

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 6th at 10:00 a.m.

Here is the Order of Worship for our online worship experience.

Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Matthew 16:24

Greeting and Welcome

Prelude Music

Call to Worship

Pastor: Whom do you seek?

All: We seek God, the Creator, who brought us to life.

Pastor: Who has told you of God?

All: Jesus Christ, God's Son, has shown us the love of God through his life.

Pastor: Discipleship is difficult. Are you ready?

All: We want to be ready. Lord, strengthen and sustain us this day.

Opening Prayer

In the beauty of this day, we have come to pray, to worship, to receive healing and hope. We come from the struggles and triumphs of the week, needing to feel the soothing presence of God. Lord, be with us this day. Calm and soothe our souls. Cause us to rejoice that you have provided a special place where we may gather to talk of your presence and love; to sing your praises; and to be empowered to go forth to serve you. Amen.

Hymn of Praise "All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine" UMH #166, Words: F. Bland Tucker, 1988. Music: Ralph Vaughn Williams, 1906.

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1. All praise to thee, for thou. O King divine,
didst yield the glory that of right was thine,
that in our darkened hearts thy grace might shine:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

2. Thou cam'st to us in lowliness of thought;
by thee the outcast and the poor were sought,
and by thy death was God's salvation wrought:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

3. Let this mind be in us which was in thee,
who wast a servant that we might be free,

humbling thyself to death on Calvary:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

4. Wherefore, by God's eternal purpose,
thou art high exalted o'er all creatures now,
and given the name to which all knees shall bow:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

5. Let every tongue confess with one accord
in heaven and earth that Jesus Christ is Lord;
and God eternal be by all adored:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Children's Moment

Special Music "Pie Jesu" - Requiem - Gabriel Fauré Soloist: Alison Combes

Prayers of the People

Gospel Reading John 6:56-69 (NRSV)

[Jesus said] "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father."

Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon "Are You a Fan or a Follower?" Rev. Matthew B. Sergent

Prayer of Confession

Patient Lord, we are a culture that wants the quick and easy answers to all of life's problems. We want to be able to open the Bible and place our fingers on the passage that will answer all our questions and heal all our hurts. It is difficult for us to deal with the knowledge that discipleship requires patience and perseverance. Jesus' own disciples struggled with his teachings. It took a long time for them to understand fully what Jesus was saying and how they were to respond. We are no different. The words of Jesus take time for us to comprehend. Forgive us, Lord, when we are so impatient; when we just want to "get on with it", and be where the action is. Help us to understand the commitment we make in discipleship, through the rocky times and the smooth seas alike. Push us in our ministry of help and compassion to do more than we ever thought we could do in helping others. Give to us that extra measure of faith and commitment that we may truly serve you by serving others. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Even though you doubt and question, God's love is poured on you, in you, and through you to others. Rest assured in God's presence and love for you, that will never fail or abandon you. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are healed, restored, and forgiven. Amen!

Hymn "Here I Am Lord" UMH #593 Words and Music: Daniel Schutte, 1981.

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1. I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save.

I who make the stars of night,
I will make their dark-ness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Refrain: Here I am, Lord. It is I Lord.
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.

I have wept for love of them.
They turn a-way.

I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love a-lone.
I will speak my words to them.
Whom shall I send?

Refrain:

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.

Finest bread I will pro-vide,
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?

Refrain:

Benediction

God is always with you. Even when times get difficult and the way is not clear, God is truly by your side. Rest in God's strength and love. Serve God with joy. Go in peace. Amen.

Postlude