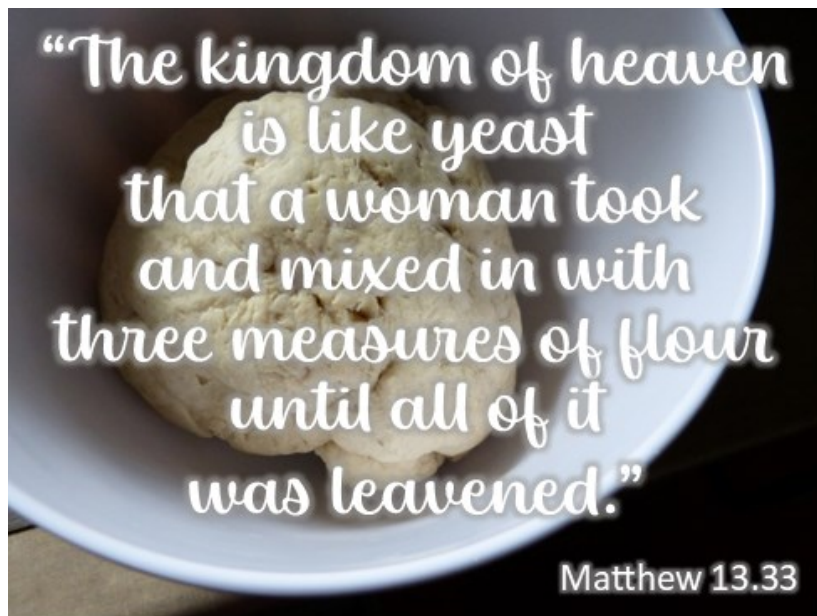


LARGE PRINT

# Worship Celebration



Twelfth Sunday  
after Pentecost

August 20, 2023 + 9 AM

## We Gather as God's Children

### Words of Welcome

**Prelude**

*I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light*

Kathleen Thomerson/John A. Behnke

**+ Opening Prayer**

*Almighty God,  
whose compassion embraces everyone,  
gather the outcast and lost,  
heal the wounds of fear and distrust,  
and make us a community of reconciliation  
that we may embody your merciful love  
and rejoice in your astounding grace  
in Jesus Christ. Amen.*

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**+ Hymn**

*Blest Be the Tie that Binds*

UMH 557

# **We Grow in God's Word**

## **Blessing of the Backpacks**

God of fresh starts and new beginnings,  
we bring ourselves, our big feelings, and our backpacks to you.  
In our backpacks, we carry blank pages,  
sharpened pencils, and pointy crayons,  
and in our hearts, we carry big feelings,  
unanswered questions, and hopeful expectations.  
There are endless possibilities of what this new year might bring—  
of what we might learn, who we might meet,  
and who we might become.

God, our friend who is always with us, be with us through it all.

Be with us as we ride the bus.

Be with us as we walk.

Be with us as we buckle seat belts, zip-up jackets, and tie shoes.

However we get there, and whatever we wear,

    bless this journey into something new.

For the grown-ups going back to school,

With-Us God, be with them too.

Thank you for our teachers, helpers, caregivers, and leaders,

    and for all they do to help us learn and grow.

God, our friend who's full of wonder,

    fill their hearts and bless their hands. Amen.

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

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

**First Lesson—** Psalm 133 (NRSVUE)

- 1 How very good and pleasant it is  
when kindred live together in unity!
- 2 It is like the precious oil on the head,  
running down upon the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron,  
running down over the collar of his robes.
- 3 It is like the dew of Hermon,  
which falls on the mountains of Zion.  
For there the LORD ordained his blessing,  
life forevermore.

The word of God for the people of God.

***Thanks be to God.***

**Gospel Lesson —** Matthew 13.33 (NRSVUE)

<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.”

The word of God for the people of God.

***Thanks be to God.***

**Sermon**

*“The Kingdom of God is like . . . Yeast”*

**+ Hymn**

*O Breath of Life*

UMH 543

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

# Opportunities for Ministry and Invitation to Give our Tithes and Offerings

**Offertory Anthem**

*Grace Alone*

Scott Wesley Brown, Jeff Nelson, arr. Tom Fettke

**+ 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.*

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**Prayer of Thanksgiving and Commitment**

*Gracious Lord, you have given us more mercy  
than we could imagine  
and more blessings than we deserve.*

*Receive now these gifts as tokens of our gratitude to you,  
that your mercy may be multiplied  
and your blessings abound  
too embrace all those in need. Amen.*

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

**+ Hymn**

*Amazing Grace (vv. 1,2,4,6)*

UMH 378

**+ Benediction**

**Postlude**

*Sarabande*

Carl Bohm

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