

Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth
Thou sendest clear;
and while the wave-notes fall on my ear,
ev'rything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;
open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly
the warm truth ev'rywhere;
Open my heart, and let me prepare
love with Thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;
open my mouth, illumine me, Spirit divine!

***Benediction** Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

***Response:** "Shalom"

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom,
Kami no mi megumi.** *(Peace, peace, until we meet again. Peace,
peace, may we be blessed with grace from God.)*

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom
yuta kani, yuta kani, yuta kani.** *(Peace, peace, until we meet
again. Peace, peace, abundantly, abundantly, abundantly.)*

Postlude Haruko Sakakibara
"Air" by George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

*We invite you to remain seated during the Postlude as we enjoy the music
and God's presence together. If you need to go, please feel free to do so. Go
with God's blessings.*

In Appreciation:

Greeters: Bill Grissom, Herning Grissom
Ushers: Luda Wright, Michael Wright
Parking: Gary Younglove
Sound System: Cathy Nishizaki
Zoom Moderator/Greeter: Lois Van Beers
Altar Flowers: Betsy Eskridge & Lois Van Beers



The Celebration of Worship

September 7, 2025 • 13th Sunday of Pentecost

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave
Worship Leader: Judy Fukuman
Pianist: Haruko Sakakibara
Choir Conductor: Ben Pryor
Japanese Reader: Mieko Davis
Communion Elders: Terri Bowman, Maurine Huang
YES: Ben Pryor, Kishwer Vikaas

Centering Prayer for Worship

*The more we call on God,
The more we can feel God's presence.
Day by day we are drawn closer to the loving heart of God.*
- from *Sacred Space* website

Prelude Haruko Sakakibara

***Introit**

**All: Make us one, Lord, make us one. Holy Spirit make us
one. Let Your love flow so the world will know, we are one
in You.**

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

** Those who can, please stand*

Call to Worship

Judy Fukuman

Leader: We gather here, where God will teach us

People: so we may learn to be more compassionate.

Leader: We gather here, where Jesus will teach us

People: the wisdom to choose forgiveness over holding a grudge.

Leader: We gather here, where the Spirit gives wisdom,

People: so we might learn how to readily share God's grace,

All: so all God's beloved children may learn that they belong at the Lord's Welcome Table.

*Opening Hymn: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise (#263)

Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes, most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unshaking, and silent as light, nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might; Thy justice, like mountains high soaring above Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small; In all life Thou livest, the true life of all; we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree, then wither and perish; but naught changes Thee.

Thou reignest in glory, Thou dwellest in light, Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight; all praise we would render; O help us to see 'tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!

Invitation to Confession

Judy Fukuman

Leader: God receives the broken heart, the troubled conscience, the conflicted spirit, with the power to make us whole. As we humbly admit our failings, God meets us with grace. With repentant hearts, let's bring our lives to God in prayer.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Institution

Receiving the Elements

Prayer after Communion

Opportunity To Present Offerings

All: Give thanks with a grateful heart; give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because God's given Jesus Christ, God's Son. (Repeat) And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich" because of what the Lord has done for us. (Repeat) Give thanks. Give thanks.

*Doxology

All: Praise God from Whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below. Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

Judy Fukuman

Joys & Concerns

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Congregation

All: Our Parent Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

*Sending Hymn: Open My Eyes That I May See (#324)

Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth

Thou hast for me;

Place in my hands the wonderful key,

that shall unclasp and set me free.

Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;

open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

***Communion Hymn:** “Come, Share the Lord” (#2269 in black songbook)

We gather here in Jesus’ name, His love is burning in our hearts like living flame; for through the loving Son the Father makes us one: Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

No one is a stranger here, everyone belongs; finding our forgiveness here, we in turn forgive all wrongs.

He joins us here, He breaks the bread, the Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead; the One we love the most is now our gracious Host: Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

We are now a family of which the Lord is head: though unseen He meets us here in the breaking of the bread.

We’ll gather soon where angels sing; we’ll see the glory of our Lord and coming King; now we anticipate the feast for which we wait: Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord’s Table

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more. So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little, you who have been here often and you who have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, because it is the Lord who invites you. It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

- from the Iona Community

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

Prayer of Confession

Judy Fukuman

Leader: We are all too human, Faithful God, so instead of seeking Your guidance, we look for answers online, convinced that we can trust whatever we find.

People: We think we have little to learn from others, especially ancestors in the faith like Nicodemus.

Leader: Yet you continue to watch over us, longing to love us, whether we’re swaggering through the sunshine of our lives, or in shadowed moments of uncertainty in the night.

People: You are always ready to hear us and help us, whether or not we recognize or accept Your presence with us.

All: You call us from our self-reliant, rehearsed responses down an unknown path that leads to Your heart. Help us trust You, and follow.

A Time for Contemplation

This time of quiet is offered to encourage you to share your personal thoughts with God as well as listen to God through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Assurance of God’s Grace

Judy Fukuman

Leader: Our hope, our help, our peace, our joy? All come from God, the One who loved us, and the world so much, that Jesus came to bring us salvation.

People: Keeper of our souls, we trust that You are with us; Watcher of our days and nights, we trust You to lead us; Lord of our lives, thank You for Your mercy to us.

All: We believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen.

***Response to God’s Forgiveness:** Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me (#582 Glory to God hymnal)

All Sing: Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

***Passing of the Peace**

Judy Fukuman

Leader: As the forgiven and redeemed people of God, let us share our peace and joy with one another. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

Children's Message

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

Unison Prayer of Guidance

All: Now may the words of our mouths, the meditations of our hearts, the interpretation of our minds, and the response of our hands be acceptable to You, our Lord and our Redeemer. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

1st Scripture Reading (Japanese)

Mieko Davis

John 8:12

Then Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; anyone who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

2nd Scripture Reading

Judy Fukuman

John 3:1-8

There was a man of the Pharisee sect, Nicodemus, a prominent leader among the Jews. Late one night he visited Jesus and said, "Rabbi, we all know you're a teacher straight from God. No one could do all the God-pointing, God-revealing acts you do if God weren't in on it." Jesus said, "You're absolutely right. Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see what I'm pointing to—to God's kingdom."

"How can anyone," said Nicodemus, "be born who has already been born and grown up? You can't re-enter your mother's womb and be born again. What are you saying with this 'born-from-above' talk?" Jesus said, "You're not listening. Let me say it again. Unless a person submits to this original creation—the 'wind-hovering-over-the-water' creation, the invisible moving the visible, a baptism into a new life—it's not possible to enter God's kingdom.

"So don't be so surprised when I tell you that you have to be 'born from above'—out of this world, so to speak. You know well enough how the wind blows this way and that. You hear it rustling through the trees, but you have no idea where it comes from or where it's headed next. That's the way it is with everyone 'born from above' by the wind of God, the Spirit of God."

3rd Scripture Reading & Sermon

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

The Next Conversation Series "Jesus and Nick at Night"

John 3:9-12 and 16-21

Nicodemus asked, "What do you mean by this? How does this happen?" Jesus said, "You're a respected teacher of Israel and you don't know these basics? Listen carefully. Instead of facing the evidence and accepting it, you procrastinate with questions. If I tell you things that are plain as the hand before your face and you don't believe me, what use is there in telling you of things you can't see, the things of God? This is how much God loved the world:

God gave his Son, his one and only Son. So that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again."

"This is the crisis we're in: God-light streamed into the world, but men and women everywhere ran for the darkness, not really interested in pleasing God. Everyone who makes a practice of doing evil hates God-light and won't come near it, fearing a painful exposure. But anyone living in truth welcomes God-light so their work can be seen for the God-work it is."

Musical Interlude

Haruko Sakakibara

"Lullaby" by Friedrich Burgmuller (1804-1874)]