



Seventh & James Baptist Church
August 25, 2024 · 11:00 a.m.
The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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Chiming of the Hour

Meditation

“Thanks Be to Thee”

G.F. Handel

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

“Seek the Lord”

Dale Grotenhuis

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near.

Processional Hymn, No. 285

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

Litany of Peace

Betsy Vardaman

One: Peace...the illusive white rabbit we too often chase trying to be more efficient, more determined, more dedicated to our to-do lists, but it only runs faster, screaming behind its fluffy tail, “You're late! You're late for a very important date!”

Many: Lord, treat us like the sheep of the Psalmist and make us lie down by the still waters and lead us to the green grass of your Peace.

One: But our frantic chaos is a luxury compared to the madness so many experience in our world. Too many are listening to the cries of their hungry children, too many are sleeping in refugee tents and under bridges, too many are hiding behind couches from

abusive partners, too many are looking for safe places to hide in case the shooting starts, too many are afraid to drive at night or walk in their neighborhood because of the hue of their skin, too many are filled with hatred for people they don't know and want to fight for reasons they don't understand.

Many: Prince of Peace, come into our world and put an end to our warring insanity, our selfish hoarding, our fearful wall-building, our violent “solutions,” our still deadly racism, our mindless inheriting of hate.

One: We need peace. We need it in moments that take our breath away as well as a deep foundation for our hearts and minds. We need to breathe deeply the peace of your grace and presence and embrace the work laid out before us as you call us to make peace for all of our neighbors.

All: Calm our whirring minds and help us to walk deliberately in your Peace.

Prayer of Thanksgiving Betsy Vardaman

Old Testament Reading *Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18* Mary Sanford

Epistle Reading *Ephesians 6:10-20* Scott Turner

Hymn, No. 629 “Be Strong in the Lord”

Gospel Reading *John 6:56-69* Matt Rosencrans

One: This is the Word of the Lord.
Many: Thanks be to God.

Prayers of God's People Matt Rosencrans

Offertory “Sonata Op. 148, II. Cantiline” Josef Rheinberger

During the offertory, we invite you to prayerfully consider your stewardship of all the resources God is entrusting to you. The work of God at Seventh & James is dependent on the financial generosity and volunteer service of its members and friends. Offering plates are available at the doors of the sanctuary as you leave worship. Join us as you respond to God's call.

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

Leslie Rosencrans

*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 34:15-22

Daniel Farris

One: The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.

Many: The face of the Lord is against evildoers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

One: When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears, and rescues them from all their troubles.

Many: The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.

One: Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord rescues them from them all.

Many: He keeps all their bones; not one of them will be broken.

One: Evil brings death to the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

All: The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Anthem

“Prayer of St. Francis”

Allen Pote

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, thy pardon, Lord.
Where there is doubt, let there be faith.
Oh, Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.
Where there's despair, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness, let there be light,
Where there is sadness, let there be joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.
Oh, Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
For it is in giving that we receive and it is in pardoning that we are pardoned.
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Amen.

Sermon

“Onward...Christian...Soldiers?”
(Ephesians 6:10-20)

Erin Conaway

Silent Reflection

Peace demands the most heroic labor and the most difficult sacrifice. It demands greater heroism than war. It demands greater fidelity to the truth and a much more perfect purity of conscience. The Christian fight for peace is not to be confused with defeatism.... But we believe, precisely, that an essential part of the “good news” is that spiritual weapons are stronger than material ones. Indeed, by spiritual arms, the early Church conquered the entire Roman world. Have we lost our faith in this “sword of the Spirit?” Have we perhaps lost all realization of its very existence?...We still have time to do something about it, but the time is rapidly running out.

— Thomas Merton, “Peace, A Religious Responsibility,” 1962

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 “The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Be Upon You” Herbert Colvin

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon you;
The love of God, the Father, be with you;
And the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit be yours,
Now and evermore. Amen.

Postlude “The Rejoicing” G.F. Handel

Today at Seventh

Our Pianist today is Tommy Edds.

The Sanctuary Flowers are given in memory of Viola’s father, Garland Hurchel Osborn, to celebrate his 102nd birthday (August 27, 1922).

Hearing devices are available at the sound booth for any who need assistance.

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