

Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church

August 27, 2023

13th Sunday after Pentecost



Welcome Visitors: We are pleased you have chosen to worship with us today. If you have questions concerning the service, please feel free to ask an usher or a person sitting near you. If you do not have a permanent church home, please consider joining us. May God bless your experience in worship with us today. We are here to serve, so please let us know how we might better serve you.

Pastor Russel's contact information:

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Pastor Russel is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

ORDER OF WORSHIP-11:15 AM

CELEBRATION THROUGH CENTERING

PRELUDE

(As the prelude begins, you are invited to center yourself for worship)

GREETING, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

GATHERING WORDS

Our help is in God, who calls us to worship. Our hope is in love, that calls us to care. Come, let us bring our full selves to worship. Let us bring our full love and care.

CELEBRATION THROUGH ADORATION

OPENING HYMN AND BRINGING FORTH THE LIGHT

'At the Name of Jesus'

No. 168

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Family of God, as we gather today, Jesus asks us, "Who do you say that I am?"

People: You are our Messiah, the Son of the living God!

HYMN

'Jesus, Name above All Names'

TFWS No. 2071

***Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.***

Pastor: Family of God, as we gather today, the Holy Spirit asks us, "Who do you say that I am?"

People: You are our Comforter, Advocate, and Sustainer!

HYMN

'Jesus, Name above All Names'

TFWS No. 2071

***Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.***

Pastor: Family of God, as we gather today, God the Father asks us, "Who do you say that I am?"

People: You are our Creator, Provider, and Healer!

HYMN

'Jesus, Name above All Names'

TFWS No. 2071

***Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.***

Pastor: Family of God, as we gather today, the Triune God asks us, "Who do you say that I am?"

People: You are Love that creates, saves, and enfolds us into the family of God! May we be instruments of Love in all that we are and all that we do. Amen.

HYMN

'Jesus, Name above All Names'

TFWS No. 2071

***Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.***

OPENING PRAYER

God, without you on our side, our troubles would swallow us up whole. Guide us, merciful God, as we navigate through the muck and mire in our lives. Help us to trust your guidance.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

God, without you on our side, disasters would overwhelm and sweep us away. Protect us, merciful God, and inspire us to give and receive help when we face times of calamity and destruction.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

God, without you on our side, the suffering of the world would overtake us, arresting us with the enormity of human need all around us. Help our hearts remain tender, merciful God, that we would meet the suffering in ourselves, our families, and our neighbors with compassion and care.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

God, without you on our side, the conflicts and discord that surround us would leave us full of distrust and suspicion. Heal us, merciful God, that we may be agents of restoration, peace, and help everywhere we go.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Thanks be to God who guides, protects, heals, and helps us now and forevermore. Amen.

INTROIT

'His Name Is Wonderful'

No. 174

CHILDREN'S MOMENTS BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSING

Pastor: It is the beginning of a new school year, and God is a God of new beginnings and new creations. Learning is a gift from God.

People: We give thanks for a new year and for new beginnings.

Pastor: A new adventure awaits our students as they prepare for school. Excitement for new possibilities and fear of the unknown mingle in their hearts. Thoughts of achievement and thoughts of failure slow their footsteps.

People: Bless our children this day, O God.

Pastor: Give them inquiring minds and discerning hearts.

People: Give them courage to persevere in all they undertake.

Pastor: Give them the gift of joy and wonder in all things.

People: Give them laughter and love to share.

Pastor: Give them protection and safety as they move out of our embrace.

People: Walk with them, O God, as we enter into a new year, a new path, and new opportunities. Help them to remember that you have written their names on the palm of your hand. Let them always know they are your children in the world.

Pastor: We pray for teachers and staff that this year might be safe and rewarding for all.

People: Bless them this day, O God.

Pastor: We ask God to bless our classmates and friends. We ask God to bless our principals, counselors, and librarians.

People: Bless them this day, O God.

Pastor: We ask God to bless those who prepare our lunches, those who drive us to school, and those who keep our schools clean and safe.

People: Bless them this day, O God.

Pastor: We give thanks to God for books and computers and all the things that help us learn.

People: We give thanks to God for the gift of learning!

Pastor: A new school year, a new beginning, whether you are just starting kindergarten, entering high school or leaving the nest for college, our hearts, hopes and prayers go with you. We pray God's blessing upon you and on this new school year, that it may be a time when you fully appreciate and fully use God's gift of Learning.

Prayer: **Loving God, sometimes a new school year seems exciting or scary or both. Sometimes school is great, and sometimes it is hard. But we know that whether we are excited or scared, you are with us. We know that whether school is great or hard, you are with us. We thank you for always being with us. Help us to remember to show our thanks for your gift of learning by doing our best every day. Amen.**

CELEBRATION THROUGH CONFESSION AND PARDON

CALL TO CONFESSION

While we may yearn to be like Jesus, we know that in our hotheaded choices, our frantic lives, our impetuous words, we are too often like Peter. But like him, we can confess Christ as our Lord, speaking of our need for your saving presence in our lives.

GENERAL CONFESSION

We look for you in all the wrong places, God of the lost, and wonder why we cannot find you. We wander the corridors of power, while you are on the sidewalks, beside the homeless. We sit at the head tables of the world, while you are handing out soup to the hungry at the kitchen's backdoor. We applaud those who win the race, while you are cheering on those in last place. In forgiving us, God of new life, you would transform our cold hearts into those melted in service to others. In granting us mercy, you challenge us to think of all those we have ignored. In gifting us with grace, you enable us to proclaim Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, as the hope, the joy, the peace the world seeks.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Pastor: It's not money, but our generosity with it; it is not power, but our willingness to humble ourselves; it is not our efforts, but Christ's gift, which transforms us into God's children.

People: **It is more than just how we think. In mercy and grace, our hearts, our lives, our spirits are transfigured and made new. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

HYMN OF ASSURANCE 'All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name'" No. 154 V. 2 & 3

CELEBRATION THROUGH THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Pastor: O Lord, open our eyes, our ears our minds, and our hearts.

People: **that we might behold wondrous things out of your word.**

CHORAL RESPONSE

'Thy Word'

No. 601 (Refrain only)

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

FIRST LESSON

Exodus 1: 8 - 2:10

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

'Alleluia'

No. 186

"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia"

Pastor: The Lord be with you,
People: and also with you.
Pastor: A reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew.
People: Glory to You, O Lord.

*THE GOSPEL IS READ

Matthew 16:13-20

*THE GOSPEL RESPONSE

Pastor: The Gospel of the Living Christ.
People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*GLORIA PATRI

No. 70

CELEBRATION THROUGH PROCLAMATION

SERMON

'Women and their Place!'

Pastor Shuluga

CELEBRATION THROUGH COMMITMENT

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

The richness of God's mercy is poured over us every minute of our lives, even when we least expect it. We offer our gifts and tithes in gratitude for all that God does for and with us, that we might become better servants of the Gospel

THE LORD'S OFFERING

THE OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

No. 95

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

Loving and generous God: As we offer our gifts this day, we confess that when confronted with Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?" our answer is ambivalent at best. Even when we get the words right, we know our lives give a different answer. We turn away from the suffering and oppression of your children. We accumulate wealth and prestige and ignore the poor and powerless. You give and hold nothing back, and we give from our excess and resent being asked to do more. Help us to respond with the answer that comes from the center of our being and that is demonstrated in our living. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

CELEBRATION THROUGH SENDING

***BENEDICTION**

Family of God, go from this place led by the Triune God who loves you, saves you, and sustains you, that in our following, we may be agents of goodness and blessing wherever we go. Amen.



*BENEDICTION RESPONSE 'Danish Amen' No. 898

*RECESSIONAL HYMN 'Blessed Be the Name' No. 63

*POSTLUDE

WE TAKE THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD



John McQuade—recovery from surgery
Those affected by fires in Maui
Those affected by explosions in Plum
Roberta (Carolyn’s friend) - diagnosed with early dementia
Those affected by COVID
Sharon S.—diabetes complications
Scott (Paulette’s son) - cardiac Lyme disease
Jean Winter—Prayers needed
Lainee Rivers (Kim’s friend) – Prayers needed
Dave McEchern (Kim’s friend) – prayers needed
Kristina Terrell (Kim’s friend) – prayers needed
Virginia Atkinson
Those affected by gun violence
Ellie Holderbaum (Ginnie’s family friend 19th year old daughter) - recovery from surgery
Annie (Viehland’s friend) - recovery from multiple surgery
Families who are traveling
Seth (Robert Morris’s son) - accident
People of Turkey & Syria
People of East Palestine, Ohio
President Carter—in hospice
Jim White (Ginnie’s son) - recovery from rotator cuff surgery
Steven Akers—health concerns
Pastor Janet Hellner-Burris—health concerns
Judy Spencer Baker - continued prayers
Aubrie (Ginnie’s granddaughter) – diagnosed with breast cancer
Joe (Ginnie & Sue’s cousin) - diagnosed with myeloma cancer
Gary (Ginnie’s son) - continued good health
Rev. Russel W. Shuluga
Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi
Rev. Paul Ritchey— Pittsburgh/Greensburg DS
Peacemakers
People of Ukraine
Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church
United Methodist Church