

SEPTEMBER 20, 2020
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**Please maintain social distance of at least 6 feet and
keep your mask on at all times while on MPC property.*

PRELUDE — *Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire*

Mark Shockey

*Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
and lighten with celestial fire;
thou the anointing Spirit art,
who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.*

*Thy blessed unction from above
is comfort life, and fire of love;
enable with perpetual light
the dullness of our mortal sight.*

*Teach us to know the Father, Son,
and thee, of both, to be but one,
that through the ages all along
this may be our endless song:*

*Praise to thine eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Amen.*

CALL to WORSHIP — from *Psalms 105*

Pastor Lester-Abdalla

One: O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name,

All: Make known his deeds among the peoples.

One: Sing to the Lord, sing praises to the Lord;

All: Tell of the Lord's wonderful works.

One: Glory in God's holy name;

All: Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Let us worship God together!

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Molly Ramsey

Merciful God, we confess that we fear the rush of your Spirit. We confess that the unpredictability of your Spirit gives us pause. We confess that, too often, we prefer to take matters into our own hands because of what your Spirit might call us to do, or to be, or to say. Forgive us, O God. For your Spirit has the power to bring comfort when nothing else can. Your Spirit has the power to intercede in ways we cannot imagine. Help us to let down our barriers to your Spirit; guide us to live with joy, abandon, and faithfulness. Silence in us our desire to always have words for every occasion, for more often than not, the whisper of your Spirit is more than enough.

(Time for silent prayer and confession.)

PROMISE of FORGIVENESS

One: Hear the good news of God's love for us: whether it is in a rush of wind or the quiet whisper of the Spirit, God will say again and again, "You are my beloved. Nothing you could ever do will separate you from my love." And so, friends, let us rest in the assurance of God's love and proclaim the good news of the gospel:

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

SCRIPTURE READING — Romans 8:22-27

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

MEDITATION

Pastor Rhodes

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. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, Come, Lord Jesus!

PAUSE for PRAYER

- 1) When you look around the world right now, where do you see the world groaning?
- 2) In you own life, where do you need the Spirit's intercession?
- 3) How might you open your heart more fully to the intercession of God's Spirit?

HYMN 288 — *Spirit of the Living God*

LIVING GOD

*Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me; mold me; fill me; use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.*

POSTLUDE — *Give to the Winds Thy Fears*

OTHERS PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Tim Carpenter – Director of Music

Photos provided by: Luisa Herrera-Gonzalez, Nancy Kernan,
Damon Miller & Rachel Rhodes