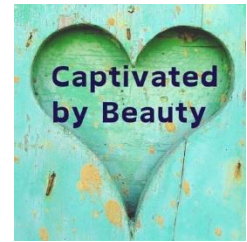


The Presbyterian Church of Okemos
June 30, 2024
Sixth Sunday After Pentecost



Preparation: “The difficulty and crisis of the world is overwhelming. It is virtually impossible to bear it without very deep resources.” — Theologian Wendy Farley, author of *Beguiled by Beauty*

Gathering As a People of God

Prelude

Adagio from *Sonata 1*
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organ

Felix Mendelssohn

Invitation to Our Shared Ministry

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Centering Our Minds and Candle Lighting

*You are invited to a moment of quiet rest,
a time of slowing the pace of your body and mind so that the spirit can settle.
We invite those at home to light a candle and become centered for worship.*

Opening Prayer

Barbara Fretwell-Cooke, liturgist

One: Holy One, pause us for this moment, bear us up in this time, hold us for eternity. We offer ourselves in connection with you. We allow ourselves this love from you. We release ourselves into your presence.

All: Amen

Engaging Our Bodies

Barbara Fretwell-Cooke, liturgist

One: Let us embrace God’s love through worship with our whole bodies. Plant your feet firmly on the ground, anchoring your body.

All: We plant our feet on the ground, remembering the roots which anchor our faith.

One: Center your body. Stretch your arms upward, reaching for the trees.

All: We stretch our arms upward, seeking the wonder and glory of God.

One: Center your body. Stretch your arms out from your sides, extending our branches to form community.

All: We stretch our arms outward, connecting with each other.

* **Hymn #684**

Faith Begins by Letting Go, vs. 1-3
[Lux Prima]

Prayer of Confession

Pastor Lisa Schrott

One: God never forgets God’s promises. God’s covenant endures in each new generation. We are free to speak the truth about our lives because God’s faithfulness embraces us as we examine our hearts.

All: God of mercy, we remember with gratitude those people who generously sowed the seeds of faith in our lives.

Silent prayer of gratitude

We recognize how you have blessed our lives with the gift of the Holy Spirit so that our faith has miraculously and mysteriously grown.

Silent prayer of gratitude

We confess the times we fail to involve ourselves in planting any seeds of faith in the lives of others; the times we have failed to nurture our own faith; the times when our lives become so entangled with the values of the world that we forget what you have said and done and promised.

Silent prayer of confession

We know that when we become disconnected from you, our lives becomes parched and unfruitful. Our faith becomes stunted and dry. We imagine that we are capable judges of wisdom and goodness. We trust the standards of society to judge the beauty of others and this world. We separate and categorize; we mark the performance of others.

Silent prayer of confession

God of mystery, God of life, forgive us. Forgive us when we fail to appreciate the diversity of beauty in your creation. Remind us over and over again of the depth of your love and breadth of your grace. Gracious God, hidden and manifest, transform our withered imaginations so we embrace your love, a love we cannot control.

Silent prayer of confession

Renew us and renew our lives, we pray. Enable us to remain connected to you at all times and in all places, deepening our faith so we bear the fruit of your mercy, your love, and your undying life.

Silent prayer of commitment (Amen)

Promise of the Gospel and Passing of the Peace

One: What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Nothing we have done and nothing we will ever do, is enough to separate us from the love of God made known in Jesus Christ. Please turn to your neighbor and share these words of assurance: "In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven."

All: In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen.

One: It is as a forgiven people that we share the peace of Christ. The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you. Please greet your fellow worshippers in ways you feel comfortable.

* **Act of Praise #581**

Gloria Patri

The Word

Prayer of Illumination

Barbara Fretwell-Cooke, liturgist

Enlightening God, the unfolding of your Word gives light and provides wisdom to all who seek your truth. Open our minds and hearts by the presence of your Holy Spirit, that the mystery of your heavenly realm is made evident here on earth. Amen.

Children's Message

Pastor Lisa Schrott

New Testament Reading

Matthew 13: 31-32 (CEB) Barbara Fretwell-Cooke, liturgist

Old Testament Reading

Ezekiel 31: 1-7 (CEB)

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Reflection

Captivated by Beauty: The Depth and Spread of Love Pastor Lisa Schrott

Visio Divina

As images appear on the screen, you are invited to be captivated by beauty.

Who or what has rooted your faith? What gives your trunk sustenance?

What nutrients do you need to seek more?

Where is God calling you to stretch your branches?

Special Music

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

Arr. Margaret Bonds

Amira Coleman, soprano

Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, piano

Responding to the Word

Offering

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Invitation

Building Our Offering Tree

Write an act of kindness you will commit to this week on one of the leaves provided.

Place your offering of kindness on the tree. You may place your financial offering in the

basket next to the tree. Please signal an usher if you need assistance bringing your

offering forward. For those worshipping online, you may email your act of kindness to

Pastor Lisa and we will add it to the tree.

Offertory

Trees

Music by Oscar Rasbach

Amira Coleman, soprano

Poem by Joyce Kilmer

Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, piano

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

***Doxology #606**

***Prayer of Dedication**

Prayers of the People

Barbara Fretwell-Cooke, liturgist

One: Lord, in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer **in unison**
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.

Sent Out As a People of God

* **Hymn #226** *There in God's Garden*, vs. 1-4
[Shades Mountain]

* **Benediction** Pastor Lisa Schrott

Postlude *Go Forth in Faith* Franklin Ritter

* *Please rise in body or spirit*

Education Time: Laurie Hereza will share information about our mission partner, Michigan Refugee Hope.

Flowers: The flowers beautifying our sanctuary today are from Ewen & Zora Todd in celebration of their granddaughters Shauna Hale and Ruth Todd's graduations from high school.

This Morning's Fellowship Team: Thank you to Shirley Rumminger for providing snacks and to Edward Ennen for taking care of the coffee.

Next Week July 7, 2024: Seventh Sunday after Pentecost; Communion Sunday

Scripture: Psalm 16: 7-11

Inspiration for the service, order of worship and some liturgy are adapted from *Beguiled by Beauty* by Dr. Marcia McFee <https://worshipdesignstudio.com/beauty>

The Prayer and Confession, Promise of the Gospel, and Prayer of Illumination are combined material adapted from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 2*; Westminster John Knox Press, 2014 and words from Moira Laidlaw available from Re-Worship at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/05/prayer-of-confession-mark-4-26-34.html>

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Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, Organist
Westin Sorrel (he/him), Chancel Choir Director
Irene Shutt, Handbell Choir Director
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