

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
Sunday, August 16, 2026
Twentieth Sunday of Ordinary Time

PRELUDE

Tommy Clay, Jr.

ACCOLYTES (Bringing in the Light)

At the beginning of worship, the acolytes carry the light of Christ into the sanctuary. This symbolizes Christ's presence among the gathered people — a reminder that we don't create the light ourselves; God brings it to us.

As the candles are lit, we remember Jesus' words, "*I am the light of the world.*" Worship begins in that light.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: Mary Garcia

PASSING OF THE PEACE

May the Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!
And also with you!

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Together we call our family to worship in this way:
(From Psalm 133, NIV)

ALL How good and pleasant it is
when God's people live together in unity!

² It is like precious oil poured on the head,
running down on the beard,
running down on Aaron's beard,
down on the collar of his robe.

³ It is as if the dew of Hermon
were falling on Mount Zion.

For there the Lord bestows his blessing,
even life forevermore.

ALL: Together let us worship God!

GATHERING PRAYER

Leader: *Let us pray together*

All: When we are alone, you make us known to our siblings everywhere.

When we are lonely, you whisper, 'come closer, inviting us into your heart.

Great is your love for us, Welcoming God.

When we wander lost and afraid, you take us by the hand, so we may settle in your kingdom. When we hunger for the crumbs of hope which the world offers to us, you feed us with the fullness of your joy. Great is your grace for us, Accepting Christ.

When those around us make clear they want nothing to do with us, ever, you persist in being our friend. When we stand on despair's welfare line, you invite us to come to a sumptuous feast. Great is your hope for us, Embracing Spirit. AMEN

HYMN "Church in the Wildwood"

There is a church in the valley by the wildwood,
No lovelier spot in the dale;
No place is so dear to my childhood,
As the little brown church in the vale.

Refrain

Come to the church in the wildwood,
Oh, come to the church in the dale,
No spot is so dear to my childhood,
As the little brown church in the vale.

How sweet on a clear, Sabbath morning,
To list to the clear ringing bell;
Its tones so sweetly are calling,
Oh, come to the church in the vale.

Refrain

Come to the church in the wildwood,
Oh, come to the church in the dale,
No spot is so dear to my childhood,
As the little brown church in the vale.

There, close by the church in the valley,
Lies one that I loved so well;
She sleeps, sweetly sleeps, 'neath the willow,
Disturb not her rest in the vale.

Refrain

Come to the church in the wildwood,
Oh, come to the church in the dale,
No spot is so dear to my childhood,
As the little brown church in the vale.

There, close by the side of that loved one,
To trees where the wild flowers bloom,
When the farewell hymn shall be chanted
I shall rest by her side in the tomb.

Refrain

Come to the church in the wildwood,
Oh, come to the church in the dale,
No spot is so dear to my childhood,
As the little brown church in the vale.

From the church in the valley by the wildwood,
When day fades away into night,
I would fain from this spot of my childhood
Wing my way to the mansions of light.

Refrain

Come to the church in the wildwood,
Oh, come to the church in the dale,
No spot is so dear to my childhood,
As the little brown church in the vale.

CONFESSION AND PARDON

ALL: Merciful God, your world cries out. The fruits of our disobedience are harming your creation. You tasked us to be good stewards of your creation and we have fallen short. You challenged us to love God and love our neighbor, and we have failed to show that love. You promise to bring all people joyfully together in a house of prayer on your holy mountain. We find ways to stay apart. Bring us together, O Lord. Empower us with a spirit of love for you and love for all our neighbors. Help us live lives of service to you so that all your children will know your peace.

(And now in this moment of silence, those sins which are ours alone.)

ALL: Forgive us when we fall short and continue to transform your world, leading us to your promised kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen

GLORIA PATRI "Glory Be to the Father" Hymn #581

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end, Amen."

ANTHEM "Creation Will Be At Peace" Chancel Choir

CHILDRENS CHURCH

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE (NRSV UPDATED EDITION)

First Reading

Genesis 45:1-15 p.33, OT

Second Reading

Romans 8:12-25 p.120, NT

Gospel Reading

Matthew 15:1-28 p.13, NT

Genesis 45:1-15 p.33, OT

Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

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

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. 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. 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. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors. 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. 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. 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. 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.' ¹² And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. 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." ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

Romans 8:12-25 p.120, NT

¹² So then, brothers and sisters, we are obligated, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— ¹³ for if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if we in fact suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

Future Glory

¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope

we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Matthew 15:1-28 p.13, NT

The Tradition of the Elders

15 Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, ² “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands before they eat.” ³ He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? ⁴ For God said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.’ ⁵ But you say that whoever tells father or mother, ‘Whatever support you might have had from me is given to God, then that person need not honor the father. ⁶ So, for the sake of your tradition, you nullify the word of God. ⁷ You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied rightly about you when he said: ⁸ ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; ⁹ in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.’ ”

Things That Defile

¹⁰ Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: ¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.” ¹² Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” ¹³ He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” ¹⁵ But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” ¹⁶ Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

The Canaanite Woman’s Faith

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 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." 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." ²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶ He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷ She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"A Bit of Satire"

Terry Albright

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Confession of 1967)

God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women. The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God's love. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (with the Lord's Prayer)

Hymnal p.35

ALL: 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING/OFFERING MUSIC

Tommy Clay, Jr.

DOXOLOGY

Hymn #606

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.”

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

HYMN “Fight the Good Fight” Hymn #846

1 Fight the good fight with all thy might.
Christ is thy strength and Christ thy right.
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
thy joy and crown eternally.

2 Run the straight race through God's good grace;
lift up thine eyes, and seek Christ's face.
Life with its way before us lies;
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

3 Cast care aside; lean on thy guide.
God's boundless mercy will provide.
Trust, and thy trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

4 Faint not nor fear: God's arms are near.
God changeth not, and thou art dear.
Only believe, and thou shalt see
that Christ is all in all to thee.

ACCOLYTES (Taking the Light Out)

At the end of the service, the acolytes take the flame back out of the sanctuary. This is not extinguishing Christ's presence — it is sending it.

The light that gathered us now goes ahead of us into the world, where we are called to carry Christ's love, justice, and compassion into our daily lives.

BLESSING AND CHARGE

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE “Because He Lives”

Because He lives I can face tomorrow
Because He lives all fear is gone

Because I know He holds the future.
And life is worth the living just because He lives

POSTLUDE

Tommy Clay, Jr.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: (Details on our website, Facebook, Realm & 386-385-3040.)

Volunteers Needed for Children & Youth Ministries

We need **2 volunteers each Sunday** to help lead Children's Church. We are also seeking adults willing to support and grow our children's and youth ministries throughout the year. These ministries simply cannot thrive without dedicated volunteers. If you feel called to serve, please contact Terry Albright.

This week's prayer: God of mercy, send gentle, life-giving rain to the dry and burning places of our world. Protect firefighters, emergency workers, and all who risk their lives to respond with courage and compassion. Shelter those threatened by wildfire and disaster, strengthen their communities, and guide us all toward wise care for your creation.

Church Activities

Small Groups-Sunday 9:15 am; Wed. 4:30 pm.

Presbyterian Women-recess until September.

Social Connections-Thurs. 1pm in Zoom Rm.

Quilting Group-Friday's at 10:00 in the Zoom Room.

Outreach Ministries

Shower Ministry-Thurs. from 2-4pm

Meridian/Grace Market Place-Thurs. 2-4pm in the Bartram Rm.

CDC (Chemical Dependency Counseling)-Mon. 8-12; T, W, Sat. 8-6.

All Together Youth Group-every 2nd & 4th Wednesday at 7pm. Starting August 26th. Contact Suzie Cornelio for more information.

Barron Rice Music Studio

Choir starts August 24th!

We're getting ready to welcome the Azalea City Children's Chorus back for our fall semester—and we're so excited about our beautiful new rehearsal and performance home at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Palatka.

This semester, students will spend Monday mornings making music together, building friendships, and learning the traditional Christmas hymns and carols every young singer

should know as we prepare for our Christmas Candlelight Concert.

Ages 6–16, No audition required, Mondays, 11:00AM–12:00PM
There’s still time to join us for a beautiful semester of music, friendship, and Christmas hymns!

Church Calendar

8/22 ARK	9:00am-3:30pm	Zoom Rm
8/31 SMA	4:00pm-8:30pm	WH
9/7 RCMA	8:00am-3:30pm	WH, Zoom
Rm		
9/19 Private Event	TBD	WH



The Building and Grounds committee invites everyone to a church workday on Saturday, August 22nd with the intent of painting 2 walls of Westminster Hall. Contact Elliott Kane for more details.



Sara Josephson
October 17, 1967-August 7, 2026

We share with tender hearts the passing of **Sara Josephson**, a beloved and longtime member of our church family. Sara carried a beautiful call to minister to children—both within our congregation and throughout her work life.

Her gentleness, her joy, and her unwavering commitment to nurturing young hearts reflected Christ's love in every season of her life.

Sara will be greatly missed. Yet we give thanks that she is now held in the eternal care of the Lord she loved so deeply.

A **Celebration of Life** for Sara Josephson will be held on **Saturday, August 22nd at 3:00pm** at the **Rodeheaver Boy's Ranch**, 380 Boys Ranch Rd., Palatka, FL 32177.

May her memory be a blessing, and may God's comfort surround all who loved her.