



BIRMINGHAM FIRST
A UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
...gathered here for good.™

Prelude

Choral

Joseph Jongen

***Hymn #400**

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

***Call To Worship**

Leader: Before we ever thought to seek God, grace was already seeking us.

People: We come to rest in a love we did not earn.

Leader: We come with hands clenched tight around old hurts.

People: Today we open our hands to God.

Leader: The grievances we hold cannot dim the light of God. They only keep us from seeing it.

People: Open our eyes to the Christ in every face, even the faces that have hurt us.

Leader: Mercy has already set us free. Let us go free, and let others go free.

People: Let us worship the God whose mercy is without end.

***Response #393**

Spirit of the Living God

Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall a-fresh on me.

Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall a-fresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall a-fresh on me.

Welcome and Announcements

Baptism (11:00 am)

Congregational Response

With God's help we will proclaim the good news and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround these persons and families with a community of love and forgiveness, that they may grow in their service to others. We will pray for them, that they may become true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life.

The Response (all singing)

I was there to hear your boding cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.

Anthem

Matin
Chancel Choir

Matthew Armstrong

The morning sun reveals a shining ray.
The singing birds announce the promise of a new day.
Earth awakes in silence, Alleluia.

Each blossom opens with the grace of God,
and every tree displays the strength of His mighty rod.
Majesty and beauty, Alleluia.

The Father's handiwork springs forth anew,
and every creature joins the joyous Allelu.
Praising the Creator, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Pastoral prayer

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Offertory Invitation

Offertory

We Believe
(The Apostle's Creed)
Chancel Choir

John Purifoy

We believe in God, the Father, Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and was born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and buried.
He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again and
ascended into heaven. He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, and the world-wide Church,
the communion of all the saints, the forgiveness of every sin,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

***Doxology #94**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer of Dedication

Hymn #389

Freely, Freely

Scripture

Matthew 18: 21-35 NIV

Message

No Ledger

Rev. Chad Oyer

***Hymn #384**

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

Grand Chorus

Theodore Dubois



The Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Louise Sechler by her friends: Peggy Dufault, John and Brenda Hile, Mel and Libby Rowe, Janet Henke, and Faye and George Miller.

The Mission Candle is lit to the glory of God and in prayer for the children of our church, that they may be surrounded by God's love, guidance, and protection throughout the school year.



FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Today in Fellowship Hall

- All-Church BBQ is today at 5:30 p.m. in the CLC. Be sure to RSVP or sign up to host a table today.
- Equal Exchange Fair Trade Sale: Shop fair trade coffee, tea, and chocolate. QR code payment is now available! Every purchase supports fair trade and organic farming around the world.
- Sunday Morning Greeters: Stop by the kiosk to sign up to greet, enjoy a complimentary chocolate, and order a name badge if you need one.
- Rummage Sale for Missions: Sign up to volunteer for the October 4–9 sale.
- Fall Food & Supply Drive: Pick up a donation bag at the Hunger Ministry table today and return it filled next Sunday, September 27.
- Circuit Rider Bookstore: Stop by today to pick up your copy of Theo of Golden, then join Pastor Chad for a book discussion on Sunday, September 27, at 6:30 p.m. in the bookstore.
- Pickleball with a Purpose Silent Auction: Stop by the Hunger Ministry table to check out the silent auction items and sign up to bid. Choose from gift cards, local specialty gifts, salon and nail services, pickleball equipment, drop-in play passes, and more, all supporting our Hunger Ministry.

Thank You, Blood Donors!

Thank you to everyone who rolled up their sleeves for our Blood Drive on Tuesday! We collected 27 whole blood donations, 5 double red donations, and 1 platelet donation for a total of 38 units, just three units shy of our goal of 41. We are grateful to everyone who donated, volunteered, and helped make the drive a success. Our next blood drive is Tuesday, December 8.

Don't miss next Sunday, September 27

Join us at the 9:30 a.m. worship service for Choir Dedication Sunday, when singers of all ages come together to fill the Sanctuary with music and praise. We will celebrate the many voices that enrich our worship throughout the year and dedicate our choirs, their music, and their ministry to the glory of God.

Hands On Mission Sunday is next week - an opportunity to put faith into action through hands-on service. Opportunities include making blankets for Samaritans, assembling meal kits and lunches, and sorting donations for the Redford Brightmoor Initiative. There is also an After the Storm work team, meeting at 12:30 p.m. in the Birmingham First South Parking Lot, to assist Detroit residents continuing to recover from flooding. If you would like to carpool to Redford Brightmoor, meet at Berkley First at 11:00 a.m.

Pray for Our Children This School Year

Children and Family Ministries invites you to pray for one of our children throughout the school year. Pick up a prayer card and pray for that child's safety, well-being, blessings, and growing faith. More than 800 prayer cards are available in the narthex, Main Office, and at the Welcome Desk, so feel free to take more than one or share with family and friends. Place your card somewhere you'll see it often as a reminder to lift that child in prayer throughout the year.

High School Bible Study Begins September 23

High school students are invited to join us for a new Bible study meeting on Wednesday nights from 8:15-9:30 PM. We'll be exploring the Gospel of Mark together as we discover who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him. Boys will meet in The Pit, and girls will meet in the CLC Lounge. Bring a friend and come ready for great conversation and grow in faith! Reach out to Mary Deal at mdeal@fumcbirmingham.org with any questions.

College Care Packets: Get One or Help Make One

As a new school year begins, so does a Birmingham First tradition that has been caring for our college students for at least 28 years! Students and parents should send a current mailing address to cschulte@fumcbirmingham.org by October 4, even if it hasn't changed. Did you receive a College Care Packet in years past? Now is your chance to help continue the tradition! Volunteers are needed to donate small items or help assemble packets on October 11 at 10:30 a.m. in the Martin Room. To help, contact Sue Smith at sue.smith@beachcom.net or 248-730-3040.

Sock-It-To-Me September

Throughout September, help support our neighbors experiencing homelessness through NOAH at Central UMC. We are collecting new men's socks in white, black, or gray, men's and women's underwear in sizes M-3XL, and T-shirts in sizes M-3XL. Please prioritize quality over quantity when donating. Items may be dropped off throughout the month in the collection bin near the Welcome Desk or in the CLC.

New Monthly Prayer Group

Join us for a new opportunity to gather in prayer on the first Sunday of each month from 10:35-10:55 a.m. in the Ward Library, Room 105. Meeting between worship services makes it easy for those attending either service to participate. Our first gathering is Sunday, October 4. Questions? Contact Judy Lowery at 248-792-7821.

Need to Reserve a Room or Space for a church-sponsored meeting or event? Please use our online Facility Request Form, or email Kate Wilcox at calendar@fumcbirmingham.org. A link to the Facility Request Form can always be found in the footer section of our website.

BULLETIN COVER

This week's window represents one of the Twelve Spiritual Acts of Mercy: Freeing the Enslaved. It embodies the following sentiment: God's mercy meets us in the very place where sin tries to hold us captive. When guilt whispers that we are too far gone, mercy speaks a better word: we are not beyond the reach of God's love. The chains of sin are powerful, but they are not stronger than the cross. Through Christ, mercy forgives what we could never undo, and grace gives us strength to walk in a new way. We are no longer defined by shame, failure, or fear. We are held by a Savior who breaks every chain and calls us beloved, redeemed, and free.

[located in the Sanctuary east wall, north window, far right tracery]

For more information about Birmingham First, or to make an online donation, please visit our website at www.gatheredhereforgood.org, or scan the QR code with your cell phone's camera.

Rev. Dr. Charles S. G. Boayue, Jr., Senior Pastor
Rev. Chad Oyer, Senior Associate Pastor
Rev. Elizabeth Hurd, Associate Pastor
Casey Proch, Executive Director Worship, Music & Operations
Doris Hall, Organist

Rev. Gary Haller, Bishop Laurie Haller,
Rev. Dr. John E. Harnish, & Rev. Dr. William A. Ritter,
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