

the good news that the Kingdom of God is here,

Many: God comes near.

One: In all seasons of our lives, God comes near to us and does not forsake us.

Many: We gather to come near to God, whose ever-present love remains near, no matter where our journey takes us.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, September 2023.

OPENING PRAYER — Lin

HYMN TFWS #2233 “Where Children Belong”

CHILDREN’S STORY — Dan Smith

SPECIAL MUSIC — Chancel Choir “Down to the River to Pray”

SCRIPTURE: Mark 1:9-15

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” ¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³

He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. ¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

MESSAGE “The Good News” Rev. Lin Cheek

RESPONSIVE HYMN UMH #473 “Lead Me, Lord” (2x)
**Lead me, Lord, Lead me in thy righteousness. Make thy way plain before my face.
For it is thou, Lord, thou Lord only who makest me to dwell in safety.**

OFFERTORY — Anneke Toomey

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH #94

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION — Eric Presnall**

ALL: Holy God, we bring our tithes and offerings to your altar, asking you to bless our gifts for your unfinished kingdom work. Remind us, as we worship here, that the redemption of our lives did not come without a price, which was paid for us. Without our own repentance, we can miss the enormity of the gift Jesus gave. Knowing we cannot earn this redemption and forgiveness, this wiping clean of our ledger, we can only hope to reflect such grace and compassion in our encounters with others. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER — Lin

All: 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

TFWS #2241 "The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve" (v. 1-3)

**1. The Spirit sends us forth to serve; we go in Jesus' name
To bring glad tidings to the poor, God's favor to proclaim.**

**2. We go to comfort those who mourn and set the burdened free;
Were hope is dim, to share a dream and help the blind to see.**

**3. We go to be the hands of Christ, to scatter joy like seed
and, all our days, to cherish life, to do the loving deed.**

***BENEDICTION — Lin**

POSTLUDE — Anneke Toomey

Prelude/Postlude—Anneke
Song Leader—Janice Bachman
Liturgist — Eric Presnall

Accomp.—Anneke
Special Music — Choir
Children's Message— Dan Smith

Offertory—Anneke
Organ — Betsy