



EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SUNDAY, JULY 26, 2020

— *Gathering* —

PRELUDE #766 ***"The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound"*** Tice, 2005

WELCOME Rev. Michele R. Goff

OPENING SENTENCES

A tiny seed that burgeons into a majestic tree with branches that offer shelter and shade;
or yeast, hidden within a bushel of flour, that transforms the dough in due time:

this is what the kingdom of heaven is like.

We gather 'round Jesus—our teacher and Lord—seeking wisdom and understanding,
longing for a foretaste of the kingdom of heaven.

Let anyone with ears to hear listen!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

HYMN #336 (559) ***"We Gather Together"*** Valerius, 1626
(Alternate hymn numbers are for the old blue hymnals.)

CONFESSION

Trusting that the Spirit pleads for us, let us come before the Lord in honest confession.

God, your kingdom confounds us. You challenge our assumptions about right living and stretch our understanding of what holds worth. You reverse our expectations and reorder our priorities until they reflect your vision of well-being for all. Your kingdom surprises us with grace upon grace. But we cling to the values of this world, which privilege products over people, success over service, and competition for resources over the common good. Open us to new ways of living that embody your desire for creation and contribute to a commonwealth marked by justice and joy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel: ***in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!***

— *Word* —

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE

Our first lesson today is from Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 8 verses 26 through 39. The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. Listen to the word of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

Our gospel lesson is from the gospel according to Matthew chapter 13 verses 31 through 33, continuing with verses 44 through 52. Listen to the word of the Lord.

Keep these words in your heart. The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. ***Thanks be to God.***

ASCRPTION OF PRAISE

— *Response* —

HYMN #687 (210) "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"

Watts, 1719

(Alternate hymn numbers are for the old blue hymnals.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Loving God, you cause rain to fall on the just and the unjust.

Hear our prayers for your church and world:

for the hungry and the overfed, **may we have enough;**

for the mourners and the mockers, **may we laugh together;**

for the victims and the oppressors, **may we share power wisely;**

for the peacemakers and the warmongers, **may clear truth and stern love lead us to harmony;**

for the silenced and the propagandists, **may we speak our own words in truth;**

for the unemployed and the overworked, **may our mark on this earth be kindly and creative;**

for the troubled and the secure, **may we live together as wounded healers;**

for the homeless and the pampered, **may our homes be simple, warm, and welcoming;**

for the vibrant and the dying, **may we all die to sin and live to love. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER—UNISON

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 and the power and the glory, forever, Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

At this time in the service, we would usually collect our gifts and offerings. Even though we are worshipping differently, we are still doing the work of the church. We are thankful that you continue to support our church and her ministries with your time, talent and treasure.

Thank you!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of unending gifts, we praise you for your abundant goodness. As you are generous, we want to be generous too. May the gifts we bring extend your generosity into the world, so that all people may be made whole by your goodness and grace. Amen.

— *Sending* —

BLESSING AND CHARGE

May the blessing of the Trinity—holy, holy, holy Lord—be with you now and always. **Alleluia!**

Lead a life worthy of your calling, giving glory to God in all things. **Amen.**

HYMN #643 (555) "Now Thank We All Our God"

Rinkart, 1636

(Alternate hymn numbers are for the old blue hymnals.)

"Serving God, Honoring Creation, Embracing Differences"

