

Order of Worship

7th Sunday after Pentecost
July 12, 2026



Gathering and announcements *In Christ Alone*

Prelude *I will Sing of My Redeemer* – arr. John Wilson

***Call to worship** (from Psalm 119:105-11)

All who walk in shadow, come into the light!

God's Word lights the way for us.

God has promised to abide with us.

So let us commit to walk in God's ways.

All who are afflicted, ensnared by the world, come give praise to God.

**God is the joy of our heart, our sure and certain comfort,
come what may!**

***Opening Hymn # 15** *All Creatures of Our God and King*

***Call to confession**

God does not promise us a life without struggle or hardship; yet how often do we make what is already difficult even more so? Yet the grace of God is that the sorrows we inflict upon ourselves cannot last forever; so, let us unburden ourselves, confessing the ways in which we struggle against God that we may receive that grace anew.

***Prayer of confession**

Gracious Creator, you created this world and called it good, and out of it called a pilgrim people, chosen to abide with you and to bear witness to your reality. Yet we, who have been called "Beloved" by you, often find ourselves making peace with what does not give peace. Meet us in our weakness; turn our unwilling eyes upon our unruly hearts. Draw us away from our love of power, our tolerance of injustice, our ignorance of suffering. Drive us towards what is fearfully and wonderfully made, so that we may inspire hope, offer forgiveness, and love our neighbors through faithful living, according to the way of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

(Silence is kept)

***Assurance of pardon**

For those who are in Christ, there is no condemnation; for by Christ's death and resurrection, God has done what the law and works of human righteousness alone could not: breathed new life through the Holy Spirit into the world, turning it upside down. Believe this scandalous, joyous good news: through Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and restored to new life. **Alleluia! Amen!**

Anthem *As a Little Child* – by Joseph Martin Arthur & Julie McPhail

Prayer for illumination

Holy Creator, the earth is yours, and all that is in it. We give you thanks for the beauty of the earth, for the creatures that fill it, and for your providence, which stands beneath and above and within it all.

Now grant us hearts open to your grace, eyes open to your wonders and ears open to your Holy Word. Let your Holy Spirit dwell with us, that we may be renewed in our commitment to the way, the truth and the life of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Scripture readings Genesis 25: 19 – 34; Romans 8: 1 - 11:
Matthew 13: 22 – 33

Message

Ruling Elder Duke Monroe

***Affirmation of faith** (from the Barmen Declaration)

The Christian Church is the congregation of the brethren in which Jesus Christ acts presently as the Lord in Word and Sacrament through the Holy Spirit. As the Church of pardoned sinners, it has to testify in the midst of a sinful world.

So we reject the false doctrine, as though the church in human arrogance could place the Word and work of the Lord in the service of any arbitrarily chosen desires, purposes, and plans. Amen.

Hymn # 519 *You Are My Strength When I am Weak

Call for the offering

The God who demands nothing of us, but instead invites us to inhabit the infinite ocean of grace poured out through our savior, Jesus Christ. It is this generosity that gives us life, and it is in our own acts of generosity that we join in this larger life. So let us give joyfully, thanking God for the wonders of Christ's love.

Offertory *This is My Father's World* – arr. Penny Rodriguez

***Doxology # 606 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow**

***Prayer of dedication**

Most generous God, you have blessed us with gifts to serve and share. May the offerings we present today be used to further your Kingdom and build your beloved community. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Holy God, you are a mystery hidden beyond all sense and understanding, yet you are as near to us as our very breath. As we breathe this word of prayer together, allow your Holy Spirit to enter into the deepest ground of our being, and bind us as one body with you and all the communion of the faithful in every time and place.

Lord, we live in a time of great struggle: of nation against nation, party against party, neighbor against neighbor. So many struggle to put food on the table, or keep a roof over their head, or to provide care to those they love. Meet us in the struggle and comfort us with your quiet courage to struggle on.

Holy Jesus, you know us by name; hear us now as we name those who need your tender care. (*Silence is kept*)

God, your thoughts are not our thoughts, and your ways are not our ways, yet we abide in your peace for you have given it freely to us. Loosen our anxiously tightened hearts; open our fearfully clenched hands; shake us out of our screen-induced reveries. Let us see the world with a new vision:

through the eyes of faith, let us perceive your way of justice in places of injustice. Let us recognize the humanity in those who are treated inhumanely. Let us know that you are God alone, and that in serving you, we are made stronger.

Bless these prayers, and those offered in the silence of our hearts, and receive them with grace, as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, saying “**Our Father...**”

Hymn of Sending # 32 *I Sing the Mighty Power of God

Charge and blessing (Numbers 6:24-26)

Go forth from this place to struggle for God’s glory, to be a “happy warrior” for peace, knowing that Christ goes before us, to make a way out of no way.

Now may the Lord bless us and keep us; may the Lord make His face to shine upon us and be gracious unto us. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon those whom we love, both this day and forevermore. **Alleluia! Amen.**

Prelude *Come We That Love the Lord*

Jessye Whitis, Music Director and Pianist; Carol Tyson, Organist; Worship Leader, Ruling Elder Mark Kintner; Liturgist, Patricia Rye

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