



**Seventh & James Baptist Church**  
**July 23, 2023 · 11:00 a.m.**  
**The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost**

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**Chiming of the Hour**

**Meditation**

**Welcome and Call to Worship**

Erin Conaway

One: Beloved child of God, you are welcome here....

**Many: We give thanks to God for bringing us into this moment of worship.**

One: For no matter who you are or where you've been, you matter to God and to us.

**Many: Our hearts rejoice and give thanks for all those who have come before us and made a place for us to worship, pray, sing, wonder, doubt, believe, and just be.**

One: May the love of God through Christ our Lord convince you of your worth and invitation into this body of believers as we worship together in thanksgiving and hope.

**Choral Summons**

“Surely the Lord Is in This Place”

Herbert Colvin

Surely the Lord is this place.  
This is none other than the House of God,  
And this is the Gate of Heaven.  
Surely the Lord is in this place.

**Processional Hymn, No. 26**

“God of Creation, All-Powerful”

**Litany of Awareness**

Jung-Hyun Min

One: Lord, we gather in the sanctuary of your grace, thankful for so many things, even and especially “the church that ever more lifts holy hands above, offering up on every shore her pure sacrifice of love.”

**Many: “Lord of all, to Thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.”**

One: We confess that all of this is often lost on us because we grope around with closed eyes and noise in our ears. But there are moments when we dare to listen and moments

when we catch glimpses, and in those moments, we are thankful “for the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind’s delight, for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight.”

**Many: “Lord of all, to Thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.”**

One: With eyes daring to look and ears open to listen and hearts ready to be ravished by your love, we sit at your feet and wait for the wind of your Spirit to blow through us and to move us from our comfortable places of false security into the current of your redemption of the world.

**All: Lord of all, all of creation and every brother and sister, to thee and thee alone we raise our hymn, our heart’s song, our mind’s melody of grateful praise. O Lord, hear our prayer.**

— adapted from “For the Beauty of the Earth,”  
Hymn, No. 341, stanzas 4 and 5

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Jung-Hyun Min

**Old Testament Reading**

*Genesis 28:10-19a*

Eri Hatakeyama  
Kenichi Hatakeyama

**Epistle Reading**

*Romans 8:12-25*

Yuri Hatakeyama

**Hymn, No. 680**

“I Then Shall Live”

**Gospel Reading**

*Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43*

Scott Turner

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

**Many: Thanks be to God.**

**Prayers of God’s People**

Scott Turner

**Offertory**

*Offering plates are available at the doors of the sanctuary as you leave worship.*

## Doxology, No. 707

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God, above ye heavenly host.  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## Children's Sermon

Sadie Hynan

*All children are invited to come forward for the Children's Sermon.  
Preschoolers [ages 4-kindergarten] may then go to Extended Session.*

## Responsive Reading of Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

Matt Rosencrans

One: O Lord, you have searched me and known me.

**Many: You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.**

One: You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.

**Many: Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely.**

One: You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

**Many: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.**

One: Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?

**Many: If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.**

One: If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

**Many: Even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.**

One: If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,"

**Many: Even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.**

One: Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts.

**All: See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.**

**Music for Reflection**

“Give Me Jesus”

arr. by Ruth Schram

Lise Uhl, *soprano*  
Angela Yoon, *soprano***Sermon**“Creation is Groaning”  
*(Romans 8:12-25)*

Erin Conaway

**Silent Reflection**

Christ is not here to illuminate the deformity of a fallen world but rather to release a beautiful and holy world from bondage; most of all to release the human person from bondage and dissipate the shadows that lie across all creation.

— Father Timothy Joyce (OSB)

**Hymn of Commitment, No. 619**

“Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine”

*If you would like to make a public profession of your faith in Christ  
or request membership in this congregation, our ministers  
will greet you at the front of the sanctuary.*

**Congregational Response**

In response to your decision, we pledge ourselves to be the family of God for you in this place; we offer you our love, our care, our kinship, and our hopes; we hope to learn from you, give to you, and receive from you, by God’s grace. Amen.

**Pastoral Blessing**

Erin Conaway

**Choral Benediction**

“This Is My Father’s World”

Franklin L. Sheppard

This is my Father’s world, and to my listening ears  
All nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.  
This is my Father’s world: I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas – His hand the wonders wrought.  
This is my Father’s world: O let me ne’er forget  
That though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the Ruler yet.  
This is my Father’s world: why should my heart be sad?  
The Lord is King: let the heavens ring! God reigns; let earth be glad!

**Postlude**