

## GATHERING

### Prelude

### Welcome

### Call to Worship

One: Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God.

**All: The Lord builds up the community; God gathers the outcasts and heals the brokenhearted.**

One: In the early church, as the disciples increased, the Spirit called forth new leaders to care for the hungry.

**All: God still calls us today—some to the ministry of the Word, and some to the ministry of the table.**

Leader: Whether we preach or provide, whether we pray or protect:

**All: All of us are called. All of us are one in Christ. Let us worship God.**

### Gathering Song: Gather Us In

Here in this place, new light is streaming, now is the darkness vanished away.  
See in this space our fears and our dreamings, brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken; gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
Call to us now, and we shall awaken; we shall arise at the sound of our name.

Here we receive new life in the waters; here we receive the bread of new birth;  
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters, call us anew to be salt for the earth.  
Give us to drink the wine of compassion; give us to eat the bread that is you;  
Nourish us well, and teach us to fashion lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not in the dark of buildings confining, not in some heaven, light years away,  
Here in this place, the new light is shining; now is God present, and now is the day.  
Gather us in and hold us forever; gather us in and make us your own;  
Gather us in, all peoples together, fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Marty Haugen\*\*\*

## PRAISING

### Prayer of Adoration

Most Holy and Sovereign God, we lift our hearts in praise to You, the Architect of all things and the Shepherd of our souls. We adore You for Your infinite wisdom and for the way You care for every member of Your flock. Just as You heard the cries of the vulnerable in the early church, we celebrate that You are a God who sees, who listens, and who provides.

We praise You for the gift of Your Word and the calling of Service. We marvel at Your Spirit, which empowers Your people to lead with grace and to serve with humility. We adore You for the "good repute" found in Your saints and for the wisdom that flows only from Your throne. You are the source of all order, turning potential conflict into an opportunity for ministry and the spreading of Your Gospel.

We glorify You for the multiplication of Your Grace. Lord, we stand in awe of how Your Word continues to increase and how the number of disciples multiplies through the dedication of Your servants. You are the God of the "full house"—full of faith, full of the

Holy Spirit, and full of the desire to see Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. In the name of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, we offer You our highest praise. Amen.

### **Song of Adoration: Cornerstone**

My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame  
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name.

*Christ alone, Cornerstone  
Weak made strong, In the Saviour's love  
Through the storm, He is Lord  
Lord of all*

When darkness seems to hide His face  
I rest on His unchanging grace  
In every high and stormy gale  
My anchor holds within the veil. *Refrain*

When He shall come with trumpet sound  
Oh may I then in Him be found  
Dressed in His righteousness alone  
Faultless stand before the throne. *Refrain*

Edward Mote, Eric Liljero, Jonas Myrin, and Reuben Morgan\*\*

## **BELONGING**

### **Kids on the Steps**

#### **Call to Confession: Nothing but the Blood**

What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

*Refrain: O precious is the flow that makes me white as snow!  
No other fount I know: nothing but the blood of Jesus.*

For my pardon this I see: nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
For my cleansing this my plea: nothing but the blood of Jesus. *Refrain*

Nothing can for sin atone: nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
Naught of good that I have done: nothing but the blood of Jesus. *Refrain*

This is all my hope and peace: nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
This is all my righteousness: nothing but the blood of Jesus. *Refrain*

Robert Lowry, 1876 \*\*

### **Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Forgiveness**

Full of grace and mercy, we confess that we often fail to live as a seamless body of Christ. Like the early disciples, we allow our differences to become divisions. We admit that we have overlooked the "widows" in our own midst—the lonely, the marginalized, and those whose voices are quieted by our busy systems. We confess that we often value the "public" ministries of leadership more than the "quiet" ministries of service.

Forgive us for our complaints and our neglect. Fill us with the Spirit and wisdom, that we might reorganize our lives around your love, ensuring that no one among us goes hungry or unloved. Amen.

## **Assurance of Forgiveness**

One: Hear the good news: God does not leave us in our dysfunction. In Christ, we are forgiven and set free to try again. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are equipped to serve one another in love.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

## **STEWARDING**

### **Invitation to Offering**

## **FORMING**

### **Sermon: Acts 6:1-7**

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

## **Celebration of the Lord's Supper**

### **Communion Song: At the Table, All Are Equal**

At the table, all are equal, all approach the feast as a guest.  
None sit in the seat of honor; at the table, none are best.

At the table, none go hungry, none must steal or beg for bread;  
All receive from God's abundance: at the table, all are fed.  
At the table, none go hungry, at the table, all are fed.

At the table, all are cherished, all are sought at any cost,  
None abandoned or forsaken, at the table none are lost.

At the table, none are finished, none sit selfishly content;  
All are called to love in service: from the table, all are sent.

At the table, all are cherished, at the table all are sent.  
At the table, none go hungry, at the table, all are fed.  
At the table, all are equal, at the table all are fed.

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## **SENDING**

### **Sending Song: We Will Feast in the House of Zion**

*Refrain: We will feast in the house of Zion. We will sing with our hearts restored.  
"He has done great things!" we will say together. We will feast and weep no more.*

We will not be burned by the fire, He is the Lord our God.  
We are not consumed by the flood. Upheld, protected, gathered up. *Refrain*

In the dark of night, before the dawn, my soul, be not afraid.  
For the promised morning, O how long? O God of Jacob, be my strength. *Refrain*

Every vow we've broken and betrayed, You are the faithful one.  
And from the garden to the grave, bind us together, bring shalom. *Refrain*

Sandra McCracken\*\*

## **Benediction**

### Leading in Worship This Morning:

Liturgist: Martha Ripley

Kids on the Steps: Sarah Henning

Sermon: Austin Graef

Musicians: Chris Caldwell, Joselyn Thomsen, Emma Thackston

Sound and Video Techs: Zane Reneau, Diane Wells Cherry, Aaron Nachazel

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### FPC Ministry Staff:

Pastor: Dan Cravy

Children, Youth and Family Director: Sarah Henning

Music Director: Noah Hill

Worship Coordinator: Allie McAdow

Church Operations Manager: Becky Kress

Program Support Administrator: Jo Ruby

Facilities Manager: Wes Keller

Church Secretary: Lori Wheeler

Bell Choir Director: Tomi Kent

Parish Associates: Rev. Janet Malone and Rev. Bob Schurr

Preaching Pastor, Blackfoot Church of the Potomac: Natalie Mauer

