



Centenary

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

July 23, 2023

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

As the Prelude begins, you are invited to enter a time of prayer and meditation as we prepare to worship God together.

The Prelude

My Jesus, I Love Thee

arr. Hayes

The Call to Worship

Leader: We look at this world, focusing on the pain and confusion,
the fears and hatred which seem to abound.

People: For what can we hope?

Leader: We wait breathlessly for the goodness of creation
to be made manifest in all the world,
for this is the promise of God.

**People: God is always with us,
guiding, rescuing, healing, restoring us.**

Leader: Get ready, dear friends, the promises of God are true.

**People: Lord, quiet our spirits and open our hearts.
Bring us hope and peace. Amen.**

The Hymn No. 89

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

HYMN TO JOY

1. Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!
2. All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.
3. Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our brother, all who live in love are thine;
teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.
4. Mortals, join the mighty chorus which the morning stars began;
love divine is reigning o'er us, binding all within its span.
Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife;
joyful music leads us sunward, in the triumph song of life.

The Opening Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

**All: We are such a rag-tag group of people.
Some of us are at the "top of our game"
and others just struggle to get through each day.
Yet you draw us here
where we will find friendship, peace, and hope
not only for our lives right now**

but for all the times to come.
 Stand us up again, O God.
 Dust us off and put us back
 on the pathways of service and reconciliation.
 Warm our hearts with your love;
 lift our spirits with your power,
 for we ask these things in the Name of Jesus our Savior.
 Amen.

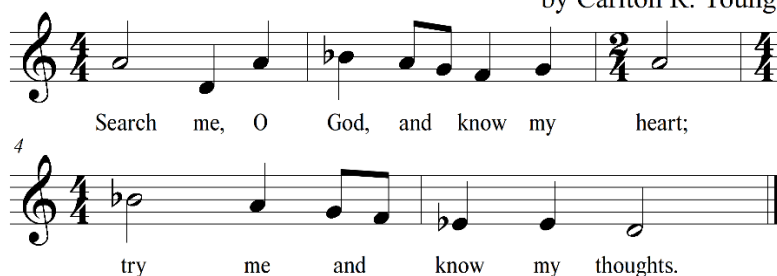
The Announcements

The Prayer of Illumination

The Psalter No. 854

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

Ps. 139:23
 Adapt. from Martin Luther
 by Carlton R. Young



Search me, O God, and know my heart;
 try me and know my thoughts.

Response

- 1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me!
- 2 **You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
 you discern my thoughts from afar.**
- 3 You searched out my path and my lying down,
 and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 **Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord,
 you know it altogether.**
- 5 You pursue me behind and before,
 and lay your hand upon me.
- 6 **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
 it is high, I cannot attain it.**

Response

- 7 Whither shall I go from your spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from your presence?
- 8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there!
 If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!
- 9 **If I take the wings of the morning
 and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea.**
- 10 **even there your hand shall lead me,
 and your right hand shall hold me.**
- 11 If I say, "Let only darkness cover me,
 and the light about me be night,"
- 12 **even the darkness is not dark to you,
 the night is bright as the day;
 for darkness is as light with you.**

Response

- 13 For it was you who formed my inward parts,
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

- 14 I praise you, for you are fearful and wonderful.
Wonderful are your works!
 You know me very well;
- 15 **my frame was not hidden from you,
 when I was being made in secret,
 intricately wrought in the depths of the earth.**
- 16 Your eyes beheld my unformed substance;
**in your book were written
 the days that were formed for me,
 every day, before they came into being.**
- 17 How profound to me are your thoughts, O God!
 How vast is the sum of them!
- 18 **If I would count them, they are more than the sand.
 When I awake, I am still with you.**

Response

- 19 O that you would slay the wicked, O God,
 and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me,
- 20 **those who maliciously defy you,
 who lift themselves up against you for evil.**
- 21 Do I not hate them that hate you, O Lord?
 And do I not loathe them that rise up against you?
- 22 **I hate them with perfect hatred;
 I count them my enemies.**
- 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart!
 Try me and know my thoughts;
- 24 **and see if there be any wicked way in me,
 and lead me in the way everlasting!**

Response

The Scripture Lesson

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

The Hymn No. 528

Nearer, My God, to Thee

BETHANY

1. Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!
 E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me, still all my song shall be,
 nearer, my God, to thee; nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!
2. Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,
 darkness be over me, my rest a stone; yet in my dreams I'd be
 nearer, my God, to thee; nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!
3. There let the way appear, steps unto heaven;
 all that thou sendest me, in mercy given; angels to beckon me
 nearer, my God, to thee; nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!
4. Then, with my waking thoughts bright with thy praise,
 out of my stony griefs Bethel I'll raise; so by my woes to be
 nearer, my God, to thee; nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!
5. Or if, on joyful wing cleaving the sky,
 sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I fly, still all my song shall be,
 nearer, my God, to thee; nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

The Sermon

Leave the Weeds Alone!

Rev. Matthew Bates

The Offertory Prayer

The Offertory Solo

If God Be for Us (from Messiah)
Emily Downey, soloist

Handel

The Prayers of the People

The Silent Prayer
The Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer No. 895

**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 that 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.**

The Hymn No. 2060

God the Sculptor of the Mountains

JENNINGS-HOUSTON

1. God the sculptor of the mountains, God the miller of the sand,
God the jeweler of the heavens, God the potter of the land:
you are womb of all creation, we are formless; shape us now.
2. God the nuisance to the Pharaoh, God the cleaver of the sea,
God the pillar of the darkness, God the beacon of the free:
you are gate of all deliv'rance, we are sightless; lead us now.
3. God the unexpected infant, God the calm, determined youth,
God the table turning prophet, God the resurrected Truth:
you are present every moment, we are searching; meet us now.
4. God the dresser of the vineyard, God the planter of the wheat,
God the reaper of the harvest, God the source of all we eat:
you are host at every table, we are hungry; feed us now.

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The Benediction

The Postlude

Shalom to You

Anon; harm by Carlton R. Young

Today our organist is Mark Fleisher.

The altar flowers this morning are given by Wendy Smith in memory of Nancy Penman.

*Reminder! Help us know that you worshiped with us this morning
by signing the online attendance pad [here](#).*

*Thank you to all the volunteers who helped us throughout the week to make all the worship services
this week possible.*

Scripture

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The Parable of Weeds among the Wheat

²⁴ He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field, ²⁵ but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷ And 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?’ ²⁸ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹ But he replied, ‘No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let 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.’ ”

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Weeds

³⁶ Then 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.” ³⁷ He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

Welcome!

Centenary United Methodist Church is a Reconciling Congregation, extending hospitality and encouraging full participation of all, regardless of age, race, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, education, economic background, and physical or mental ability.

We are glad that you have joined us today! If you are a new guest, we hope that you experience a warm welcome! Please return soon and consider us for your church home. If you are interested in church membership, please speak with a pastor.

Upcoming Events

THIS WEEK

July 24	5:00 pm	Change the World/RVA
July 25	Noon	AA
July 28	10:30 am	Friday Lunch Program
	Noon	AA
July 30	10:30 am	In person & Live Stream Worship