ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AUGUST 24, 2025
11:00 AM

As a courtesy to others, please silence your phone.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

RINGING OF THE BELLS

LIFE OF THE CHURCH — Eric Robinson

PRELUDE — Improvisations on *In the Garden* (Steven Phillips & Isaac Mingus)

from Psalm 71

CALL TO WORSHIP — Linda Smith

God is our rock and our fortress,
our refuge and strength.
God is our hope and our trust.
Praise the Lord!

***HYMN 645** *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above* — MIT FREUDENT ZART

Sing praise to God who reigns above,
the God of all creation,
the God of power, the God of love,
the God of our salvation.
With healing balm my soul is filled,
and every faithless murmur stilled:
to God all praise and glory!

What God's almighty power has made
God's gracious mercy keepeth;
by morning glow or evening shade
God's watchful eye ne'er sleepeth.
Within the kingdom of God's might,
lo! all is just and all is right:
to God all praise and glory!

The Lord is never far away,
but, through all grief distressing,
an ever-present help and stay,
our peace and joy and blessing,
as with a mother's tender hand
God gently leads the chosen band:
to God all praise and glory!

Thus all my toilsome way along
I sing aloud thy praises,
that all may hear the grateful song
my voice unwearied raises.
Be joyful in the Lord, my heart;
both soul and body, take your part:
to God all praise and glory!

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** RC Smith

Gracious God,
we come before you in need of forgiveness and grace.
You call us to trust in you completely, but we do not.
We are timid and fearful as we run the race that is set before us.

Forgive us, we pray.
Help us to be born again into the life of Christ,
trusting that - by grace - we are members of the timeless family of faith.

(a moment for silent reflection)

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God.

***SONG OF JOY 770** (vv. 1 & 4) *I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table*

I'm gonna eat at the welcome table;
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, Alleluia.
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table;
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, Alleluia.

Here all the world will find a welcome;
Here all the world will find a welcome, Alleluia.
Here all the world will find a welcome;
Here all the world will find a welcome, Alleluia.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

ANTHEM *The Lord is My Shepherd (Psalm 23)* Howard Goodall
(The Chancel Choir)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:
For you are with me, you will comfort me.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

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SCRIPTURE READING Hebrews 11:32-12:2

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON *The Unbroken Cord* RC Smith

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER Linda Smith

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.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY *The Goodness of God* Jenn Johnson
(Ariel Blue, with the Chancel Choir)

***DOXOLOGY 607** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

from *The Confession of 1967*

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** Linda Smith

The church disperses to serve God
wherever its members are,
at work or play, in private or in the life of society.
Their prayer and Bible study are part
of the church's worship and theological reflection.
Their witness is the church's evangelism.
Their daily action in the world
is the church in mission to the world.
The quality of their relation with other persons
is the measure of the church's fidelity.

BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

***HYMN 730** *I Sing a Song of the Saints of God* GRAND ISLE

I sing a song of the saints of God,
patient and brave and true,
who toiled and fought and lived and died
for the Lord they loved and knew.
And one was a doctor, and one was a queen,
and one was a shepherdess on the green:
they were all of them saints of God, and I mean,
God helping, to be one too.

They loved their Lord so dear, so dear,
and God's love made them strong;
and they followed the right, for Jesus' sake,
the whole of their good lives long.
And one was a soldier, and one was a priest,
and one was slain by a fierce wild beast:
and there's not any reason, no, not the least,
why I shouldn't be one too.

They lived not only in ages past;
there are hundreds of thousands still;
the world is bright with the joyous saints
who love to do Jesus' will.
You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea,
in church, or in trains, or in shops, or at tea;
for the saints of God are just folk like me,
and I mean to be one too.

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION** RC Smith

POSTLUDE *Impressions of Moret's Rondeau* Steven Phillips

The postlude concludes our worship today. It's the custom of this congregation to sit and enter into this moment with gratitude and celebration.

Today we welcome guest soloist **Ariel Blue** to the 9:00 and 11:00 services. Ariel is a member of West Coast Black Theater Troupe and a well-recognized actor and singer in Southwest Florida.

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