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Reverend Jim Harper III, Pastor

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## June 26, 2016 Sixth Sunday After Pentecost

### OPENING OF WORSHIP

*Prelude*

*Jesus Calls Us*

William H. Jude

**\*Opening Words of Worship** (Responsively)

A kind word opens a closed flower.

**A soul-deep prayer lifts the clouds.**

A generous gift loosens hardened hearts.

**A quiet deed catches another's attention.**

A heart-felt forgiveness releases new possibilities.

**Each act of love, each measure of care**

Weaves another strand in God's Kingdom

**And causes the heart to sing.**

~ Larry J. Peacock, Water Words 3 (Fall 1991).

**\*Opening Song** (Printed)

***In the Midst of New Dimensions***

**\*Opening Prayer** (Responsively)

Source of all light, Creator of all heavens,  
before the vastness of the universe we stand in awe.

Remembering the miracles of creation,  
those that happened long ago, like the birth of the world,  
and those that happen every day, like the birth of a child,  
we cannot comprehend Your marvels.

Surrounded by life's mysteries, giving thanks for  
the knowledge You share and the resources You provide,  
we turn to You in worship and praise.

**Giver of all life, reveal Yourself in our worship.  
As Your Spirit breathes life into all that lives, blow among  
us now, that we might be refreshed and enlivened.  
Grant us hearts to worship and voices to sing Your praise.  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

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**\*Gloria Patri** (Unison)

Henry W. Greatorex (From Red Hymnal #623)

**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, Amen.**

**\*Welcome to Our Guest(s)**

*After you fill out a Guest Card, please place it in the offertory plate later in the service.*

*Greet one another and pass along the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*You may say, "Peace be with you." The response is "And also with you."*

***Celebrating Our Lives and Faith Together***

# SHARING OF GOD'S STORY

## *Scriptures of the Day*

### **Luke 9:51-62**

#### **Jesus Sets Out for Jerusalem**

<sup>51</sup> As the time approached when Jesus was to be taken up into heaven, he determined to go to Jerusalem. <sup>52</sup> He sent messengers on ahead of him. Along the way, they entered a Samaritan village to prepare for his arrival, <sup>53</sup> but the Samaritan villagers refused to welcome him because he was determined to go to Jerusalem. <sup>54</sup> When the disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to consume them?" <sup>55</sup> But Jesus turned and spoke sternly to them, <sup>56</sup> and they went on to another village.

#### **Following Jesus**

<sup>57</sup> As Jesus and his disciples traveled along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." <sup>58</sup> Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and the birds in the sky have nests, but the Human One has no place to lay his head."

<sup>59</sup> Then Jesus said to someone else, "Follow me." He replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." <sup>60</sup> Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead. But you go and spread the news of God's kingdom."

<sup>61</sup> Someone else said to Jesus, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say good-bye to those in my house." <sup>62</sup> Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand on the plow and looks back is fit for God's kingdom."

~ Scripture Reading from the Common English Bible (CEB)

**Luke 9:51-62 ~ Cotton Patch Gospel of Luke**

51. Now when the days for his arrest approached, he set his heart on going to Atlanta. He sent the arrangements committee on ahead, and on the way they stopped in a black community to find accommodations. But they refused to accept Jesus' party, because there were white people in it.

When Jim and Jack saw this, they said, "Sir, do you want us to give them the 'fire-from-heaven' treatment and bump 'em off?" But Jesus turned and scolded them, and they went on to another town.

57. While they were going along the way, somebody said to him, "I'll live your life, regardless of where it takes me." 58. Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the son of man has nowhere to hang his hat."

Then he said to another, "Share my life." "Okay," he said, "but let me first discharge my family obligations. "Jesus told him, "Let the people of the world care for themselves, but you, you spend your time promoting the God Movement."

Still another said, "I will share your life, sir, but let me first work things out with my relatives." To him Jesus replied, "No man who commits himself to a course of action, and then keeps looking for a way out of it, is fit material for the God Movement."

~ Excerpt From: Clarence Jordan. *Cotton Patch Gospel: Luke and Acts*. iBooks. <https://itun.es/us/2-6Rz.1>"

**Meditation**

**Are We Traveling Together & Are We Traveling Forward?**

# PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## *Song of Prayer*

### ***Precious Lord, Take My Hand***

Thomas A. Dorsey  
Eva Morse, Vocalist

## *Pastoral Prayer*

### ***The Prayer of Our Savior #426*** (Unison)

#### ***The Lord's Prayer***

Albert Hay Malotte

## SHARING OF OUR GIFTS AND GOD'S GIFTS

### ***Call to Give*** (Responsively)

God invites each of us to become members of the Team —  
Members of the Team...  
who share unselfishly;  
who love creatively;  
who speak out loudly against injustice;  
who work tirelessly;  
who give generously.

God is inviting you and me, at this moment,  
to suit up and enter the playing field faithfully.  
God is inviting us to be faithful members of God's Team.

Amen.

**Amen.**

**Offertory**

***I Surrender All***

Lyndell Leatherman

**\*Doxology** (Unison)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise God and Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication*** (Unison)

**God, You are the Creator who creates us,  
the Redeemer who redeems us,  
and the Spirit who fills us with hope.  
May we and our gifts be instruments  
fit to create and perpetuate Godly Moment  
and Godly Movements of Your design here on earth.  
Amen.**

## **CLOSING OF WORSHIP**

**\*Closing Hymn #461**

***He Leadeth Me***

**\*Closing Words of Worship** (Responsively)

Our worship has ended,  
But now our service begins!  
Go from this place for you  
and I are the body of Christ  
and the whole world awaits us;  
So live passionately, and love faithfully,

and celebrate every moment of your life  
from now until the Finale.

Our God of relentless grace goes with us!

Amen.

**Amen.**

~ Adapted from a prayer written by The Rev. Michael S. Piazza

**Postlude**

***Lift High the Cross***

Lani Smith

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***Time with your Children and the Bible this Week***

**CHILDREN'S SERMON**

**Luke 9:51-62 — Don't Look Back by Lois Parker Edstrom**

Object needed: Pictures of Canada Geese. Pictures available online at:

<http://www.nature.ca/notebooks/english/cdngoose.htm>

or

<https://www.google.com/#q=pictures+of+canadian+geese>

Have you ever noticed wild geese flying in a v-shaped formation? They do that because it is the most efficient way for them to travel. The goose at the tip of the vee feels the wind's force the most, while the others are more protected. When the lead goose gets tired from flying in the foremost position, another goose moves in to take a turn.

Wild geese, like many other types of birds, migrate. They fly to warmer climates when the temperature drops, snow covers the land and the lakes freeze over. They fly back to northern locations as the temperatures begin to get warmer. They migrate so they will be in a place that provides them with adequate food and good nesting areas. Birds have an internal clock that tells them when to start their

migration, and they have amazing ways to stay on course. They use their eyes to check for landmarks like rivers and mountain ranges. They navigate by watching the position of the stars and sun. Some birds even have tiny grains of a mineral (magnetite) in their heads that allows them to navigate by monitoring the earth's magnetic field.

Migrating birds must eat to build up fat in their bodies so they will have energy for the long journey. Once they start their migration, they do not look back. All their effort is focused on getting to their destination.

When Jesus came to live on earth, he had a purpose. All his energy was directed toward God's plan. He did not look back, but did what was necessary to reach his destination. He counsels us to do the same.

The Bible tells us that as Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem, he told a man to, "Follow me!" (9:59). Once we have set our course to follow Jesus, we need to be committed to our faith and do what is necessary to be the person God wants us to be. Like migrating birds we must stay on course and focus on our destination.

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