



PLUM Afternoon Worship 16th Sunday after Pentecost

GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM September 20, 2020

PRELUDE

WELCOME and PRAYER REQUESTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Lord God is our God.

And so, we are not afraid.

The Lord is our shield,

Protecting and watching over us.

When we put our trust in God,

Great is our reward.

HYMN MORNING HAS BROKEN

*1 Morning has broken, like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word*

*2 Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from Heaven
Like the first dew fall, on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass*

*3 Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning
Born of the One Light Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise every morning
God's re-creation of the new day*

*4 Morning has broken, like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

God of all ages,

You have chosen us as your own, yet we so often live as if it were not so. We succumb to things which are not good for us. We believe we know better than you. We refuse to put our trust in your promises. Sweep away our foolishness and bring us back into a trusting relationship with the one who has lovingly created us and longs to be our strength and life.

Dear people, hear the joyful words that God has forgiven us! Our misdeeds and folly are forgotten; grace and mercy abound. Let us give thanks that we have a compassionate creator! **Amen.**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PEACE

The minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty God, You long for us to trust that you hold our lives safely in your hands. Reveal the surprises you have for us in your good time, and show us that your mercy never fails us, in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

FIRST READING

Genesis 15:1-6

¹After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ²But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and

count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”⁶ And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL

Luke 3:8

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

HYMN

BLESSED ASSURANCE

*1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.*

Refrain

*This is my story, this is my song
praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song
praising my Savior all the day long.*

*2 Perfect submission, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love.* Refrain

*3 Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with his goodness; lost in his love.* Refrain

SERMON

PASTOR SUE DEVINE

LITANY

There is nothing so great

That God could not do it.

God makes a creature out of dust

And breathes new life into it.

God stretches out a sky of stars

So vast we cannot count them.

God gives us powers to create

And magnifies our efforts.

There is nothing so great

That God could not do it.

God makes the waters teem with life

With creatures strange and awesome.

God brings a seedling from the ground

Into a fruitful harvest.

God gives us minds to figure out

The puzzles of our planet.

There is nothing so great

That God could not do it.

God promises descendants to

A couple old and barren.

God makes a young man full of doubt

Into a mighty leader.

God saves the richest blessings

For those without great stature.

There is nothing so great

That God could not do it.

God takes a captive nation

And leads them through the sea

But makes the waters stand aside

So, they can safely cross.

God leads them through a wilderness

For many grueling years,

And finally, to the promised land

Where they can make a home.

There is nothing so great

That God could not do it.

God makes us a promise

And then it's fulfilled,

Not always as hoped for

But better by far.

Praise God, who is faithful,

Our covenant-keeper.

There is nothing so great

That God could not do it!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

At this time, we offer ourselves to God—our physical resources and our whole life—recognizing that all we are and all we have are God's, given to us and for which we are stewards. If you have a monetary offering for your congregation, please send it or deliver it to the church.

Let us pray. We offer what we have, O God, trusting that all we need will be provided for us. Use these gifts in your kingdom's work, and make our lives a blessing to others, for the sake of your Spirit. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Often the plans we make look nothing like the amazing future you have in store for us. Keep us open to the unexpected and surprise us with your grace. Faithful God, **Hear our prayer.**

As the days and nights even out and we reach the midpoint of the season, we pause to thank you for the fruits of the earth, the beauty of nature, and our interdependence with this planet on which we live. Faithful God, **Hear our prayer.**

When we try to count the stars, we fall short; how easily we underestimate the vastness of your creation. Give us respect for our relative size within the cosmos and awe at the splendor of all that you have made. Faithful God, **Hear our prayer.**

Be present with those who have given up hope of anything improving in their lives, and compel us to encourage others by the promises you give to all. Send your healing strength to those whom we name today... Faithful God, **Hear our prayer.**

We celebrate Bishop Nelson Wesley Trout and all who have played pioneering roles in your earthly church. Give us courage to walk where you lead, even if no one has ever walked that way before. Faithful God, **Hear our prayer.**

Grant confidence and zeal to members of our PLUM congregations that we may faithfully carry out your work which you have entrusted to us. Faithful God, **Hear our prayer.**

Here other petitions may be offered.

Our prayers—and our lives—are safe within your hands. We trust in your faithfulness and give thanks that you have heard us, for the sake of Jesus. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as the Lord taught us.

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 and ever. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

May the love of Jesus Christ bring us wholeness, the grace of God the Father grant us peace, the breath of Holy Spirit instill passion and the unity between them give us strength for this and every day. **Amen.**

HYMN PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE ALMIGHTY

- Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
The King of Creation
O my soul, praise Him
For He is thy health and salvation
All ye who hear, now to his temple draw near
Join me in glad adoration*
- Praise to the Lord Who doth
Prosper thy work and defend thee
Surely His goodness and mercy
here daily attend thee
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do
If with His love He befriend thee*
- Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me adore Him
All that has life and breath
Come now with praises before Him
Let the "amen" sound from his people again
Gladly forever adore Him*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS and GOD SIGHTINGS

COFFEE HOUR

FALL STUDY CLASSES ON ZOOM FOR PLUM

Last week PLUM began a 10-week fall series of study, ending with the start of Advent. There will be two different sessions each week: Tuesday (1:00) and Thursday (7:00). **All are invited to one or both sessions.**

The Tuesday class will focus on **Scripture Study**, as requested by some members. Ten passages of Scripture from 8 different books of the Bible will be read and discussed. This will not be an academic class. Emphasis will be on discussion. It is expected that the discussion will lead us to applying Scripture to current issues of our day.

The Thursday Evening class will focus on a book entitled **"The Color of Compromise,"** by Jemar Tisby, a graduate of Notre Dame and the Reformed Theological Seminary. The book is available on Amazon and in the form of a series of videos (that correlate with the chapters in the book) on Prime Video. This is a serious look at Racism and, in particular, the Church's participation in the development of Racism and its potential role to overcome it. Key words in this book are Awareness, Relationships and Commitments (A.R.C.).

Most sessions will be led by the Pastoral Team. Come, enjoy the company of PLUM, learn, and pray together.

PLUM Pastors:

The Reverend John Gropp	412-680-7867
The Reverend Brenda Henry	412-390-8005
The Reverend Susan Devine	412-496-4889
The Reverend Paul Koch	773-848-1470
Vicar Mandy Gilberti	814-241-8150

All individuals are encouraged to check the following for updates which will be posted by **Noon** daily:

- PLUM website at www.plumofpa.com for all news and event updates.
- PLUM phone hotline **412-466-7774**
(messages may also be left on this line or call our individual churches)

The call in line for worship and bible study:

Zoom online: <https://zoom.us/j/401596541>

Zoom by phone: +1 646 876 9923

Meeting ID: 401 596 541#

It is the Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries (PLUM) mission to be **LIVING CHRIST'S LIGHT OF HOPE IN OUR COMMUNITIES.** PLUM will:

- Provide stability of Word, Sacrament, and Pastoral Care.
- Foster opportunities for connectivity among individuals, congregations, and communities.
- Develop lay leadership for sharing the Gospel.
- Encourage freedom to care for neighbors.

Congregations of PLUM

Bethany Lutheran Church – Dormont
Christ Lutheran Church – Duquesne
East Liberty Lutheran Church – East Liberty
Hope Lutheran Church – Forest Hills
Lutheran Church of our Saviour – North Huntingdon
Messiah Lutheran Church – Munhall
Resurrection Lutheran Church – Oakdale
St. Andrew Lutheran Church – East Carnegie
St. Paul's Lutheran Church – Canonsburg
Zion Lutheran Church – Coraopolis

If you are not already connected to one of our congregations and would like to support our ministry, please send donations to:

Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries

**405 Kennedy Avenue,
Duquesne, PA 15110**