



*Grounded in the grace of God, we are a  
vibrant Christian community, disciples of all ages,  
gathered for worship and nurture, scattered to serve and to love.*

MPC Mission Statement adopted by the Session March 31, 2008

WORSHIP for SEPTEMBER 12, 2021  
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY  
after PENTECOST

## GATHERING

**PRELUDE** — *Moderato* - Thomas P. Ryder

### CALL to WORSHIP

Pastor Alex Lester-Abdalla

One: In Christ, the God of heaven has made a home on earth.

**All: Christ dwells among us and is one with us.**

One: Highest of all creation, he lives among the least.

**All: He journeys with the rejected and welcomes the weary.**

One: He breathes new life of the Spirit.

**All: The Spirit of God is among us!**

**HYMN** — *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

HYFRYDOL

*Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heavens, to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling; all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesus, thou art all compassion; pure, unbounded love thou art;  
visit us with thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.*

*Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast;  
let us all in thee inherit; let us find the promised rest.  
Take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be;  
end of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.*

*Come, Almighty, to deliver; let us all thy life receive;  
suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.*

*Finish then thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be;  
let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored to thee:  
Changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.*

**PRAYER of CONFESSION** -

Pastor Rachel Rhodes

**Risen Lord, you have breathed the Spirit upon us, and sent us forth to testify to what we have heard and seen. Yet we resist this calling, huddling behind locked doors rather than stepping out with confidence. We yearn for more—more proof, more courage, more guidance, more faith—and forget that you have given us all we need: the gift of the Holy Spirit. Forgive us, we pray. Free us from fear and send us forth to proclaim: “We have seen the Lord!”**

*(Time for silent prayer and confession.)*

**PROMISE of FORGIVENESS**

One: The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Believe the good news of the Gospel!

**All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen!**

**RESPONSE to GOD'S GRACE** — *Glory to the Father*

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.  
Amen. Amen. Amen.*

**L I T U R G Y** *o f t h e* **W O R D**

**SCRIPTURE READING** — *John 20:19-23*

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

*Peace*

Pastor Lester-Abdalla

**AFFIRMATION of FAITH** — *from A Brief Statement of Faith*

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the church. The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.**

**HYMN** — *Breathe on Me, Breath of God*

TRENTHAM

*Breathe on me, Breath of God;  
fill me with anew,  
that I may love what thou dost love,  
and do what thou wouldst do.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
until my heart is pure,  
until with thee I will one will,  
to do and to endure.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God;  
till I am wholly thine,  
until this earthly part of me  
glows with thy fire divine.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God;  
so shall I never die,  
but live with thee the perfect life  
of thine eternity.*

## S E N D I N G

HYMN — *Will You Come and Follow Me*

KELVINGROVE

*"Will you come and follow me if I call your name?  
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?  
Will you let my love be shown; will you let my name be known;  
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?"*

*"Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?  
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?  
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?  
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?"*

*"Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?  
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?  
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,  
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?"*

*"Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?  
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?  
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,  
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?"*

*Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.  
Let me turn and follow and never be the same.  
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.  
This I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.*

POSTLUDE — *Concluding Voluntary* - Caleb Simper

### QUESTION *for* REFLECTION

- What peace are you yearning for?

### OTHERS PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Tim Carpenter – Director of Music

Justin Hartz – Organist

Video Ministry Volunteers

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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***\*Please note all announcements for Sunday bulletins are due by noon the Tuesday before they are to be published. Please email announcements to [Bulletin@MPCusa.net](mailto:Bulletin@MPCusa.net).***

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL IS BACK NEXT SUNDAY!**

We hope you will join us on September 19 as we welcome back in-person faith formation at MPC. All Sunday School classes will begin that morning at 9:30 am. This year we give thanks for the teachers of our Pre-k, One-Room Elementary School, Quest, High School Seminar, and Adult Sunday School classes as they create a safe and welcoming faith-formation experience. Masks, social distancing, and a spirit of openness will be in effect. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Alex at [alexlester-abdalla@mpcusa.net](mailto:alexlester-abdalla@mpcusa.net). So come all of you who are weary and bearing heavy burdens, come all of you seeking renewed energy and spirit, for we care about you.

### **NEXT SUNDAY! GROUNDED IN GRACE PICNIC - YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER**

It's time to get back together again! Join us on Sunday, September 19 following worship, for our annual *Grounded in Grace* picnic held this year in the Memorial Gardens. Limited seating on the paved area will be provided for those with mobility issues. Everyone else is invited to please bring their own chairs or blankets and spread out on the grass. A boxed lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by emailing the church office at [office@mpcusa.net](mailto:office@mpcusa.net) or by calling 215-295-4191. A rain date is set for the following Sunday, September 26.

### **MPC WILL BE AT YARDLEY'S HARVEST DAY THIS SATURDAY, BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

The Communications & Evangelism Committee is looking for a few volunteers to greet visitors who stop by the MPC booth at Yardley's Harvest Day on Saturday, September 18. We also need volunteers to help set up and break down our booth. Shifts are 1 1/2 hours beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 5:30 p.m.. You may sign up through the Sign-Up Genius link located in the weekly MPC emails or contact Damon Miller at [damonmiller@mpcusa.net](mailto:damonmiller@mpcusa.net) for available times and any questions you may have. Yardley's Harvest Day is rain or shine and is one of the biggest events MPC attends to spread the word, "No matter who you are or where you are on your journey of faith, please know that you are welcome at MPC!" to others in our area. We hope you can join us!

### **MPC CLOTHING CENTER FALL REOPENING THIS WEEK**

The MPC Clothing Center will reopen its doors on Thursday, September 16 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We are now accepting "CLEAN" gently worn Fall/Winter clothing and household items. Donations may be placed in the box next to the elevator on the Fellowship Hall level whenever the church is open, Monday-Friday. Hope to see you soon.

### **2021 BACKPACK DRIVE**

We would like to take the opportunity to thank those in the congregation who filled backpacks or donated money to this year's backpack drive! It was an incredible success! We, as a congregation, donated over 60 backpacks filled with spiral notebooks, pocket folders, pens, pencils, binders, subject dividers, rulers, dictionaries, highlighters, and weekly planners! We also included a special Blessing Card letting the students know that God loves them! The Ivins Outreach Center will distribute the backpacks to high school students in Morrisville, Bensalem, and Bristol. We couldn't be happier that so many of these students will get to start the school year off with the necessary tools to make their year successful! Again, thank you so much for your generosity! Patti Sheffer and Lori Newman

