



An Open and Affirming Congregation
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Sunday, August 16, 2026
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

“Awake and Aware”
Matthew 25: 1 – 13 (NRSV)

Pastor: Reverend Jonathan Paredes
Music Director: Greg Wilfrid
Liturgist: Kathy Shugdinis

*Whoever you are, Wherever you are on life’s journey,
You are WELCOME here!*

We Gather Together in Hope for Worship

**Stand if you are able*

NCH - New Century Hymnal (Black book)

PH - Pilgrim Hymnal (Red book)

Prelude

Prelude in G Minor

(J.S. Bach)

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Leader: Come, people of God, stay awake to the ways God is moving among us.

People: We come with open hearts and attentive spirits.

Leader: When the world distracts us with fear or despair, God invites us to notice signs of hope.

People: We come with open hearts and attentive spirits.

Leader: When justice seems delayed and love seems hidden, God continues creating something new.

People: We come with open hearts and attentive spirits.

Leader: Come worship the God whose light continues to shine through every ordinary day.

Unison: Together we will worship, remain attentive, and follow Christ with hopeful and expectant hearts. Thanks be to God.

Opening Prayer

***Opening Hymn**

(NCH) # 164

Arise, Your Light Is Come

***Call to Confession**

Leader: The stories of Jesus invite us into honesty before God. So we come not as perfect people, but as people still learning how to live in grace.

***Prayer of Confession**

Unison: God of grace and truth, sometimes we forget who we are. We forget that we belong to one another. We forget that compassion matters. We forget that love is stronger than fear. We forget that every person carries a sacred story. Too often we choose judgment over mercy, silence over courage, comfort over justice, and isolation over community. But even then, you continue calling us back. Remind us again that we are not abandoned. Remind us again that healing is possible. Remind us again that new chapters can begin. For we are still part of your story, and your story is still being written in love. Amen.

***Assurance of Grace**

Pastor: Even in the moments when we lose our way, God continues to meet us with mercy and renewal. Friends, hear the good news: God is not finished with us yet. Love still speaks. Grace still restores. Hope still rises. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and invited forward together.

People: We are part of God's story. Thanks be to God. Amen.

***Passing of the Peace**

Pastor: Because God never stops awakening us to grace, we are invited to share that grace with one another. Share a smile, a wave, or a gesture of welcome, as we greet each other in this sacred moment of belonging and may the peace of God be with you.

People: And also, with you.

***Song of Response**

*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.*

Children's Time

***Second Hymn**

(PH) #255

Let There Be Light

***Prayer of Illumination**

Scripture Reading

Matthew 25: 1 - 13 (NRSV)

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Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"Awake and Aware"

Rev. Jonathan Paredes

Prayers of the People

*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.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory now and forever.
Amen.*

Invitation to the Offering

Leader: Every day, God entrusts us with opportunities to share hope, kindness, and generosity. Our offerings become part of God's continuing work of healing, hospitality, and justice within our community and throughout the world. As we remain awake to God's presence, may we also remain generous in sharing what has first been given to us. Let us offer our gifts with grateful hearts.

Offertory

What Are They Doing in Heaven Today

(C.A. Tindley)

***Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Alleluia. Alleluia.
Praise Christ the source of all our gifts.
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts.
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

***Offering Prayer**

Unison: God of abundance, receive these gifts and the lives we offer alongside them. Use them to plant seeds of hope, compassion, justice, and love in this community and beyond. May what we share today become part of the work of your Spirit in the world. Amen.

***Hymn of Response**

(PH) # 186

O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee

***Benediction**

Postlude

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning

(Trad. Spiritual)