



AS WE GATHER: Plants in God's good earth respond to the showers He sends, producing plants for pasture and crops for harvest. In the psalm, David says it is as if "the meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain, they shout and sing together for joy." It is all natural, and so is our producing fruit for God as His Word works through us. That God works through us sinners is all grace; if we but hear the Word and let the Spirit give us understanding, a bountiful harvest will follow. Jesus likens it to seeds producing yields of up to a hundredfold. But we are no mere plants, as Paul points out in the Epistle. Because we have been adopted by our heavenly Father, we are brothers and sisters of Christ, the children of God, calling out to Him, "Abba! Father!" Our growth in faith is indeed by the grace of God, and to Him belongs all the credit for the bountiful harvest He reaps through us.

The pastures of
the wilderness
overflow,
the hills gird
themselves
with joy,
the meadows
clothe themselves
with flocks,
the valleys deck
themselves
with grain,
they shout and
sing together
for joy.

Psalm 65:12-13

Order of Service

HYMN #725 "Children of the Heavenly Father"

Invocation

Confession and Absolution

HYMN #584 "Faith and Truth and Life Bestowing"

Kyrie

HYMN #946 "Glory to God, We Give You Thanks and Praise"

Salutation

Prayer of the Day

Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 55:10-13*

Epistle *Romans 8:12-17*

HYMN #578 "Thy Strong Word" sts. 1-3

Holy Gospel *Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23*

HYMN #578 "Thy Strong Word" sts. 4-6

SERMON "Thy Strong Word" *Text: The Old Testament Reading*

Confession of Faith *Explanation of the Third Article*

Prayer of the Church

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

HYMN #921 "On What Has Now Been Sown"