



Everyone is welcome here

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BINGHAMTON

ACT JUSTLY • PRACTICE KINDNESS • WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD



Sunday, March 16, 2025 • 10:00am

Second Sunday of Lent

📺 Our worship service is livestreaming on our YouTube Channel: [upcbgm.org/youtube](https://www.upcbgm.org/youtube)

Join via phone call on Zoom: (+1) 646-558-8656, Meeting ID 865 274 8433

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Welcome to the Celebration!

March 16, 2025 • 10:00am

Jesus continues the work of teaching and healing, and gives the disciples a parable about the work of the kingdom, reminding them that not everyone will hear the challenge and be able to act upon it. The success of the work is found in the faithfulness of the workers, not in the response of the crowds. The chapter closes with the intertwined stories of a woman who has been cut off from society for twelve years by a medical condition, and the restoration to life of a twelve-year-old girl, the daughter of a synagogue leader. Rather than use the platform of his success to broaden his influence, Jesus orders the parents to stay silent and continues on his way.

We Gather as a Community of Faith

OPENING BELL *The bell tolls to center our hearts and minds for worship.*

GATHERING MUSIC “All Good Gifts” from *Godspell* Andrea Gilebarto, *vocals*; Rebecca Mebert, *piano*

We plow the fields and scatter the good seed on the land, but it is fed and watered
by God’s almighty hand. He sends us snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.

Refrain: All good gifts around us are sent from Heaven above,
so thank the Lord, oh, thank the Lord for all his love.

We thank thee then, O Father, for all things bright and good, the seed time and the harvest,
our life, our health, our food. No gifts have we to offer for all thy love imparts
but that which thou desirest: our humble, thankful hearts! [*Refrain*]

I really want to thank you, Lord! I want to thank you, Lord, thank you for all of your love!
Oh, thank you, Lord. I want to thank you, Lord, thank you, Lord.

Words and Music: Stephen Schwartz. © 1971 Quartet Music and Range Road Music Inc. All rights reserved.

WORDS OF WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)

by Avery Barden

One: Beloved community, we gather to worship the God
who invites us to join Them in creating a new world.
When our souls are trampled on, made too hard to bear fruit,

All: Let us gather.

One: When our hearts exclaim over God’s word for a moment,
but never break open to let it sink in,

All: Let us gather.

* = Please rise in body or in spirit.

One: When the cares of the world prick at and stifle our spirits like thorns,
leaving no room for joy or hope, no time for kindness or compassion,

All: Let us gather.

One: And when God comes, heals, cultivates in us
hearts soft enough to receive, to nurture, to blossom.

All: Let us gather to worship our Creator, our Redeemer, the Breath within our lungs.

***SONG OF GATHERING** “A Sower Came from Ancient Hills” (see page 4)

GATHERING PRAYER (*together*)

by Avery Barden

**God of Life in all its seasons,
you are the Sower who softens us like soil,
slowly but surely, so that your Word may sprout in us.
You are the source of the water, the sun, the air
that sustains our being and unites us with all living things.**

**You are the Wind that stirs our stagnation,
who takes us by the hands and pulls us into action,
inviting us to be co-laborers in the hard harvest work
as your reign takes root, grows, and blossoms across the world.
We come to worship
you who guide all Creation into flourishing. Amen!**

TIME FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

We Tell and Hear the Word

BREATH PRAYER *inhale:* No one is hidden from your love.
exhale: You are the God who sees.

FOCUS LESSON *Luke 8:1–21, 40–56, CEB*

¹ Soon afterward, Jesus traveled through the cities and villages, preaching and proclaiming the good news of God’s kingdom. The Twelve were with him, ² along with some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses. Among them were Mary Magdalene (from whom seven demons had been thrown out), ³ Joanna (the wife of Herod’s servant Chuza), Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their resources.

⁴ When a great crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from one city after another, he spoke to them in a parable: ⁵ “A farmer went out to scatter his seed. As he was scattering it, some fell on the path where it was crushed, and the birds in the sky came and ate it. ⁶ Other seed fell on rock. As it grew, it dried up because it had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorny plants. The thorns grew with the plants and choked them. ⁸ Still other seed landed on good soil. When it grew, it produced one hundred times more grain than was scattered.” As he said this, he called out, “Everyone who has ears should pay attention.”

⁹ His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, “You have been given the mysteries of God’s kingdom, but these mysteries come to everyone else in parables so that *when they see, they can’t see, and when they hear, they can’t understand.*”

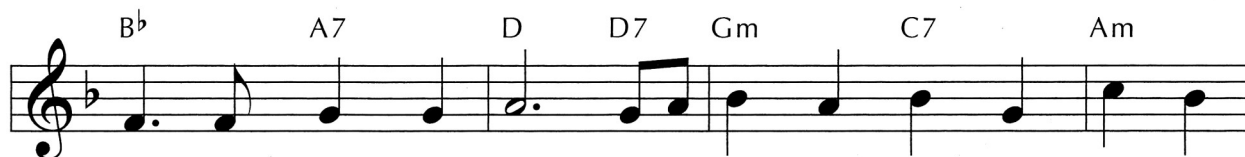
171 A Sower Came from Ancient Hills



1 A Sow - er came from an - cient hills and cast good
 2 A Sow - er walked through - out the land and, ev - ery -
 3 The Seed was bur - ied deep in death be - neath a
 4 O Christ, you come a - mong us still, the Sow - er



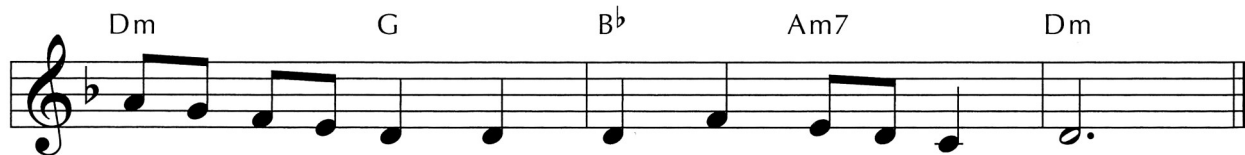
seed a - broad: his field, ten thou - sand hu - man hearts; his
 where he trod, he sowed his life be - cause he was him -
 blood - red sky, and deep - er still was bur - ied hope for
 and the Seed. As once you sowed the truth of God in



seed, the word of God. And some who lis - tened would not
 self the Seed of God. But then, a - top a bar - ren
 those who watched him die. But then, in Jo - seph's gar - den
 glow - ing word and deed, im - plant your Word in wait - ing



hear, and some who heard for - got. But some re - ceived in
 hill, be - neath a dark - ening sky, they threw God's Seed on
 fair, as dawn broke o'er the land, the Seed, from three days'
 hearts, and let it there take hold, un - til it bears in



fer - tile soil the truth the Sow - er taught.
 ston - y ground and left it there to die.
 si - lent sleep, a - woke at God's com - mand!
 fruit - ful lives a har - vest hun - dred - fold.

¹¹ “The parable means this: The seed is God’s word. ¹² The seed on the path are those who hear, but then the devil comes and steals the word from their hearts so that they won’t believe and be saved. ¹³ The seed on the rock are those who receive the word joyfully when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while but fall away when they are tempted. ¹⁴ As for the seed that fell among thorny plants, these are the ones who, as they go about their lives, are choked by the concerns, riches, and pleasures of life, and their fruit never matures. ¹⁵ The seed that fell on good soil are those who hear the word and commit themselves to it with a good and upright heart. Through their resolve, they bear fruit.

¹⁶ “No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a bowl or puts it under a bed. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand so that those who enter can see the light. ¹⁷ Nothing is hidden that won’t be exposed. Nor is anything concealed that won’t be made known and brought to the light. ¹⁸ Therefore, listen carefully. Those who have will receive more, but as for those who don’t have, even what they seem to have will be taken away from them.”

¹⁹ Jesus’s mother and brothers came to him but were unable to reach him because of the crowd. ²⁰ Someone told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.”

²¹ He replied, “My mother and brothers are those who listen to God’s word and do it.”

⁴⁰ When Jesus returned [to Galilee], the crowd welcomed him, for they had been waiting for him.

⁴¹ A man named Jairus, who was a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus’s feet. He pleaded with Jesus to come to his house ⁴² because his only daughter, a twelve-year-old, was dying.

As Jesus moved forward, he faced smothering crowds. ⁴³ A woman was there who had been bleeding for twelve years. She had spent her entire livelihood on doctors, but no one could heal her. ⁴⁴ She came up behind him and touched the hem of his clothes, and at once her bleeding stopped.

⁴⁵ “Who touched me?” Jesus asked.

When everyone denied it, Peter said, “Master, the crowds are surrounding you and pressing in on you!”

⁴⁶ But Jesus said, “Someone touched me. I know that power has gone out from me.”

⁴⁷ When the woman saw that she couldn’t escape notice, she came trembling and fell before Jesus. In front of everyone, she explained why she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed.

⁴⁸ “Daughter, your faith has healed you,” Jesus said. “Go in peace.”

⁴⁹ While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the synagogue leader’s house, saying to Jairus, “Your daughter has died. Don’t bother the teacher any longer.”

⁵⁰ When Jesus heard this, he responded, “Don’t be afraid; just keep trusting, and she will be healed.”

⁵¹ When he came to the house, he didn’t allow anyone to enter with him except Peter, John, and James, and the child’s father and mother. ⁵² They were all crying and mourning for her, but Jesus said, “Don’t cry. She isn’t dead. She’s only sleeping.”

⁵³ They laughed at him because they knew she was dead.

⁵⁴ Taking her hand, Jesus called out, “Child, get up.” ⁵⁵ Her life returned and she got up at once. He directed them to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶ Her parents were beside themselves with joy, but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

BREATH PRAYER *inhale:* The work that is mine to do
 exhale: I will be faithful to do

We Respond to the Word

***SONG OF RESPONSE** “The Woman Hiding in the Crowd” (see page 7)

WE SAY WHAT WE BELIEVE (*together*) *by Noel Palsma, for the World Communion of Reformed Churches*

We share one faith,
have one calling,
are of one soul and one mind;
have one God and Father,
are filled with one Spirit,
are baptized with one baptism,
eat of one bread and drink of one cup,
confess one Name,
are obedient to one Lord,
work for one cause,
and share one hope.

Together we come to know
the height and the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ;
are built up to the stature of Christ, to the new humanity;
know and bear one another's burdens,
thereby fulfilling the law of Christ
that we need one another and up build one another,
admonishing and comforting one another;
that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness.
Together we pray; together we serve God in this world.

MINUTE FOR MISSION *One Great Hour of Sharing special offering*

Judy Westcott

WE OFFER OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

You are invited to support the ministry of this congregation through online giving at upcbgm.org/give, or by sending a check to the church office or putting an offering in the plates by the door.

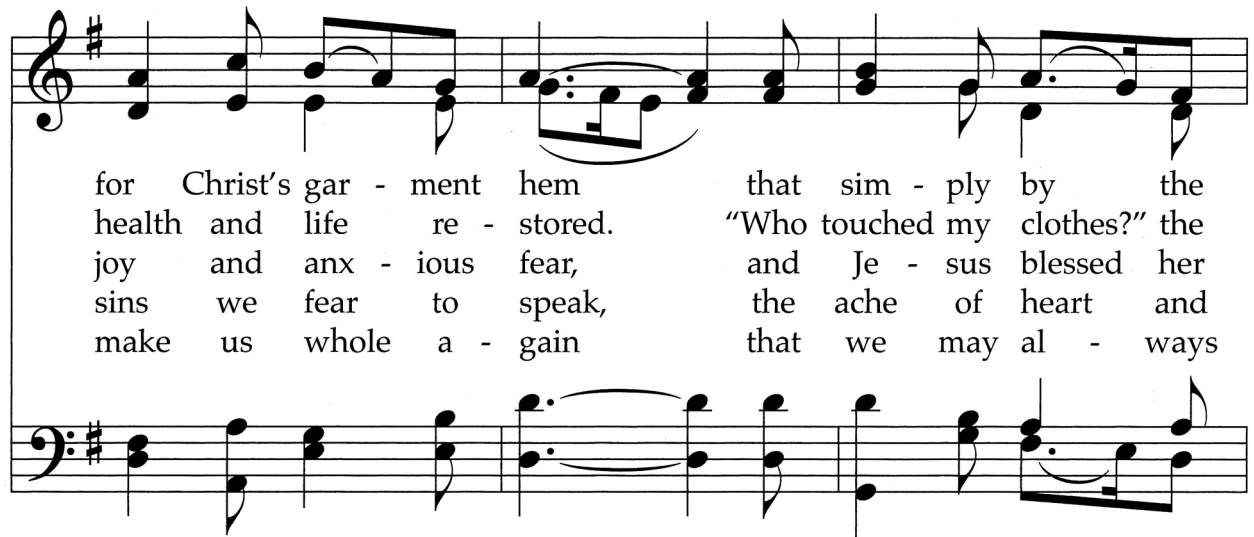
You can contribute to the PC(USA)'s One Great Hour of Sharing offering online at pcusa.org/give-oghs or text OGHS to 91999, or use one of the Special Offering envelopes located near the plates by the doors, or send a check to the church office marked with “special offering” in the memo line.



The Woman Hiding in the Crowd 178



1 The wom - an hid - ing in the crowd reached
 2 From Christ went forth the heal - ing grace, her
 3 The wom - an knelt be - fore him then with
 4 The bur - dens now that weigh us down, the
 5 So touch us, Lord, with heal - ing grace and



for Christ's gar - ment hem that sim - ply by the
 health and life re - stored. "Who touched my clothes?" the
 joy and anx - ious fear, and Je - sus blessed her
 sins we fear to speak, the ache of heart and
 make us whole a - gain that we may al - ways



touch of it she might be healed with - in.
 Sav - ior asked, but no one said a word.
 lov - ing - ly: "In peace go forth from here."
 emp - ty soul we lay be - fore your feet.
 live in you and know your peace with - in.

Words: J. Dudley Weaver, Jr., © 2008. Music: William P. Rowan (SIMMONS), © 1993 Selah Publishing Co., Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727560. All rights reserved.

MUSICAL OFFERING “Old Irish Blessing”

UPC Choir

May the road rise to meet you, may the wind be always at your back,
the sun shine warm upon your face, the rains fall soft upon your fields,
and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

May the Lord bless you and keep you,
may the Lord cause his face to shine upon you, and give you peace.

Words: Traditional Irish, and para. Numbers 6:22–26. Music: Denes Agay. © 1970 WB Music Corp.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*together*)

by Thandiwe Dale-Ferguson

**Holy God,
Grant us a heart full of grace,
and a soul generated by love,
that we may serve you and your world.
Thank you for all those who have shown us the way
and all those who are showing us the way. Amen!**

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS (*responsive*)

As each petition is concluded, the prayer leader and congregation respond:

One: Lord, in your loving kindness,

All: hear our prayer.

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

Lord of Love,
we have been unsettled this year,
and we don't like it.

Routines shattered routines,
bringing fear and stress when we long for hope.

Yet for most of us,
our privilege has kept us whole,
while around us others have suffered.

Deeply embedded racism,
inadequate safety nets for the poor,
vindictiveness among neighbors,
and a politics of selfishness
have led to death and suffering.

As we yearn for,
as we move toward,
a semblance of normalcy,
keep our eyes and hearts on
the poor, the immigrant, the oppressed.

Disrupt our desires to live unaware
of the pain and suffering in our fragmented world.
Motivate us, to love and act as Jesus taught.
Amen.

And now, with the confidence of the children of God,
we pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying...

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*together*)

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen!**

We Go Forth in Gratitude to Serve

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INVITATIONS

***SONG OF SENDING** "Sometimes a Light Surprises" (see page 10)

BLESSING

adapted from a poem by Christine Sine

Do not be overwhelmed
by the enormity of the world's grief.
We do not carry this burden alone.

Hold onto the ways of Jesus.
Act justly now,
Be merciful now,
Be compassionate now.

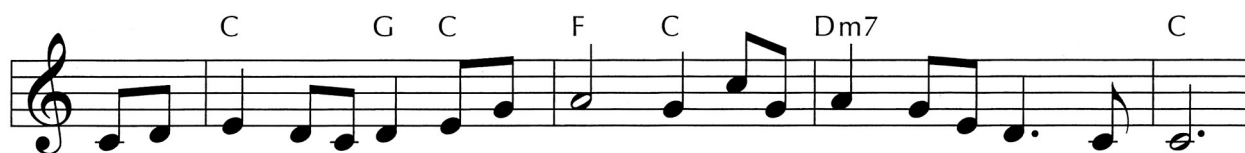
Do not be paralyzed
by what you cannot change.
Do what you can
for your anxious soul,
towards each battered person
for our devastated planet.

Stretch your arms wide
Find healing in the chaos.
Find strength in togetherness.
Find peace in God's love.

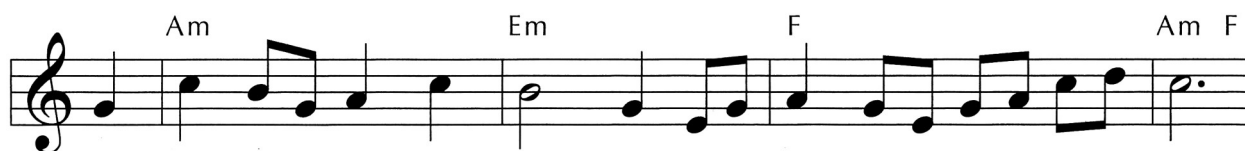
800 Sometimes a Light Surprises



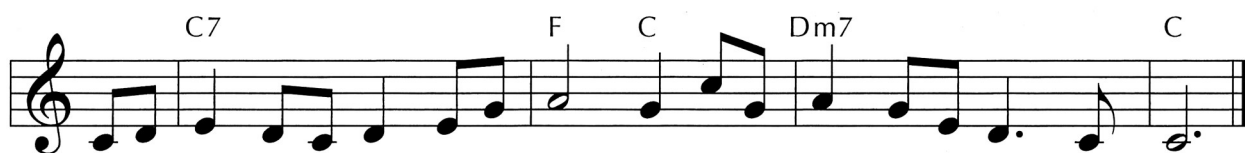
1 Some - times a light sur - pris - es the child of God who sings;
 2 In ho - ly con - tem - pla - tion we sweet - ly then pur - sue
 3 It can bring with it noth - ing but he will bear us through;
 4 Though vine nor fig tree nei - ther their longed - for fruit should bear,



it is the Lord who ris - es with heal - ing in his wings;
 the theme of God's sal - va - tion and find it ev - er new;
 who gives the lil - ies cloth - ing will clothe his peo - ple, too;
 though all the fields should with - er, nor flocks nor herds be there,



when com - forts are de - clin - ing, he grants the soul a - gain
 set free from pres - ent sor - row, we cheer - ful - ly can say,
 be - neath the spread - ing heav - ens no crea - ture but is fed;
 yet God the same a - bid - ing, his praise shall tune my voice;



a sea - son of clear shin - ing to cheer it af - ter rain.
 "Let the un - known to - mor - row bring with it what it may."
 and he who feeds the ra - vens will give his chil - dren bread.
 for while in him con - fid - ing, I can - not but re - joice.

Words: William Cowper, alt. Music: SALLEY GARDENS, Irish folk melody; arr. Alfred V. Fedak, © 2011. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727560. All rights reserved.

SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

One: And may the peace that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of God's son, Jesus Christ, and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you and abide with you today and always.

Peace be with you.

All: And also with you.

SENDING MUSIC "Providence Reel"

Aimée Backus, *flute*; Phil Westcott, *guitar*

(Please exchange a greeting of peace with those around you as our worship concludes.)

After the service, everyone is invited to join us downstairs for a time of fellowship and refreshments as we celebrate all the birthdays in the month of March.

Scripture Challenge: Can We Get 100 Sheep into the Pasture by Good Shepherd Sunday?



Every Sunday and Thursday, a new verse or passage from scripture will be given for memorization. Every time you are able to recite a new text to a Pastor when you see her, you will receive a sheep sticker and a small resin sheep will be placed in the “pasture” on the communion table. **So far we’ve got 7 sheep!**

If we get 100 sheep into the pasture by Good Shepherd Sunday on May 11, we will have a party to celebrate! Prizes will be awarded to special people for special accomplishments.

ANYONE CAN PLAY! NO AGE LIMIT!*

**Choir members may be limited in how much of Handel’s “Messiah” they are allowed to recite.*

Children in Worship: “Let the little children come to me...” —Matthew 19:14

We are glad that your children are here today, and we hope that you know that they are welcome and encouraged to be in worship with you. We truly believe that a community of faith is made up of people of ALL ages. There is a PrayGround space with coloring sheets and quiet toys in the front of the sanctuary to use there or can be taken to another pew, if that suits your family’s needs. Sunday school materials are mailed to our families once a month to do together at home.



There is also a nursery space at the end of the hall at the front of the sanctuary that is open for use with a parent or guardian. It has a changing table, a rocking chair, and some toys appropriate for age two and under. There is a speaker in the room so you can listen to the service. Please let us know if you have questions.

COVER IMAGE: Reproduction of “Sower at Sunset” by Vincent van Gogh, 1888. Oil on canvas, 64.2 x 80.3 cm.

PRAYER CREDITS: **Call to Worship** and **Gathering Prayer** by Avery Arden, from Binary Breaking Worship. **We Say What We Believe:** “Affirmation of Unity” by Noel Palsma, from *Prayerful Preparation: Living God, Renew Us* published by the World Communion of Reformed Churches, posted on re:Worship re-worship.blogspot.com. **Prayer of Dedication** by Thandiwe Dale-Ferguson, posted on Worship Words worshipwords.co.uk. **Blessing** adapted from a poem by Christine Sine, from her Walking in Wonder substack, substack.com/@chrissine.

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Pastors Rev. Kimberly P Chastain and Rev. Becky Kindig ~ **Reader** Cindy Chadwick
Musicians Aimée Backus, *Music Coordinator*; Rebecca Mebert, *accompanist*;
Austin Shadduck, *United Ringers director*; Andrea Gilebarto, Robert Manners,
Starletta Noll-Long, Phil Westcott, and the UPC Choir ~ **Technicians** Chris Burger,
Andy Chadwick, Emily Hugenbruch, Scott Kindig, Sara Lieberman, Ken Mebert