

# NORTH PARK COVENANT CHURCH

SEPTEMBER 7, 2025 + THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST + FALL CELEBRATION SUNDAY

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**PRELUDE** 

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus arr. Mark Hayes and Douglas E. Wagner Brian Ward and Sam Parnin, Keyboard

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Libby Piotrowski and Jeff Hunter

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\* CALL TO WORSHIP

from Psalm 1

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.

But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season.

Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.

For the Lord watches over the path of the godly. Thanks be to God. Amen.

\* OPENING HYMN

All Are Welcome

Marty Haugen

### \* INVOCATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

#### \* PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES

Old Testament Reading

New Testament Reading

\* Gospel Reading

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM

Donn Engebretson, Reader

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Philemon 1:1-21

Luke 14:25-33

Luke 14:23-33

Be Thou My Vision (412) arr. Alice Parker

Chancel Choir, Brian Ward, Director

### WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

N School-year Blessings
G Te Alabaré Mi Buen Jesús

\* CONGREGATIONAL SONG

Emmanuel Espinosa

1997 Grupo CanZion (Admin. por Canzion Networks LLC)

Led by Jordan Doles, Sam Parnin, Brian Ward, and Ryan Wendt

MESSAGE

Jeff Hunter and Libby Piotrowski

\* CONGREGATIONAL SONG

You Go Before Me Brian and Maria Ward 2020 Eldeward Music

Led by Sam Parnin, Brian Ward, Maria Ward, and Ryan Wendt

### THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table Words of Institution Sharing the Elements

Communion Music

Jesus Paid It All arr. Mark Hayes Sam Parnin, Keyboard

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

### GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Invitation to Generosity

The Trustees will come around at this time to receive physical offerings.

Giving online at any time is also an option at www.npcovenant.org/give.

Offertory Jesus, Lord, We Look to Thee (586)

arr. Cindy Berry

- \* Doxology 48
- \* Prayer of Dedication

\* CLOSING HYMN 614 Christ, You Call Us All to Service

WORDS OF SENDING

CHORAL BENEDICTION The Lord Bless You and Keep You

Rick Carlson, arr. B. Ward

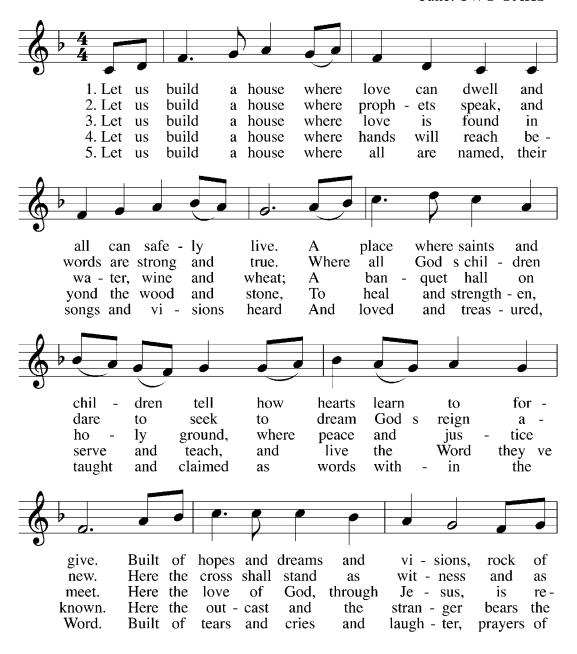
POSTLUDE All People That on Earth Do Dwell (42)

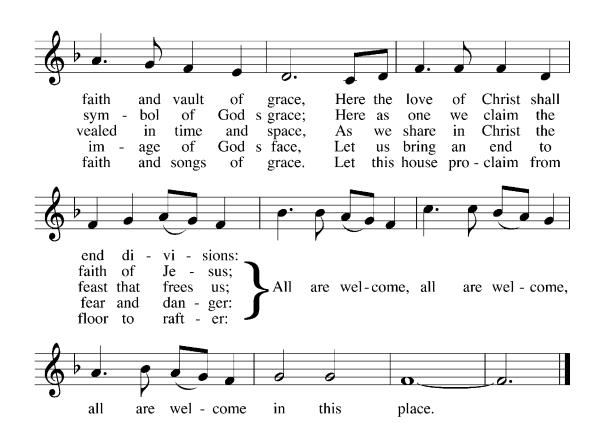
arr. Lloyd Larson

<sup>\*</sup> Please rise, in body or in spirit.

# ALL ARE WELCOME

Text and Music by Marty Haugen Tune: TWO OAKS





### READING OF THE SCRIPTURES

### Old Testament Reading

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

<sup>15</sup>"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. <sup>16</sup>If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. <sup>17</sup>But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup>I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, <sup>20</sup>loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

New Testament Reading

Philemon 1:1-21

#### Salutation

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To our beloved coworker Philemon, <sup>2</sup>to our sister Apphia, to our fellow soldier Archippus, and to the church in your house:

<sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

# Philemon's Love and Faith

<sup>4</sup>I thank my God always when I mention you in my prayers, <sup>5</sup>because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>I pray that the partnership of your faith may become effective as you comprehend all the good that we share in Christ. <sup>7</sup>I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

### Paul's Plea for Onesimus

<sup>8</sup>For this reason, though I am more than bold enough in Christ to command you to do the right thing, <sup>9</sup>yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. <sup>10</sup>I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. <sup>11</sup>Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me. <sup>12</sup>I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. <sup>13</sup>I wanted to keep him with me so that he might minister to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel, <sup>14</sup>but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your good deed might be

voluntary and not something forced. <sup>15</sup>Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for the long term, <sup>16</sup>no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

<sup>17</sup>So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. <sup>18</sup>If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to me. <sup>19</sup>I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. <sup>20</sup>Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. <sup>21</sup>Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

\* Gospel Reading

Luke 14:25-33

# The Cost of Discipleship

<sup>25</sup>Now large crowds were traveling with him, and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup>"Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. <sup>27</sup>Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. <sup>28</sup>For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? <sup>29</sup>Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, <sup>30</sup>saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' <sup>31</sup>Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup>If he cannot, then while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. <sup>33</sup>So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

# Te Alabaré Mi Buen Jesús

**Emmanuel Espinosa** 



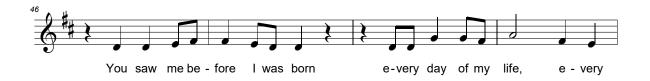
# You Go Before Me

Brian and Maria Ward Psalm 139: 1-2, 5-8, 12, 15-18 Allegro ( = 120) Oh Lord, you've ex-am-ined my heart I can ne-ver es-cape from your spirit You know e-very-thing a-bout me or I when sit stand I can ne-ver get a - way from your sence pre You know my thoughts when l'm far e - ven way if hea - ven, You there. go up to are day You are The night will like the shine there. lf to the grave You are go down there. You go be - fore and fol-low me You place Your me hand of bles-sing on my head such know - ledge is too won-der-ful for me 1. too great to un der - stand

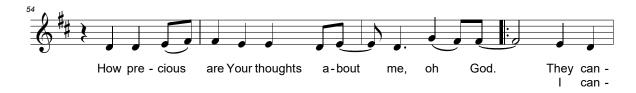


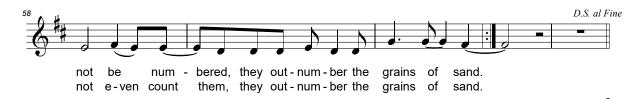












# Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow 48



# Christ, You Call Us All to Service

### 614



WORDS: Joy F. Patterson, 1931-, © 1994 Hope Publishing Company MUSIC: Dutch melody; arr. Julius Rontgen, 1855-1933

8.7.8.7.D. IN BABILONE

# Welcome to North Park Covenant Church online! We're glad you're here.

### For your prayers this week:

- our neighborhood, specifically the east side of the 5400 block of N. St Louis "We pray that God would unveil within our neighbors and ourselves the unlimited riches of his glory and favor until supernatural strength floods their and our innermost beings with his divine might and explosive power." (Ephesians 3:16)
- Gunnel Brunsell, now on hospice care
- Janette Smith and family, mourning the passing of her mother, Ruth, on August 30
- Zayd Vestal, one of our former youth interns, as he lives, works, and adventures abroad
- all those affected by the shooting August 27 at Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis, MN
- **Valerie Sanchez Lucco's son Jeff Lucco**, his fellow coaches, and 25 Taft High School soccer players, as they travel back from Detroit, MI, today after a weekend of soccer
- **Kevin Wendt**, Ryan Wendt's father, spending two weeks in isolation, under physicians' observation, after a T-cell procedure
- Steve Brown, who has been dealing with pancreatic cancer,
- Jan Huber, who fell and will undergo shoulder surgery after she recovers from COVID
- Martha Berg, recovering from a small stroke
- Huck Johnson, recuperating after surgery to repair a torn ACL
- Lynn Pearson, moved last week to Brandel Care Center for continued healing
- Pete Pearson, home from the hospital
- Sandy Edstrom, still experiencing sciatic pain
- Bruce Strom, continuing to heal after a fall
- Janet Olfelt, Joel Olfelt's mother, now in a skilled nursing facility for further recovery after a fall
- **Zeynab and her two sons**, awaiting word about their asylum case; and for Zeynab's daughter, **Sophia**, who could potentially be released from the detention center if she can find a sponsor
- Diane Haglund, continuing to struggle with fatigue, which is affecting her ability to work
- Anna and Peter Kim, missionaries to Taiwan, have a lengthy prayer list, which you can read here.

Welcome to North Park Covenant Church! If you're new here today, we invite you to email the co-pastors at copastors@npcovenant.org to learn more about us and get a little more connected.

A space for children to wiggle and play has been set up on the west side of the south garden, and kids are welcome to be on the climbing apparatus, as well.

**Today is a Benevolence Sunday.** Members of the Deacon Board will be at the gates after the service to receive any donations to our benevolence fund, which is used to help those in need in our community.

**Vida Plena, a Spanish-speaking Covenant church plant** that meets here, invites you to worship every Sunday at 1:30 pm. For more information, contact Pastor Dany Flores at 872-357-9080.

Wednesday-night programming resumes September 10: Join us (just about) every Wednesday night during the school year beginning at 6 pm for our midweek community dinner! There's no need to bring anything! Just come, grab a plate, pull up a chair, and share some conversation from 6 to 7 pm in the church parlor. We'll begin sending out an RSVP form next week and ask that you reserve your spot by the end of the preceding Monday. We'll accept a donation of \$6/person or \$20/family if you have the resources.

We are usually done with dinner by about 6:45 and, occasionally, there will be some programming following dinner, but come when you can and leave when you must. Also, following dinner, we have activities for a variety of ages and interests:

6:30-7:10	Chancel Handbell Choir Rehearsal
6:30-7:10	Contemporary Music Rehearsal
7-8:30	Knit or Not
7-8:30	Middle-school Youth Group
7:15-8:30	Chancel Choir Rehearsal

# Lectionary texts for Sunday, September 14:

Exodus 32:7-14 Psalm 51:1-10 1 Timothy 1:12-17 Luke 15:1-10

Sunday School for all ages begins next Sunday, September 14. If you have a child in preschool through 6th grade, we invite you to register them for our weekly Sunday School gathering that meets from 9:15 to 10:15 am. Registration can be completed on the church website or by using this link.

A Different Type of Ministry Fair: Next Sunday, September 14, following our 10:30 am worship service, we will hold a Ministry Fair, complete with a raffle surprise! Here's the day's schedule:

### Prior to Worship

9 am: Coffee bar opens.

Confirmation for students in 7th and 8th grade begins.

9:15 am: Adult Formation begins.

Sunday School for children in preschool - 6th grade begins.

Worship 10:30 am:

# Following Worship

Ministry Fair and Special Coffee Hour in the Parlors

### Ministry Fair Details

As a church body, we are committed to the Pietistic idea of living and serving for God's glory and for neighbors' good. But living and serving together that way doesn't happen by accident or magic. Instead, the invitation is for each of us to bring our gifts to the table and to serve in the ways in which we are best suited, to build God's Kingdom here on earth where good can flourish in every corner, for God's glory and for neighbors' good.

And so, as one way to share the ministry opportunities of this church body and welcome one another into service, we will enjoy a Ministry Fair again this year. We are separating it from the block party celebration so we might really focus us on serving together. This is an opportunity for lay leadership groups to share the ministry work of individual boards and committees and to encourage people to volunteer and get involved in new ways. We will leave up our displays for a couple of weeks so we can all continue to pray for and think on how we might serve.

If you as an individual, or your board or committee, would like to participate in the Ministry Fair, here is what you need to do:

- 1. Let Pastor Libby know you'd like to participate so she can provide table space for you.
- 2. Come with any materials and/or visuals for the table that morning. We hope to have tables and displays set up no later than 10:30 that morning, in time for worship. Small display boards will be purchased and available for you through the church office. Just let Ann-Marie or Libby know you need one, and you can come and pick it up.
  - 3. In your display, consider highlighting the ways in which we minister to one another. For example:
    - Sign up your child for Sunday School, Confirmation, or youth group
    - Check out the many ministries of our church and learn how the church might come alongside and minister to you and those you love!
    - Also, consider highlighting ways that we (church and community) can engage in serving our neighbors together. For example:
      - Sign up to help with a Trustee workday
      - Volunteer to deliver groceries for the Friendship Center
      - Walk with others to clean up trash in the neighborhood
      - Tutor for an hour at Hibbard Elementary
      - Serve coffee on a Sunday morning
      - Volunteer to be a deacon for the day or serve communion when it is needed
      - Sign up to teach Sunday School—for kids or adults!

For a few of these things, one must be a member of the church. However, most of these opportunities require only a willing spirit and a desire to serve! Don't forget sign-up sheets if you need them!

**Let's go out to the movies!** On Friday, September 19, we'll meet in the south garden at 7 pm for an all-church viewing of *The Princess Bride\**! Bring a blanket or chair to sit on, and a neighbor or friend to share in the fun. We expect to start the movie around 7:30 and be done by 9:15. In the case of rain, we'll move indoors to the parlors.

\* Rated PG, 1987

**Pray with Us!** It is soon time for our semiannual virtual prayer vigil, praying in the comfort of your own home for half an hour using provided prayer materials. This has been an exciting year in our church. As prayer is considered foundation-building in any church, all who have participated in the past are strong builders of that foundation on which we lean so heavily! We invite you to join us again on Saturday, September 20. Every slot was filled for our April Lenten vigil! Let's make that happen again this fall! You will receive your prayer materials by the end of the day on Friday, September 19. Let's come together boldly in prayer on September 20! Please sign up using this form.

We invite you and your favorite furry (or scaly or feathered) friend to a Pet Blessing on Saturday, September 20, at 10 am. Come to the south garden for a time of fellowship and a brief service of blessing. Dog biscuits will be available for the hounds, and we'll have coffee for the humans. No need to RSVP, but please make sure your pet is appropriately leashed or otherwise contained.

Come to our table at the Bryn Mawr Block Party! Come say "hi" to us at our table at the Bryn Mawr Block Party on Sunday, September 21! We'll be there from 10 am to 6 pm with NPCC merch and games for kids!

**North Park Readers Resume!** Now that it is fall, the North Park Readers are meeting again. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 30, at 5:30 pm at Tre Kronor. We will be reading *Code Girls* by Liza Mundy. This is a book about the American women who secretly served as codebreakers during World War II. Please contact Helen Arkema at <a href="helen.arkema@gmail.com">helen.arkema@gmail.com</a> with any questions.

It's Time to Bike (or Run or Walk) for Congo! Did you know that some people in DR Congo travel over 50 kilometers (31 miles) on a bicycle to a hospital, while sick or injured? And what's even harder to believe is that, when they arrive at the hospital, limited medicines, clean water, and medical training often prevent a person from getting better. Paul Carlson Partnership invites you to join the 2025 Biking for Congo Challenge as a fun way to bike (or run, walk, swim) to support healthcare in DR Congo. For more information or to register to participate, use this link. Also, if you choose to participate, let the church office know so we can spread the word!

**Spiritual Direction Offer:** Emily Wagner, seminary staff member and friend of the congregation, is working on finishing her spiritual direction certificate at North Park University, a requirement for which is to offer spiritual direction under her supervision. If you are interested in spiritual direction for this season of life, this would be a free way to engage in that practice while Emily completes her training. Reach out to Pastor Jeff if you have questions or interest, and he'll get you in contact with Emily.

Interested in a North Park Beginners Bicycle Riding Group? If you are interested in participating in a regular riding group, please email new NPCC friend Cecilea Mun at <a href="mailto:cmun@northpark.edu">cmun@northpark.edu</a> by Tuesday, September 30. The plan for now is to meet at North Park Covenant Church on Saturdays and ride the River Park path north to various locations along the coast of Lake Michigan. We can have a short group prayer and time to rest and meditate before heading somewhere for a meal. Riders are welcome to drop off whenever they want, and end points can change, too. Suggestions or advice are also welcomed. Once you email Cecilea, she will set up a meeting for those who are interested to decide on a time, date, and destination for the first ride, as well as to make plans for organizing future rides.

Are you looking for a way to serve at NPCC? We always welcome people who are willing to hang out with the littlest in our community or help serve refreshments after the worship service! <u>Click here to put your name down for a Sunday or two.</u> Please note: this is a new link.

# The Church Calendar This Week

The calendar is available online at www.npcovenant.org/calendar and is updated as changes occur.

 	7 · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
9:15 am 10:30 am 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Monday, September 8 Women's Bible Study (Hybrid/Large Conference Room) Staff Meeting (Staff Conference Room) Geezerball (Gym) Centering Prayer (Staff Conference Room)
8 am 4:30 pm 5 pm 6 pm 7 pm	Tuesday, September 9 Men's Bible Study Resumes (Hybrid/Large Conference Room) Uniting Voices Chicago Rehearsal (Sanctuary) Board of Community Concern Meeting (via Zoom) Cudahy Basketball (Gym) Board of Christian Formation Meeting (Hybrid/Parlors) Board of Deacons Meeting (Hybrid/Staff Conference Room) Board of Trustees Meeting (Large Conference Room)
10 am 6 pm 6:30 pm 7 pm 7:15 pm	Wednesday, September 10 Wednesday Women's Bible Study (Edstrom Home) Gather Dinner Resumes (South Garden) Chancel Handbell Choir Rehearsal (Side Balcony, Sanctuary) Contemporary Music Rehearsal (Choir Room) Knit or Not (Location TBD) Middle-school Youth Group (Youth Room near the Gym) Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)
4:30 pm	Thursday, September 11 Uniting Voices Chicago Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
1 pm	Friday, September 12 Prayer Group Gathering (Edstrom Home)
8 am 10 am 10:15 am	Saturday, September 13 Geezerball (Gym) NPU Community Service Day (Various) Cudahy Basketball (Gym)
9 am 9:15 am 10:30 am 1:30 pm	Sunday, September 14 Confirmation Resumes (Staff Conference Room) Adult Formation Resumes (Parlors) Bible Journaling Resumes (Art Room) Sunday School for Preschool - 6th Grade Resumes (Junior Chapel) Worship (Sanctuary) Vida Plena Covenant Church Worship Service (Parlors)
7 pm	AA Meeting (Parlors) High-school Youth Group (The Attic Youth Room)

North Park Covenant North Park Church Church Staff Cooperative Preschool Jeff Hunter, Co-pastor Libby Piotrowski, Co-pastor Becky Edwards, jhunter@npcovenant.org lpiotrowski@npcovenant.org Administrative Director ext. 515 ext. 525 Lyndsey Wellner, To reach both Jeff and Libby, please use Head Teacher/Educational Director copastors@npcovenant.org or ext. 510. Jeanette Mottl, Pastor for Community Connection, Jennifer Glazier, with a Focus on Youth and College Students Assistant Teacher jmottl@npcovenant.org (773) 463-0055, ext. 520 Brian Ward, Music Ministry Coordinator/ preschool@npcovenant.org Chancel Choir Director www.npcovenant.org/npccp bward@npcovenant.org Sam Parnin, Organist The Friendship Center sparnin@npcovenant.org Nadia Jiménez, Linnea Olfelt, Chancel Handbell Choir Director **Executive Director** lolfelt@npcovenant.org 2711 West Lawrence Avenue Christian Schuetz, Custodian Chicago, Illinois 60625

Ann-Marie Olson, Church Administrator aolson@npcovenant.org, ext. 500

Missionaries We Support

Letha Kerl, Regional Co-coordinator for Europe

cschuetz@npcovenant.org

ionar do coordinator for Europe

Peter and Anna Kim, Taiwan

Paul and Sheryl Noren, Congo

Eugenio and Pia Restrepo,

Regional Coordinators for Latin America

(773) 907-6338

info@friendshipcenterchicago.org

www.friendshipcenterchicago.org

James and Rachel Ventress, Alaska

# Welcome Statement

We welcome all people to begin or deepen their relationship with Christ through worship and study. We invite all believers to fully participate in the life and ministry of our church as members, leaders, and lay staff. We celebrate the gifts and presence of diverse Christians among us—whether those differences be race, ethnicity, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, or socioeconomic status. We are blessed by our diversity and are unified in Christ.

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