Westminster
Presbyterian Church

June 13, 2021
3RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Prelude Chorale Improvisation on "Lobe den Herren" JOHANN WALTHER
Kenneth Shafer, organ

Welcome and Announcements **Candy Relle**

Gathering Words **Candy and Ferenc Relle**

The God we worship is the giver of life:
The One who makes the dry tree green and grows a forest from the smallest seed.

Opening Prayer **Candy and Ferenc Relle**

O Lord our God,
We give you thanks for the grace that is at work in us
through the gift of our baptism—
the sign of your threefold name,
the communion of your faithful people,
the promise of your glorious realm.

By the power of your Holy Spirit
let your grace and peace grow in us,
until we gather at your heavenly throne
to give you thanks and praise forever.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Opening Hymn No. 714 God of the Fertile Fields ITALIAN HYMN

1 God of the fertile fields,
Shaper of earth that yields
Our daily bread:
Forth from your bounteous hand
Come gifts your love has planned,
That all in every land
Be clothed and fed.

2 We would be stewards true,
Holding in trust from you
All that you give;
Help us in love to share,
Teach us like you to care
For people everywhere,
That all may live.

3 As grows the hidden seed
To fruit that serves our need,
So your reign grows.
Let all our toil be used,

No gift of yours abused,
No humble task refused
Your love bestows.

4 God of the countryside,
Dear to the Christ who died
To make us one:
We pledge our lives anew
In faithful love to you.
Guide all we say and do.
Your will be done.

Prayer of Confession **Candy and Ferenc Relle**

It is only by the power of God that we are able to stand against evil.
Trusting in God's grace, let's us confess our sin.

**When our actions are not consistent with the truth of your gospel,
forgive us, Lord. Cleanse us and free us.**

**When our lives do not proclaim the power of your love,
compel us, Lord. Free us and forgive us.**

**When our minds are full of self-condemnation, with no room for your grace,
revive us, Lord. Forgive us and compel us.**

**For our lives are rooted in our faith in Jesus Christ,
and through Christ's love alone we are reconciled to you.**

Silent Confession

Assurance of Forgiveness **Candy and Ferenc Relle**

Now stand firm in your faith,
covered by the saving grace of God
and ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.

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

Musical Response Meditation on "Dennis" DOROTHY WELLS
Kenneth Shafer, organ

Prayer of Illumination **Rev. Virginia Birks**

Scripture Reading Mark 4: 26-34

26He also said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, **27**and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. **28**The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. **29**But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

[30]He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? [31]It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; [32]yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

[33]With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; [34]he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

Sermon **Rev. Virginia Birks**

Hymn No. 171 A Sower Came from Ancient Hills SEACHRIST

1 A Sower came from ancient hills
And cast good seed abroad:
His field, ten thousand human hearts;
His seed, the word of God.
And some who listened would not hear,
And some who heard forgot.
But some received in fertile soil
The truth the Sower taught.

2 A Sower walked throughout the land
And, everywhere he trod,
He sowed his life because he was
Himself the Seed of God.
But then, atop a barren hill,
Beneath a darkening sky,
They threw God’s Seed on stony ground
And left it there to die.

3 The Seed was buried deep in death
Beneath a blood-red sky,
And deeper still was buried hope
For those who watched him die.
But then, in Joseph’s garden fair,
As dawn broke o’er the land,
The Seed, from three days’ silent sleep,
Awoke at God’s command!

4 O Christ, you come among us still,
The Sower and the Seed.
As once you sowed the truth of God
In glowing word and deed,
Implant your Word in waiting hearts,
And let it there take hold,
Until it bears in fruitful lives
A harvest hundredfold.

Prayer of the People **Candy and Ferenc Relle**

We pray in the name of the One who is to come, Jesus the Christ, who taught us to pray together:

O Breathing Life, your Name shines everywhere!

Release a space to plant your Presence here.
Imagine your possibilities now.
Embody your desire in every light and form.
Grow through us this moment's bread and wisdom.
Untie the knots of failure binding us,
as we release the strands we hold of others' faults.
Help us not forget our Source,
Yet free us from not being in the Present.
From you arises every Vision, Power and Song from gathering to gathering.
Amen—
May our future actions grow from here!

Closing Hymn No. 308 O God in Whom All Life Begins NOEL

1 O God in whom all life begins,
Who births the seed to fruit,
Bestow your blessing on our lives;
Here to let your love find root.
Bring forth in us the Spirit's gifts
Of patience, joy, and peace;
Deliver us from numbing fear,
And grant our faith increase.

2 Unite in mutual ministry
Our minds and hands and hearts
That we may have the grace to seek
The power your peace imparts.
So let our varied gifts combine
To glorify your Name
That in all things by word and deed
We may your love proclaim.

3 Through tears and laughter, grief and joy,
Enlarge our trust and care;
So bind us in community
That we may risk and dare.
Be with us when we gather here
To worship, sing, and pray;
Then send us forth in power and faith
To live the words we say.

Benediction **Rev. Virginia Birks**

Postlude To God Be the Glory TOM BIRCHWOOD
Kenneth Shafer, organ

*Note: The Gathering Words, Opening Prayer and Prayer of Confession were adapted from the *Call to Worship.* The Lord's Prayer is a retranslation from the Aramaic by Mark Berry from the Emerging Church Movement.

Music: Ken Shafer – Organ