



“The kingdom of God  
is as if someone would  
scatter seed on the  
ground ...  
and the seed would  
sprout and grow,  
he does not know how.”

Mark 4:26-27, NRSV

Minister: The Rev. Dr. Wendy Neff  
ASSISTING IN WORSHIP THIS MORNING

Pianist: Judy Moyer

Sound: Adam Badger

Video: Jake Horton

**The Service for the Lord's Day**  
**Bethel Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**June 13, 2021 – 11:00 AM**

*\* Indicates congregation standing if able.*  
*Congregational responses indicated in bold.*

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship (*L = Leader, P = People*)

L: First I saw the strong and the mighty one, and I said to myself,

**P: Surely this is God's chosen!**

L: But God passed by.

Then I saw the wise and the ancient one, and I said to myself,

**P: Surely this is God's chosen!**

L: But God passed by.

Then I saw the beautiful and the clever one,  
and I said to myself.

**P: Surely this is God's chosen!**

L: But God passed by.

Then came the small, the meek, the vulnerable one – the child.  
And I said to myself,

**P: Can this be God's chosen?**

L: Can God see value in something so unimpressive,  
so insignificant, so easily broken?

**P: And God said "Yes!"**

L: For while we see what's on the outside,  
God sees through to our souls.

**P: We see with our eyes, but God sees with the heart.**

Prayer of Invocation

God, you are the gardener of all creation. You planted this world with the seeds of your love and grow them with your faithfulness. We are your harvest; we find our meaning and sustenance in you. May our minds listen to you calling, may our hearts be attuned to your will, may our feet follow you in the world, through Jesus, the Word become flesh. Amen.

*Lov-ing Spir-it, lov-ing Spir-it,  
you have cho-sen me to be,  
you have drawn me to your won-der,  
you have set your sign on me.*

*Like a moth-er you en-fold me,  
hold my life with-in your own,  
feed me with your ver-y bod-y,  
form me of your flesh and bone.*

*Like a fa-ther you pro-tect me,  
teach me the dis-cern-ing eye,  
hoist me up up-on your shoul-der,  
let me see the world from high.*

*Friend and lov-er, in your close-ness  
I am known and held and blessed:  
in your prom-ise is my com-fort,  
in your pres-ence I may rest.*

*Lov-ing Spir-it, lov-ing Spir-it,  
you have cho-sen me to be,  
you have drawn me to your won-der,  
you have set your sign on me.*

\* Call to Confession

When we gather to worship God,  
we remember that we are God’s people,  
but we have often preferred our way instead of God’s.  
Trusting God’s power to make us new persons in Christ,  
let us confess our sin before God and one another.

\* Corporate Prayer of Confession

**Mighty Planter God, you have thrown your seed on the ground that it might take root. You intend for us hope and abundance and new life. But, in our limited understanding, we have mixed some of our seeds in with your own – seeds of fear and bitterness, of greed and apathy. And then, even**

worse, seeing our mistakes, we have torn up the garden trying to make our garden “pure” again. We have pushed out our brothers and sisters, created laws that hurt and destroy, and built walls that isolate us from others and from ourselves. Forgive us our anxious weeding, O God, and help us to repair the garden of your heart. Show us how to cultivate a place of fruitfulness and hospitality, a place of grace and peace. And teach us trust, that we might leave the tending of the garden to your hand, and yours alone.

... (silent and personal confession)

In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

\* Sung Response      **“SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD”**      LIVING GOD

*Spir-it of the liv-ing God, fall a-fresh on me.*

*Spir-it of the liv-ing God, fall a-fresh on me.*

*Melt me; mold me; fill me; use me.*

*Spir-it of the liv-ing God, fall a-fresh on me.*

\* Declaration of Forgiveness

We who walk by faith and not by sight believe the good news –

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

everything old has passed away;

see, everything has become new!

Praise be to God for the mercy and grace that forgives our sins.

Alleluia. Amen!

\* Sung Response      **“HELELUYAN”**      NATIVE AMERICAN

*He-le-lu-yan, he-le-lu-yan: he-le, he-le-lu-yan;*

*He-le-lu-yan, he-le-lu-yan; he-le, he-le-lu-yan.*

Prayer for Illumination

Let us pray:

Holy Spirit, by your mysterious power speak to us your truth

and show us your wisdom, that we may know you more deeply

and serve you more faithfully, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Readings from Scripture

History      1 Samuel 15:34 – 16:1-13 (*David Anointed as King*)

Gospel      Mark 4:26-34      (*The Parable of the Growing Seed*)

Sermon: “God’s Measuring Stick”

The Rev. Dr. Wendy Neff

\* Affirmation of Faith

*(Taken from The Brief Statement of Faith, 1991,  
The Book of Confessions, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.)*

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
everywhere the giver and renewer of life.  
The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,  
sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and  
neighbor,  
and binds us together with all believers  
in the one body of Christ, the Church.  
The same Spirit  
who inspired the prophets and apostles  
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,  
engages us through the Word proclaimed,  
claims us in the waters of baptism,  
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,  
and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.  
In a broken and fearful world  
the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.  
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,  
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks  
and to live holy and joyful lives,  
even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth,  
praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"**

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

Lord our God, who created all things  
and promises us an eternal realm,  
hear our prayers of intercession, spoken and unspoken.

We pray for peace.

Eternal God, you sent us a Savior, Jesus Christ,  
to break down the walls of hostility that divide us.

Send peace to the places where greed, pride, and anger  
turn nation against nation, race against race, church against church.

We pray for the leaders of the church and the nations.  
Mighty God, sovereign over all,  
give the leaders of the church and the leaders of nations  
the vision of your kingdom,  
that they may lead us with justice and goodwill.

We pray for the earth, God's creation.  
God of creation, you made all things in your wisdom and love.  
Grant us all a reverence for the earth  
that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others  
and to your honor and glory.

We pray for those who are in pain in body and mind.  
Merciful God, you bear the pain of the world.  
Look with compassion on those who are sick.  
Stand with those who sorrow.  
Show them hope by your Word;  
bring healing as a sign of your grace.

Let us pray for friends and families.  
God of love, bless us and those we love, our friends and families,  
so that by drawing close to you  
we may be drawn closer to each other.

All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ,  
who died for us and rose for us,  
who reminds us of your saving grace. Amen.

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 sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Invitation to the Offering

God has provided us with all that we need.

It is our privilege to give back to God.

Let us return a portion of what God has so freely given to us.

Let us now humbly bring our gifts to the Lord.

Prayer of Dedication

Bless, O God, the gifts that we bring this day, that they may be a sign of our commitment to your kingdom and a pledge of our love for you and your world. Multiply the work done by our time, treasures, and talents, that your presence and compassion may be known in all the earth. Amen.

\* Hymn

**“GOD OF THE FERTILE FIELDS”**

ITALIAN HYMN

*God of the fer-tile fields,  
shap-er of earth that yields our dai-ly bread:  
forth from your boun-teous hand  
come gifts your love has planned,  
that all in ev-ery land be clothed and fed.*

*We would be stew-ards true,  
hold-ing in trust from you all that you give;  
help us in love to share,  
teach us like you to care,  
for peo-ple ev-ery-where, that all may live.*

*As grows the hid-den seed  
to fruit that serves our need, so your reign grows.*

*Let all our toil be used,  
no gift of yours a-bused,  
no hum-ble task re-fused your love be-stows.*

*God of the coun-try-side,  
dear to the Christ who died to make us one:  
we pledge our lives a-new  
in faith-ful love to you.*

*Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.*

\* Charge and Benediction

\* Sung Response “COME O HOLY SPIRIT, COME”

*Come, O Ho-ly Spir-it, come;*  
*Come, al-might-y Spir-it, come;*  
*Come, come, come.*

Postlude

“Loving Spirit”

Text: Shirley Erena Murray, 1986

Music: Corner’s Gross Catholisch Gesangbuch, 1631

Arr. William Smith Rockstro, 19<sup>th</sup> cent.

Text © 1987 The Hymn Society (admin. Hope Publishing Company)

“Spirit of the Living God”

Text: Daniel Iverson, 1926

Music: Daniel Iverson, 1926

Text & Music © 1935 Birdwing Music

(admin. EMICMGPublishing.com)

“Heleluyan”

Text: Native American (Muscogee)

Transcribed by Charles Webb, 1989

Music: Transcription © 1989

by The United Methodist Publishing House

“God of the Fertile Fields”

Text: Georgia Harkness, 1955, alt.

Music: Felice de Giardini, 1769, alt.

Text © 1955, ren. 1983 The Hymn Society

(admin. Hope Publishing Company)

“Come, O Holy Spirit, Come”

Text: Nigerian song; English trans. I-to Loh, 1986

Music: Nigerian melody, taught by Samuel Solanke;  
transcr. I-to Loh, 1986

English Trans. and Music Transcr. © 1995

General Board of Global Ministries t/a GBGMusik

Used By Permission. ONE LICENSE #A-718125