

LARGE PRINT

# Worship Celebration



Ninth Sunday  
after Pentecost

July 30, 2023 + 9 AM

## We Gather as God's Children

### Words of Welcome

Prelude

*Meditation on "How Great Thou Art"*

arr. Janet Linker

### + Opening Prayer

*God, you have given us a dream of your world made whole,  
a heavenly realm that is near in heart and close at hand,  
and it is ours to choose each day.*

*May our smallest acts of courtesy,  
when transformed by your love,*

*grow abundantly into a realm of flourishing for all. Amen.*

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+ Hymn

*How Great Thou Art*

UMH 77

# We Grow in God's Word

Leader: With disciples of every time and place,  
let us listen for the word of God among us.

**People: *Our ears and hearts are open.***

## **First Lesson**— Psalm 119.129-136 (*NRSVUE*)

- 129 Your decrees are wonderful;  
therefore my soul keeps them.
- 130 The unfolding of your words gives light;  
it imparts understanding to the simple.
- 131 With open mouth I pant,  
because I long for your commandments.
- 132 Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
as is your custom toward those who love your name.
- 133 Keep my steps steady according to your promise,  
and never let iniquity have dominion over me.
- 134 Redeem me from human oppression,  
that I may keep your precepts.
- 135 Make your face shine upon your servant,  
and teach me your statutes.
- 136 My eyes shed streams of tears  
because your law is not kept.

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

**People: *Thanks be to God.***

## **Gospel Lesson** — Matthew 13.31-33, 44-52 (*NRSVUE*)

<sup>31</sup> He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; <sup>32</sup> it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

<sup>33</sup> He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”<sup>44</sup> “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

<sup>45</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; <sup>46</sup> on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

<sup>47</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; <sup>48</sup> when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. <sup>49</sup> So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous <sup>50</sup> and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

<sup>51</sup> “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” <sup>52</sup> And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

**People: *Thanks be to God.***

**Sermon**

“The Kingdom of Heaven is like...”

**+Hymn**

*Pass it On*

UMH 572

**Prayers of the People & The Lord’s Prayer**

**Opportunities for Ministry and**

**Invitation to Give our Tithes and Offerings**

**Offertory**

*Cantabile on “How Great Thou Art”*

arr. Janet Linker

**+ Doxology**

UMH 95

***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.***

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving and Commitment**

*We dedicate our lives to you this day  
and seal that promise by way of this offering.  
We give out of the abundance of our hearts,  
that the treasure of your kingdom may be shared with many.  
Thank you for giving us grateful hearts  
and a spirit of generosity for the flourishing  
of your realm. Amen.*

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## **We Go Out to Serve in God's Name**

**+ Hymn**

*Forward Through the Ages*

UMH 555

**+ Benediction**

**Postlude**

*Prelude No. 1 in C Major*

J. S. Bach

edited by James H. Rogers

***Our service of worship is ended.  
Our worship through service now begins.***