

Resurrecting his life of Love through communion with others. The texts and traditions of Christianity give voice to our souls, so that we may support each other in our quests of compassion. Love is the measure of what is worth following, and what is not, in all religions. So we pray for a Holy Spirit of discernment, to express our faith afresh in new times and places. (by James Burklo).

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING *Liturgist*

OFFERTORY “Fairest Lord Jesus” arr. J. Turner

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE **DOXOLOGY NO. 34**
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. AMEN.

OFFERING DEDICATION *Liturgist*

BEARING AND FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 596 “Help Us Accept Each Other”

*BENEDICTION *Pastor*

*CHORAL BENEDICTION “Go Now in Peace” *arr. Don Besig*
Go now in Peace. Never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of every day. Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true. Know He will guide you in all you do. Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can see. God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

POSTLUDE “When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder” arr. J. Turner

** Please stand as you are able at the points in the service marked with an asterisk.*



Mission Statement
That We All May Be One in Unconditional Christian Love.

Volume 47, Number 40

September 17, 2023

Order of Worship
10:00 a.m. Ringing of the Bell

WELCOME *Rev. Char Burch*
ANNOUNCEMENTS *Liturgist*

LITURGIST: The Peace of Christ be with you.
PEOPLE: And also with you.

PRELUDE “At Peace” comp. & arr. J. Turner
CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP “Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts”
Camille Saint-saens

OUR CALL TO A CELEBRATING TIME OF WORSHIP

Liturgist: Bless the Holy One with our whole selves. Praise the Maker of our being!

All: Remember the mighty deeds and the good works of our God.

Liturgist: God endows us with many gifts and equips us to do good work.

All: Remember the mighty deeds and the good works of our God.

Liturgist: Holy Love entered the world without condemnation but with grace and forgiveness, mercy and compassion, redemption and restoration.

All: Hallelujah! We give thanks for the mighty deeds and the good works of our God!

PRAYER OF PRAISE **In Unison.**

Liturgist

God who calls, it is you who gathers us together and forms us as a community. It is you who makes us uniquely individual and who designs us for companionship. Let us journey together this day in your presence reminded of our interdependence with one another. May we see your glory and be inspired to demonstrate your goodness and care through our lives. Amen.

*HYMN NO. 649 “Gather Us In”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION **In Unison**

Pastor

God of grace, we need your strength in our weakness. We confess that we can be judgmental and hyper-critical of our neighbors, family, and friends. We project our own shortcomings on others in order to deflect attention from our mistakes. We withhold and condition forgiveness, mercy, and grace from those who wrong us at the same time we seek it for the wrongs we have done. Even still, we struggle to forgive ourselves. You have shown us the better way. Help us to follow your path—receiving and extending forgiveness in a world in need of an infusion of grace for transformation. In your mercy, O God, hear our prayer, and let us forgive as you forgive. Amen.

Silent Confession

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor

Beloved, grace has always been part of God’s relationship with humanity. God does not want you condemned or held captive by unresolved anger

leading to bitterness. Rather, the Creator desires you to be released as both forgiven and forgiver so that all may live a life that is whole, free, and flourishing.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OUR MISSIONARY PRAYER PARTNER

PASTORAL PRAYER and **LORD’S PRAYER**

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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. AMEN.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

ANTHEM “Walk Worthy by Joseph Martin ” arr. J. Paul Williams
featuring Dana Beal as conductor

SCRIPTURE LESSON ROMANS 14:1-12 (page 163) *Liturgist*
Liturgist: Thus ends the reading.
All: Thanks be to God.

*HYMN NO. 415 “When We Are Living”

GOSPEL READING MATTHEW 18:21-35 (page 20) *Pastor*
Pastor: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.
All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON “Forgiveness Sustains Community” Rev. Char Burch

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

God is Love, the cosmic creativity present everywhere and in everything, gently urging all toward the good. To Love we raise our awestruck praise! Jesus embodied the Love that is God. He loved the poor, the sick, the outcast. He loved the unpopular, and even his own enemies. He loved so completely, he loved so dangerously, that it cost him his life. As Christians we aim to serve humbly, as he did.