

Seventh & James Baptist Church
October 18, 2026 · 11:00 a.m.
The Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

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Chiming of the Hour

Meditation "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (NETTLETON)
J.B. Wyeth arr. M.J. Glasgow

Adult Handbell Choir

Welcome and Call to Worship Daniel Farris

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.

Gathering Hymn, No. 58 "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

Litany of Paradox David Morgan

One: Holy Paradox, we do not come grasping for certainty,

Many: But seeking to make our home in mystery.

One: We release the illusion of divisions,

Many: We release the false borders drawn between spirit and flesh, between sacred and ordinary.

One: Here, in the space between knowing and unknowing,

Many: We open ourselves to the presence that lingers in both.

One: We release the need for either/or.

All: We embrace the both/and.

— adapted from Kat Armas, *Liturgies for Resisting Empire*, p. 93

Prayer of Thanksgiving David Morgan

Meditation "Jesus Loves Me" (CHINA) William Bradbury
arr. M.J. Glasgow

Adult Handbell Choir
Sam Conaway, *guest conductor*

Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 45:1-7* Ann Sims

Epistle Reading *1 Thessalonians 1:1-10* Debbie Brassfield

Hymn, No. 486 "Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult"

Gospel Reading *Matthew 22:15-22* Scott Turner

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

The Prayers of God's People Scott Turner

Offertory "Benedictus" from *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* Karl Jenkins

Kristin Mortenson, *violin*
Lydia Bratcher, *piano*

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 Harper Hall 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 96:1-9 Leslie Rosencrans

One: Sing to God a new song, sing to God, all the earth.

Many: Sing to God, bless God's name, proclaim God's victory day after day.

One: Tell of God's glory among the nations, God's wondrous deeds, among all peoples.

Many: For God is great and much acclaimed, and is held in awe by all divine beings.

One: All the gods of the peoples are mere idols, but the Eternal made the heavens.

Many: Glory and majesty are present; strength and splendor are in the holy temple.

One: Ascribe to God, O families of the peoples, ascribe to God glory and strength. Ascribe to God the glory of God's name, bring tribute and enter the temple's courts.

All: Bow down to God, majestic in holiness; tremble in the divine presence, all the earth!

Sermon "This or That?" Erin Conaway
(Matthew 22:15-22)

Anthem "I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing" arr. Howard Helvey

Carmen Conaway, *soprano*
Jim Williams, *piano*
Lydia Bratcher, *piano*

I'm gonna sing when the Spirit says sing, and obey the Spirit of the Lord.
I'm gonna preach when the Spirit says preach, and obey the Spirit of the Lord.
I'm gonna pray when the Spirit says pray, and obey the Spirit of the Lord.
I'm gonna shout when the Spirit says shout, and obey the Spirit of the Lord.

Silent Reflection

Up from the bed of the river
God scooped the clay;
And by the bank of the river
He kneeled Him down;
And there the great God Almighty
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,
Who flung the stars
    To the most far corner of the night,
Who rounded the earth
    In the middle of His hand;
This Great God,
Like a mammy bending over her baby,
Kneeled down in the dust
Toiling over a lump of clay
Till He shaped it in His own image;
Then into it He blew the breath of life,
And man became a living soul.
Amen. Amen.

— James Weldon Johnson, "The Creation"

Hymn of Commitment, No. 323 "How Great Thou Art"

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 "Peace I Leave with You" David Music

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you:
Not as the world giveth, give I to you. Amen.

Postlude "Come, Christians, Join to Sing" (MADRID)
arr. Mark Hayes

Today at Seventh

Adult Handbell Choir

Rosalie Beck
Sonia Belew
Carmen Conaway
Sam Conaway
Doris DeLoach
Linda Hynan
Pat Hynan
Dean Kiesling
Ann McGlashan
Eli Ryden
Ann Sims
Abby Sitton
Pat Wilson

Instrumentalists

Eury Alvarez, *oboe*
Lydia Bratcher, *piano*
Ava Farris, *flute*
Daniel Farris, *synthesizer*
Phillip Lowe, *French horn*
Scott McAllister, *clarinet*

The Sanctuary Flowers are given by Mary Ann & Don Cook in thanks and sincere appreciation for the important work and service provided to our church family by the Real Estate, Building, and Fundraising Committees.

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

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