

**ORDER OF WORSHIP**  
17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
Rally Sunday

September 24, 2023

10:00am

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WORDS OF WELCOME

ORGAN PRELUDE

Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654)  
Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire / and lighten with celestial fire;  
thou the anointing Spirit art, / who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.  
*-Latin, 9<sup>th</sup> century; tr. John Cosin (1594-1672; Pilgrim Hymnal, No. 575*

CHORAL INTROIT This is the Day! Les Grant

\*OPENING HYMN (insert) New Beginnings Sarah Ames

CALL TO WORSHIP Based on Psalm 145:1-8

L: I will extol you, my God, and bless your name forever and ever.

**C: Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever.**

L: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; God's greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.

**C: On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.**

L: The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed; we shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

**ALL: The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

INVOCATION

SILENT REFLECTION

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 43:16-21

ALL AGES TOGETHER Trish Walton

\*HYMN 453 (blue) Called as Partners in Christ's Service

1. Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,  
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,  
equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.
2. Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,  
let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.  
Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,  
blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.
3. Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense,  
Help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.  
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,  
bring new power and strength for action, makes us colleagues, free and fair.
4. So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life  
that surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.  
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,  
messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.

SECOND LESSON Matthew 13:31-35

SERMON Rev. Alexandra Boudreaux

CHORAL ANTHEM With a Voice of Singing Martin Shaw

PASTORAL PRAYER

L: God, in your compassion...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer (debts)

*(Please pray this prayer in words most meaningful to your heart.)*

SERVICE OF STEWARDSHIP

Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering

The Giving of Our Gifts

Interlude Meditation on "New Beginnings"

melody by Sarah Ames, organ setting by David L. Almond

\*Doxology

***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. Amen.***

\*Prayer of Dedication

\*CLOSING HYMN 452 (blue) Here I Am, Lord

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Refrain

Here I am, Lord. Is it I Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them, my hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain

\*COMMISSION

Leader: As we go out to be the body of Christ in the world,

**People: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, love your neighbor as yourself; and love and cherish the earth and all that dwells therein."**

\*BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE Love Is Love Is Love Is Love Abbie Betinis

POSTLUDE Rigaudon André Campra (1660-1744)

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The flowers in the sanctuary are given in welcome to Rev. Lexi by Carol and Jim Howard.

**ISAIAH 43:16-21**

Thus says the LORD,  
who makes a way in the sea,  
a path in the mighty waters,  
**17** who brings out chariot and horse,  
army and warrior;  
they lie down; they cannot rise;  
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:  
**18** Do not remember the former things  
or consider the things of old.  
**19** I am about to do a new thing;  
now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the wilderness  
and rivers in the desert.  
**20** The wild animals will honor me,  
the jackals and the ostriches,  
for I give water in the wilderness,  
rivers in the desert,  
to give drink to my chosen people,  
**21** the people whom I formed for myself.

**MATTHEW 13:31-35**

31 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; 32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."  
33 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."  
34 Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. 35 This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

"I will open my mouth to speak in parables;  
I will proclaim what has been hidden since the foundation."