

**14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
GATHER IN GOD’S NAME**

(*=**please stand if you are able**)

PRELUDE

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

L: Christ abides in us,

P: And we abide in him.

L: Christ has the words of eternal life:

P: We believe and trust that he is the Holy One of God.

L: As we hear the gospel of peace today,

P: Let us choose again whom we will serve.

L: We will serve the God of liberation and new life,

P: the God who hears and answers when we call.

L: We bring our praises and our prayers to God,

P: Trusting God to meet us as we gather. Let us worship our God together!

HYMN OF THE MONTH “I HAVE DECIDED TO FOLLOW JESUS/ HE DECIDIDO SEGUIR A CRISTO”

CALL TO CONFESSION

Our psalm for today reminds us: “The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in God will be condemned”. Trusting that God is always more ready to forgive than we are to confess, let us turn to God in prayer, seeking forgiveness and new life.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, through Christ you abide in us, and you invite us to abide in you. But so often we are restless and unsatisfied. Instead of resting in the fullness of life Christ offers to us, we chase after money and fame, recognition and power, status and control. Instead of honoring the image of God in all our neighbors, we push others down in the pursuit of our own desires. Forgive us for forgetting that you call us to a different way of being in the world, to lives grounded in the self-giving love of Christ. Lead us out of self-interest and into communal care for one another and the world you have made. In Christ’s name we pray; Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

John’s Gospel tells us: “God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him” (John 3:17). Christ forgives us and makes us whole. Christ fills us with life and sets us free for love. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

ALL: Thanks be to God! Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

“THE GLORY OF THE LORD”

When the glory of the Lord fills this holy temple, He will lift us high.

And on angels’ wings we’ll rise to the pure and holy, when His Spirit fills this place.

When His glory, when His glory, when His glory fills this place.

When His glory, when His glory, when His glory fills this place.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Eternal God, quiet our hearts and minds amid the clattering chaos of the world and all the voices vying for our attention. May we clearly hear your word of life spoken to us today. As we hear, help us to understand; as we understand, move us to respond in love, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ; Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Ezra 9

When these tasks were finished, the officials approached me and said, “The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites haven’t kept themselves separate from the peoples of the neighboring lands with their detestable practices; namely, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. They’ve taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and the holy descendants have become mixed with the neighboring peoples. Moreover, the officials and leaders have led the way in this unfaithfulness.” When I heard this, I tore my clothes and cloak, pulled out hair from my head and beard, and sat down in shock. Then all those who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me on account of the transgression of the returned exiles while I remained sitting in shock until the evening sacrifice. At the time of the evening sacrifice, I ended my penitential acts. While still wearing my torn clothes and cloak, I fell upon my knees, spread out my hands to the Lord my God, and said, “My God, I’m too ashamed to lift up my face to you. Our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown to the heavens. “From the days

of our ancestors to this day, we’ve been deep in guilt. On account of our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been handed over to the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plundering, and to utter shame, as is now the case. “But now, for a brief while the Lord our God has shown favor in leaving us survivors and in giving us a stake in his holy place. Our God cheered us and revived us for a little while in our slavery. Even though we are slaves, our God hasn’t abandoned us in our slavery. Instead, he’s shown us his graciousness before Persia’s kings by reviving us to set up our God’s house, to repair its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judea and Jerusalem. “And now, our God, what will we say after this? We have abandoned your commandments, which you commanded through your servants the prophets, saying: ‘The land which you are about to enter to possess is a land polluted by the impurity of the neighboring peoples. Their detestable practices have filled it with uncleanness from end to end. So now, do not give your daughters to their sons in marriage, do not take their sons for your daughters to marry, and never seek their peace or prosperity. This is so you may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.’ “After all that has happened to us because of our evil deeds and our great guilt—although you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserve and have allowed us to survive as we do— will we once again break your commandments and intermarry with the peoples who practice these detestable things? Would you not be so angry with us that you leave us without remnant or survivor? Lord, God of Israel, you are righteous, for we have survived and a few remain until now. Here we are before you in our guilt, though no one can face you because of this guilt.”

L: This is the word of the Lord. **P: Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM:

SCRIPTURE READING

Ezra 10:1-15

While Ezra was praying and confessing, weeping and bowing down before God’s house, a very large crowd of men, women, and children of Israel gathered around him. The people also wept in distress. Then Shecaniah, Jehiel’s son, from the family of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra, “We’ve been unfaithful to our God by marrying foreign women from the neighboring peoples. But even now, there is hope for Israel in spite of this. Let’s now make a covenant with our God to send away all these wives and their children, according to the advice of my master and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God. Let it be done according to the Instruction. Get up, for it is your duty to deal with this matter; we will support you. Be strong and act.” So Ezra got up and made the leading priests, the Levites, and all Israel take a solemn pledge that they would do as had been said. So they took a solemn pledge. Then Ezra got up from the area in front of God’s house and went to the room of Jehohanan, Eliashib’s son, where he spent the night. He didn’t eat food or drink water, for he was mourning because of the unfaithfulness of the exiles. An order was then circulated throughout Judah and Jerusalem that all the returned exiles should gather in Jerusalem. All those who failed to appear within three days, as mandated by the officials and elders, would have all their property taken away. They would be separated from the congregation of the exiles. So within three days, all the people of Judah and Benjamin gathered in Jerusalem. It was the twentieth day of the ninth month. All of the people sat in the area in front of God’s house, trembling because of this order and because of the heavy rain. Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have been unfaithful by marrying foreign women and adding to Israel’s guilt. But now, make a confession to the Lord God of your ancestors and do his will. Separate yourselves from the neighboring peoples and from the foreign wives.” The whole assembly shouted in reply, “Yes. We must do as you have said. But there are many people, and it’s the rainy season; we can’t continue to stand outside. Nor can this task be completed in a day or two because many of us have sinned in this matter. Let our leaders represent the entire assembly. Let all in our towns who have taken foreign wives come at appointed times, along with the elders and judges of every town, until God’s great anger at us on account of this matter be averted.” Only Jonathan, Asahel’s son, and Jahzeiah, Tikvah’s son, opposed this; Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levites supported them.

L: This is the word of the Lord. **P: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“OUR EXPECTED RESPONSE”

Rev. Jeniffer Rodriguez

HYMN GTG#683

“LORD OF ALL HOPEFULNESS”

WORDS OF GRATITUDE

When Christ abides in us and we abide in him, we can see that everything we have is a gift from God. The gifts of time, talent and treasure God has entrusted us with are not to be hoarded, but to be shared, to give life to others as Christ gives life to us. Let us now return to God a portion of what God has so generously given to us.

OFFERTORY GTG#411

RESPOND IN GRACE

“GOD IS HERE TODAY”

God is here today;

as certain as the air I breathe,

as certain as the morning sun that rises,

as certain when I sing you’ll hear my song.

*** DOXOLOGY**

“JUKKESO WANWIYE”

The God of Glory goes up to the throne
Why do you tremble and why do you fear?
Our hearts and spirits are dancing for joy;
God is our sovereign on high Hallelujah, Hallelujah,
Holy God of glory, wonderful and mighty
God is our sovereign on high

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy God, we thank you that we have heard your words of eternal life today. As a sign of our gratitude, we offer you these gifts. Take what we have given and multiply it for the good: the good of our faith community, the good of our neighbors, and the good of the world you so love. Shape and mold us so that our whole lives become a loving response to your goodness. In the name of the one whose life gives life to the world, Jesus Christ, Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Holy Three-in-One and One-in-Three, we give thanks that you draw us into community with you, just as your three persons live in perpetual community, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Thank you for the many gifts of grace that flow into our lives when we enter the embrace of your love: for your nearness in times of trouble, for your guidance in times of uncertainty, for the promise of hope.

We thank you, too, that you draw us into community with our fellow human beings. We thank you for the gifts of this faith community... [specific gifts may be listed here]. In this time of conflict in the world, bind us to one another and to you, that we may bear faithful witness to your love. Help us to care for others as you care for us. May the work we do in your name show those around us what is possible when people commit to working together for the common good.

Loving Lord, we pray for our world marred by violence, arrogance, greed and injustice. We grieve the ways the “spiritual forces of evil” which the Apostle Paul wrote about still wreak havoc in our world today. As we fight against racism, sexism, poverty and every form of oppression, remind us that the fight is not against our neighbors who think or believe differently from us, but against the powers and principalities that oppose your reign of justice and peace. Ground us in your love and fill us with your Spirit that we may see Christ’s face in the face of every person we meet. When we are tempted to treat our neighbors as enemies, soften our hearts and move us to offer your transformative grace. Give us patience, perseverance and hope as we join you in the work of building the kingdom of God.

God of grace, you promise to be near to the brokenhearted and save the crushed in spirit. We bring before you those in our community who are sick or recovering, grieving or in pain. Comfort their spirits by your Spirit and ease their sufferings with your healing mercies. Make us attentive to their needs and bearers of your loving presence.

Lord of all, we thank you that through Christ’s life, death and resurrection, you have already won victory over sin and death. Help us to live in ways that reflect and respond to your overflowing love. Make us ready with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and even the sword of the Spirit, that we may stand firm in your grace and be your faithful people, bearing the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. We pray in Christ’s name and as he taught us: “Our Father...”

***LORD’S PRAYER**

HYMN (See Attached)

“MAY THIS CHURCH BE LIKE A TREE”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

God is Good! All the time! All the Time! God is Good!
“Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people;

THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you

People: And also with you

AMEN

POSTLUDE

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2024



PASTOR

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MUSIC DIRECTOR

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SEXTON

Benson Njie

MINISTERS

All the Members

“A multicultural congregation worshipping together where Jesus Christ is Lord; where men, women, and children share in leadership; and where the strength of our fellowship builds bridges to the community.”

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For offerings please scan the QR code below



EVENTS HAPPENING IN 2024

In person hybrid worship is at 11AM

Zoom link is as follows:

By Computer

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 870 270 865

One tap mobile

+16465588656

Drumming Program The drumming program will be off the month of August. Due to Labor Day weekend our drumming sessions for the month of September will be on Monday the 9th and 16th at 6PM.

Hybrid English Bible Study will be off for the summer and will return Thursday September 12th

Zoom Link bible study

By computer

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 376 838 854

One tap mobile

+16465588656,Spanish

Spanish Bible Study will be off for the summer and will return on Wednesday September 11th

Coffee Hour following worship today.

Pastor Jeniffer will be away August 28th – September 2nd.

Please Share your tithes and offerings using the QR code below



Prayers and Praise

Please prayer for our Nation

Please pray for everyone in leadership

Please pray for children/ families

Please pray for the Otu family

Please pray for the Supina/Ruess family

Please pray for the Sevilla family

Please pray for people struggling with cancer for healing

Please pray for people struggling with mental health

Please pray for leaders, people in a position of authority

Please pray for the Denzer Family

Please pray for Heather Blenkinsopp

Please pray for the Carretta family

Please pray for the Yumart family

Pleaser pray for the Sippel family

Please pray for the Quinoy family

Please pray for Joy and Teresa Zeiden

Please pray for Boateng family

Please pray for Kiara Taylor's family

Please pray for Bruce and family

Please pray for Nancy Marin

Please pray for Bob

Please pray for Curtis

Please pray for the Bonapace family

Please pray for peace in the world

Please pray for Warren's family

Please pray for Diana Behan and family.

Praise Songs and Hymns

I HAVE DECIDED TO FOLLOW JESUS / HE DECIDIDO SEQUIR A CRISTO

I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
No turning back, no turning back.

The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
No turning back, no turning back.

He decidido seguir a Cristo,
He decidido seguir a Cristo,
He decidido seguir a Cristo;
No vuelvo atrás, no vuelvo atrás

La vida vieja ya he dejado,
La vida vieja ya he dejado,
La vida vieja ya he dejado;
No vuelvo atrás, no vuelvo atrás

LORD OF ALL HOPEFULNESS

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy:
be there at our waking and give us, we pray,
your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
be there at our labors and give us, we pray,
your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace:
be there at our homing and give us, we pray,
your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm:
be there at our sleeping and give us, we pray,
your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

MAY THIS CHURCH BE LIKE A TREE / QUE ESTA IGLESIA SEA UN ÁRBOL

May this church be like a tree,
behind your house, there in your garden,
meeting place for joy, and feast,
and simple prayer beneath its branches.

With its roots in earth so fertile,
and its arms raised high to heaven,
May this church bear fruits of justice,
acts of loving and compassion.
Tree ever growing by living water,
running external, flowing from God.

May this church be like a tree
Here in the street or in the plaza,
For the birds, a nesting branch,
For passers-by, a welcome shelter.
May it stand as if it's watching,
Near my house, just round the corner,
Waiting for this weary pilgrim
With its arms wide to embrace me.

Que esta iglesia sea un árbol
en el fondo de tu casa,
que haya fiesta y alegría
y oración bajo sus ramas.
Con raíces bien profundas,
y sus brazos hacia el cielo
que esta iglesia sea fecunda
dando frutos de consuelo
árbol plantado junto
a las aguas de vida
eterna de nuestro Dios.”

Que esta iglesia también sea
Como un árbol de la plaza,
Nido de pájaros libres y refugio del que pasa,
Y que sea como el árbol de la esquina de mi casa,
Que me ve llegar de lejos e imagino que me abraza.