



First United Methodist Church

Order of Worship

Sunday, October 25, 2020 | 21st Sunday after Pentecost

United Methodist Women Sunday

THE PRELUDE

Prelude and Fugue in C Major, BWV 553

Joshua Starnes, organ

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

GREETING

The Rev^d Stacey Lundy

THE GATHERING HYMN

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

ST. ANNE

UMH 117

*Isaiah 41.9-10 reads, “I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, ‘You are my servant’; I have chosen you and have not rejected you. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” No matter our situation, amid struggles, fears, or doubts, we are told to have courage for the Lord is God. And as Isaac Watts writes so powerfully in this hymn, our God is everlasting, and will be our help through all of our years. The first stanza gives us every assurance we need: God is our help, our hope, and our home. This does not blithely dismiss our fears and troubles. They are, and always will be, very real. But it does assure us that even if we cannot feel the immediate comfort, or even when all we can do is lament, we have a God that withstands the storms of this life and the tests of time, and who protects us and hears our cries. Isaac Watts wrote this metrical paraphrase of Psalm 90 in 1714, shortly before the death of Queen Anne of England. This was a time of great crises and turmoil, as the successor of Queen Anne was as yet undetermined, and the fear of a monarch who would reinstate the persecution of Protestants was great. This was the context in which Watts wrote his powerful text, now lauded as “one of the grandest in the whole realm of English Hymnody” (Bailey, *The Gospel in Hymns*, 54). Though first published in “*The Psalms of David Imitated*” in 1719, in 9 stanzas, now the original first, second, third, fifth, seventh, and ninth stanzas are commonly sung. In 1738, John Wesley changed “Our God, our help” to “O God, our help” for his *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*. Perhaps even amid the uncertainty and tumult that has enveloped the year 2020, we can echo the poetic words of 300 years ago: “be Thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home!”*

1. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
 2. Un - der the sha - dow of thy throne, still may we dwell se - cure;
 MEN 3. Be - fore the hills in or - der stood, or earth re - ceived her frame,
 4. A thou - sand a - ges, in thy sight, are like an eve - ning gone;
 WOMEN 5. Time, like an e - ver rol - ling stream, bears all who breathe a - way;
 6. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come;

our shel - ter from the stor - my blast, and our e - ter - nal home!
 suf - fi - cient is thine arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
 from e - ver - las - ting, thou art God, to end - less years the same.
 short as the watch that ends the night, be - fore the ri - sing sun.
 they fly for - got - ten, as a dream dies at the ope - ning day.
 be thou our guide while life shall last, and our e - ter - nal home!

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

Words: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt. (based on Psalm 90)

Music: ST. ANNE; attr. to William Croft, 1708; harm. by W. H. Monk, 1861

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Mrs. Sara Hill

Saving God,

**we confess that our faith is too small,
 our fear is too great.**

**When we are overwhelmed,
 we think you do not care enough for us.**

**When life is uncertain and risky,
 we are not sure we can trust you with our whole heart.**

**Even when you move among us in powerful ways,
 we question who you are.**

Forgive us and calm our fears, we pray.

**Teach us to trust in your power to save
 and guide us in every circumstance.**

**Grant us your peace,
 which is clearly beyond our understanding.**

In Christ's name we pray. *Amen.*

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Christ offers peace to our troubled souls.

Believe this One whom even the wind and the sea obey.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Alleluia!

Praise God, from whom all bles - sings flow; praise God, all crea - tures here be - low; ,

Praise God a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - MEN!

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674; alt.

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH; attr. Louis Bourgeois, 1551.

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PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Mrs. Karla Swanson

God of eternity, by the power of your Spirit, speak your Word to us this day,
that hearing, we may know your truth and live ever more faithfully for you.
In Jesus' name we pray. *Amen.*

THE PSALMODY (*responsively, by half-verse*)

Psalm 69.1-2, 13-18 (NRSV)

To the leader: according to the Lilies. Of David.

The Cantor introduces and sings the Refrain first, then All repeat:

An - swer me, O Lord, for your love is kind.

Save me, O God, *
for the waters have come up to my neck.

²I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold; *

I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me.

Refrain

¹³But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD. *

At an acceptable time, O God,
in the abundance of your steadfast love, answer me.

With your faithful help ¹⁴rescue me from sinking in the mire; *
let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters.

¹⁵Do not let the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up, *
or the Pit close its mouth over me.

¹⁶Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good; *
according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.

¹⁷Do not hide your face from your servant, *
for I am in distress—make haste to answer me.

¹⁸Draw near to me, redeem me, *
set me free because of my enemies.

Refrain

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 8:22-25

This is the Word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God!

SERMON

The Rev^d Ashley Pickerel Thomas

THE SONG OF RESPONSE:

UMH 116

LEONI

The God of Abraham Praise



1. The God of A - braham praise, who reigns en - throned a - bove;
2. The great I AM has sworn; I on this oath de - pend.
3. The heaven - ly land I see, with peace and plen - ty blest;
4. The God who reigns on high the great arch - an - gels sing,



An - cient of Ev - er - la - sting Days, and God of love;
I shall, on ea - gle wings up - borne, to heaven as - cend.
a land of sa - cred li - ber - ty, and end - less rest.
and "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!" cry, "Al - migh - ty King!



Je - ho - vah, great I AM! by_ earth and_ heaven con - fessed;
I shall be - hold God's face; I_ shall God's power a - dore,
There milk and hon - ey flow, and oil_ and_ wine a - bound,
Who was, and is, the same, and e - ver - more shall be:



I bow and bless the sa - cred Name for - e - ver blest.
and sing the won - ders of God's grace for - e - ver - more.
and trees of life for - e - ver_ grow with mer - cy crowned.
Je - ho - vah, Lord, the great I_ AM, we_ wor - ship thee!"

"The God of Abraham Praise"

Words: from *The Yigdal* of Daniel ben Judah, ca. 1400; para. Thomas Olivers, 1760; alt.

Music: LEONI; Hebrew melody, XVII century; *Sacred Harmony*, 1780; harm. from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1875, alt.
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OFFERING

Mrs. Lizz Johnson

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

UMH 881

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Mrs. Nancy Sherriff

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

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.*

THE SENDING HYMN

EIN' FESTE BURG

A Mighty Fortress is Our God

Hymn Prelude: Martin Luther (1483–1546); arr. William Roger Price (b. 1955)

UMH 110

Martin Luther wrote this text sometime between 1527 and 1529 as a paraphrase of Psalm 46, though stanza 4 comes directly from Luther's own persecution experience. This hymn is often referred to as "the battle hymn" of the Reformation. Many stories have been relayed about its use. Albert Bailey writes, "It was, as Heine said, the Marseillaise of the Reformation...It was sung in the streets...It was sung by poor Protestant emigres on their way to exile, and by martyrs at their death...Gustavus Adolphus

ordered it sung by his army before the battle of Leipzig in 1631...Again it was the battle hymn of his army at Lutzen in 1632...It has had a part in countless celebrations commemorating the men and events of the Reformation; and its first line is engraved on the base of Luther's monument at Wittenberg...An imperishable hymn! Not polished and artistically wrought but rugged and strong like Luther himself, whose very words seem like deeds" (The Gospel in Hymns, 316). As you can see, this is a hymn close to the hearts of Protestants, a source of assurance in times of duress and persecution. The test is not restricted, however, to times of actual physical battles. In any time of need, when we do battle with the forces of evil, God is our fortress to hide us and protect us, and the Word that endures forever will fight for us! On this 503rd anniversary of the Protestant Reformation's beginning, we praise God, "a bulwark never failing."



1. A might - ty for - tress is our God, a bul - wark ne - ver fail - ing;
 2. Did we in our own strength con - fide, our stri - ving would be los - ing,
 3. And though this world with de - vils filled, should threa - ten to un - do us,
 4. That word a - bove all ear - thly powers, no thanks to them, a - bi - deth;



our hel - per he a - mid the flood of mor - tal ills pre - vai - ling.
 were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choo - sing.
 we will not fear, for God hath willed his truth to tri - umph through us.
 the Spi - rit and the gifts are ours, through him who with us si - deth.



For still our an - cient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are great,
 Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus it is he; Lord Sa - ba - oth, his Name,
 The Prince of Dark - ness grim, we trem - ble not for him; his rage we can en - dure,
 Let goods and kin - dred go, this mor - tal life al - so; the bo - dy they may kill;



and armed with cru - el hate, on earth is not his e - qual.
 from age to age the same, and he must win the bat - tle.
 for lo, his doom is sure; one lit - tle word shall fell him.
 God's truth a - bi - deth still; his king - dom is for - e - ver.

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

Words: Martin Luther, ca. 1529; trans. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853 (Psalm 46).

Music: EIN' FESTE BURG; Martin Luther, ca. 1529; harm. from *The New Hymnal for American Youth*, 1930.

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BENEDICTION AND BLESSING

THE POSTLUDE

Tocatta in D minor, BWV 565

Joshua Starnes, organ

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

THE FLOWERS ADORNING THE CHANCEL ARE PRESENTED TO
 THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD IN LOVING MEMORY OF
 A.B. & MARTHA SALEEBY AND EMIEL & AGNES SALEEBY.
 GIVEN BY WAYNE AND BARBARA SALEEBY AND FAMILY.

THOSE LEADING TODAY'S SERVICE

Miss Jenna Robinson	Acolyte
Miss Stella Smeltzer	Acolyte
Mrs. Molly Alexander	Song Leader
Mr. Joshua Starnes	Director of Music and Organist
Mrs. Nancy Schoch	Altar Guild
The Reverend Ashley Pickerel Thomas	Guest Preacher
The Reverend Stacey Lundy	Associate Pastor
United Methodist Women	



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