



August 16, 2026, 10:30 am
12th Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome to worship! Led by the Holy Spirit, we glorify God, nurture the faith with each other, and witness the fullness of Christ's love in the world. Beyond the pews, we hope you will grow in faith with us on Sunday mornings and throughout the week.

Our service today includes the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. All are invited to share in this joyful feast of the people of God as you are served in your pew. Children are welcome in the Sanctuary throughout the service and are encouraged to visit our worship corner in the front left of the Sanctuary and borrow a variety of resources. After the moment with the children, toddlers and preschoolers may leave with staff and volunteers to play on the playground or in the nursery in the Education Building.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

✠We rise in body or spirit.
We say words in bold together.

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Elizabeth Lovell Milford

Silent prayer of preparation

Almighty God, whose compassion embraces everyone, gather the outcast and the lost, heal the wounds of fear and distrust, and make us a community of reconciliation that we may embody your merciful love and rejoice in your astounding grace in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Call to Worship *based on Psalm 133*

Liturgist: Rev. Mary Bielen

Though we may be inclined to brag, let us come together with humility;

How good a thing it is when all of God's people live together in unity.

Though we may be tempted to use harsh words,

let us come together with gentleness;

How good a thing it is when all of God's people live together in unity.

Though we may want everything to happen quickly,

let us come together with patience.

How good a thing it is when all of God's people live together in unity.

Though the world around often encourages hate, let us come together in love.

How good a thing it is when all of God's people live together in unity.

Come, let us worship the God who has called us together.

✠Hymn 445

God, How Can We Forgive

God, how can we forgive when bonds of love are torn?

How can we rise and start anew, our trust reborn?

When human loving fails and every hope is gone,

your love gives strength beyond our own to face the dawn.

When we have missed the mark, and tears of anguish flow,

how can you still release our guilt, the debt we owe?

The ocean depth of grace surpasses all our needs.

A priest who shares our human pain, Christ intercedes.

Who dares to throw the stone to damn another's sin,

when you, while knowing all our past, forgive again?

No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.

As you, O God, forgive our sin, may we forgive.

✠Prayer of Confession

Have mercy on us, Lord. Our lives have been disrupted by the sin and evil of this world. We are haunted by the past, plagued by the present, and fearful of the future. We are stunned by the awful fallout of our own failures. We cannot take back what we have said or undo what we have

done or atone for the agony we have caused. We shrink away from your gaze as strangers outside your circle of blessing. Yet the faith you have planted in us reaches out for your favor, returns to your presence, and hungers for your mercy. Forgive us and strengthen us to trust in your mercy, reaching out for your healing and receiving your reconciliation through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

✠Assurance of Pardon

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! **Thanks be to God.**

✠Joyful Response (Hymn 591 refrain)

Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lujah! Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lujah!
Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

✠Peace and Greeting

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading: *Matthew 15:10-20*

p. 20 in the pew Bible

Moment with the Children

Corey Chewning

Anthem

Benedictus

Scripture Reading: *Genesis 45:1-15*

p. 52 in the pew Bible

This is the word of faith that we proclaim. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Family Reunions

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

✠Affirmation of Faith from *The Confession of 1967* (inclusive language text)

To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God's reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God's message of reconciliation and shares God's labor of healing the enmities which separate people from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church maintains continuity with the apostles and with Israel by faithful obedience to his call. . . . In the power of the risen Christ and the hope of his coming, the church sees the promise of

God's renewal of human life in society and of God's victory over all wrong.

✠Hymn 510 *We Gather Here in Jesus' Name (Come, Share the Lord)*

*We gather here in Jesus' name;
his love is burning in our hearts like living flame;
for through the loving Son the Father makes us one:
come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.
No one is a stranger here; everyone belongs.
Finding our forgiveness here, we in turn forgive all wrongs.*

*He joins us here; he breaks the bread;
the Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead;
the one we love the most is now our gracious host:
come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.
We are now a family, of which the Lord is head.
Though unseen, he meets us here in the breaking of the bread.*

*We'll gather soon where angels sing;
we'll see the glory of our Lord and coming King;
now we anticipate the feast for which we wait:
come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.*

CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy God, you made the world to hum in harmony . . .
proclaiming the great mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

By your Spirit, make us one. . . for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, who
taught us to pray: **Our Father . . .forgive us our debts, as we forgive
our debtors.**

Breaking of the Bread

Communion of the People

Today communion will be served in the pews. You are welcome to consume the elements in a moment of personal prayer or hold them until all have been served so we may partake together. All the bread is gluten-free and the cups contain grape juice. These are the gifts of God for the people of God!

Prayer After Receiving

SENDING

✠Hymn 754

Help Us Accept Each Other

*Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe
we are ourselves accepted, and meant to love and live.*

*Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
we struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them, or as they may become.*

*Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
in living situations to do the truth in love;
to practice your acceptance until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness, and laughter's healing art.*

*Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,
who hunger for acceptance, for justice and for bread,
we need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on:
renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us; make us one!*

✠Charge and Benediction

✠Postlude

Rejoice, Ye Pure In Heart

arr. F. Ritter

*Go in peace, holding quiet space for those who wish to reflect and pray.
Please join us in the Fellowship Hall for our 3rd Sunday Lunch,
hosted by our youth!*



Serving in Worship Today:

Organist & Guest Choir Director: Amy Shirk

Ushers: Marjolijn Bijlefeld, Steve Spratt

Elevator Assistant: John Howe

Communion Servers: Connie Barnes, Marjolijn Bijlefeld, Porter Blakemore, Susie Davis, Joan Gaston, Mike Gibson, Bruce Harvey, John Howe, Elizabeth Rehm

Sanctuary Guild: Doreen Vaughn

Videographer: Vicky Wilder, Ed Foresman

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God, How Can We Forgive —Text: Ruth Duck, 1994; Music: Jewish melody, 17th cent.,; adapt. Meyer Lyon and Thomas Olive 1770;

The Pilgrim Press; Text © 1996

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah! —Text: Ref., trad, liturgical text; stanzas, Marty Haugen; Music: Caribbean melody; arr. John L. Bell, 1990;

stanzas, Mary Haugen, 1990; Text and Music: Iona Community (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) ©1990

Benedictus —Text: Brian Lewis; Alfred Publishing Company Inc.; ©2004

We Gather Here in Jesus' Name —Text and Music: Bryan Jeffery Leech; Fred Bock Music Co., Inc. ; ©1984

Help Us Accept Each Other —Text: Fred Kaan, 1974; Music: Doreen Potter, 1974; Hope Publishing Company; © 1975

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