

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

August 27, 2023

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

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Liturgist: Alvin Thompson

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WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME

PRELUDE

Patricia Hammer
Accompanist

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SONG

“This Is a Day of New Beginnings”

UM #383

This is a day of new beginnings
Time to remember and move on
Time to believe what love is bringing
Laying to rest the pain that's gone

For by the life and death of Jesus
God's mighty Spirit, now as then
Can make for us a world of difference
As faith and hope are born again

Then let us, with the Spirit's daring
Step from the past and leave behind
Our disappointment, guilt, and grieving
Seeking new paths, and sure to find

Christ is alive and goes before us
To show and share what love can do
This is a day of new beginnings
Our God is making all things new

CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome! It is good to have you here this day.

Thank you. We come seeking healing and peace for our spirits.

God is with us, giving that wondrous healing love to each one.

Blessed be God who watches over us.

Come, let us praise God with thankful hearts.

Lord, we come to you in gratitude for all you do for us. AMEN.

OPENING PRAYER

Lord, bless each one of these people who have told us of their special talent.

Please be with us as we learn to share our gifts that show the world who you are.

We gather these cards, symbols of our community of faith, and place them on the altar/worship center. Lord, help us to give and receive these gifts from each other;

that our community is made stronger and builds your world as you would have it to be, with liberty, justice, and compassion for all. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 12:1 – 8

ANTHEM

“Precious Jesus”
Jay Althouse

Karen Randall
soloist

All that I am and all that I can be,
All that I know and all that I can see:
These are the things my Jesus gave to me.
Jesus, my Lord, and friend.

Once, I was alone and day seemed dark as night.
Once I was blind, but I’ve been given sight.
Jesus, my redeemer, led me to the light,
Jesus, my Lord, and friend.

Refrain

*Precious Jesus, blessed Jesus,
You’re my life, my joy, my friend.
Precious Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Your love is a love without end.*

Now, like a shepherd, He guides me on my way.
Now I will follow: I cannot go astray.
Jesus, keep me near You: this I humbly pray.
Jesus, my Lord and friend.

Refrain

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 16:13 – 20

TIME WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

“All Are Welcome”

Rev. Mary Ka Kanahan
Song with Ingrid Sampson

MESSAGE

“**THE JOURNEY BEGINS**”

Rev. Mary Ka Kanahan

OFFERTORY SONG

OF REFLECTION

“Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying”

GTG #469

Lord, listen to your children praying
Lord, send your Spirit in this place
Lord, listen to your children praying
Send us love; send us power; send us grace

CALL TO GENEROSITY

Generous God who always gives to each one of us the best, we thank you for this opportunity to share from our abundance of life in a community of faith and friendship. Bless these gifts, offered through the ministries and mission of this church as we are neighbors to one another. In Jesus’ name, we pray. AMEN.

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS / CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Gracious God, we lift to you today, these students, parents, teachers and staff. They stand here ready to receive your blessings and they commit themselves to study and learning in the school year ahead. We ask your blessing on each of them.

Further, we ask your blessing on these backpacks. They will hold the school work of each student and will be carried safely from home to school and back again. As these students carry these backpacks, may they be reminded of the love and care of this congregation that surrounds them each school day.

We pray as well for the teachers and administrators in our schools. May they also be sustained by your blessing. May they be reminded that this congregation embraces their call to teaching and learning and surrounds them with love and care as well.

We pray in the name of Jesus who we seek to follow day by day. Amen.

CLOSING SONG

“I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”
(African-American spiritual)

GTG #700

I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

BENEDICTION

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, March 2023.

Family of God, go from this place led by the Triune God who loves you, saves you, and sustains you, that in our following, we may share our gifts of goodness and blessing wherever we go. 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

Romans 12:1 – 8

12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God--what is good and acceptable and perfect.

12:3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

12:4 For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function,

12:5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

12:6 We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith;

12:7 ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching;

12:8 the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Matthew 16:13 – 20

16:13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

16:14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

16:15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

16:17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.

16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.

16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

16:20 Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

