

Prairieland Parish

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.  
May we together experience the presence of God

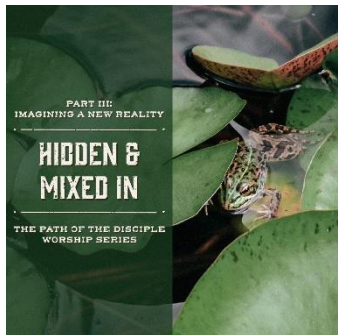
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**We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord**

**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Announcements – Joys/Concerns**



**Opening Meditation**

Hebrews 11:1 reminds us that faith “is the conviction of things not seen.” Not seen? Like a treasure hidden in a field, or like yeast mixed in the flour, hidden and mixed in. That’s how grace works.

So how do we find it and how do we celebrate it?

By telling the stories, by pointing it out. Glory sightings, some call them. Sharing with the whole body the moments of joy and grace that we experience day by day.

Often, our prayer time is one of petitions, requesting more of the Spirit in our lives or in the lives of those we love or the world as a whole. An important and necessary part of our ongoing prayer life, to be sure. But we can also give thanks and praise for all that has and is happening in our lives of faith.

So, today as we gather. Let create this time to be a time of celebration, and let us ask together, “How do we tell the story of a hidden grace or the elusive kingdom?”

Come Let us worship our Lord!

**A Call to Worship**

We come to worship the Triune God who creates, redeems, and sustains us all.

**We come to worship God who never leaves us and yet whose purposes often seem hidden.**

As the bulb hides the flower, as the seed hides the tree, as the cocoon hides the butterfly, so too does God bring forth life even when we cannot see it.

**We gather today to learn how to watch, wait, and anticipate the season when God’s unrevealed work will come into the open.**

As silence gives way to song, as night gives way to dawn, as the past flows through the present into the future, so too does God tirelessly persist in bringing about the abundant life of the kingdom of heaven.

**We gather today to learn how to join in God's dance as partners who prepare for the season when God's unrevealed work comes into the open.**

As our end meets our beginning, as our time meets infinity, as our doubt meets our believing, so too does God meet our brokenness with persevering love, unfolding a new reality of flourishing for all creation.

**We gather today to learn how to love as God loves so that we may be part of bringing God's unrevealed work into the open.**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Holy God, remind us that we are loved when we find ourselves unlovable. Remind us that there is hope when all we see around us makes us despair. Remind us that you sent the Prince of Peace when war and violence overwhelm. Remind us that you are the merciful judge when injustice seems to prevail. Remind us that you give us all we need to do your work in the world. Remind us that you give us grace so that we can be your people. We confess our doubt, and trust in your love. Amen.**

### **Praise Hymn UMH #141 "Children of the Heavenly Father"**

*Author: Carolina Sandell (1855)*

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**1 Children of the heav'nly Father  
safely in his bosom gather;  
nestling bird nor star in heaven  
such a refuge e'er was given.**

**2 God his own doth tend and nourish;  
in his holy courts they flourish.  
From all evil things he spares them;  
in his mighty arms he bears them.**

**3 Neither life nor death shall ever  
from the Lord his children sever;  
unto them his grace he showeth,  
and their sorrows all he knoweth.**

**4 Though he giveth or he taketh,  
God his children ne'er forsaketh;  
his the loving purpose solely  
to preserve them pure and holy.**

**Gospel Reading..... Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 (NRSV)**

### **The Parable of the Mustard Seed**

31 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; 32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

### **The Parable of the Yeast**

33 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with[a] three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

### **Three Parables**

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46 on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; 48 when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

### **Treasures New and Old**

51 "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." 52 And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

This is the Word of God, for the people of God, **Thanks be to God!**

### **Children's Sermon**

#### **Faith Hymn UMH #144 "This Is My Father's World"**

*Author: Maltbie D. Babcock (1901)*

*Copyright: Public Domain*

**1 This is my Father's world,  
And to my listening ears  
All nature sings, and round me rings  
The music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world:  
I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas--  
His hand the wonders wrought.**

**2 This is my Father's world:  
The birds their carols raise,  
The morning light, the lily white,  
Declare their Maker's praise.  
This is my Father's world:  
He shines in all that's fair;  
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass,  
He speaks to me everywhere.**

**3 This is my Father's world:**

**O let me ne'er forget  
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,  
God is the Ruler yet.  
This is my Father's world:  
Why should my heart be sad?  
The Lord is King: let the heavens ring!  
God reigns; let earth be glad!**

### **Message**

#### **PRAYER OF PETITION**

O God, teach us not to despise small things.  
Remind us that the kingdom of heaven is like a tiny mustard seed.  
Turn our attention to the small things that bless others.  
You have planted seeds of great potential in our souls.  
Help us develop our potential so that you and others can depend on it.  
Turn our attention to what is small but potent.  
O God, you have entrusted us with gifts and graces that can bless many people.  
Help us not to overlook the smallest ability.  
O God, you have placed the destiny of the kingdom of heaven inside of us.  
Turn our attention to the small things that this congregation can do to make a tremendous difference in human lives. We come to you this day with praise and thanksgiving in our hearts as we join together in the prayer your Son taught us to pray, Our Father...

#### **Offertory/Doxology/Offertory Prayer**

*God of all blessings, Jesus inspired us through his teaching to see your kingdom as a place where small things can have a mighty impact: a tiny mustard seed planted, or a bit of yeast mixed into the flour. We ask you this day to bless the gifts we offer, so that they may have a powerful impact when used according to your purposes. Bless us that we might see glimpses of your kingdom through our giving and grow in generosity in the process. In name of Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, we pray. Amen. (Matt 13:31-33, 44-52)*

#### **Departing Hymn UMH #672 "God Be With you till We Meet Again" (verses 1 & 4)**

*Author: Jeremiah E. Rankin (1880)  
Composer: William G. Tomer (1880)*

**1. God be with you till we meet again;  
by his counsels guide, uphold you,  
with his sheep securely fold you;  
God be with you till we meet again.**

#### **Refrain:**

**Till we meet, till we meet,  
till we meet at Jesus' feet;  
till we meet, till we meet,  
God be with you till we meet again.**

**4. God be with you till we meet again;  
keep love's banner floating o'er you,**

**smite death's threatening wave before you;  
God be with you till we meet again.  
(Refrain)**

### **SENDING FORTH**

Go forth today ready to catch glimpses of God's never-ending, unstoppable, and always-present love at work in the world. And when that love feels hidden and distant, breathe deep and remember: unrevealed does not mean inactive. Amen.

### **Postlude**