



**PRELUDE** *There Is a Balm in Gilead*  
- Cathy Draper, flute  
- Michelle Kangas, piano

**WELCOME**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

(adapted from 1 Peter 4:12-19)

Do not be surprised when you are tested.

**Rejoice that we participate  
in the sufferings of Christ.**

If we are insulted because of Christ's  
name,  
we are blessed

**For it is a sign that the glorious Spirit of  
God rests on us.**

If we suffer as Christians, we still praise  
God.

**Let us commit ourselves to our faithful  
Creator and to continuing to do good.**

**HYMN #463** *How Firm a Foundation*

**PRAYER OF PRAISE**

**Loving and living Lord,  
as we welcome you into our midst  
we call upon you to hallow this time:**

**that we may know your blessing  
and you may know our devotion;**

**that we may know your presence  
and you may know our worship;**

**that we may know your will  
and you may know our willingness;**

**that we may know you in the silence  
and you may know us in our praise.  
Amen.**

**RESPONSE #188** *Jesus Loves Me!*

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND REFLECTION**

**Gracious and loving God, awaken us this  
hour to the glory of your presence in our  
midst. Shine among us in such a way that  
the darkness without and within may be  
pushed back, such that we might truly see  
what is real. Enable us to behold the  
world as you created it to be, as you  
created us to be. Empower us to move  
from darkness to light, from sin to new  
life. May your light within us shine  
through into our worship this day, as in all  
our days. This we pray in the name of  
Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.**

(time for silent prayers and reflection)

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

—from 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

*Christ said, "My grace is sufficient for you,  
my power is made perfect in weakness."  
We can boast gladly about our  
weaknesses, so that Christ's power will  
strengthen us even in sin, hardship,  
or persecution.*

Children of God, hear this:  
God's grace is abundant!  
With our Lord Jesus, we walk in  
confidence and peace, knowing that God's  
mercy is more than enough to forgive,  
heal, and reconcile us to God and to each  
other.

**Thanks be to God!**

## PASSING THE PEACE

**HYMN #775** *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me*

**SCRIPTURE READINGS** John 15:12-21  
Matthew 5:10-12

**MESSAGE** Learning to See as God Sees:  
Blessed Are the Persecuted—  
the Prophets and Practitioners of  
Justice

**HYMN #314** *Christ Be Our Light*

**THANKS AND BLESSINGS FOR JONNA**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S  
PRAYER**

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your  
name,  
your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory  
now and forever. Amen.*

**HYMN #353** *MY Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

## **Reflection questions and action invitations:**

1. *Given that Christians in the United States are on the margins (not the center) of the persecuted church, how can we follow Jesus alongside members of the global church who do suffer for their faith? Ideas include being aware (select a nation or region), praying, and inviting others to join you in awareness and prayer.*
2. *How do we encourage younger generations to nurture and live out their faith when they face an environment (in the Pacific Northwest) where going to church or a Bible study group is seen as outside the norm and may be criticized?*
3. *Learn about one place where Christians are reviled or threatened for their faith and pray. See Open Doors or Voice of the Martyrs.  
<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/> or  
<https://www.persecution.com/>*