

**Welcome to Niskayuna Reformed Church**  
**July 23, 2023**  
**Eight Sunday of Pentecost**  
**Rev. Dr. Sherri & Rev. Michael Meyer-Veen**

**The Approach to God**

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

Welcome and announcements

Prelude Here is Love, Vast as the Ocean Tracey Craig McKibben

Votum Sharon Rice-Herbst  
Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Amen

The Call to Worship: Isaiah 44:6-8

Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and God's Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:

I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.

**Who is like the LORD? Let them proclaim it,  
let them declare and set it forth before our God.**

**Who has announced from of old the things to come?**

**Let them tell us what is yet to be.**

Do not fear, or be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it?

**We are God's witnesses!**

**Is there any god besides the LORD?**

**There is no other rock; we know not one.**

\*Hymn of Worship "O Worship the King All Glorious Above"  
The Hymnbook, 26

\*The Salutation and People's Amen: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Call to Confession:

Trusting in God's mercy and forgiveness,

let us confess our failings,  
and acknowledge our part in the pain of the world.

Prayer of Confession (Responsive):

Before God,  
with the people of God,  
I confess to turning away from God  
in the ways I wound my life,  
the lives of others,  
and the life of the world.

**May God forgive you; Christ renew you,  
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.**

Amen.

**Before God,  
with the people of God,  
we confess to turning away from God  
in the ways we wound our lives,  
the lives of others,  
and the life of the world.**

May God forgive you; Christ renew you,  
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.

**Amen.**

**Kyrie Eleison: Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us;  
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Words of Assurance: Romans 10:8-9

“But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your heart,” that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is LORD,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

\*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.***

Special Music

Voluntary on "Slane"

Eugene Butler

### **The Word of God**

Junior Sermon

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading:

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

"God's Garden of Grace"

A Prayer for Blessing Upon the Word

\*Hymn of Worship

"Come, Ye Thankful People, Come"

The Hymnbook, 525

### **The Response of God's People**

The Offering

Offertory Gracious God, You Send Great Blessings (Holy Manna)

Setting by Jacob B. Weber

\*The Doxology 544 and Prayer of Consecration

Prayers of the people and 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

\*Hymn of Worship "O Jesus, I Have Promised"

The Hymnbook, 307

\*The Benediction

\*The Postlude Festive Praise

Lloyd Larson

Please stand if you are able.

Prayer of Confession: The Iona Abbey Worship Book. Wild Goose Publications, 2017.

Cover Art: <https://diocesan.com/modern-day-wheat/>.

## **Announcements**

Ellen is on vacation till July 28. If you have any issues while she is away, please contact Rick Wallace.

Greetings NRC Church Family! We are looking for a few volunteers to help move the items in the Nursery School room in order to do a summer cleaning to help get them ready for the upcoming school year. This is a great way to bless one of the special ministries of our church. After worship on Sunday, August 20th we will be moving half the room for

cleaning and then the next week we will move the other half. Please help us if you are able. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Mike.

The July Mission of the Month collection will be supporting RCA - Global Mission, specifically through missionary work with the Al Amana Centre in Oman. Several RCA missionaries working there have ties to our area. The Al Amana Center is an ecumenical and interfaith organization built upon the legacy of over 130 years of Christians working with their Muslim hosts and neighbors from different faiths represented in Oman. Al Amana Centre provides safe spaces, diverse encounters, and engaging methodologies for people of faith to build sustainable peace.

The Church would like to provide childcare during services for your children 2 years old and younger. To do so we need to know 1) if you would use it and 2) if you are interested in signing up to be on a schedule of childcare providers. This is a great way for our High School kids to earn volunteer hours for the National Honor Society! Please contact Suzi OBrien (at [suzinuke@gmail.com](mailto:suzinuke@gmail.com)) with questions or to let us know if childcare during the service is something you would like to see reinstated.

The Mission and Service Committee is asking the membership to consider volunteering for the Brooks BBQ on Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>. We need help the day of the BBQ, both inside and out. BROWNIES!!! Baking and donating brownies is another great way to help if you can't volunteer the day of the BBQ. If you can volunteer Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, between 2:30 and 6PM, there will be signup sheets for volunteering and baking brownies in the main hall of the Education Building starting the weekend of July 22<sup>nd</sup>. If you are unable to make it into church and would like to volunteer in some way, please call me (Kim Cerone) @ 518-339-7504 or email me at [purdyka@aol.com](mailto:purdyka@aol.com). Please leave your name and contact information, and I will get back to you.

## **Announcements**

### **Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24**

O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

<sup>2</sup>You know when I sit down and when I rise up;

you discern my thoughts from far away.  
<sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.  
<sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O LORD, you know it completely.  
<sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.  
<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.  
<sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?  
<sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.  
<sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
<sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.  
<sup>11</sup> If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and the light around me become night',  
<sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my thoughts.

<sup>24</sup> See if there is any wicked<sup>[a]</sup> way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

### **Matthew 13:24-30,36-43**

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup> but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. <sup>26</sup> So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. <sup>27</sup> And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" <sup>28</sup> He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" <sup>29</sup> But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would

uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.”