

**Sunday September 12, 2021**  
**WHAT did you say?**

**Prelude**

**Words of Welcome**

**Announcements**

**Call to Worship** *(from Psalm 19)*

**Leader:** Come into this sacred space to worship God

**People:** **whose teaching is perfect; whose directions are sure.**

**Leader:** Come into this holy place to worship God

**People:** **whose standards are right;**  
**whose commandment is clear;**  
**whose judgements are true.**

**Leader:** Come with holy fear –  
to be given life, and made wise,  
to have your heart stirred and your eyes opened wide.  
Come — let us worship God.

**All:** **Let the words of our mouths and the whispering of our hearts**  
**be according to your will, O God. Amen.**

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**Opening Prayer** **Unison**

**O God, Wisdom of the universe,**  
**you bear the pain of your people.**  
**Grant us the gift of wisdom,**  
**that we may discern your way**  
**and live justly and graciously**  
**amid the struggles of this world. Amen.**

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**Hymn #290: Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart**  
*(Please see separate attachment for the score)*

*Hymn Leader: Ken Littlefield*

1) Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;  
wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;  
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as you are,  
and make me love thee as I ought to love.

2) I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,  
no sudden rending of the veil of clay,  
No angel visitant, no opening skies;  
but take the dimness of my soul away.

3) Have you not bid us love you every way?  
All, all your own: soul, heart, and strength, and mind;  
I see your cross - there teach my heart to stay:  
O let me seek you, and O let me find.

4) Teach me to feel that you are always nigh;  
teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,  
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;  
teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

5) Teach me to love you as your angels love,  
one holy passion filling all my frame;  
The baptism of the heaven-descended dove,  
my heart an altar, and your love the flame.

### Prayer of Confession **Unison**

**With hearts of sorrow,  
we come before you, O God,  
to confess what you already know—  
we have failed to keep your laws.  
Again and again,  
we have followed our own selfish will,  
rather than your holy and life-giving will  
for our lives.  
We have twisted your decrees and institutions  
to suit our preconceptions and interests  
rather than your own.  
Forgive us, O God,  
and cleanse us from hidden faults,  
that the words of our mouths,  
and the meditations of all our hearts,  
may be acceptable to you,  
our Rock and our Redeemer.**

## Assurance of Pardon

Leader: God sent Jesus  
to bless and redeem God's people.

All: **God forgives us our sins  
and restores us to new life.  
Let us rejoice in God's mercy.**

AMEN.

## Passing of the Peace

Pastor: The Peace of Christ be with you

People: **And also with you!**

## Reading

Liisa Granfors-Hunt

### James 3:1-12 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. <sup>2</sup> For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. <sup>3</sup> If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. <sup>4</sup> Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. <sup>5</sup> So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! <sup>6</sup> And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. <sup>7</sup> For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, <sup>8</sup> but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup> With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. <sup>10</sup> From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. <sup>11</sup> Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? <sup>12</sup> Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Special Music

Ken Littlefield

## Gospel Reading

### Mark 8:27-38 NRSV

<sup>27</sup> Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” <sup>28</sup> And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” <sup>29</sup> He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.”<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>30</sup> And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

<sup>31</sup> Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup> He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup> But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

<sup>34</sup> He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup> For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for the sake of the gospel will save it. <sup>36</sup> For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? <sup>37</sup> Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? <sup>38</sup> Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Sermon:** WHAT did you say?

## Music for Meditation

## Prayers of the People

**Hymn #537** Christian, Rise and Act Your Creed (verses 1 and 2)

**1) Christian, rise and act your creed;  
let your prayer be in your deed;  
Seek the right, perform the true,  
raise your work and life anew.**

**2) Hearts around you sink with care,  
you can help their load to bear;**

**You can bring inspiring light,  
strengthen them to do the right.**

## **Pastoral Prayer**

### **The Lord's Prayer **Unison****

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Your 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.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For yours is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory  
forever and ever.  
**AMEN.****

## **Offering Invitation**

By mail, by our presence, with our very lives, let us give to God from our time, our talents, and our treasure.

## **Offering and Dedication**

**Leader:** Creator God, we who have been given much now share what we have with the world.

**People:** **We offer these gifts of time, talent, and treasure out of our desire to build a better community.**

**Leader:** May the offering of these gifts change we who give them.

**All:** **May the offering of these gifts change the world in which we live. We offer them in your name, God of our abundance. Amen.**

## **Benediction **Unison****

**We go out into the world knowing God has made the way for us to love and serve our God and our neighbors.  
Thanks be to God!**