

Hillsdale First United Methodist Church | July 26, 2026

- **IN-PERSON 9:30 am** in the Sanctuary
- **LIVESTREAM** online at **9:30 am on Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/HillsdaleFirstUMC>
- on **YouTube** <https://www.youtube.com/@hillsdalefirstumc-45nmanni2>
- on **our church website** <https://hillsdalefirstumc.com/>

Please stand as you are able during parts of the service indicated with an asterisk. * | Congregation responses indicated in **bold print**.

Gathering

Prelude

When Morning Gilds the Skies

D.R. Johnson

Greeting

*Call to Worship

With a song of joy, I enter the gates of God's house.

With shouts of praise, I proclaim the wonders of our Lord.

He makes the lame to walk, and gives new sight to the blind;

he gives strength to the weary, and the desperate find hope in him;

the barren womb brings forth life, and the graves give up their dead;

**at his command, the darkness surrenders to the day, the earth shakes off its slumber,
and its music rises to the heavens.**

So I shall add my song to the music of the spheres,

and join with all creation in celebrating the goodness of our God.

*Hymn of Praise

When Morning Gilds the Skies

185

1. When morning gilds the skies
my heart awaking cries:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Alike at work and prayer,
to Jesus I repair:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

2. The night becomes as day
when from the heart we say:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
The powers of darkness fear
when this sweet chant they hear:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

3. Let all the earth around
ring joyous with the sound:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
In heaven's eternal bliss
the loveliest strain is this:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

4. Be this, while life is mine,
my canticle divine:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Be this th'eternal song
through all the ages long:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

Words: Katholisches Gesangbuch, Vienna, ca. 1774. Translator (stanzas 1, 2, 4): Edward Caswall (1854).
Translator (stanza 3): Robert S. Bridges (1899). Music: Public Domain

*Prayer of the Day

Lord of light, your power and glory are beyond human understanding.

Our loftiest thoughts and most sublime sentiments cannot begin to sound the depths of your love and holiness.

We cannot worship you as you deserve.

Human language fails to convey the wonder that frustrates the tongues of angels.

*But help us, Lord, to worship you to the best of our abilities,
turning our minds and hearts wholly to the praise of your majesty.*

**Inspire in us humble awe at the Mystery of your perfect power,
and profound gratitude for depths of divine love.**

In the name of Christ our Lord we pray, Amen.

*Gloria Patri

***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.***

Words: Lesser Doxology, 3rd-4th cent. Music: Henry W. Greatorex, 1851. Public Domain

Proclamation

Old Testament Reading – Genesis 29:15-28 ¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?” ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah’s eyes were weak, but Rachel was graceful and beautiful. ¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.” ¹⁹ Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me.” ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her. ²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed.” ²² So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. ²³ But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. ²⁴ (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) ²⁵ When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?” ²⁶ Laban said, “This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” ²⁸ Jacob did so and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

Psalm 103:1-12

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.

² Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits—

³ who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,

⁴ who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

⁵ who satisfies you with good as long as you live
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

⁶ The Lord works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.

⁷ He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.

⁸ The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

⁹ He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger forever.

¹⁰ He does not deal with us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love
toward those who fear him;

¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.

Sung Response

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

139, vs 2-3

**Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigning
bears thee on eagle's wings, e'er in his keeping maintaining.
God's care enfolds all, whose true good he upholds.
Hast thou not known his sustaining?**

**Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
who with his love doth befriend thee.**

Words: Joachim Neander, 1680; Sts. 1, 3, 5 Trans. By Catherine Winkworth, 1863. St. 2 by Paul Schilling, st. 4 by Rupert E. Davies, 1983 (Ps. 103:1-6, 150)
Trans. Sts. 2 and 4 © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House. Music: Erneuereten Gesangbuch, 1665; harm. by William Sterndale Bennet, 1864; Music is Public Domain
All rights reserved. Reprinted under CCLI #3134300 and streamed under CCLI #20153811

Epistle Reading – Romans 8:26-39 ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Viola Solo

Prelude from Suite No. 2

J.S. Bach

Gospel Reading – Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 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.” ³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.” 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.

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.”

Response to the Scripture *This is the Word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God!*

Message

Parables of the Kingdom

Ralph Bieganek, Guest Speaker

Response

***Hymn of Response**

You Are the Seed

583

1. You are the seed that will grow a new sprout; you're a star that will shine in the night;
you are the yeast and a small grain of salt, a beacon to glow in the dark.
You are the dawn that will bring a new day; you're the wheat that will bear golden grain;
you are a sting and a soft, gentle touch, my witnesses where'er you go.
Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all,
messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love.
Be, my friends, a loyal witness, from the dead I arose;
"Lo, I'll be with you forever, till the end of the world."

2. You are the flame that will lighten the dark, sending sparkles of hope, faith, and love;
you are the shepherds to lead the whole world through valleys and pastures of peace.
You are the friends that I chose for myself, the word that I want to proclaim.
You are the new kingdom built on a rock where justice and truth always reign.
Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all,
messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love.
Be, my friends, a loyal witness, from the dead I arose;
"Lo, I'll be with you forever, till the end of the world."

3. You are the life that will nurture the plant; you're the waves in a turbulent sea;
yesterday's yeast is beginning to rise, a new loaf of bread it will yield.
There is no place for a city to hide, nor a mountain can cover its might;
may your good deeds show a world in despair a path that will lead all to God.
Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all,
messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love.
Be, my friends, a loyal witness, from the dead I arose;
"Lo, I'll be with you forever, till the end of the world."

Words: Cesaro Gabarian, 1979; trans. by Raquel Guetierrez-Achon. Music: Cesaro Gabarian, 1979; harm. by Skinner Chavez-Melo, 1987 © 1979 Ediciones Paulinas; trans. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House; harm. © 1987 Skinner Chavez-Melo. All Rights Reserved. Reprinted and streamed under One License #A-723218

Intercessory Prayer

...God of love, **Lord, hear our prayers.**
...God of peace, **Lord, hear our prayers.**
...God of mercy, **Lord, hear our prayers.**
...God of hope, **Lord, hear our prayers.**
...God of grace, **Lord, hear our prayers.**
...God of compassion, **Lord, hear our prayers.**

Responsively

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, for ever. Amen.**

Sung Prayer Response

O Lord, Hear Our Prayer

2200

***O Lord, hear our prayer. O Lord, hear our prayer. When we call, answer us.
O Lord, hear our prayer. O Lord, hear our prayer. Come and listen to us.***

Words and Music by Jacques Berthier (Words Ps. 102:1-2). © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé, admin. by GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted and streamed under One License #A-723218

Offertory and Church Family News and Notes

*We invite you to sign the attendance pads and pass them to others in your pew.
An offering plate is located at the back of the sanctuary for you to use for your giving.*

*Doxology 95

***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.***

Words: Thomas Ken, Music: Attr. to Louis Bourgeois, Public Domain

*Prayer of Dedication

*Gracious Lord,
every good gift and every perfect gift come from you.
Your generous hand provides for all the creatures of the earth.
We do not give because you have need of our offerings.
We give to follow your example of compassion and sacrifice.
May our offering be blessed, and may it bring blessing to our neighbors.
And may we be blessed with a deeper connection to your work,
and a closer walk with you.
In the name of Jesus our Lord, Amen.*

Sending

*Hymn

O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee

430

1. O Master, let me walk with thee
in lowly paths of service free;
tell me thy secret; help me bear
the strain of toil, the fret of care.
2. Help me the slow of heart to move
by some clear, winning word of love;
teach me the wayward feet to stay,
and guide them in the homeward way.

3. Teach me thy patience; still with thee
in closer, dearer company,
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
in trust that triumphs over wrong;
4. In hope that sends a shining ray
far down the future's broadening way,
in peace that only thou canst give,
with thee, O Master, let me live.

Words by Washington Gladden, 1879. Music by H. Percy Smith, 1874. Public Domain

*Prayer of Dismissal

*Blessed Lord, be with us now as we leave this place of sanctuary
to share your love and life with our neighbors.
May your Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path on every step of our journey.
In Jesus' name, amen.*

Postlude

O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee

J. Pethel

*After the pastor and liturgist have recessed and the altar candles are extinguished,
you may stay seated or quietly leave your seats during the postlude.*

Hillsdale First United Methodist Church

45 N. Manning St., Hillsdale, MI 49242 | 517-437-3681 | www.hillsdalefirstumc.com facebook.com/HillsdaleFirstUMC

Ralph Bieganek, Guest Speaker
Calista Brunett, Music Director
Tana Trombly, Liturgist