SIXTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 17, 2023
11:00 AM

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME AND INVITATION Rev. Timothy T. Boggess

PRELUDE *Aria* by Flor Peters

CALL TO WORSHIP Adapted from Psalm 16
Jeff Bartell

Protect us, O God, for in you we take refuge.
You show us the path of life.
In your presence there is fullness of joy;
in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

* **HYMN 24** *God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens* HOLY MANNA

God, who stretched the spangled heavens
infinite in time and place,
flung the suns in burning radiance
through the silent fields of space,
we, your children in your likeness,
share inventive powers with you.
Great Creator, still creating,
show us what we yet may do.

Proudly rise our modern cities,
stately buildings row on row.
Yet their windows, blank, unfeeling,
stare on canyoned streets below,
where the lonely drift unnoticed
in the city's ebb and flow,
lost to purpose and to meaning,
scarcely caring where they go.

We have ventured worlds undreamed of
since the childhood of our race;
known the ecstasy of winging
though untraveled realms of space;
probed the secrets of the atom,
yielding unimagined power,
facing us with life's destruction
or our most triumphant hour. *(continued next page)*

As each far horizon beckons,
may it challenge us anew,
children of creative purpose,
serving others, honoring you.
May our dreams prove rich with promise,
each endeavor well begun.
Great Creator, give us guidance
till our goals and yours are one.

*** PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Surprising God,
forgive us for our lack of faith and imagination
in the face of the world's challenges.
We so easily despair of thinking that
the world will change for the better
or that we will change for the better.
And yet scripture teaches us that
nothing is impossible with you.
Renew our resolve to do all that we can,
trusting that you will do all that we cannot.

(a moment for silent reflection)

*** ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

*** SONG OF JOY 804** (v 1) *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart* MARION

Rejoice, ye pure in heart!
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!
Your festal banner wave on high,
the cross of Christ your King.

Rejoice! Rejoice!
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

*** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

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

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

ANTHEM *Esto les Digo* Kinley Lange
(The Chancel Choir) Text from Matthew 18:19-20

Esto les digo,
si dos de ustedes se ponen
en acuerdo aquí
en la tierra para pedir
algo en oración,
mi Padre que está en el cielo
se lo dará.

This I say to you,
if two of you are gathered
in one accord here
in the earth to ask
anything in prayer,
my Father who is in heaven
will give it to you.

Porque donde dos o tres
se reúnen en mi nombre,
allí estoy yo
en medio de ellos.

Because where two or three
are gathered in my name,
there am I
in the midst of them.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7 Page 13

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON *The Last Laugh* Rev. Boggess

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** From *A Declaration of Faith* (1977)
Jeff Bartell

We hold that what God says to us and does for us
centers in Jesus Christ our living Lord
as he is remembered, known, and expected.

In Christ God's Word of acceptance takes flesh:
by grace through faith
we are set right with God,
adopted as children of God,
not because of anything we have done,
but because of what Christ has done.

In Christ God's Word of demand is lived out:
to love God and neighbor as he did
is what God requires of us.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* arr. Steven Phillips

*** DOXOLOGY 608** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* PRAISE GOD (Hopson)

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

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*** HYMN 547** *Go, My Children, with My Blessing* AR HYDY NOS

"Go, my children, with my blessing,
never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you,
you are my own.
In my love's baptismal river
I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing,
you are my own."

"Go, my children, sins forgiven,
at peace and pure.
Here you learned how much I love you,
what I can cure.
Here you heard my dear Son's story;
here you touched him, saw his glory.
Go, my children, sins forgiven,
at peace and pure."

"Go, my children, fed and nourished,
closer to me.
Grow in love and love by serving,
joyful and free.
Here my Spirit's power filled you;
here my tender comfort stilled you.
Go, my children, fed and nourished,
joyful and free."

*** CHARGE AND BENEDICTION** Rev. Boggess

POSTLUDE *Prelude and Fugue in F Major* J. S. Bach