

## Worship Resources - *The Work of Compassion*

**Guest Preacher: Audrey DeCoursey**

**26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Pentecost, Year A,**

**26<sup>th</sup> November, 2023**

**Ezekiel 34:11-16 NRSV and Matthew 25:31-40 NSRV**

**Prelude** (video)

**[The Love of God](#)**

played by church musician Annie Center,  
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**Opening Music** (video)

**[Better](#)**

Hezekiah Walker New Video

YouTube CCLI Song Number 7065714

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## Welcome / Announcements

**Pass the Peace - video**

played by church musician Annie Center

**Opening Hymn** (Video)

**[Savior, Like A Shepherd Lead Us - 355](#)**

Posted to Youtube by @StrangeLyrics

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## Call to Worship

One: Because El Shaddai shepherds me, my deepest needs are met.

**All: She gives me rest in the green pastures of Her Word.**

One: She leads me beside the still waters of prayerful silence.

**All: She restores me, body and soul. She leads me in the paths of wholeness.**

One: Her rod and staff uphold and guide me.

**All: Even when I walk in the shadow of death, I need fear no evil, for She is with me.**

One: She anoints my head with the oil of Her blessing.

**All: She sets Her table before me in the presence of my inner enemies.**

One: I know that Her goodness and mercy will follow me as long as I live,  
and that I will dwell forever in the house of Her loving presence.

**All: My cup of joy overflows!**

## Invocation

## **Old Testament Reading Ezekiel 34:11-16 NSRV**

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out.

As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.

I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land.

I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God.

I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

### **A Time of Prayer**

#### **Sharing Joys and Concerns**

#### **Pastoral Prayer**

God, help us welcome those who have come to dwell among us.

For all those who have come fleeing oppression and persecution — black, white, brown and yellow: God, help us welcome those who have come to dwell among us.

For those who have come fleeing hardship and hunger: God, help us welcome those who have come to dwell among us.

For those who have come to join loved ones already here: God, help us welcome those who have come to dwell among us. For those who have come seeking freedom and opportunity: God, help us welcome those who have come to dwell among us.

Let us remember the words of Christ, who said “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed

me.” When, Lord, were you a stranger that we welcomed among us? “Truly, as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me” When we welcomed the stranger, we welcomed you, Christ Jesus, in our midst!

Loving God, you call us to create hospitable communities. Help us to overcome any fear and anxiety we may have of those who come from other lands to live among us. Give us the courage and wisdom to create compassionate and just immigration policies. Grant that we may all live together in peace and love. Amen.

**Hymn** (video)

## **[Will You Let Me Be Your Servant](#) - 307**

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## **Gospel Reading     Matthew 25:31-40 NSRV**

‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.

All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats,

and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;

for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,

I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.”

Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?

And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?

And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?”

And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

**Message**

***The Work of Compassion***

Audrey DeCoursey

## Call to Serve

You call us to service; to be your eyes and ears, hands and voice in this, your world. To open our eyes not only to the beauty and love which you create, but the injustice, hate and suffering that humankind generates.

To open our ears not only to the chattering of this coming week, but the searching, fears and questioning of all whom we shall meet.

To open our hands not only to those we choose our lives to share, but in welcome, love and fellowship to all who you draw near.

To open our mouths not only to speak platitudes and simple words, but the truths you lay upon our hearts. Your Word for this, your world. You call us to service, to be your eyes and ears, hands and voice in this, your world.

## A Time for Reflection ~ Great Is Thy Faithfulness

played by church musician Annie Center

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of Grace, you have gifted us with a world of abundance; a land of plenty; a country where all can have enough. We come before you this day to thank you for this prosperity and to repent from our apparent inability to share this wealth.

God, we declare our own complicity in systems that sustain some of us, while forsaking many others. And we come before you to seek your forgiveness, even as we pray for your justice.

Righteous God, you hear the cry of the poor. You listen to those who do without, while so many spend recklessly and our leaders invest the wealth of the nation in instruments of destruction.

Be with us this day Lord. Hear our prayers. Touch our hearts that we may be faithful witnesses and effective voices for justice. God of mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.

### Hymn (video)

### [\*O Worship the King\* - 66](#)

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### Benediction

### Postlude

### **You Are My All In All**

played by church musician Annie Center