



FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

NEWPORT-MT. OLIVET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

September 1, 2024

11:00 a.m.

GATHERING & PRAISE

PRELUDE Connie Sublett & Jean Williams

WELCOME & OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY Nancy Sasser

* CALL TO WORSHIP based on the Song of Solomon

One: Here, our Beloved speaks to us;
the voice of our Beloved sounds in our hearts:

All: calling us to generous acts, to share the gifts we have been given.

One: Now, our Beloved speaks to us;
the voice of our Beloved sounds in our land:

All: calling us to generous acts, to open our hearts to all in need.

One: In every place, in every moment, our Beloved speaks to us;
the voice of our Beloved sounds in all creation:

**All: calling us to generous acts, to stand with God's people:
the least, the lost, and the left out.**

* HYMN OF PRAISE *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* UMH 140

* PRAYER OF APPROACH

One: Let us pray:

**All: Eternal Creator, you have been good, beyond all deserving.
All we have and are is the gift of your love.
You have surrounded us with your light and love,
with beauty and with friends.
You have placed hope in our hearts.
As we unite in worship, make us alert to every desire you have for us.
Where our hearts are hardened, soften them.
Where our minds are closed to your truth, open them.
Where our feet are slow to follow you, urge us on.
Do all of this and more, as you know our need,
in this time of worship together. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

One: And now, with the confidence of children of God we pray:

**All: 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

SHARING THE BREAD & CUP

The United Methodist Church celebrates an open Communion Table.
According to The United Methodist Book of Worship:

All who intend to lead a Christian life, together with their children are invited to receive the bread and cup. We have no tradition of refusing any who present themselves desiring to receive the bread and cup.

If you are unable to come forward, we will be happy to come and serve you in the pew. All ages are welcome to receive these gifts of God's grace.



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

One: Let us pray:

**All: Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.
Grant that we may go into the world
in the strength of your Spirit,
to give ourselves for others,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SENDING FORTH

* HYMN OF DEDICATION *The Gift of Love* UMH 408

* COMMISSION & BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE

Connie Sublett & Jean Williams

* Indicates congregation standing (if able)
UMH = United Methodist Hymnal

Where Is the Church?

(Ann Weems, adapted)

The church of Jesus Christ...

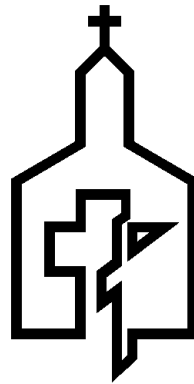
is where lepers come to be touched
is where the blind see and the deaf hear
is where the lame run and the dying live
is where daisies bloom out of barren land
is where children lead and wise men follow
is where mountains are moved and walls come tumbling down

is where loaves of bread are stacked in the sanctuary to feed the hungry
is where coats are taken off and put on the backs of the naked
is where barefoot children run giggling in procession
is where the anthem is the laughter of the congregation
and the offering plates are full of people

is where people go when they skin their knees or their hearts
is where night is day
is where the ark floats and the lamb lies down with the lion
is where people can disagree and hold hands at the same time

is where trumpets and drums and tambourines declare God's goodness
is where lost lambs are found
is where people write thank-you notes to God
is where seeds are scattered and miracles are grown
is where judges don't judge and each child of God is beautiful and precious

The church of Jesus Christ is where we live responsively toward God's coming.
Even on Monday morning the world will hear an abundance of alleluias!



**THE FLOWERS
APPEAR ON THE EARTH;
THE TIME OF SINGING
HAS COME**



SONG OF SOLOMON 2:12, NRSV

SUNG RESPONSE

(to the tune of *Morning Has Broken*)

**Christ, you have called us here to your table,
loving us deeply, new life begun.
We bring our gifts now, blessed to be blessing,
your living Body, risen as one.**

One: And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

All: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

One: Generous God, pour out your Holy Spirit
upon those who gather around your table,
and upon the gifts of the Bread and Cup.
As they are the body of your Servant and the Spirit of your compassion,
may we become the healing and hope for which the world longs.
As you touch our lips with your life,
may we be quick to speak of justice.
As you pour grace into our hearts,
may we be the doers of your Word—
those whose hands are stained by generous acts of kindness:
feeding the hungry, clothing the naked,
lifting the fallen to their feet,
and comforting all who are broken.
Then, when your Spirit unites us at your table in heaven,
as we clasp hands with all your beloved,
we will sing your love song for all eternity:
God in Community, Holy in One.

SUNG RESPONSE

(to the tune of *Morning Has Broken*)

**Spirit, revive us, breathe in us brightly,
love in us bravely, shining with light.
Feed us your grace now, that in our living,
daily we may fulfill your delight.**

PROCLAMATION & RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Song of Solomon 2:8-13, NRSV

⁸The voice of my beloved! Look, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. ⁹My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice. ¹⁰My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; ¹¹for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. ¹²The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. ¹³The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

One: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word.

All: Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

Heard It in a Love Song

Pastor Fleischer

INVITATION

One: Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him,
who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another.
Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

CONFESSION & PARDON

**All: Dearest God, we admit that we take for granted all you have given us.
At dawn, you embrace us as the mist that shrouds the mountains.
At dusk, your power is revealed in the crimson hues of a fiery sunset.
Yet, we are so busy with the burdens and tasks of life,
that we miss the expressions of your love in the creation around us.
Our lives are so filled with noise,
that we are unable to hear your love song in the spry call of the sparrow
or echoing in the soulful cooing of a dove.
Evidence of your love surrounds us, and yet,
we continue to struggle with feelings of abandonment and loneliness.
Forgive us, O God, for our neglect to express our love for you.
Forgive us for placing conditions on our relationships with you and others,
and not sharing our love in the boundless ways in which you love us.**

moment of silent confession

One: Did you hear the voice of the Beloved speaking to you—
whispering words of hope, of grace, of forgiveness
into your heart and into your soul?

This is the good news which is offered for us!

**All: Our hearts overflow with the kindness and generosity
God has planted deep within us.**

Our glad songs of joy are lifted to the One who forgives us.

THANKSGIVING & COMMUNION

OFFERTORY

Jesus, Joy of Our Desiring

Jackie Livesay

* DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

UMH 95

* SHARING OUR GIFTS

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: God be with you!

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to our Creator.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: Living God, we offer our thanks and praise to you;
creator of all things, lover of all humanity.

You revealed your unending love

as you spoke freedom to your people enslaved in Egypt
and led them through the wilderness.

“Come away,” you said, “the winter of your lives is past.
Come away to a land of promise.”

And, having led them to the land of promise,
they remembered your goodness with their mouths,
but failed to reflect your goodness with their lives.

You spoke through the prophets and when their words went unheeded,
you spoke a new Word which would be an eternal reminder
that the language of your love is unchanging and endless
as your word became flesh and lived among us.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

All: Holy, holy, holy! God of new hearts and hope.

Creation resounds with your glory and grace.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the Bread of life who comes in your name.

Hosanna in the highest.

One: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.

Who, through his life, shared your love with all whom he met:

healing the sick,

lifting up the discouraged,

and bringing new life to those suffering from the pain of guilt and shame.

And who, through his death on the cross,

revealed the greatest love that the world has ever known.

By the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection

you gave birth to your church,

delivered us from slavery to sin and death,

and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,

gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

SUNG RESPONSE

(to the tune of *Morning Has Broken*)

God, we give thanks for all of your blessings.

Jesus, once dead, has risen above,

breathing his Spirit into your people,

making us vessels of your great love.

One: When the supper was over he took the cup,

gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."