



Third Sunday after Pentecost

June 29, 2025 9:00 a.m.

We kindly ask that you silence your cellphones and electronic devices as we create a sacred space for contemplation and prayer.

† - Please rise in body or in spirit.

Chiming the Hour

Welcome & Announcements

God Gathers the Scattered

Prelude *Prélude from "Prélude, Fugue et Variation" (op. 18)* Franck

† Call to Worship¹ Rick Phillips

One: God's voice is calling! "My beloved children, scattered across the valleys of despair and mountains of struggle, I call you home!"

Many: **We come, O God, hungry for your presence and thirsty for your justice.**

One: "Come, you who feel powerless against the forces that would crush your spirit—I am weaving courage into your hearts!"

Many: **We come, seeking the strength to resist what diminishes us and others.**

One: "Come, all you who need to hear again that my dignity cannot be taken away from you—you are my beloved, and in you I am well pleased!"

Many: **We come to worship you, the God who defies gravity, who lifts up the lowly and calls us all to rise!**

All: **Let us worship the God of holy resistance and sacred possibility!**

† Hymn *God of Grace and God of Glory* UMH 577

1. God of grace and God of glory
On Thy people pour Thy power
Crown Thine ancient church's story
Bring her bud to glorious flower
Grant us wisdom grant us courage
For the facing of this hour
For the facing of this hour

2. Lo the hosts of evil 'round us
Scorn Thy Christ assail His ways
From the fears that long have bound us
Free our hearts to faith and praise
Grant us wisdom grant us courage
For the living of these days
For the living of these days

3. Cure Thy children's warring madness
Bend our pride to Thy control
Shame our wanton selfish gladness
Rich in things and poor in soul
Grant us wisdom grant us courage
Lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal
Lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal

4. Save us from weak resignation
To the evils we deplore
Let the search for Thy salvation
Be our glory evermore
Grant us wisdom grant us courage
Serving Thee whom we adore
Serving Thee whom we adore

† Opening Prayer¹

Unison

**Almighty God,
who heard the cries of your people in Egypt
and called them out of bondage into freedom,
and who in Christ Jesus proclaimed release to the captives
and liberty to the oppressed:
Grant us the courage of Queen Vashti to say NO
to those who would diminish our dignity.
Weave into our hearts that same Spirit of holy resistance
that enables us to stand with those at the mercy of others
and speak truth to power.
Help us to trust that even our smallest acts
of defiance against oppression
become threads in your great tapestry of liberation.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who defied the gravity of sin and death
and steels us to follow in his way of sacrificial love. Amen.**

God Speaks the Word to Us

Children's Moment

Sierra Cummins

A Dramatic Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Esther 1:1 – 2:7a

Ahasuerus, King of Persia Rick Phillips *A Servant of the King* Lisa Rittenhouse
Memucan, a noble Gavin Rittenhouse *Narrator* Sam Parkes

One: Word of God, Word of Life!

Many: Thanks be to God!

Musical Offering

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
Laura Tongring, Flute

arr. Kathie Hill

God Inspires Us to Respond

Prayer to Reclaim Our Worth & Dignity²

by Cole Arthur Riley

**God in us, we know the miracle inherent in our existence.
 We are here, our beauty stretching out and dwelling within us.
 But it is hard to believe in one's dignity
 when the systems and societies to which we belong
 are content to destroy us.
 We have heard lies of our worthlessness
 in the explicit and implicit ways the world interacts
 with our bodies, stories, and homes.
 It is incessant—this lie of our own inadequacy,
 this charade of our inferiority.
 Remind us that our dignity does not wane or bud
 in relation to anyone's belief in it, including our own.
 Let us rest with the knowledge that we have nothing to prove;
 our dignity, perpetual as it is divine.
 We will not shrink. We expand. Remind us of our making.
 For we too contain the divine. Amen.**

Hymn

Loving Spirit

TFWS 2123

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|--|---|
| <p>1. Loving Spirit loving Spirit
 You have chosen me to be
 You have drawn me to Your wonder
 You have set Your sign on me</p> | <p>3. Like a father You protect me
 Teach me the discerning eye
 Hoist me up upon Your shoulder
 Let me see the world from high</p> |
| <p>2. Like a mother You enfold me
 Hold my life within Your own
 Feed me with Your very body
 Form me of Your flesh and bone</p> | <p>4. Friend and lover in Your closeness
 I am known and held and blessed
 In Your promise is my comfort
 In Your presence I may rest</p> |
| <p>5. Loving Spirit loving Spirit
 You have chosen me to be
 You have drawn me to Your wonder
 You have set Your sign on me</p> | |

† The Peace

One: The Peace of the Lord Jesus be always with you. **Many: And also with you.**

The Offering

Offertory *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* arr. B. Kolodziej

† Doxology UMH 94

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

† Prayer of Gratitude

God Sends Us to the World

† Hymn *We Shall Overcome* UMH 533

We shall overcome	We shall all be free (2X)
We shall overcome someday	We shall all be free someday.
O deep in my heart I do believe	O deep in my heart I do believe
We shall overcome someday	We shall all be free someday.
We'll walk hand in hand (2X)	We shall live in peace (2X)
We'll walk hand in hand someday	We shall live in peace someday
O deep in my heart I do believe	O deep in my heart I do believe
We'll walk hand in hand someday	We shall live in peace someday
The Lord will see us through (2X)	
The Lord will see us through someday	
O deep in my heart I do believe	
The Lord will see us through someday	

† Dismissal with Blessing

The pastor blesses those gathered and concludes:

One: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord! **All: Thanks be to God!**

Postlude *Defying Gravity* arr. V. Harris

¹ Text generated by claude.ai, Anthropic, June 25, 2025, altered for worship by Sam Parkes.

² Cole Arthur Riley, *Black Liturgies*, First edition (New York: Convergent, 2024).