

Bethel United Church of Christ
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost-
August 2, 2020

"You will face your greatest opposition when you are closest to your biggest miracle."

Shannon L. Alder, 21C

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING MUSIC

"Blessed Be Your Name"
Bethel Praise Team

CALL TO WORSHIP#259

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us:

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (*unison*)

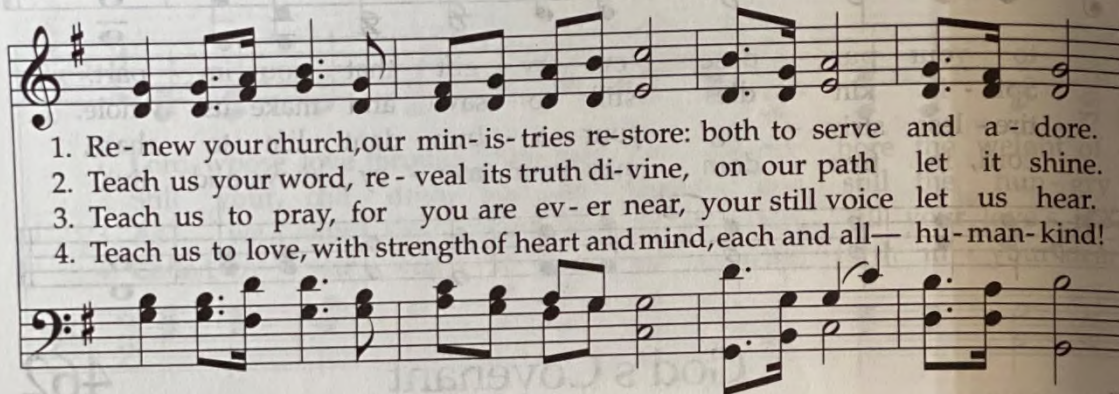
Come to us, Spirit of God, Breathe life into our weary souls. Stir among us to connect us to one another. Call us again to be renewed by you life-giving love. We will be still and listen. You have the words of eternal life. Speak those words to us through songs, prayers, holy scripture, today's message and the consoling, compassionate sharing of love from this family of faith. In Jesus' name. Amen.

OPENING HYMN#463

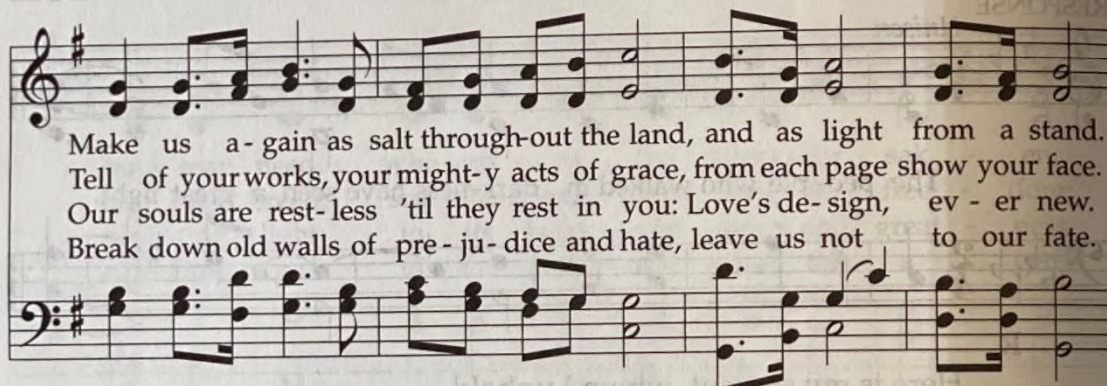
"Renew Your Church, Her Ministries Restore" (vs. 1&2)

463

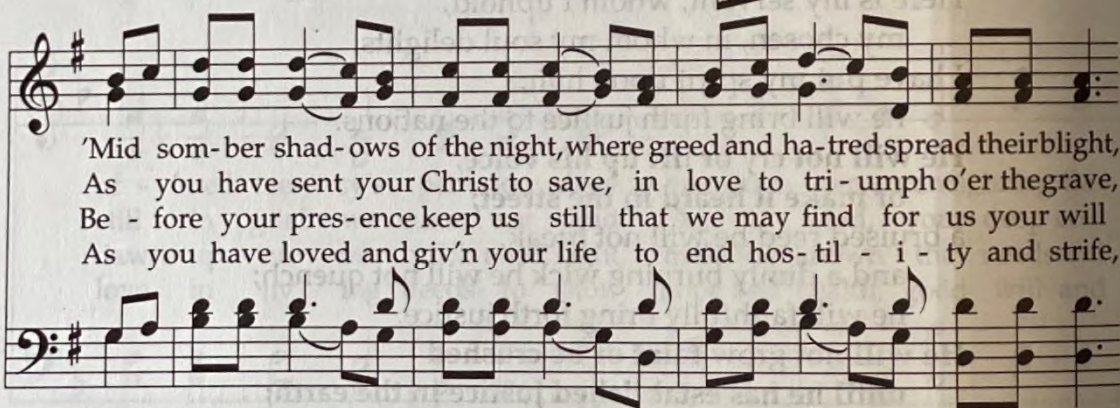
Renew Your Church



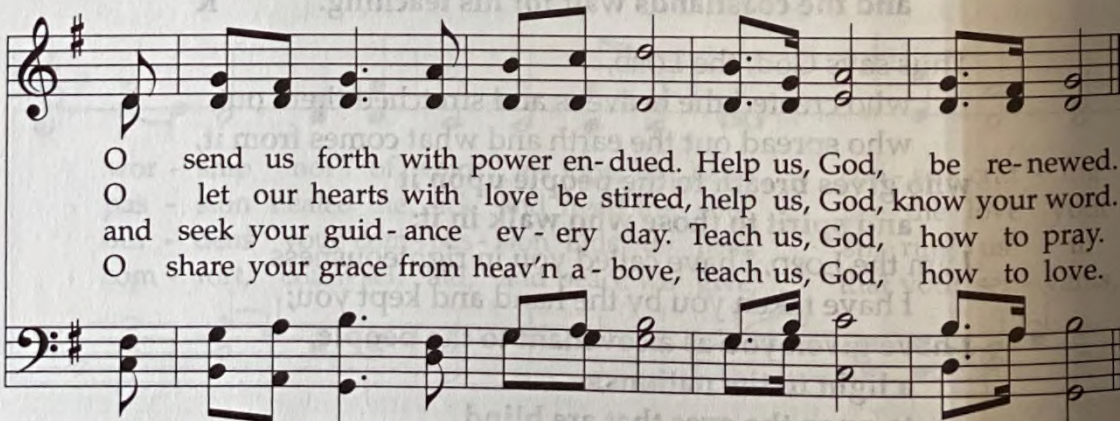
1. Re- new your church, our min- is- tries re- store: both to serve and a - dore.
 2. Teach us your word, re - veal its truth di- vine, on our path let it shine.
 3. Teach us to pray, for you are ev - er near, your still voice let us hear.
 4. Teach us to love, with strength of heart and mind, each and all— hu - man - kind!



Make us a - gain as salt through - out the land, and as light from a stand.
 Tell of your works, your might - y acts of grace, from each page show your face.
 Our souls are rest - less 'til they rest in you: Love's de - sign, ev - er new.
 Break down old walls of pre - ju - dice and hate, leave us not to our fate.



'Mid som - ber shad - ows of the night, where greed and ha - tred spread their blight,
 As you have sent your Christ to save, in love to tri - umph o'er the grave,
 Be - fore your pres - ence keep us still that we may find for us your will
 As you have loved and giv'n your life to end hos - til - i - ty and strife,



O send us forth with power en - dued. Help us, God, be re - newed.
 O let our hearts with love be stirred, help us, God, know your word.
 and seek your guid - ance ev - ery day. Teach us, God, how to pray.
 O share your grace from heav'n a - bove, teach us, God, how to love.

OUR SACRED STORY

Matthew 14:13-21

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

"5 Loaves & 2 Fish"

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Days of Elijah" or "My Redeemer Lives" Bethel Praise Team

MESSAGE

"You Feed Them"

Rev. Karen J. Aitkens

HYMN#556

"Trust and Obey" (vs. 1&4)

Trust and Obey

1. When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word,
 2. Not a bur - den we bear, not a sor - row we share,
 3. But we nev - er can prove the de - lights of his love
 4. Then in fel - low - ship sweet we will sit at his feet,

what a glo - ry he sheds on our way!
 but our toil he will rich - ly re - pay;
 un - til all on the al - tar we lay;
 or we'll walk by his side in the way;

While we do his good will, he a - bides with us still,
 not a grief or a loss, not a frown or a cross,
 for the fa - vor he shows, for the joy he be - stows,
 what he says we will do, where he sends we will go;

and with all who will trust and o - bey.
 but is blest if we trust and o - bey.
 are for them who will trust and o - bey.
 nev - er fear, on - ly trust and o - bey.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/LORD'S PRAYER (*forgive us our sins...*)

OFFERING OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Invitation

Offertory

"His Eye is On the Sparrow"

Response

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above the heavenly host

Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

Come to the table. Jesus calls his friends to dine and be fed.

We recall loving acts of creation, both ancient and new, and celebrate your deep faithfulness.

You give us breath; you give us hope, and you give us purpose.

Jesus comes to us in word and story, in bread and wine, in the deepness of our being and in the communion we share with all who gather in his name.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

BLESSING OF THE BREAD AND CUP (*unison*)

Come now, Holy Spirit, come. Bless us with renewed vigor to share the good news of Jesus freely and extravagantly. Bless our lives with such deep passion that nothing may deter us from doing your work of peace and justice. Bless the food before us, the fellowship that surrounds us, and the love that sustains us, for we place our trust in your life-giving Word and your healing ways. Amen.

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

Both wine and white grape juice are offered.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (*responsive*)

For the gift of grace and the loving presence found at this table, Holy One, we rejoice.

You receive our lives and refresh them;

You challenge us and comfort us;

You call us to be more than we can imagine and you give us strength and purpose we need to speak our truths and stand our ground.

May your energy re-ignite our passion so we can share your story in word and deed.

We lift prayers of thanksgiving for the blessing of coming to this table and experiencing Christ among us. Amen.

**communion liturgy edited from Common Lot, Winter, 2008*

CLOSING HYMN

"Renew Your Church" (vs. 3&4)

COMMISSION & BENEDICTION

Open our hearts to the abundance you will provide.

We go from here trusting your guidance as we seek new and awesome ways to be church.

Keep us focused on you as we discern what it means to be church in this time and place.

God is in our past forgiving us; God is in the loving us and God is in our future calling us.

Go from here to continue sharing your portion of God's grace. And let the people say:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Amen.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 2, 2020

Matthew 14:13-21

Face to Face

“(Jesus) took the five loaves of bread and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them and broke the loaves apart and gave them to his disciples. Then the disciples gave them to the crowds.”

-Matthew 14:19, Common English Bible Translation

Jesus blessed the bread before he shared it and the result was abundance for himself, his disciples, and the strangers who flocked around them. How might we expand our vision if we gave thanks every time we ate? Try one of these simple meal blessings or another one of your choosing before your next meal.

Prayer for breakfast:

Thank you for this breakfast food.
Strengthen me/us to do your good.
All this day and all the next.
Remind me/us that Your love is best.
Hallelujah!

Prayer over lunch:

God, bless this food.
Bless this pause in the busy business of the day.
Strengthen me/us to work for your justice
for those who don't have enough to eat
or who eat alone today. Amen.

Prayer over dinner:

Jesus, you met your friends around a table.
Meet me/us here and help me/us to hear your promises:
I am/We are forgiven and you are with me/us always. Amen.

Prayer over a snack:

Creator God, you made everything, large and small.
You made it all and called it good -
every rock and person, plant and animal,
and this little snack. Thank you. Amen.

