

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH
A UNITED METHODIST/PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) COMMUNITY
WILDE LAKE INTERFAITH CENTER • COLUMBIA, MARYLAND
UNITED IN LOVE – UNITED FOR SERVICE

August 20, 2023

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST // IN-PERSON & ONLINE SERVICE

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Liturgist: Carole Thompson

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WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME

PRELUDE

Patricia Hammer
Accompanist

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SONG

“He Has Made Me Glad”
(I Will Enter His Gates)

TFWS #2270

I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart
I will enter his courts with praise
I will say this is the day that the Lord has made
I will rejoice for he has made me glad!

He has made me glad, he has made me glad
I will rejoice for he has made me glad!
He has made me glad, he has made me glad
I will rejoice for he has made me glad!

CALL TO WORSHIP

What joy we feel when we are called together to celebrate God’s love.

God’s love flows through our lives!

This is what it means to be the body of Christ!

This is what it means to be faithful witnesses to God.

Let us rejoice on this day!

Lord, we thank you for the blessings you pour on us. AMEN.

OPENING PRAYER

As summer draws to a close, we begin to focus our attention to the activities of autumn. For some it will mean preparing children for school; for others youth will be preparing to enter college or the work force or perhaps military service. Be with these precious ones as they embark on life’s journeys. Be with each one of us as we encounter life’s challenges. Open our hearts to receive your healing mercy and your transforming love. In Jesus’ name we pray. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 45:1 – 15

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Amazing Grace”
John Newton; arr. M. Dover

SJU Men’s Choir

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found
Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home

The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures

When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 15:21 – 28

TIME WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

Rev. Mary Ka Kanahan

MESSAGE

“IS IT FAIR?”

Rev. Mary Ka Kanahan

OFFERTORY SONG

OF REFLECTION

“Lord, I Want to Be a Christian”

GTG #729

Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart
In my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart

Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart
In my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart

Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart
In my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart

Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart
In my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart

CALL TO GENEROSITY

Creator and architect of the universe, we want to believe that your love for us means you will go before us on life's path and clear the way, making it easy to travel, but our experience doesn't always bear that out. We know you see a bigger picture than we do. As we bring you our offerings this day, we affirm your presence with us in the pits of despair as well as in the palaces of plenty. We give with gratitude, in Christ's holy name. Amen.

CLOSING SONG

“In Christ There Is No East or West”

GTG #317

In Christ there is no east or west
In him no south or north
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth

In Christ shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find
His service is the golden cord
Close binding humankind

Join hands, disciples of the faith
Whate'er your race may be
All children of the living God
Are surely kin to me

In Christ now meet both east and west
In him meet south and north
All Christly souls are one in him
Throughout the whole wide earth

BENEDICTION

Beloved, is it fair? As you go today asking this question, remember: whether your answer is yes or no, there is always room for more mercy. May we be blessed to be people of God's grace and mercy in a world preoccupied with fairness. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Patricia Hammer
accompanist

Readings are NRSV unless otherwise noted. CEB=Common English Bible; CEV=Contemporary English Version; KJV=King James Version; MSG=The Message; NIV=New International Version; NLT=New Living Translation; TIB=The Inclusive Bible

Genesis 45:1 – 15

45:1 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

45:2 And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it.

45:3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

45:4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.

45:5 And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.

45:6 For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.

45:7 God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.

45:8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

45:9 Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.

45:10 You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have.

45:11 I will provide for you there--since there are five more years of famine to come--so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.

45:12 And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you.

45:13 You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here."

45:14 Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck.

45:15 And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Matthew 15:21 – 28

15:21 Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

15:22 Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon."

15:23 But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us."

15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

15:25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me."

15:26 He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."

15:27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

15:28 Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

