

Greeting

Rick Schlee

L: This is the day that the Lord has made!

**P: We will rejoice and be glad in it!**

Welcome and Announcements

Centering Bell

Music to Prepare Our Hearts

"My Jesus I Love Thee"

Dr. Kristie Janczyk

*Music by Adoniram J. Gordon. Arranged by Lily Topolski. Public Domain. Arrangement © 2023 Lily Topolski Music. All Rights Reserved. Used by permission.*

\*Call to Worship

L: Welcome to the weary and the worn.

**P: Welcome to the wiggly and the eager.**

L: Welcome to the skeptical and the seeking.

**P: Welcome to the early risers and those still trying to wake up.**

L: Welcome to the rule followers and the rule breakers.

**P: Welcome to those hungry for justice and those desperate for mercy.**

L: Welcome to the sinners and the saints.

**P: This is God's house.**

L: You can make yourself at home here.

**P: Let us worship our just, merciful, and faithful God!**

\*Hymn of Praise

"Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)""

Projected

*Music: Irish Folk Melody; Words by Jan Struther (1901-1953) from Enlarged Songs of Praise 1931; Oxford University Press  
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**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
was blind, but now I see.**

**Tw'as grace that taught my heart to fear;  
and grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed.**

Refrain

**My chains are gone, I've been set free.  
My God, my savior, has ransomed me.  
And like a flood his mercy reigns,  
Unending love, amazing grace.**

**The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures.  
He will my shield and portion be,  
as long as life endures. (*Refrain*)**

**\*We Affirm Our Faith  
I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.**

**It sounds like welcome  
and feels like home.  
It sounds like laughter  
and feels like mercy.  
It sounds like love  
and feels like a seat at the table,  
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.**

**I have seen it alive in the world.  
And even when my heart aches,  
even when wars rage,  
even when mercy feels out of reach,**

**I remember the one who  
welcomed the children  
and led with nonviolence.  
I remember the one who  
cared for the vulnerable  
and inspired those around him.**

**I remember that the good news really is good news,  
for I have seen it alive in the world.  
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**\*Glory Be to the Father**  
*Lesser Doxology, 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Cent.*

UMH 70

**Glory be to the Father  
And to the Son and to the Holy Ghost!  
As it was in the beginning  
Is now, and ever shall be,  
World without end, Amen. Amen!**

**A Season of Prayer  
Invitation to Confession  
Prayer of Confession and Words of Forgiveness  
Holy God, we love to live our lives by the rules.**

**We love clear answers. We love right and wrong.  
We love swift justice.  
We love to pick up stones, but you show us another way.  
You welcome shades of gray and nuanced conversation.  
You prioritize mercy over legality. You prioritize people over tradition.  
You prioritize love over everything.**

**Forgive us for losing sight of what truly matters.  
Forgive us for clinging tighter to laws than to each other or to you.  
Forgive us. Soften our hearts. Root us in mercy, justice, and love.  
With hope for a better tomorrow, we pray. Amen.**

*~ Silence ~*

L: Church family, Jesus saw a crowd ready to throw stones and invited them to choose another way. Jesus offered them grace, mercy, and compassion, and the same can be said for us. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

**P: Our God is a God of mercy.  
Our God is a God of compassion.  
Our God is a God of grace.  
We are forgiven, loved, and invited to choose another way.  
Thanks be to God for yet another second chance. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

UMH 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 who 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!**

Prayer Song

“Come and Find the Quiet Center”

TFWS 2128

*Music attr. to B. F. White, Public Domain; Words by Shirley Erena Murray*

Verse 3

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**In the Spirit let us travel, open to each other's pain,  
Let our loves and fears unravel, celebrate the space we gain:  
There's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care,  
In the Spirit's lively scheming there is always room to spare.**

Anthem

“A Green Hill Far Away”

Chancel Choir

*Contributors: Cecil Alexander, Douglas Nolan; Tune: © 2011 by Hal Leonard – Milwin Music Corp. Text: © 2011 by Hal Leonar – Milwin Music Corp; OneLicense #A-739344*

Scripture Reading

John 8:2-11  
Matthew 23:23

Prayer for Illumination (Unison)

L: Let us pray together,

**Holy One, when you speak, we don't want to miss it. When you bend down and write in the dirt, when you move through the trees, when you wake with the dawn, when you tug on our heart, or whisper into our dreams, we don't want to miss it. So today we pray, clear out the cobwebs in our ears. Quiet the steady stream of thoughts marching through our minds. Open up space in our hearts so that we can receive your word for us today. With hope we pray. Amen.**

Song of Preparation

“When the Church of Jesus”

UMH 592

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**When the church of Jesus  
Shuts its outer door,  
Lest the roar of traffic  
Drown the voice of prayer,  
May our prayers, Lord, make us  
Ten times more aware  
That the world we banish  
Is our Christian care**

**If our hearts are lifted  
Where devotion soars  
High above this hungry,  
Suffering world of ours,  
Lest our hymns should drug us  
To forget its needs,  
Forge our Christian worship  
Into Christian deeds**

**Lest the gifts we offer,  
Money, talents, time,  
Serve to salve our conscience,  
To our secret shame,  
Lord reprove, inspire us  
By the way you give;  
Teach us, dying Savior,  
How true Christians live**

Message “The Good News Is: Rooted in Justice, Mercy and Faithfulness”

Rev. Sharon Pajak

We Share Our Gifts

Invitation to Giving

Song During Offering “There's A Wideness In God's Mercy” Dr. Kristie Janczyk  
*Words by Frederick W. Faber. Music: In Babilone; Oude en Nieuwe Hollantse Borerenlities en Contradanseu (1710), arranged by Julius Röntgen. ©1995, OCP. All rights reserved. Public Domain.*

**\*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow**  
*By Thomas Ken, 1674 ~ Public Domain*

UMH 95

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise him all creatures here below!  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host!  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Amen!**

**\*Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)**

**Source of justice and mercy, work through this offering to bring your gifts to the world: righteousness and peace, love and kindness, hope and joy. May our gifts truly express our gratitude for your many blessings for our church and for your children everywhere. Amen.**

**\*Song of Response** “Let Us Remember” **See Insert**  
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**What is important? What matters more?  
Human connection or keeping score?  
In our pursuit of justice and truth  
Let us remember: we fall short, too**

**We've been shown mercy all of our lives  
By the creator of humankind  
So when we're in a position to judge  
Let us remember: they're just like us**

**Following Jesus, living in truth  
We remain faithful to our roots  
When those roots lead us outside the lines  
Let us remember: faith is alive**

**What does the Lord require of us?  
To remain humble, loving, and just  
Keeping the heart of the gospel in mind  
Let us remember: do what is right**

**\*Blessing**

**\*Music for Going Forth** “God Leads Us Along” **Dr. Kristie Janczyk**  
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