

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

September 3, 2023

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

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Liturgist: Karen Randall

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WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME

PRELUDE

Patricia Hammer
Accompanist

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SONG

“Morning Has Broken”

GTG #664

Morning has broken like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain’s new fall sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness where God’s feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning,
born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God’s re-creation of the new day!

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather as a community of compassion and hope.

Jesus calls us to care for each other tenderly and willingly.

By this caring and sharing we will be known as followers of Jesus.

By our example others may be led to lives of peace.

Lord, open our hearts and minds this day to your word.

Teach us to serve you with all our gifts and talents. Amen.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of love and mercy, be with us this day. We have faltered in our service to you. We create divisions between various people; we judge before we listen; we condemn before we make any attempt to understand. Our lives are in turmoil and we confess that we have turned away from you.

(silence is kept)

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

It is fear and anger that too often surrounds us and our actions become based on those fears and anger. Slow us down, Lord. Give us hearts overflowing with grace and compassion. Help us to mirror Jesus who loved and healed others who were rejected by “polite” society.

Remind us that we are called to be strong voices of hope for those who feel alienated and lost; we are called to be a home to strangers; to quench thirst and to give nourishment; to welcome and bring words of hope. Forgive us when we have forgotten these things. In Jesus’ Name, we pray. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE READING

Exodus 3:1 – 15

ANTHEM

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

TFWS #2129

I have decided to follow Jesus
I have decided to follow Jesus
I have decided to follow Jesus
No turning back, no turning back

The world behind me, the cross before me
(sing 3x)

No turning back, no turning back

Though none go with me, still I will follow
(sing 3x)

No turning back, no turning back

READING #2

Matthew 16:21 – 28

TIME WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

Rev. Mary Ka Kanahan

MESSAGE

“WHO AM I...?”

Rev. Mary Ka Kanahan

CALL TO GENEROSITY

As God has blessed our lives with abundant love and gifts, let us bring our tithes and offerings to this place, seeking to help others, to offer comfort and hope. Let us receive our morning offering.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to The Lord’s Table

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God our Maker.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, strong and faithful God. From the beginning your Word has summoned light and life.

You give us breath and speech, that all the living might find a voice to sing your praise.

So now, with all the powers of heaven and earth, we proclaim the endless hymn of your glory:

Will you let my love be shown,
Will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown
In you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind
If I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
And never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
Should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer
In you and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see
If I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free
And never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean,
And do such as this unseen,
And admit to what I mean
In you and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
If I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
And never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
To reshape the world around,
Through my sight and touch and sound
In you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
When you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
And never be the same.
In your company I'll go
Where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
In you and you in me.

BENEDICTION

Jesus has called you and placed his trust in you. Go into this world, bearing the words of hope and healing. Reach out to others in compassion. For it is Jesus' name, that you are sent out to serve. **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*



DONATE HERE

Exodus 3:1 – 15

3:1 Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

3:2 There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

3:3 Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up."

3:4 When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."

3:5 Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."

3:6 He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

3:7 Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings,

3:8 and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

3:9 The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them.

3:10 So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

3:11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

3:12 He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."

3:13 But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?"

3:14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

3:15 God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.

Matthew 16:21 – 28

16:21 From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

16:22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you."

16:23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

16:24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

16:25 For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

16:26 For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

16:27 "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done.

16:28 Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."