

GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

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

We turn towards you in gratitude seeking to love as we have been loved and pray that this time of worship will be a worthy offering of praise and thanksgiving for the way you lay your guiding hand on our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen

VOLUNTARY

*Minuet 1 from Suite 1
Vilma Pequero, Cello Melody Davis, Piano*

J.S. Bach

*OPENING HYMN 367 *Come Ye Thankful People Come*

CALL TO CONFESSION

In confessing our sin before God, may we find comfort, hope, and forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, you plant each of us like seeds in the same field and together we are nourished and nurtured by the sun. We sway in the wind and are refreshed by the rain. We are blessed by the knowledge that you want us to grow towards what you call us to be. Forgive us when we deprive others of that same opportunity. Help us to reach out to the uprooted and rejected, the lonely and the outcast, and to develop and grow the good in ourselves, in others, and in the world. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God to whom we have been reconciled by Christ. Rejoice then, for we are known, accepted, loved and forgiven

RESPONSE 582 *Glory To God Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

O Lord our God, your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and love, that we may be obedient to your will and live always for your glory through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING (*Pew Bible*, page 25)

Genesis 28: 10-19a

¹⁰Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. ¹²And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; ¹⁴and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. ¹⁵Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." ¹⁶Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!" ¹⁷And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." ¹⁸So Jacob rose early in the

morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. ¹⁹He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

ANTHEM

*Let All Creation Praise The Lord
Men's Ensemble Katie Karlen, Descant*

Paul Loesel

NEW TESTAMENT READING (*Pew Bible*, page 14)

Matthew 13: 24-30,34-43

²⁴He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away.²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well.²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?'²⁸He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?'²⁹But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them.³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

³⁴Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing.³⁵This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world."³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field."³⁷He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man;³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one,³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers,⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

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

*HYMN 406 *We are Standing on Holy Ground*

SERMON

Promised Presence

Sherry Holloman

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from *The Iona Community*

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.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, we give you thanks for the word that you hide like a treasure in our heart, for the leaven which is able to penetrate to every area of our life - for the seed that is able to grow into a mighty plant. Help us to value that which you have given us - to make following Christ the most important thing in our daily lives - to concentrate above all upon doing your will and sharing your love and the good news you have proclaimed through Jesus with one another and with the world.

We give you thanks for the wonders of our heritage and for the new things that you continue to do in our midst. We praise you for the teachings of the prophets, for the law you revealed unto Moses, for the grace and the love that you poured out and continue to pour out through Christ - and for the guidance, the strength, the wisdom, the peace, the joy, the patience, and the gentleness that you bestow upon us through your Spirit. Help us to value both the old and the new and to become worthy teachers of the lessons of your eternal kingdom.

We pray for the people around us this day - for those who are upon our hearts and minds because of a need that they have...

Bless each one according to the need that they have and bring all to a closer walk with you. We ask you to hear all our prayers, O God, in the name of the one who taught us to pray...**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.**

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all of God's benefits.

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

He's Got the Whole World In His Hands
Sanctuary Choir

*RESPONSE 605 *Praise to God the Father*

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord Jesus Christ, you have grown your life in us through the gift of your Spirit. Accept these gifts and the service of our lives as we dedicate ourselves to spread the seeds of your life wherever we go and through whatever we do. In your name we pray. Amen

GOING INTO THE WORLD WITH GOD'S WORD

* INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND BENEDICTION

May the living Lord be with us:

Behind us encouraging us; beside us befriending us; above us watching over us; within us giving us the gifts of faith, hope and faith; beneath us holding us; and always before us showing us the way. Amen

*CLOSING HYMN 310 *I Love Thy Kingdom Lord*