

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
August 16, 2026

SEEKING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Welcome

Bringing of the Light and the Bell of Mindfulness
(Please use this time for quiet reflection.)

Prelude

Rev. Chris Michael

Ann Jeannette Pierce, piano

"Brethren, We Have Met to Worship"

William Moore

Arr. Craig Curry

*Call to Worship

One: Here we can come together, people searching for healing and hope:

All: here we are met by the One who would bless us with abundant life.

Meghan McKinley

One: Here we are called to gather as the family of God:

All: we may find those who are strangers yet are beloved siblings of ours.

One: Here we discover the truth that God makes no distinctions among us:

All: here we are welcomed and embraced by the One whose arms are open to all.

*Hymn #5

"O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

*Invocation and Lord’s Prayer
(using “debts” and “debtors”)

Meghan McKinley

First Scripture Reading

Psalm 126

Meghan McKinley

One: The Word of God for the people of God

All: Thanks be to God.

Children’s Blessing

Rev. Chris Michael

Ages 3 through 2nd grade are invited forward for a blessing, then will be escorted to Worship and Wonder (located at the end of the first floor education wing)

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Chris Michael

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Special Music

Ann Jeannette Pierce, piano

"Written in Red"

Written by Gordon Jensen

Aaron Lundy, soloist

Second Scripture Reading

Rev. Chris Michael

Matthew 9:1-8

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"Which is Easier?"

Rev. Chris Michael

Invitation to Discipleship

*Hymn #550

"There’s Within My Heart a Melody” (vs. 1 & 4)

OFFERING OURSELVES TO GOD

Preparation for the Offering

Offertory

Rev. Chris Michael

Ann Jeannette Pierce, piano

"Cast Thy Burden upon the Lord" from "Elijah"

Felix Mendelssohn

Arr. Tracey Craig McKibben

*Doxology and Presentation of Gifts (Page 46)

*Dedication Prayer

RENEWING THE COVENANT IN THE LORD’S SUPPER

We are one in Christ, let everyone share in this communion
without regard for denominational affiliation.
You are invited to take the cup and bread after your prayers.

Invitation to Communion

Words of Institution

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Chris & Stacy Castlen

Communion Music

Ann Jeannette Pierce, piano

"It is Well with My Soul"

Phillip P. Bliss

Arr. Jay Rouse

GOING IN PEACE TO LOVE AND TO SERVE

*Benediction

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Rev. Chris Michael

*Please stand if you are able.

Scripture Reading

First Reading - Psalm 126

¹ When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
² Then our mouth was filled with laughter
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.”
³ The Lord has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.
⁴ Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.
⁵ May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.
⁶ Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

Second Reading - Matthew 9:1-8

¹ And after getting into a boat he crossed the sea and came to his own town.
² And some people were carrying to him a paralyzed man lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Take heart, child; your sins are forgiven.” ³ Then some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.” ⁴ But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵ For which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and walk?’ ⁶ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Stand up, take your bed, and go to your home.” ⁷ And he stood up and went to his home. ⁸ When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.

Flowers given today in memory of Issac Sterett. Thank you to our church family for the continuous support of his Foundation.

