

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

Let us take this time to quiet our hearts and minds and prepare for worship.

* Please stand if able • Plain text = Leader • **Bold text = People**

PRELUDE *Thine Is the Glory* George Frederick Handel
Arr. Robert J. Hughes

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS The Rev. Dr. Laura S. Sugg

* CALL TO WORSHIP (Please stand) Elder

Hallelujah! Praise God in the holy temple.

Give praise in the firmament of heaven.

Praise God who is mighty in deed.

Give praise for God's excellent greatness.

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Hallelujah!

Sisters and brothers, praise the Lord!

The Lord's name be praised.

* HYMN *Christ is Alive!* No. 108

PRAYER FOR RENEWAL (Be seated, unison) Elder

Let us pray...

O God,

Your love is boundless and your grace exceeds our imaginations.

You keep finding ways to be among us,

even when our hearts are hidden,

even when the doors of our souls are locked.

You seek us out.

We cannot hide, but we can confess that sin has us in its grip.

It has led us from your ways and corrupted our best intentions,

making us believe that you don't notice, that you aren't even present.

Correct our vision. Cleanse our hearts.

Create in us a place where we can welcome you

and receive the fullness of what you have given us in Jesus Christ.

(A time for silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE Laura Sugg

Amen. If we are in Christ, we are a new people altogether;
the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new.

In your great mercy, O God,

raise us from the death of sin to newness of life

and make us your people, unburdened by the past,

unfearful of the future, and joyful in the eternal present,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE (Stand as desired.)

No. 123 verse 2

Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia!

Unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia!

Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!

Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

HEARING THE WORD

PSALTER READING Psalm 133 Pg. 586

The Word of the Lord.

Deacon

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM *Down in the River to Pray* Southern Folk Ballad

Leah Savin, soprano and Julie Pulliam, piano

GOSPEL READING John 20:19-31 Pgs. 109–110

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

TIME WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH *(As children & youth come forward, please sing.)*

This, this is where children belong, part of our family, part of our song.

Be with us, pray with us, help us grow strong, this is where children belong.

SERMON *How Very Good and Pleasant It Is* Laura Sugg

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(Please Stand)*

We believe in God above us, maker and sustainer of all life,

of sun and moon, of water and earth, of male and female.

We believe in God beside us, Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,

born of a woman, servant of the poor, tortured and nailed to a tree.

A man of sorrows, he died forsaken.

He descended into the earth to the place of death.

On the third day he rose from the tomb.

He ascended into heaven to be everywhere present,

and his kingdom will come on earth.

We believe in God within us, the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,

life-giving breath of the church, Spirit of healing and forgiveness,

source of resurrection and eternal life. Amen

—from The Iona Community in Scotland

* HYMN *We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight* No. 399

* PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER Front of Hymnal Pg. 16

(Pray, "Forgive us our sins...")

