

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship – Psalm 126, 127, and 128

Leader: May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

People: Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

Leader: Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

People: Unless the Lord guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain.

Leader: It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved.

People: Happy is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways. You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you.

*Song of Praise “And Can it Be?” Celebration Hymnal No. 347

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Heavenly Father, we gather in joy to worship you this Sunday morning. We praise your name for the blessings of this day. You created us and watch over us as a loving parent cares for a child. Help us to always walk in Your ways and praise Your name as we pray in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

First Lesson

Acts 16:16-34

Second Lesson

Matthew 13:31-35

*Gloria Patri

*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.*

Sermon

“Freedom and Jesus Christ”

Rev. Dr. Eugene A. Blair

Song of Reflection

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

Celebration Hymnal No. 676

Pastoral Prayer

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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power
and the glory forever. Amen.*

*Hymn of Going Forth

“Victory in Jesus”

Celebration Hymnal No. 353

*Benediction

*Benediction Response

“Make Us One”

Make us one Lord, make us one
Holy Spirit, make us one
Let our love flow, so the world will know
We are one in you; we are one in you.

*Postlude

*We invite you to stand if you are able.

First Lesson

Acts 16:16-34

¹⁶One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. ¹⁷While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." ¹⁸She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. ¹⁹But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. ²⁰When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews ²¹and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." ²²The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. ²³After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. ²⁴Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. ²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. ²⁷When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." ²⁹The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰Then he

brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³²They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. ³⁴He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

Second Lesson

Matthew 13:31-35

³¹He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." ³³He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened." ³⁴Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. ³⁵This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world."

The Word of God for the people of God.

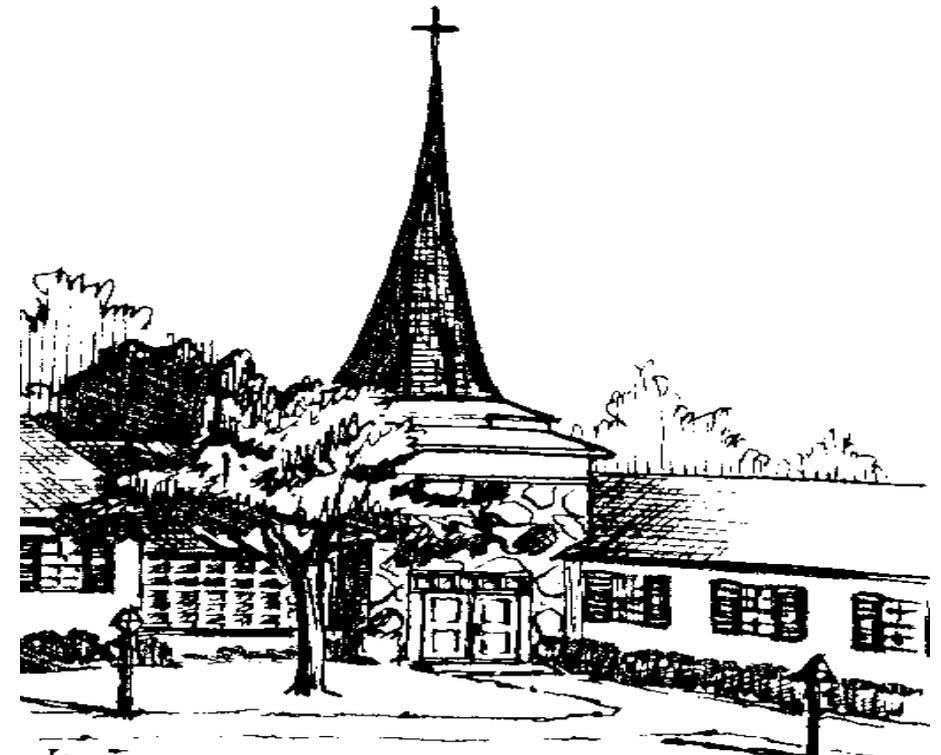
All: Thanks be to God.

WELCOME!

Church Covenant

We are banded together as a Christian Church to maintain the worship of God the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer; to proclaim the gospel of Christ, to develop in ourselves and others a consciousness of our relationship and duties to God and each other; to create a spirit of love for truth, a passion for righteousness and enthusiasm for service; to respect and protect all of God's creation. To this end we pledge our loyalty to Christ and covenant with God and with each other to strive to express God's spirit in our individual and corporate life; to live together as Christians and to submit ourselves to the government of this church, working, giving, praying for its increase, purity and peace, seeking in every way to make it a power for the building up of the Kingdom of God.

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