

THE
United Church
OF THE **San Juans**



ELEVENTH SUNDAY
AFTER
PENTECOST
AUGUST 9, 2026

MEDITATION

“God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.”

Psalm 46:1

“You press on in faith not because you’ve tested Jesus and found that he lived up to all the hype and not because Jesus has enabled you yourself to do something quite grand and eye-catching.

No, you press on because you believe Jesus when, through the Spirit, you hear him say,
‘Chin up! It is I! Don’t be afraid!’”

Scott Hoeze

Eternal father, strong to save, Whose arm does bind the restless wave, Who bids the mighty ocean deep, Its own appointed limits keep; O hear us when we cry to Thee, For those in peril on the sea.

ELW 756

At the outset of this day, we place our lives in your strong hands. Before the end of this day, do newness among us in the very places where we are tired in fear, we are exhausted in guilt, we are spent in anxiety.

Walter Brueggemann “Prayers for a Privileged People”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tim Spangler

PRELUDE

Instrumental

Ron and Dee James

CALL TO WORSHIP

Tim Spangler

Leader: We gather in the name of our gracious Parent, who loves us always and who calls us beloved children.

People: We come to offer our worship and praise.

Leader: We gather in the name of the Son, who breaks down the barriers of hostility and unites us in a single body.

People: We come in love to foster a community filled with hope.

Leader: We gather in the name of the Holy Spirit, who inspires us toward true peace and joy.

People: We come humbly seeking the peace that only Your Spirit can give. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

Tim Spangler

God of the wind and waves, in the chaotic turbulence of our lives, come to us as on the seething, heaving of the sea. Stir us to faithfulness that we may be constant in our praise keeping our eyes upon Jesus who saves us from our propensity to lose faith. This we pray in His holy name. Amen.

WELCOMING SONG*

Eternal Father, Strong to Save
(William Whiting, words; John B. Dykes, music)

Congregation

Hymn No. 74

All Verses

For Moses writes that the law's way of making a person right with God requires obedience to all of its commands. But faith's way of getting right with God says, "Don't say in your heart, 'Who will go up to heaven?' (to bring Christ down to earth). And don't say, 'Who will go down to the place of the dead?' (to bring Christ back to life again)." In fact, it says, "The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart." And that message is the very message about faith that we preach:

If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

When Peace Like a River

UCSJ Choir

(Horatio G. Spafford, words; Philip P. Bliss, music)

*When peace like a river, attendeth my way
When sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well, with my soul*

*It is well (it is well)
With my soul (with my soul)
It is well, it is well with my soul*

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come
Let this blest assurance control
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate
And hath shed His own blood for my soul*

*It is well (it is well)
With my soul (with my soul)
It is well, it is well with my soul*

*My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part but the whole
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, o my soul!*

*It is well (it is well)
With my soul (with my soul)
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

SCRIPTURE READING**Jesus Walks on Water - Matthew 14:22-33**

Rev. Vera E. Guebert Steward

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, while he dispersed the crowds. And after he sent the crowds away, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.

Meanwhile the boat, already far from land, was taking a beating from the waves because the wind was against it. As the night was ending, [c] Jesus came to them walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the water they were terrified and said, "It's a ghost!" and cried out with fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them: "Have courage! It is I. Do not be afraid."

Peter said to him, "Lord, if it is you, order me to come to you on the water." So he said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat, walked on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind he became afraid. And starting to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" When they went up into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON**Don't Look Down**

Rev. Vera E. Guebert Steward

RESPONSIVE SONG**On Eagle's Wings**

Congregation

*(Michael Joncas)***Hymn No. 438****Verses 1 and 3****RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE WITH OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

Rev. Vera E. Guebert Steward

*Thank you for your continued support of the church and our mission.***PRAYER OF DEDICATION****DOXOLOGY***

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Tim Spangler and Rev. Vera E. Guebert Steward

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 sin, as we forgive those who sin 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 SONG***Blessed Assurance**

Congregation

*(Fanny J. Crosby, words; Phoebe P. Knapp, music)***Hymn No. 426****All Verses****CLOSING PRAYER**

Tim Spangler

Most Holy God: Blessed by your gracious Word, filled with strength from singing with one, powerful voice, and encouraged to keep our eyes on Jesus, we enter the world to help others know of your abundant grace and overwhelming love. Guide our hearts with hope for the week that lies ahead. We pray this by the power of the Holy Spirit and in Jesus name. Amen.

POSTLUDE***Instrumental***

Ron and Dee James

CHARGE AND BLESSING

Rev. Vera E. Guebert Steward

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***Indicates we stand - if it is comfortable**

Reverend Vera Guebert-Steward

My name is Vera Guebert-Steward. I was ordained to Word and Sacrament ministry in 1997 and since then I have only served three ministries in Colorado. My latest “gig” was as Pastor of Evergreen Lutheran Church in Evergreen, Colorado. I had the privilege to be with that wonderful congregation for 20 years.

I retired at the end of June 2021. Since then I’ve done 4 stints, months at a time, at congregations who needed a bridge Pastor (a Pastor who serves a congregation while they are waiting either for an Interim Pastor or a full time Pastor). My husband Mark is always happy when I finish a stint so that I can retire all over again. We love to travel so not working allows us the opportunity to see much of our country and some of the world.

I have had a blessed life and very rewarding years of ministry. Can’t imagine what else I could have done with my life that would provide me such deep satisfaction and profound joy. Marriage and Ministry have made my life complete.

I am delighted and honored to be with you today. Thanks for the privilege to lead you in worship.

OUR MISSION

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that *respects the dignity and integrity* of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.

WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA ~ THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ~ THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



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