



EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY

AFTER PENTECOST

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2020

— Gathering —

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Rev. Michele R. Goff

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist, Steve Lowe

MUSIC

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Our God who is, Our Creator God, Our Heavenly Father, Bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships. Bless us with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people. Bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war. Bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world. In the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

CONFESSION

Offering honest confession, let us return to the Lord, whose ordinances are more desirable than gold and sweeter than honey.

God of the Covenant, long ago you gave us the law to guide us in the ways of righteousness. When we wandered, you called prophets to beckon us toward faithfulness. In the fullness of time, you sent your Son to heal our brokenness and draw us close to you. But, time and again, we reject your gift of grace. We bow before the false gods of our world and forget your command to serve the least of these. We fill our days with self-serving agendas or trivial tasks and neglect to nurture our relationship with you. Forgive us, Lord. Come to us again, we pray, and set us on right paths. Root out habits that separate us from you and sow within us seeds of mercy and love so that we might produce the fruits of your kingdom.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Believe the good news: We have been raised to new life and made righteous by God's gift of peace. *Thanks be to God.*

— Word —

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE

Our gospel lesson today is from the gospel according to Matthew chapter 21, verses 33 through 46. The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. 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.*

SERMON

"The Vineyard, the Tenants, and Bearing Fruit"

Rev. Michele R. Goff

ASCRPTION OF PRAISE

To the Lord our God, Alpha and Omega, be all glory and honor forever. *Amen.*

MUSIC

— Response —

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

From every place on this planet, we turn our face to you, O God. Gather us, all your people, together, to pray. In the midst of the forces which would separate us, bind us in your love as the Church, together. Strengthen us through the grace of your people gathered, no matter how we gather, with the truth of your presence.

In a world aching to be made new, we cry out with those who suffer the pains of what powers and principalities extract from the world's poorest. We cry out with those suffering from illness and disease, at whom the world turns a callous glance. We cry out with those stinging from the sins of white supremacy. We cry out with those seeking justice, equality, and peace — peace, at all times, in all ways.

In a world stretching toward wholeness, we celebrate with those whose lives bear the fruit of your Spirit and seek to share in your call to partnership. We celebrate with those whose efforts are making the world new. We celebrate with all who gather to earnestly seek your transforming work in the world.

Make us a world that grows into the shape of your communion table, where all are welcomed and all are fed. Make us a people who grow your family by practices of mutuality, generosity and justice.

And may we be found to be witnesses, when Jesus returns, to the truth of who we were created to be — people who belong to each other, people who belong to you, O God, in your Son, Jesus. Amen.

MUSIC

LORD'S PRAYER—UNISON

MUSIC

Joshua Allen

COMMUNION NOTE

Reminder: Communion will be VIRTUAL via Facebook Live streaming at 5:30 on Thursday, or you may read the prayers that were included in your weekly packet. We rejoice that we worship the Lord who transcends space and time as we practice this extension of the Eucharistic table.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

We continue to do the work of the church. We are thankful for your dedicated commitment.

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to present yourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Let us offer our lives to the Lord.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of the harvest, you are continually planting the seeds of your love in our world and in our lives. As we bring our gifts to you, may they be seeds of your grace, peace, and hope, planted deeply in our community. Amen.

— Sending —

BLESSING AND CHARGE

The blessing of the holy, triune God,
who was and is and is to come—
first and last,
beginning and end,
Alpha and Omega—
be with you now and always. **Alleluia!**

Go in peace to love the Lord your God
with heart and soul and mind and strength,
and to love your neighbor as yourself. **Amen.**

MUSIC

“Serving God, Honoring Creation, Embracing Differences”

