

GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

You are invited to silently pray as you prepare to offer thanksgiving to God.

Open our eyes and ears to the presence of your Holy Spirit. May the seeds of your Word, scattered among us this morning fall on fertile soil. May they take root in our hearts and lives and produce an abundant harvest of good words and deeds. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Teacher and our Lord. Amen.

VOLUNTARY

*God Himself is Light
Melody Davis*

Robert Shea

*OPENING HYMN 610 O, *For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

CALL TO CONFESSION

In these moments of confession, our Lord encourages us to lay down our burdens, release our fears, let go of our failures, reclaim our hopes, and align ourselves with his deep wisdom. May we do so, trusting in his forgiving grace.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Life-giving God, in resisting your claims on us, we turn our backs on your dreams for us. Forgive us and have mercy. Like Isaac and Rebekah, we are heirs of your trust; like Jacob, we receive your grace even when we have done nothing to deserve it; like Esau, we share in your promises. May Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, sow seeds of faithfulness and hope in our hearts. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

We celebrate the fact that through Jesus Christ "it is in pardoning that we are pardoned and in giving of ourselves that we receive." So we say, Thanks be to God for forgiveness through Christ that is ours and ours to share!

RESPONSE 581 *Glory Be to the Father*

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Jesus loves me this I know; for the Bible tells me so. Thank you for this beautiful book, God. Amen

OLD TESTAMENT READING (*Pew Bible*, page 21)

Genesis 25: 21-34

²¹Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. ²²The children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is to be this way, why do I live?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. ²³And the Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger." ²⁴When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. ²⁶Afterward his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. ²⁷When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. ²⁸Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

ANTHEM

*The Best of Rooms
Sanctuary Choir*

Gerald Near

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!"

Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

The grass withers; the flowers fade, but this, the Word of our Lord, lasts forever. Thanks be to God.

*HYMN 458 *Thy Word is A Lamp*

SERMON

Digging Deeper

Sherry Holloman

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from *The Iona Community in Scotland*

We believe in God above us, maker and sustainer of all life, of sun and moon, of water and earth, of male and female. We believe in God beside us, Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, born of a woman's womb, servant of the poor. He was tortured and nailed to a tree. A man of sorrows, He died forsaken. He descended into the earth to the place of death. On the third day He rose from the tomb. He ascended into heaven to be everywhere present, and His kingdom will come on earth. We believe in God within us, the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire, life-giving breath of the church, Spirit of healing and forgiveness, source of resurrection and life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Jesus planted the seeds of love, faith and hope in our hearts. Jesus says, "Share those seeds with others!"

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

We Gather Here
Sean Turner

arr. Sean Turner

*RESPONSE 606 *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

As we offer to you this morning a small portion of what you have entrusted to us, help us to have hands that hold nothing of this world as tightly as we hold on to you and your son Jesus our Savior. In that holy name, we pray. Amen.

THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

*THE INVITATION

Come to the Lord's Table, all you who love him. Come to the Lord's Table, all who are tired and weary. Come to the Lord's Table all who are carrying heavy burdens. Come to the Lord's Table, confess your sin. Come to the Lord's Table, be at peace.

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts to the Lord.

We lift our hearts to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Holy Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. From the rising of the sun to its setting your name is praised among all peoples. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with your people on earth and all the company of heaven who forever sing this hymn to the glory of your name:

*RESPONSE 556 *Holy, Holy, Holy*

You are holy, Almighty One! Blessed are you, Jesus Christ! In the power of the Spirit you created all things, blessed them, and called them good. You called to yourself a people to make your mercy and truth known in all the world. We betrayed your calling; you were faithful. We wandered from the way; you called us to return, and led us home. And still we turned from your ways, abused your creatures, and made ourselves slaves to sin and death. At the right time you came and dwelt among us, as one of us, bringing good news to the poor, healing the sick, raising the dead, sharing table with the unrighteous, and teaching the way that leads to life. By your incarnation, life, suffering, execution and resurrection you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery and made a new covenant with us by water and the Spirit.

On the night of your betrayal, Lord Jesus, you took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to your disciples and said, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." You did the same with the cup after the supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out is the new covenant in my blood." Blessed Trinity, in remembrance of all you have done to save us, we offer ourselves to you in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

RESPONSE

Lamb of God

arr. Charles Karlen

Pour

out your Spirit on us. Pour out your Spirit on these gifts and make them for us the body and blood of Christ remembered, Christ with us, and Christ yet to come.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

The seed of your kingdom is forever being sown into our lives, our world, O God. but it does not always take root. Sometimes it fails to find a place to grow. And so we pray...

for ourselves and others when life makes us hard and resistant like a well-trodden path where old habits, old systems and old patterns of thinking keep your message from growing; for ourselves and others when we become so immersed in the short-lived, shallow, rock-hiding soil of the moment where your life too easily gets blown away by the wind; for ourselves and others when our fears, insecurities, desires and self-absorption tangle like thorns around your grace and choke it into silence...**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.

SILENT POURING OF THE CUP AND BREAKING OF THE BREAD

RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT

This sacrament is not the possession of this congregation nor of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Lord welcomes you. We welcome you. All persons are invited to receive the sacrament.

RESPONSE (LUYH 20) *Alleluia*

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, you now have set your servants free to go in peace as you have promised. For these eyes of ours have seen the Savior whom you have prepared for all the world to see! Blessing and honor and glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

GOING INTO THE WORLD WITH GOD'S WORD

* INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND BENEDICTION

The grace of God be in our words;
the love and peace of Christ be in our hands;
and the joy of the Holy Spirit be in our souls Amen

*CLOSING HYMN 80 *You Shall Go Out with Joy*