



# Sunday Worship

**First United Methodist Church of Riverside**  
4845 Brockton Avenue, Riverside, CA 92506

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## Order of Worship

**September 14, 2025 10 am**

**Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER!**

\*Please stand as you are comfortable.

**PRELUDE:** "Shall We Gather at the River?" by Dale Wood / Robert Phillips, Organist

### **\*TRINITY BELLS**

**\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN: #158** "Come, Christians, Join to Sing" by Christian Henry Bateman / Kris Lovekin, Hymn Leader

#### **Verse 1**

**Come, Christians, join to sing:**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**loud praise to Christ our King:**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Let all, with heart and voice,**

**before his throne rejoice;**

**praise is his gracious choice.**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

#### **Verse 2**

**Come, lift your hearts on high:**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Let praises fill the sky:**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**He is our guide and friend;**

**to us he'll condescend;**

**his love shall never end:**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

### **Verse 3**

**Praise yet the Lord again:**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Life shall not end the strain:**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**On heaven's blissful shore**

**his goodness we'll adore,**

**singing forevermore:**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (Psalm 14) / Loretta Cudney, Liturgist

(Liturgist) "There is no God!" people say.

**(Congregation) "I can do what I like!" everyone thinks.**

(L) "Who cares about God?" questioners ask.

**(C) "I'm here for me; I don't answer to anyone!" the foolish think.**

(L) God looks for faith.

**(C) Will God find it?**

(L) God looks for care of the poor.

**(C) Will we provide it?**

(L) God looks for love.

**(All) Will God find it in us? Amen!**

**WELCOME** / The Rev. J. T. Kim, Pastor

### **\*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

(Pastor) Friends, God rejoices in you. For you were lost but now are found. Let us share the peace of Christ and rejoice that each and every one of us is highly treasured. Peace be with you!

**(All) Peace be with you!**

### **THE CHURCH AT PRAYER**

- Sharing of Joys and Concerns (I)
- Thanksgiving Prayer for the Life of Gaddiel Gwira (1963-2025)
- "Back-To-Church" Video (4 of 5) / Media Team
- Sharing of Joys and Concerns (II)

**PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE (UNISON)** (Psalm 14, Luke 15)

**O God of heaven and earth, bless us with your mercy and grace. Enter our hearts and make us holy. Be our Shepherd and guide us in your ways, that we might not wander alone. Hear our cries and gather us to yourself, that we may be one with each other, through the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**PRAYER RESPONSE:** "Amen" (Dresden)

**SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Timothy 1:12-17** (NRSVue) / Liturgist

*Gratitude for Mercy*

<sup>12</sup>I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful and appointed me to his service, <sup>13</sup>even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, <sup>14</sup>and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. <sup>16</sup>But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience as an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. <sup>17</sup>To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

(L) The word of God for the people of God.

**(Congregation) Thanks be to God!**

**ANTHEM:** "Adoration," music by J.S. Bach and Charles Gounod / The Aldersgate Chorale, directed by Yvonne Flagg

**\*GOSPEL READING: Luke 15:11-32** (NRSVue) / Liturgist

*The Parable of the Prodigal Son and His Brother*

<sup>11</sup>Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.' So he divided his assets between them. <sup>13</sup>A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to his senses he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! <sup>18</sup>I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, <sup>24</sup>for this son

of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> "Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup> He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has got him back safe and sound.' <sup>28</sup> Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' <sup>31</sup> Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

(Liturgist) This is the Gospel of Christ!

(All) Glory to you, O Christ!

**SERMON: "BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS TO CONNECTION"** (Sermon series, *"Life Is Better Together,"* #2 of 5) / The Rev. J. T. Kim, Pastor

**\*HYMN OF DEDICATION: #2056** "God Is So Good" (Traditional)

**Verse 1**

God is so good,  
God is so good,  
God is so good,  
God's so good to me.

**Verse 2**

God cares for me,  
God cares for me,  
God cares for me,  
God's so good to me.

**Verse 3**

God loves me so,  
God loves me so,  
God loves me so,  
God's so good to me.

**Verse 4**

God is so good,  
God is so good,  
God is so good,  
God's so good to me.

## **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING** / Liturgist

(Liturgist) Sometimes we offer what we think is best, only to realize that it isn't what God desires us to give. May we offer God now our very selves: our energy, our resources, and our time. Let us reach out to the vulnerable and ask God to enable this church to be a place of refuge, help, justice, love, and hospitality.

**(All) Amen!**

(Liturgist) I invite the ushers to receive our offerings.

**OFFERTORY:** "Trio on 'Spanish Hymn'" by Roy Brunner

**\*DOXOLOGY: #95** "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" by Thomas Ken

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

**\*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** (Amos 8, Psalm 52, Luke 10) / **All** (Led by Liturgist)

**Most loving God, most welcoming God, we bring these gifts to you, knowing that you will use them according to your purposes. We dedicate ourselves to your way, to challenge the worldly values that are so prevalent in your world today. Amen.**

**LAITY BLESSINGS** / Kris Lovekin, Lay Leader

**\*SENDING HYMN: #723** "Shall We Gather at the River" by Robert Lowry

**1. Shall we gather at the river,  
where bright angel feet have trod,  
with its crystal tide forever  
flowing by the throne of God?**

**Refrain:**

**Yes, we'll gather at the river,  
the beautiful, the beautiful river;  
gather with the saints at the river  
that flows by the throne of God.**

**2. On the margin of the river,  
washing up its silver spray,  
we will walk and worship ever,  
all the happy golden day. (Refrain)**

**3. Ere we reach the shining river,  
lay we every burden down;  
grace our spirits will deliver,  
and provide a robe and crown. (Refrain)**

**4. Soon we'll reach the shining river,  
soon our pilgrimage will cease;  
soon our happy hearts will quiver  
with the melody of peace. (Refrain)**

## \*BENEDICTION

**POSTLUDE:** "Postlude" by Wayne L. Wold

*We are called to pray for:*

Gitanjali Spencer, Claudia Weber-Timmerman, Bob Finch, Liz Jennings, Donna Woodard, Emilie Gorham, George Callow, Bill Ashworth, Calvin Narayan and Shail Singh, Norma Nelson, Ed Lamers, John and Susan Logger, Michael Thompson, Mack Davis, Bill and Helen Nuchols, Pat Beals, Melissa Williams, Mary Herrmann, Jim Ashworth, Mary Boon, Melva Cooke, Marge Wolter, Michelle Arguelles, Robert and Benita Roberts, De'Ann McWilliams, Jazz Roberts' family, Gaddiel Gwira's family, our families, our neighbors, our country, our world

### **First United Methodist Church of Riverside**

**4845 Brockton Avenue, Riverside, CA**

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**Phone Live: (877) 775-5136**

**New Members Welcoming Sunday: September 28th**

## **THIS WEEK AT FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

### **Sunday, September 14**

- Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost; Worship; Pastor Kim's sermon: **"BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS TO CONNECTION"** (Sermon Series, **"Life Is Better Together,"** #2 of 5) (Sanctuary) – 10 am
- Children's Sunday School (Club Ark and Nursery) – 10:15 am
- Youth Worship (Youth Room) – 10:15 am
- UMM Luncheon – Program: "King High Remembers" (Fellowship Hall) – 11 am
- U.P.L.I.F.T. Youth Sunday Dinner (Youth Room) – 5 pm

### **Monday, September 15**

- Finance Committee Meeting (Zoom) – 5:30 pm

### **Tuesday, September 16**

- Staff Meeting (Conference Room) – 10 am
- Allegro Ringers rehearsal (Mary's Kitchen) – 7 pm

### **Wednesday, September 17**

- UWF "Walk About" (off campus) – 7:30 am
- Parents Morning Out (Wednesdays – Room 2 at FUMPS) – 9 am – 12 pm
- The Response rehearsal (Sanctuary) – 6:30 pm

### **Thursday, September 18**

- UWF Bible Study: "Signs and Secrets of the Messiah" by Rabbi Jason Sobel (Zoom) – 6:45 pm
- Aldersgate Chorale rehearsal (Music Room) – 7 pm

### **Friday, September 19**

- Men's Prayer Breakfast (Mary's Kitchen) – 7 am

### **Saturday, September 20**

- East District (UWF) Annual Celebration (off-site) – 9 am to 2 pm

### **Sunday, September 21**

- Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost; Family Sunday with The Response; Pastor Kim's Sermon: **"THE POWER OF BIBLICAL FELLOWSHIP"** (Sermon Series, **"Life Is Better Together,"** #3 of 5) (Sanctuary) – 10 am
- Children's Sunday School (Club Ark and Nursery) – 10:15 am
- Faith and Fellowship "Crazy Casserole Potluck!" Bring your favorite and try another's (Fellowship Hall) – 11:00 am
- English Country Dance (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays) (Fellowship Hall) – 3 pm

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