



HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

23RD SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

"Two Or Three Or More"

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Rev. Dr. David Lee, Pastor

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"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."
(Matthew 18:20)

Today is the 14th
Sunday following
Pentecost and the 23rd
Sunday in Ordinary
Time.

As we prepare for
worship we'll listen to
the incomparable Dion
Warwick singing "What
the World Needs
Now." Love is the
guide, the healer, the
giver of hope the
demonstrative
reminder that when all
'things' fall away or are
threatened God's love
is here – now.

Our Service begins
with a **WELCOME** to
all who are gathered to
worship together.
We share news of our
life together as a
church in our service
because what we do,
outside of worship, is a
very vital portion of our
'service to God'.

Our Call to Worship
each week is designed
to bring us into focus
and help us to
heighten our
awareness of being in
a special place, in the
presence of God.
Today we echo the
gospel lesson from
Matthew.

Our "Gathering Prayer"
is an opportunity for us
to center our minds
and hearts on the
presence of God in our
worship today.

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

September 10, 2017 – 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

TIME OF PREPARATION

(Take this opportunity to pause for a moment and pray for God's presence among us today, our worship leaders, those who worship with you and for yourself.)

"WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP" "ENTER WITH REVERENCE TO WORSHIP GOD"

(They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Day by day, as they spent much time together, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.)

MUSIC AND TIME OF PREPARATION

(Enter reverently. Before the service, speak to God. During the service, let God speak to you. After the service, speak to one another.)

CHIMING THE HOUR

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AND SHARING LIFE IN THE CHURCH

PRELUDE AND BRINGING THE LIGHT

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

When two or three gather,
Christ lives in every moment,
where two or three gather,
Christ is present with them.

Where two or three gather,
to worship God,
glad songs of praise are lifted,
hearts are filled with hope.

Two or three and many more faithfully rally here this day,
Let us worship together.

***GATHERING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (In Unison)**

"Great God, we move into this time and space with our sight and sense of smell, with our listening and our touch, with our hearts and our minds, so that we may live inside your stories. Help us remember who we are as your children as we celebrate the purpose you give us as your people. This we pray in Jesus' name, even as he taught us, "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."

***HYMN OF PRAISE NO. 275 "GOD OF OUR LIFE"**

***PASSING THE PEACE (Please Remain Standing)**

May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(At this time you are invited to share a sign of peace: a hug, a handshake, a kiss...)

***CHORAL RESPONSE: (Hymn. No. 461, vs. 1)**

**"God is here! As we Your people meet to offer praise and prayer,
May we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts
Wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts."**

"SEEK FORGIVENESS AND FELLOWSHIP"

***CONFESSION AND PARDON (Responsively)**

God, through the apostle Paul, calls us to live out our faith in everyday actions beginning with how we care for one another! We are called to be God's loving, caring, serving people and we strive to do so. We pause in the midst of our lives to confess our sinfulness and to seek God's forgiveness:

Ever present and ever-loving God, sometimes we think that the church is a building. Remind us that first the church is about building our relationship with you and our sisters and brothers in Christ. For the ways in which we have neglected to maintain a holy sanctuary in our souls,

we pray for your guidance.

For the times when we held on to our grudges,

we pray that you soften our hearts.

When we have withheld our love from one another,

we pray for your forgiving love.

For the times, when we have forgotten who we are as your beloved children,

we pray that we be awakened.

For the misguided notion that we know all we need to know about you, about our faith, about the faith of others, and about your call us to see you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day.

We pray to be enlightened in our need for knowledge. Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us!

Christ, Have Mercy Upon Us!

Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us!

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

God delights in us. Such is the nature of God's abundant love. In our differences, God unites us. Such is the way of God's surprising humor. God forgives our shortcomings. Such is the way of God's immeasurable grace.

Thanks be to God!

***THE GLORIA PATRI**

**"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end,
Amen."**

Our Hymn of Praise is one of the classic hymns in the Christian tradition. "God of Our Life, Through all the Circling Years" was written for a church's 50th anniversary. It speaks of God's loving care of the church in the past, in the present and as we move forward on our journey of faith into the future.

In our final 'gathering act' we "**Pass the Peace**" as an act of caring, welcome, and mutual love.

Corporate Confession:
In the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition, we do not offer individual confession save for that which we offer in our silent prayers. Our prayer and the "**Assurance of Forgiveness**" echo themes for the day.

“The Proclamation of God’s Word” is central in the life of the worshipping community. This ‘proclamation’ includes the reading of scripture, the sharing of an anthem or musical expression of the day’s theme, the Time with The Young Church and the preaching of the Word.

Today’s anthem, “There’s A Wideness in God’s Mercy” affirms the basic goodness of God. Not just goodness in the sense that “God is in charge so whatever God does is something we’re supposed to call good,” but the kind and gentle goodness Jesus exudes in saying “Come to me you who are weary.” When we are weary or frightened the message of this anthem becomes a true blessing.

As we respond to God’s Word preached, we sing together the final three verses of Fred Pratt Greens hymn, “God Is Here” which is all about God’s people gathered for worship. Every time two or three of us gather we become the church in worship.

Presbyterians are people who embrace the ‘credal’ faith statement of the church. We stand to ‘say what we believe’ as testimony to the faith of those who were here before us and those who will come after.

“THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD’S WORD”

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Exodus 12:1-14

(OT: p.58)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

“There’s A Wideness In God’s Mercy”

*“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy, Like the wideness of the sea;
There’s a kindness in His justice, Which is more than liberty.
There is welcome for the sinner, And more graces for the good;
There is mercy with the Savior; There is healing in His blood.
There is no place where earth’s sorrows Are more felt than up in Heaven;
There is no place where earth’s failings Have such kindly judgment given.
There is plentiful redemption In the blood that has been shed;
There is joy for all the members In the sorrows of the Head.
For the love of God is broader Than the measure of our mind;
And the heart of the Eternal Is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful, We should take Him at His word;
And our lives would be thanksgiving For the goodness of the Lord.”*

*NEW TESTAMENT LESSONS

Romans 13:8-14

(NT: p. 162)

*Matthew 18:15-20, 19:13-15

(NT: p. 20)

TIME WITH THE YOUNG CHURCH

INTERLUDE

(All children, ages 3 through 1st grade are invited to attend “Children’s Church” after “A Time with the Young Church.” Their leader will meet them in the back of the sanctuary. They may be picked up after worship in the Family Life Center, room #205.)

SERMON

“Two Or Three Or More”

“SHARING OUR RESPONSE TO GOD”

*HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 461

“God Is Here”

(vss. 2 – 4)

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH **The Apostles’ Creed (Ecumenical version)**

**”I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic (universal) church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.”**

BEING THE CHURCH IN MISSION, PRAYER AND GIVING

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Lord, God of all, God of the universe, more vast than we can ever imagine, we come to you in prayer and praise. We give you thanks for blessings of our living, seen and unseen. We thank you, that as mighty as you are, you love us and care for us and claim us as your children. You call us this day to celebrate the church of Jesus Christ in all of its challenge and in all of its joy:

Lord God, we come to you in humble awe of who you are.

We worship you this morning with songs and voice and now with prayers. We adore you with our love, praises and thanksgiving. We thank you for all you are doing in and through your church.

Lord God, we thank you for what you are doing in our own lives.

Growing us to be mature in our faith. Growing us to be more like Jesus. Growing us to be loving of others and especially the unloved.

Lord we come bringing our petitions for those in need.

We now pray for those in our midst who need healing, in the hospital, home recovering, in rehabilitation, those waiting for results of tests.

We pray for those who are grieving today.

May they be comforted, re-find their way, be strengthened and encouraged.

Lord, we stand in awe at the raw power of your creation. In admitted unease and fear we come trusting in you with our prayers for nations devastated and lives lost. For those dealing with Harvey and Irma's aftermath we lift our prayers for their rising up. For those, including ourselves, who await the unknown we pray for courage and for resilience. We pray for safety and the constancy of your presence with us.

Be with us and all of your children, Lord.

Lord we entreat you to intervene in our world to put right the wrong, to guide our leaders, to relieve the suffering and pain and to offer real hope to the world. We believe our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

We believe that we all are one body of Christ, and wherever two or three of us are gathered, your joy is made complete in joining with us.

We believe that on the rock you are building your church, and that no power will prevail against it. Let us be your church in this world.

Amen.

OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

*THE DOXOLOGY & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

"Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Please take a moment and read through the prayer concerns on the back of the bulletin.

In our prayers, we ask for God's presence with and intervention for those we list each week on the back of the bulletin. We have many who are in ongoing situations of treatment, others who are saddened by loss, and still others who face uncertain futures. We keep these in our prayers today and every day.

We share our Tithes and Offerings as an active response to God's blessings to us in our living. What we give supports the work and worship of the church including all of our programs, our mission efforts and our sharing of mutual love and affection for one another.

A "Charge and Blessing" is the parallel element of worship for the "Call to Worship" which begins the service. The charge is for us to take what we have gained in worship into the world as an active service to God. The blessing is a word to us to remember that God goes with us when we go.

Our Hymn of Parting a hymn 'for the day' that recalls Jesus' teachings in Matthew 18, including our lesson for the day. "Christ You Teach Us..." sung to the lovely tune of "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" is a calming word for us today.

The 'Benediction' offers the final 'good words' said over God's people as they continue to worship in their living day by day.

Please join us in the Dining Hall following worship for a time of fellowship.

"GOD'S PEOPLE SENT INTO THE WORLD"

***CHARGE AND SENDING**

Like Moses, up from the water and saved for a purpose;

We are the church!

Like Peter declaring rock like faith;

We are the church!

Like a body with many parts called to function together;

We are the church!

On this Rally Day we embrace the grace of God in our calling;

We are the church!

We go now to be the church together!

***HYMN AS WE GO "Christ, You Teach Us of Your Kingdom" (Tune: "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly")**

Christ, you teach us of your Kingdom and the common life we share.

You remind us, "Be like children!" So we offer you our prayer:

**Make us gentle, make us humble, May we cause no one to stumble,
Sheltered in your church's care.**

Shepherd, every lamb is cherished — Even those who go astray.

You want none of us to perish Nor to wander from your way.

**When a sister or a brother Sins against you or another,
Give us helpful words to say.**

**Let your love be our foundation When we need to challenge sin;
May our quiet conversations Be the places we begin.
For our judging and complaining And our gossip and our blaming
Won't bring sinners home again.**

**May we seek your will together, Bound together by rebirth.
May we care for one another, Knowing every sinner's worth.
Two or three — united, praying, Two or three — your love obeying,
Are your voice and hands on earth.**

***BENEDICTION**

***RESPONSE**

"May the God of Hope"

"May the God of hope go with us every day, Filling all our lives with love and joy and peace. May the God of justice speed us on our way, Bringing light and hope to every land and race. Praying, let us work for peace, Singing, share our joy with all, working for a world that's new, Faithful when we hear Christ's call."

*- Those who are comfortable may please stand



HIGHLANDS' HIGHLIGHTS
 This Week at Highlands
 Week of September 10 – September 16, 2017



This Week's Calendar of Events:

Today:	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Sunday School Worship Service
Monday:	7:00 p.m.	Committee Meetings will be 9/18/17
Tuesday:	9:00 a.m.	Quilting and Sewing Group
Wednesday:	10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.	Wellness (Yoga @ 10 and Adult Logos @11) Logos enjoys its 25th year @ HUPC

"WELCOME ONE ANOTHER, AS CHRIST WELCOMES US!"

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WELCOMES YOU! We are so glad that you are here and worshipping with us this morning. We are privileged to have you with us and would invite you to a time of Fellowship in our Dining Hall after worship. Please do us a favor by signing the Friendship Register and mark appropriate boxes. There are also visitor cards in the pew racks. **FIRST TIME VISITORS – WE HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU! Thanks!**

MEMBERSHIP AT HIGHLANDS is open to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives and who wish to join in the worship and ministry of this church. The pastor or any member of the Session would be more than happy to discuss this with you.

A NURSERY IS PROVIDED IN THE FAMILY LIFE building for those who wish to have their children cared for during worship. Parents receive a 'silent pager' for peace of mind and will be paged in case of any need. Highlands takes great care in caring for your children.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH FOR AGES 3 THROUGH 1ST grade is in the Family Life building after "A Time with the Young Church," except on Communion Sundays. A nursery is provided for infants through two years of age in the Family Life Center. Worship folders for young Highlands' worshipers can be found at the usher's stand. PARENTS please help your children with their worship experience. **WE LOVE OUR CHILDREN AT HIGHLANDS** and want to keep them safe! Please help us with this goal by ensuring that **all children are supervised by an adult while on the playground at all times.**

DEVICES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEARING ASSISTANCE AT THE USHER'S STAND.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

WELCOME ONE ANOTHER...AS CHRIST HAS WELCOMED YOU! Where two or three are gathered our Lord promises to be in our midst. We gather today for worship, for prayer and to give thanks to God. We're glad you are here on a Sunday when some of our brothers and sisters have 'gone to higher and dryer' ground. The 'Word' is God's LOGOS, God's spoken presence in our midst as God's gathered people.

LOGOS IS BACK!! Our LOGOS program enjoys its 25th year on Wednesday at 4 p.m. all of our children and you are invited so please bring your children, grandchildren, friends and neighbors.

OUR WELLNESS PROGRAM is back! Our program begins with seated yoga at 10:00 a.m. and Adult LOGOS follows around 11:00 am. Seated yoga can easily be adapted to anyone's physical interest and we are looking forward to John Smith's usual presentation making Bible study amusing and informative. **Join us!**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS are moving to Monday, Sept. 18th at 7 p.m. and Session will meet this month on September 25.

THE BARNABAS CLUB WILL MEET again today as we contribute financially to Hurricane and flood relief in the wake of Harvey and Irma. Baskets for the offering are in the back of the sanctuary. Please mark your contributions for "Relief." Thanks to those who have already given. Please see the insert in today's bulletin for more information on the response of "Presbyterian Disaster Assistance."

OUR FAMILY PROMISE GUESTS WILL be with us on Tuesday.

ON OCTOBER 1 WE WILL CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF WORSHIP IN OUR SANCTUARY! We, of course, hope you will be with us as we share a most special day of worship and celebration. We are going to recall the special occasions that have taken place in this place including baptisms, confirmations, ordinations, weddings and services of Witness to the Resurrection. Please help us by inviting your family and friends who share these occasions with us to be here for the day!

50TH ANNIVERSARY TRIVIA QUESTION – In what month and year was the HUPC sanctuary dedicated? What was the original cost of the sanctuary?

DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL STORIES AND MEMORIES OF EVENTS THAT HAVE HAPPENED IN THE SANCTUARY? Do us a favor and write us a note with your memory. Email it to us at hupc_jax@bellsouth.net and/or write it out and bring in to the church office.

THE CRAFTY LADIES will not meet tomorrow, September 10th. They will have their monthly meeting Monday, September 18th. Their annual craft show is just around the corner, so start spreading the word and thinking about the delicious treats you can make for the bake sale.

MICAH'S BACK PACK is off to a great start! Thank you to our wonderful volunteers and supporters! The 'food list' is available in the office. We can use any and all items on the list and we, of course, gladly accept financial contributions. Make sure you mark your checks, "Micah's." Set up team and packers has resumed this great program as school has started! Want to help? Call Bonnie or come on the Thursday at 5:15 p.m. Thanks!

OTHER ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE

READY FOR A GOOD LAUGH? Arlington Presbyterian Church invites our congregation to an afternoon of comedy skits presented by the Vintage Players. The show is free, but voluntary donations will be accepted to help defray expenses. Come for an entertaining afternoon and enjoy refreshments afterwards on September 23, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. The show will be in Showalter Hall of Arlington Presbyterian, 1351 Sprinkle Drive (corner of Sprinkle and Commerce). Everyone is invited. Contacts are Elaine Faloon at 365-3529 and Eunice Johnson at 221-9741.

A SPECIAL THANK-YOU to Sally and Sigrid for the beautiful handmade baby quilts and blankets. They send a wonderful message to the challenged newborns and families in Jacksonville. They are used by the Little Miracles office at the University of Florida Hospital here in Jacksonville. (formerly known as Shands) They make gift bags for those in need. Our mission to fight poverty in our own community is important. Another wonderful way Highlands is The Church! Many Thanks!! Mission Committee.

ARLINGTON COMMUNITY SERVICES: ACS needs the following items: toothpaste, powdered milk, canned milk, canned pasta, pasta sauce, canned meat, canned tomatoes, canned potatoes, peanut butter, jelly- HUPC's specialty, and toilet tissue. Six jars of jelly were collected this week. Every grocery order going out of ACS has a jar of HUPC jelly!

YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP. We are looking for items for the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance kits. We recently sent 50 kits to help people after Hurricane Harvey's destruction. Now, we are starting all over with another group to help those with great needs. We need 16 X 26-inch hand towels, wash clothes, individual toothbrushes, fingernail clippers, standard size band aids, individual bars of soap, combs and gallon sized clear storage bags.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED LOVE AND SUPPORT FOR THE CHILDREN OF HAITI. Please make sure your payments are marked "SPONSOR FOR HAITI CHILDREN" to ensure the money goes into the right account.

PRAYER CONCERNS AND TODAY'S SERVICE

SPECIAL AND ONGOING PRAYERS: PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK:

IN THE HOSPITAL THIS WEEK:

OUR FRIENDS IN CARE FACILITIES: Al Hummel has gone to Brooks Rehab (Bartram Room 126) *At Brookdale Southside:* (9601 Southbrook Dr., Jax, FL 32256), Louise Keen (Clare Bridge); Hank Green (N-122); *At the Atrium (9960 Atrium Way, 32225):* Boyd and Doreen Harris (#528) , Doris Ruby (#219); *Others:* Fay Sweeney (Cypress Village, 4600 Middleton Park Circle East # E 10 A, Jacksonville, FL 32224), Linda Youmans (c/o Teri Grimm, 4206 Harbour Island Dr. 32225), Tiffani Riccilli (Annie Lietzow's granddaughter) stage 4 cancer and under hospice care.

AT HOME: Kit Fink, Don Hall, Mary Lou McNaughton, Nancy Moewe, Bill Duval, Jo and Hoagy Carmichael, Nancy Hoot, Kinzey & Betty Reeves, Patty Strader, Marilyn Reed, JoAn Ewing, Bruce and Annette Marley, Gwen Brown, Barbara Ash.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Debbie Douget's dad, Don Seay, Justin Marley (Bruce and Annette's grandson), Kenneth Moon (Barbara's son), Lenwood Lee (Dr. Dave's father), Ashley Parsons (DCE at Orange Park PC), Ed Mallard

IN THE MILITARY: Jacob Loerop (Jacob.Loerop@CVN68.navy.mil), IT3 Jacob Loerop CVN 68 USS Nimitz Unit 100103 Box 1771 FPO AP 96620. Amelia Powell (amelia.powell@cw7.navy.mil, AT2 Powell, Amelia N., VAQ-140, Unit 200107 Box 142, FPO AP 96601.

PRAYER BEARS: Prayer Bears and Caring Critters are available in the Fellowship Hall after each service.

MEMBER CARE: Bev Connell is our **Prayer Ministry Coordinator**. Bev's number is (904) 868-9659. Her email address is bevconn2016@gmail.com. Please contact Bev with your prayer request. As always, prayer requests can be made as well by calling the church office, completing the gray slips in the church pews, using the church website (hupcjax.org under "Contact Us") or by notifying your Shepherd.

FAMILIES WE ARE PRAYING FOR THIS WEEK: Heinz and Olivia Ehmer, William and Ann Ellarson and Jim and Susan Elledge.

OUR VOLUNTEERS THIS MORNING ARE: Greeters: Charles and Betsy Goodyear. Children's church Leader: Chad Sambito.

THE FLOWERS ON THE COMMUNION TABLE are given to the glory of God in celebration of Vic and Betty Stewart's 45 anniversary by Laura Sambito.