Order of Worship – September 22, 2026
Gathering of the Presbytery of Donegal

Gathering Music **Randy Yoder**

Call to Worship **Rev. Mwat Asedeh**

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless God's holy name!

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits,

Who forgives all our iniquity, who heals all our diseases,

Who redeems our lives from the grave, who crowns us with steadfast love and mercy,

Who satisfies us with good as long as we live,

So that our youth is renewed like the eagle's.

This is the day that the Lord has made;

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Hymn "O The Deep, Deep Love of Jesus"

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free!
Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me,
Underneath me, all around me, Is the current of Thy love;
Leading onward, leading homeward to my glorious rest above.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, spread his praise from shore to shore!
How he loveth, ever loveth, Changeth never, never more;
How he watches o'er his loved ones, died to call them all his own;
How for them he intercedeth, Watcheth o'er them from the throne.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, Love of every love the best;
'Tis an ocean vast of blessing, Tis a haven sweet of rest,
O the deep, deep love of Jesus, 'Tis a Heav'n of Heav'ns to me;
And it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to Thee.

Prayer of Confession **Rev. Suzanne Personette**

Holy and Merciful God, in raising Jesus from the grave, you shattered the power of sin and death. We confess that we remain captive to the powers of this world. We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We cling to grudges like they were precious possessions, and allow the past to hold us hostage. We do not forgive as we ourselves have been forgiven. We have turned from those in need, refusing to bear their burdens. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. In your mercy, forgive what we have been. Help us to amend what we are. Shape and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your Holy Name. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness and Passing of the Peace

Scripture & Sermon - *Exploring the Wilderness* **Rev. Dr. Erin Cox-Holmes**

Song "Down to the River to Pray"

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good old way
And who shall wear the starry crown
Good Lord, show me the way!

O sisters let's go down,
Let's go down, come on down,
O sisters let's go down,
Down in the river to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good old way
And who shall wear the robe and crown
Good Lord, show me the way!

O brothers let's go down,
Let's go down, come on down,
Come on brothers let's go down,
Down in the river to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good old way
And who shall wear the starry crown
Good Lord, show me the way!

O fathers let's go down,
Let's go down, come on down,
O fathers let's go down,
Down in the river to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good old way
And who shall wear the robe and crown
Good Lord, show me the way!

O mothers, let's go down,
Let's go down, don't you want to go down,
Come on mothers let's go down,
Down in the river to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good old way
And who shall wear the starry crown
Good Lord, show me the way!

O sinners let's go down,
Let's go down, come on down,
O sinners let's go down,
Down in the river to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good old way
And who shall wear the robe and crown
Good Lord, show me the way!

(Note: The earliest known version of the song, titled "The Good Old Way," was published in Slave Songs of the United States in 1867. It was a freedom song, often sung "Down IN the river to pray, to give directions for the underground railroad. "Siblings" and "Parents" may be substituted in the lyrics.

Renewal of the Baptismal Covenant (See page 3) **Rev. Bob Bronkema**

Hymn #131 "Wind Who Makes All Winds That Blow"

Charge and Benediction
Music to Lead Us to the Learning Community Time

Renewal of the Baptismal Covenant

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERVICE

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

On behalf of the whole Church, I ask you: Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?

I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races?

I do.

According to the grace given to you, will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?

I will.

Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,
died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Eternal Father: When nothing existed but chaos, you swept across the dark waters and brought forth light. In the days of Noah you saved those on the ark through water. After the flood you set in the clouds a rainbow. When you saw your people as slaves in Egypt, you led them to freedom through the sea. Their children you brought through the Jordan to the land which you promised.

Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Tell of God's mercy each day.

In the fullness of time you sent Jesus, nurtured in the water of a womb. He was baptized by John and anointed by your Spirit. He called his disciples to share in the baptism of his death and resurrection and to make disciples of all nations.

Declare Christ's works to the nations, his glory among all the people.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, and by this gift of water call to our remembrance the grace declared to us in our baptism. For you have washed away our sins, and you clothe us with righteousness throughout our lives, that dying and rising with Christ we may share in his final victory.

All praise to you, Eternal Father, through your Son Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns for ever. Amen.

REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

Amen.

The Holy Spirit works within you, that having been born through water and the Spirit, you may live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THANKSGIVING

Let us rejoice in the faithfulness of our covenant God.

We give thanks for all that God has already given us. As members of the body of Christ, and as members of the Donegal Presbytery, we will faithfully participate in the ministries of the Church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service and our witness that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

The God of all grace, who has called us to eternal glory in Christ, establish and strengthen you by the power of the Holy Spirit, that you may live in grace and peace.