swaddling love as the agents of healing you have created us to be. Bring us to new life; bring us to healing shores; bring us to courage and compassion, we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, the one whose power was embodied in love.

Pause for private intercessions

Pastor: Gracious God, as you have promised, may it come to pass. We pray in Christ's name and offer the prayer He offered;

Unison: 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.

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

NEWS FROM THE PEWS – The Talboo Family

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SHARING

SPECIAL MUSIC: *EVEN IF* - MercyMe

Darin Jellison, guitar

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Unison: We recognize your presence, Loving God, even when we feel adrift and alone. Receive our giving as a testimony to your grace. Bless it toward the strengthening of your people and the healing of your planet, that someday we might truly live in the deep communion you designed and desire. Amen.

GO IN GOD'S NAME

CLOSING HYMN: *IT'S THE OLD SHIP OF ZION*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: *TRUMPET RECESSIONAL IN G* - G. F. Handel

*Special thanks to **Sandy Sosnowsky** for reading the scriptures,
the **Talboo family** for sharing their greeting with us,
to **Darin Jellison** for providing special music,
and to **Noah Jellison** for editing the service.
Blessings to all!*