

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP *(based on Psalm 130)*

One: With God, there is forgiveness, steadfast love, great power to redeem.

All: **We wait for the Lord, who is our hope.**

**Through the long night,
we watch for God more passionately
than for the sun's first light!**

One: Wait for God, and hope in God's Word.

Open your hearts to the holy presence in our midst.

All: **Our ears are attentive to the voice of God.**

We open our lives to God's direction.

***OPENING HYMN** "Blessed Jesus, at Your Word" GtG 395

1. Blessed Jesus, at your word
we have come again to hear you;
let our thoughts and hearts be stirred
and in glowing faith be near you.
By your gospel true and holy,
teach us, Lord, to love you solely.

2. All our knowledge, sense, and sight
lie in deepest darkness shrouded,
till your Spirit breaks our night,
filling us with light unclouded.
All good thoughts and all good living
come but by your gracious giving.

3. Glorious Lord, yourself impart,
Light of Light, from God proceeding.

(continued...)

**Touch our lips and ears and heart;
help us by your Spirit's pleading.
Hear the cry your church now raises;
hear, and bless our prayers and praises.**

Words: Tobias Clausnitzer, 1663; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1858, alt.
Music: LIEBSTER JESU, Johann Rudolph Ahle; harm. Johann Sebastian
Bach, 18th cent., alt.
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UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Almighty God, you have called us to bring out the best in the world around us,
to be bold in our faith, to share your love with those around us.
We have failed your command.
Instead, we have asked for your righteous judgment against others,
while failing to acknowledge the sin in our own lives.
We have worshiped you with our lips,
but have dishonored you with our actions.
We have prayed for you to end the suffering in our world,
yet we have not practiced compassion and generosity toward others.
Our religion has become the source of quarreling
rather than a testimony to your grace.
We are so misguided that we cannot discern good from evil,
making the wrong choice, choosing the wrong side.
Forgive our self-righteousness, O God.
Forgive us for rejecting your way and your work in our lives.
Give us your insight and integrity of heart,
that we may shine forth the light of your salvation,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Even when we fail, even when we are not perfect, God still claims us.
God still calls us by name. God still places God's Spirit upon us.
Sisters and brothers, do not lose heart.
When we call, God hears us; when we confess, God forgives us.
All: **In mercy God forgives us our sin and grants us genuine repentance.
We are being renewed day by day
through the grace of Christ extended to us.**
One: So we believe and so we proclaim: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
All: **Thanks be to God!**
One: May the grace of our Lord overflow for you
with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS Luke 8:16-21

Luke 11:27-36

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION “Thy Word Is a Lamp unto My Feet” GtG 458

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

**When I feel afraid, and I think I've lost my way,
still you're there right beside me.**

Nothing will I fear as long as you are near.

Please be near me to the end.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Words: Amy Grant, 1984

Music: THY WORD, Michael W. Smith, 1984; arr. John Sharber

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SERMON “Hearing the Light” by Pastor Bill Vincent

*HYMN “Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness” GtG 314

(Christ, Be Our Light)

**1. Longing for light,
we wait in darkness.**

**Longing for truth,
we turn to you.**

**Make us your own,
your holy people,
light for the world to see.**

(continued...)

Refrain:

**Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church
gathered today.**

**2. Longing for peace,
our world is troubled.
Longing for hope,
many despair.
Your word alone
has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.**

Refrain:

**3. Longing for food,
many are hungry.
Longing for water,
many still thirst.
Make us your bread,
broken for others,
shared until all are fed.**

Refrain:

**4. Longing for shelter,
many are homeless.
Longing for warmth,
many are cold.
Make us your building,
sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.**

Refrain:

**5. Many the gifts,
many the people,
many the hearts
that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants
to one another,
making your kingdom come.**

Refrain:

(next page...)

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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from *The Confession of 1967*)

**The life, death, resurrection, and promised coming of Jesus Christ
has set the pattern for the church's mission.**
His human life
involves the church in the common life of all people.
His service to men and women
commits the church to work for every form of human well-being.
His suffering
makes the church sensitive to all human suffering
so that it sees the face of Christ in the faces of persons in every kind of need.
His crucifixion
discloses to the church God's judgment on the inhumanity
that marks human relations,
and the awful consequences of the church's own complicity in injustice.
In the power of the risen Christ and the hope of his coming,
the church sees the promise of God's renewal of human life in society
and of God's victory over all wrong.

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: God of love...
All: ...heal us and help us in your light.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Contemporary)

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

Loving God,

**we give thanks for all you have given to us
and praise you for your astounding goodness.**

**Receive the dedication of our hearts, minds, and bodies
for the ministry of your church.**

**Bless our offering for the work of your kingdom,
and give us wisdom for the right use of all you have provided,
through Christ our Lord and our Light. Amen.**

SENDING

***CLOSING HYMN** “Come! Live in the Light!” GtG 749
(We Are Called)

**1. Come! Live in the light!
Shine with the joy
and the love of the Lord!
We are called
to be light for the kingdom,
to live in the freedom
of the city of God.
We are called to act with justice;
we are called to love tenderly;
we are called to serve one another,
to walk humbly with God.**

**2. Come! Open your heart!
Show your mercy
to all those in fear!
We are called
to be hope for the hopeless
so hatred and violence
will be no more.
We are called to act with justice;
we are called to love tenderly;
we are called to serve one another,
to walk humbly with God.**

(continued...)

**3. Sing! Sing a new song!
Sing of that great day
when all will be one!
God will reign,
and we'll walk with each other
as sisters and brothers
united in love.
We are called to act with justice;
we are called to love tenderly;
we are called to serve one another,
to walk humbly with God.**

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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...
All: ...Amen.

POSTLUDE

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