

AUGUST 23, 2026 8:10AM  
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WELCOME

Rev. Bob Kohler

CENTERING PRAYER

O God, Sustainer of all life and Creator of the universe,  
lift us above the unstable currents of our self-will  
and establish us on the rock of your purposes.  
Be to each of us the secret stay and the inner guide of our lives.  
May your Spirit dwell in us more and more,  
that your peace which exceeds all understanding  
may possess our hearts and minds. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

PRELUDE

The Gift of Love  
Jean Kohler, piano

arr. John Carter

†CALL TO WORSHIP

In a world where powerful people make decisions  
to lift themselves up and cast others aside, how does God teach us to use our power?  
**God teaches us to protect the vulnerable, resist the oppressors,  
and persist in doing good.**  
In a world where power means might, how does God show us what power means?  
**God shows us through the midwives' daring, Peter's truth-telling,  
and Jesus' humility.**  
In a world where power is held over people's heads, how does God exercise power?  
**God exercises power with—with the oppressed, with the outcasts,  
with the poor and downtrodden.**  
Beloved, we gather to recognize our world as it is  
and grow as disciples and imitators of Christ. So, how will you use your power today?  
**We will side with the vulnerable, build community in the margins,  
and love all of our neighbors with the exuberant, all-encompassing love of Christ.**  
Amen.<sup>2</sup>

†HYMN NO. 568

Christ for the World We Sing

ITALIAN HYMN

†PRAYER OF 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 unhoused.

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.<sup>3</sup>

*(silent reflection)*

## †ASSURANCE OF GRACE

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.  
**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.<sup>3</sup>

## †PASSING THE PEACE

### SCRIPTURE

Exodus 2:1-10

NRSVUE

†Matthew 23:23

This is the word of God for the people of God.  
Thanks be to God.

### SERMON

Jesus' Moral Philosophy: Justice

Paul Purdue

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*The celebrant gives thanks, remembering God's acts of salvation, and concludes:*  
And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:  
**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**  
**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**  
**Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**

*The celebrant continues the thanksgiving.*  
*The institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled, and the celebrant concludes:*  
And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice,  
in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

*The celebrant invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit and then praises the Trinity, concluding:*  
All honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

## BREAKING THE BREAD - SHARING THE CUP

For Everyone Born

arr. Tom Trenney

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery**  
**in which you have given yourself to us.**  
**Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit,**  
**to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## BENEDICTION

**May the God of all creation bless you and keep you.**  
**May Jesus Christ make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.**  
**May the Holy Spirit lift up her countenance upon you and bring you peace**  
**as all the beloved of God say, "Amen!"**

†You are invited to stand as you are able.

Liturgy written/selected by Matthew Webb.

<sup>1</sup>adapted from Lawrence Gandiya, *Prayers Encircling the World*, 1998.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, May 2026

<sup>3</sup>adapted from Thom Shuman, Lectionary Liturgies

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