



First Central Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SUMMER THEME: RESTORE

August 22, 2021

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

St. Columba

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

***Greeting and Passing of the Peace**

"The Peace of God be with you."

*In Unison: Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.*

** Let us rise in body or spirit.*

Call to Worship

Marian Fey, liturgist

With happiness we welcome one another.

Here we greet both friend and stranger.

Happy are those who live in God's house.

Singing our praises to God fills us with joy.

Open our hearts to receive new strength.

Surely God will equip us to face our world.

Open our lives to renewed understandings.

We will be ambassadors for God wherever we go.

***Processional Hymn**

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God *10/26/97*

439

*Martin Luther, c. 1529**Ps. 46**Transl. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853; adapt. Ruth Duck, 1981*

1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul - wark nev - er fail - ing,
 2 Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be los - ing,
 3 And though this world with dev - ils - filled should threat - en to un - do us,
 4 That word be - yond all earth - ly powers for - ev - er is a - bid - ing;

Our pres - ent help a - mid the flood of mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing.
 But there is one who takes our side, the One of God's own choos - ing.
 We will not fear for God has willed the truth to tri - umph through us.
 The Spir - it and the gifts are ours, for Christ is with us sid - ing.

For still our an - cient foe does seek to work us woe with craft and pow - er
 You ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus sets us free! With might - y power to
 The powers of e - vil grim, we trem - ble not for them; their rage we can en -
 Let goods and kin - dred go, this mor - tal life al - so; the bod - y they may

great, and armed with cru - el hate, on earth with - out an e - qual.
 save, vic - to - rious o'er the grave, Christ will pre - vail tri - um - phant.
 dure, for lo, their doom is sure: one lit - tle word shall fell them.
 kill; God's truth shall tri - umph still; God's reign en - dures for - ev - er.

There is speculation that this psalm paraphrase was written in 1527 when Martin Luther's friend was burned at the stake.

Tune: EIN' FESTE BURG (isometric) 8.7.8.7.6.6.6.7.
Martin Luther, c. 1529

***Invocation**

O God, we have no life apart from you. We come here to be nourished by you. You keep us safe and secure. Your love fills us for a lifetime. Give us the courage we need to face adversity. Give us the strength to persist. Give us joy, we pray. Amen.

***Gloria**

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Conversation with the Children

Marian Fey

First Testament Lesson

Nehemiah 4:1-9

For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God within us,
For the Word of God among us,
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Adversity

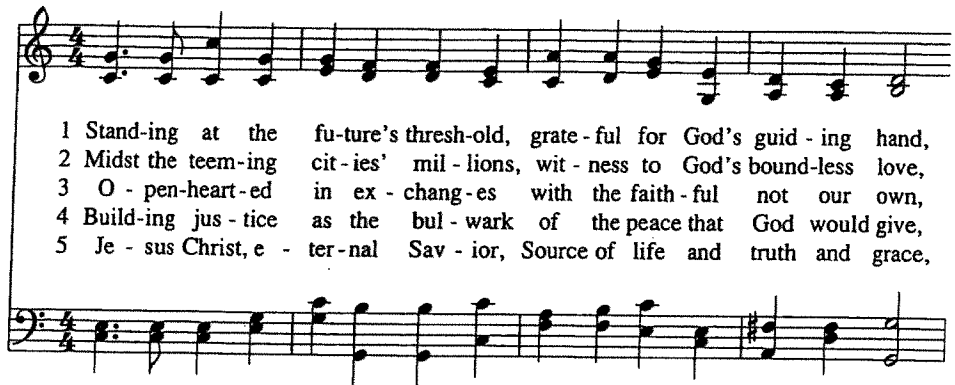
Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

***Hymn**

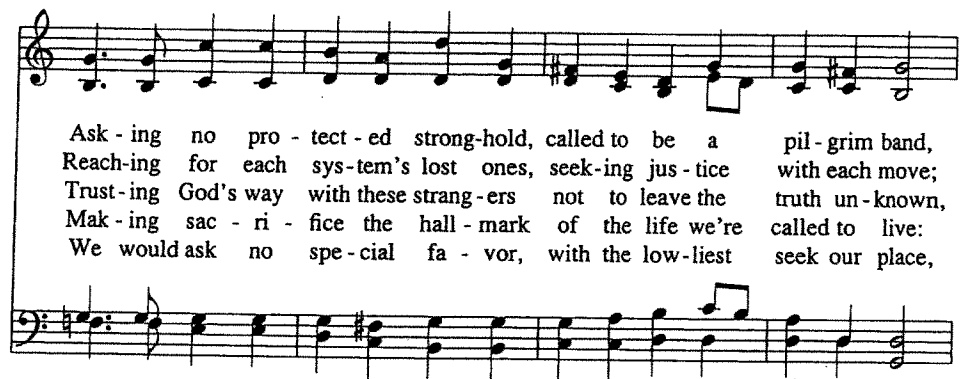
Standing at the Future's Threshold

Matt. 25:31-40

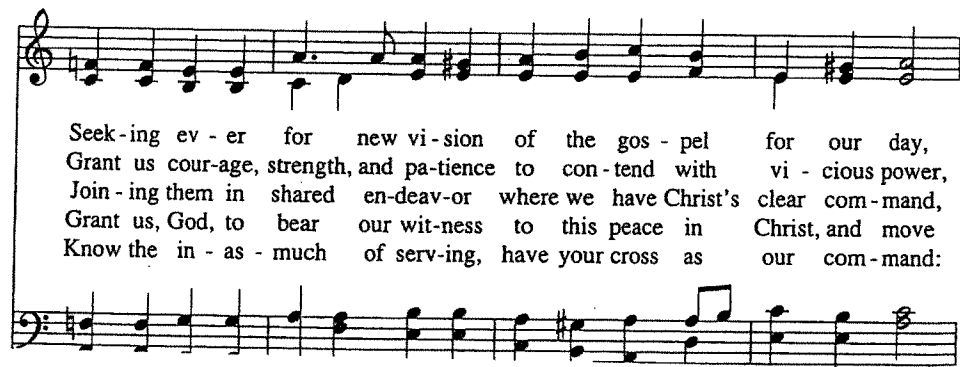
Paul R. Gregory, 1985; rev. 1994



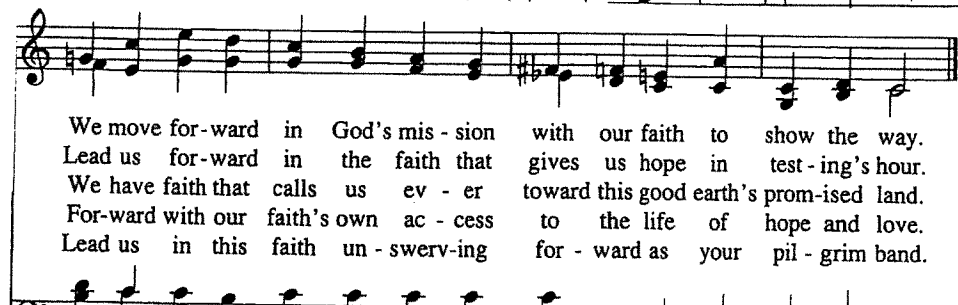
1 Stand-ing at the fu-ture's thresh-old, grate-ful for God's guid-ing hand,
 2 Midst the teem-ing cit-ies' mil-lions, wit-ness to God's bound-less love,
 3 O-pen-heart-ed in ex-chang-es with the faith-ful not our own,
 4 Build-ing jus-tice as the bul-wark of the peace that God would give,
 5 Je-sus Christ, e-ter-nal Sav-ior, Source of life and truth and grace,



Ask-ing no pro-ject-ed strong-hold, called to be a pil-grim band,
 Reach-ing for each sys-tem's lost ones, seek-ing jus-tice with each move;
 Trust-ing God's way with these strang-ers not to leave the truth un-known,
 Mak-ing sac-ri-fice the hall-mark of the life we're called to live:
 We would ask no spe-cial fa-vor, with the low-liest seek our place,



Seek-ing ev-er for new vi-sion of the gos-pel for our day,
 Grant us cour-age, strength, and pa-tience to con-tend with vi-cious power,
 Join-ing them in shared en-deav-or where we have Christ's clear com-mand,
 Grant us, God, to bear our wit-ness to this peace in Christ, and move
 Know the in-as-much of serv-ing, have your cross as our com-mand:



We move for-ward in God's mis-sion with our faith to show the way.
 Lead us for-ward in the faith that gives us hope in test-ing's hour.
 We have faith that calls us ev-er toward this good earth's prom-ised land.
 For-ward with our faith's own ac-cess to the life of hope and love.
 Lead us in this faith un-swerv-ing for-ward as your pil-grim band.

***Prayer of Confession**

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

Alert us now, eternal Spirit to your presence among us. Sometimes we have been so angry and afraid that we have forgotten you. We have forgotten that your love and compassion are stronger than any force. Forgive our mistrust. Draw us back into your secure embrace. Amen.

*** Assurance**

Happy are those who trust in God, who sincerely and truthfully seek to serve where God needs them most. God redeems us, whatever our circumstances, lifting our spirits. May we serve boldly and without fear.

Prayers

Pastoral Prayer

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.

Offertory

Be Thou My Vision

***Hymn of Dedication**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

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

***Offertory Prayer**

Accept our offerings of praise in grateful thanksgiving for your presence in our lives and the many blessings you bestow upon us. Consecrate this offering, gracious God, that it may fill the emptiness and heal the brokenness of lives in this community and beyond. May we go forth encouraged and inspired to carry on your work in the world. Amen.

***Recessional Hymn**

We Shall Overcome

We Shall Overcome

570

United States traditional

John 8:31-32; Rom. 12:21; 2 Cor. 13:11

1 We shall o - ver - come, we shall o - ver -
 2 We'll go hand in hand, we'll go hand in
 3 We are not a - fraid, we are not a -
 4 Our God will see us through, our God will see us

come, we shall o - ver - come some day;
 hand, we'll go hand in hand some day;
 fraid, we are not a - fraid to - day;
 through, our God will see us through some day;

(1-6) Oh, deep in my heart, I do be - lieve,

we shall o - ver - come some day.
 we'll go hand in hand some day.
 we are not a - fraid to - day.
 our God will see us through some day.

5 The truth shall make us free . . . some day.

6 We shall live in peace . . . some day.

This anthem of the 1960s civil rights movement was frequently sung at mass meetings and marches. Several sources have been cited as its origins, including the spiritual "No more auction block for me" based on the tune known as Sicilian Mariners: an old

Tune: WE SHALL OVERCOME Irr.
 United States traditional
 Harm. J. Jefferson Cleveland, 1981

***Benediction**

Benediction Response

Bouma

May you hear laughter in the wind. May you see hope in the light.
May you find courage in your faith. May you know joy in your God.

Postlude

Werde Munter

Open & Affirming Statement

In our ongoing quest for hearts that open, minds that understand,
and lives that serve, we welcome into our fellowship, membership, leadership, and employment,
all people, regardless of abilities, race, gender, sexual orientation, or any God-given characteristic.

Announcements
August 22, 2021

Prayers: for *Leo Yankton*, hospitalized at UMNC; *Luther MacNaughton*, now at Josie Harper Hospice House.

Happy Birthday this week: to *Joanna Fisher, Laura Mitchell, Al Nelson, Dave Cassidy, Paul Spence, George Staffend, Marilyn Hammond, Sara Sharpe, Jasmin Dinslage, Phil Owen, and Jamie Rudd.*

Chancel flowers and decorations: sponsored this month by *Renee Jizba, Bob Vassell.*

Fair Trade Coffee: sponsors this month *Terry & Pam Beranek, Lou & Pat Lamberty.*

FirstKids: will not be held this week.

Coffee Hour: will be held on the Patio following worship.

Register: for the **All-Church Intergenerational Retreat**, held Saturday, **September 25th, 2021.** Mallet Lodge in Platte River State Park between 9:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m.
Registration forms are available in the Parlor.

Want to donate electronically? Please scan the QR code.



Activities for the Coming Week, August 23 – August 28

*Lectionary Readings: Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9;
Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9; Psalm 15; James 1:17-27; Mark 7:1-8, 21-23.*

- Monday:** Staff meeting will not be held today.
- Wednesday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.
- Thursday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Friday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
CEOs, 5:30 p.m., Shirley's Diner, 13838 R St.
- Saturday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Sunday, August 29

Bible Study: 9:15 a.m. Gospel of Mark, led by *Rev. Jeannie Bates*. Third Floor Parlor.
Through August 29th.

Worship: 10:30 a.m. on FaceBook Live, YouTube, or in person. Masks required.

*The church calendar is also available at www.firstcentral.org
Like us on **Facebook**. Follow us on **Twitter**. Watch us on **YouTube**.*