

The Falls Village Congregational Church
September 24, 2023 10 a.m.
17th Sunday after Pentecost
The Reverend Terrence Ryan, Worship Leader

Welcome and Announcements

Ringling of the Bell

Prelude - *Great is Thy Faithfulness* - arr. J. Carter

THE CHURCH GATHERS TO PRAISE

Call to Worship –

God's Spirit is moving among us: thanks be to God!

How good it is to be chosen by God; we gather to sing and to give thanks.

The Lord has done great things. Now the Lord is calling us to confront hatred with love, compassion, and mercy.

The Scriptures show us the way. Am I ready to risk the slings and arrows of those who bear bitterness and hatred for people who are different than they are?

Will we dare the wilderness of the times we live in? Will we love those who are convinced that we who follow Christ are fools?

We know what is behind us. We do not know what awaits us around the next turn in the path.

Then, onward to Glory we go!

Prayer for God's Presence (Unison):

Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us. Strengthen us to stand for what is good. Give us the words to speak, the joy to live, and that love to care about our neighbors and our fellow pilgrims who

are hard at sea who seek a new beginning. Enter our hearts as we worship, as we give You our praise, and, most of all, as we give our thanksgiving. Amen.

Opening Hymn: #112 "Holy Ground"

Prayer of Confession

Loving and Almighty God, many times we think we love you well, but we deceive ourselves. We confess our love for you is diluted and divided. Our attention falls away. Our devotion dies. Our commitment withers. Forgive us, O God. In your deep mercy, spare us. Rekindle our love for you as we experience your love for us through the grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Silent Confession

Personal prayer of confession (in unison):

I have fallen short of the mark and often times miss the target of a sacred life. Give us humility to face the truth, courage to choose to live in Jesus' name, and the faith to trust Him now and forever.

TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

Responsive Reading Psalm 139:1-2, page 765

Gloria Patri #35 in hymnal

Passing the Peace of Christ:

The Peace of Christ be with you

And also, with you

Let us pass the peace

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-14

John 8: 34-38

Frank Hadsell

Rev. Terrence Ryan

Prayer

Sermon: "Living or Dying"

The Rev. Terrence Ryan

TO RESPOND IN FAITH

Offertory Hymn #86 “*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*” (all)

Pastoral Prayer

Prayers of the People / The Lord’s Prayer

THE CHURCH DISPERSES TO SERVE

Hymn #589 “*Lord I Want To Be a Christian*”

Benediction

Benediction Response- *God Be with You till We Meet Again*

Your tithes and offerings may be left in the plates at either entrance to the sanctuary.

Holy Ground

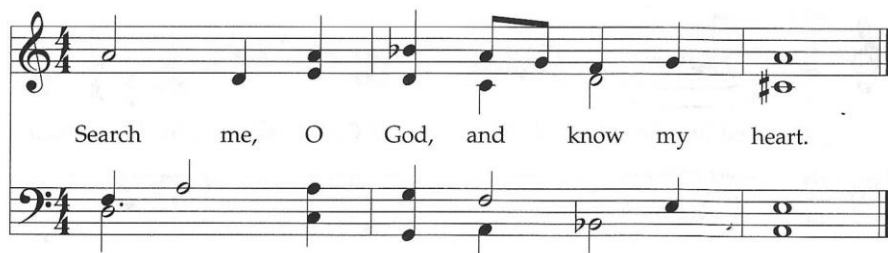
G/A Gmaj7/A D A/E D/F# G
 We are stand - ing on ho - ly
 D/F# Em D G/A G F#m F#m7
 ground, and I know that there are
 B7 B7(+9) E/G# Gm6 Gm Gm(#7)
 an - gels all a - round; let us
 D/F# A7/E D G D/F# Em
 praise Je - sus now,
 F#m7 G D/F# G
 we are stand - ing in his

D/A Em7/A D G/D D
 pres - ence on ho - ly ground.

Psalm 139:1–12

RESPONSE

Psalm 139:23
Martin Luther; adapt. Carlton R. Young



R

- 1 O God, you have searched me and known me.
- 2 **You know when I sit down and when I rise up;**
you discern my thoughts from far away.
- 3 You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 **Even before a word is on my tongue,**
you know it completely.
- 5 You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
- 6 **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;**
it is so high that I cannot attain it. R
- 7 Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
- 8 **If I ascend to heaven, you are there;**
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
- 9 If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
10 **even there your hand shall lead me,**
and your right hand shall hold me fast.
- 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night,"
12 **even the darkness is not dark to you;**
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you. R

Scripture Lessons for September 24, 2023

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The Valley of Dry Bones

37 The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2 He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. 3 He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." 4 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5 Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath[a] to enter you, and you shall live. 6 I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath[b] in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord."

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. 8 I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. 9 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath:[c] Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath,[d] and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." 10 I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

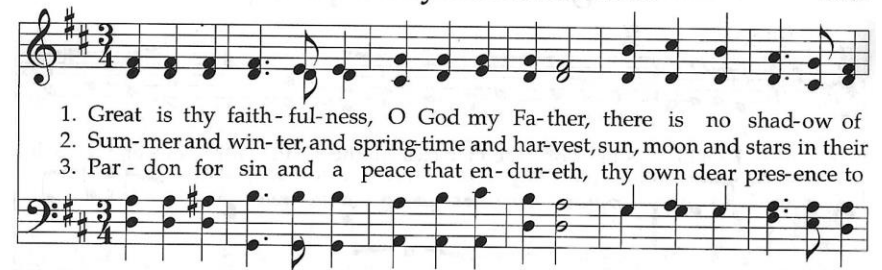
11 Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ 12 Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13 And you shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. 14 I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.”

John 8: 34-38

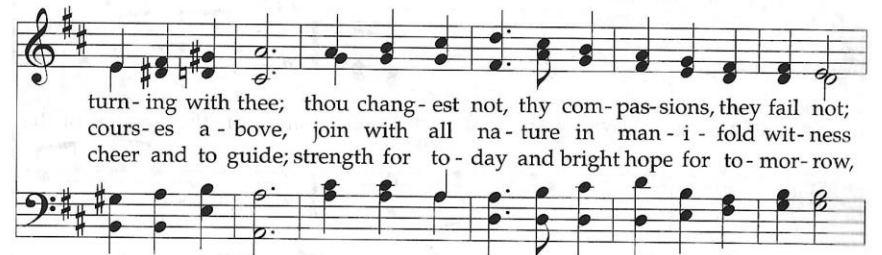
³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶ So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that you are descendants of Abraham, yet you look for an opportunity to kill me because there is no place in you for my word. ³⁸ I declare what I have seen in the Father’s presence; as for you, you should do what you have heard from the Father.”

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

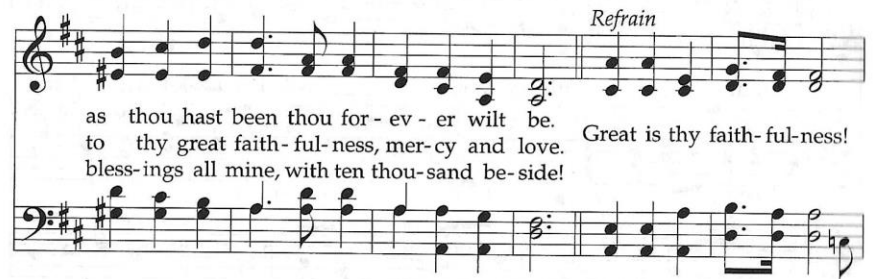
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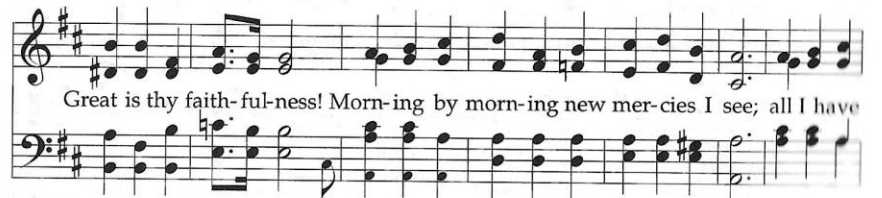
1. Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Fa-ther, there is no shad-ow of
 2. Sum-mer and win-ter, and spring-time and har-vest, sun, moon and stars in their
 3. Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth, thy own dear pres-ence to



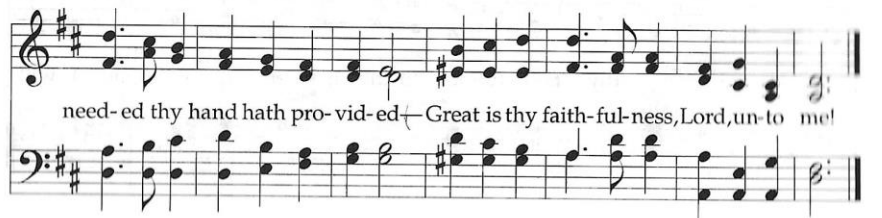
turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-pas-sions, they fail not;
 cours-es a-bove, join with all na-ture in man-i-fold wit-ness
 cheer and to guide; strength for to-day and bright hope for to-mor-row,



Refrain
 as thou hast been thou for-ev-er wilt be. Great is thy faith-ful-ness!
 to thy great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy and love. Great is thy faith-ful-ness!
 bless-ings all mine, with ten thou-sand be-side!



Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by morn-ing new mer-cies I see; all I have



need-ed thy hand hath pro-vid-ed — Great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord, un-to me!

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

1. Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in-a my heart, in-a my heart,
 2. Lord, I want to be more lov-ing in-a my heart, in-a my heart,
 3. Lord, I want to be like Je-sus in-a my heart, in-a my heart,

Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in-a my heart.
 Lord, I want to be more lov-ing in-a my heart.
 Lord, I want to be like Je-sus in-a my heart.

In-a my heart, in-a my heart, in-a my heart, in-a my heart,

Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in-a my heart. (in-a my heart.)
 Lord, I want to be more lov-ing in-a my heart. (in-a my heart.)
 Lord, I want to be like Je-sus in-a my heart. (in-a my heart.)