



An Open and Affirming Congregation

---

June 14, 2020

Second Sunday after Pentecost

---

## TURNING TOWARD GOD IN A DISORDERED TIME

Prelude

*Cherished Moments*

Welcome

Call to Worship (Responsively):

Isaiah 55:6-7

Seek the Lord while he may be found,  
**call upon him while he is near;**  
let the wicked forsake their way,  
**and the unrighteous their thoughts;**  
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy upon them,  
**and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.**

Opening Prayer (Unison):

**Lord Jesus, in whom there is neither East nor West, neither North nor South, but one community of love throughout the whole wide earth, we come to you in worship for the sharpening of our spiritual senses in ways that hone, help, and heal. Grant us wisdom to learn, courage to confess, humility to change, and love to welcome all for all are yours even if they be unlike us in appearance, experience, or conviction. Amen.**

Hymn:

*Immortal, Invisible*

Prayer of Confession (Unison):

**God only wise, we come before you grateful for our Lord's Parable of the Weeds and the Wheat with its message that the weeds are not pulled before the harvest lest the wheat be damaged in the process. We are grateful for only you, and not we ourselves, know if our thoughts and words, our characters and deeds, are wheat-like or weed-like. We know our actions, but not our sin, the depth of it or the expanse of it or the damage it does. And so we pray with that psalmist of old, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

Pastoral Prayer and 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, for ever. Amen.**

Anthem: *Wade in the Water*  
arr. Mark Hayes, performed by the Barry Robinson Chorus

Scripture Reading: Acts 6:1-7

Sermon: A Text to Help Us Understand Systemic Racism  
*Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food.* Acts 6:1

Hymn: *Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer*

Benediction

Postlude *Blessed Assurance*

---

Today's anthem, "Wade in the Water," arr. Mark Hayes, performed by the Barry Robinson Chorus is an African American Spiritual. A spiritual is a type of religious folksong that is most closely associated with the enslavement of African people in the American South with embedded biblical narratives.

Howard Thurman (1899-1981), in his book, *The Negro Spiritual Speaks of Life and Death*, offers this interpretation of the text from Wade in the Water:

*Wade in the water  
Wade in the water, children,  
Wade in the water  
God's a-going to trouble the water*

"For [the slaves] the 'troubled waters' meant the ups and downs, the vicissitudes of life. Within the context of the 'troubled' waters of life there are healing waters, because God is in the midst of the turmoil." Though African American spirituals were born in the pain, oppression, and struggle of a particular people, they have become songs for all people. Thurman's conclusion is a message for all of us: "Do not shrink from moving confidently out into the choppy seas. Wade in the water, because God is troubling the water."

Scholars have collected and catalogued over 6,000 spirituals which embody the faith and heritage of a people who have encountered the dehumanizing effects of slavery and racism. Through song, African Americans affirm their identity, embrace their cultural differences and demand equal rights in the United States. All of this, with great resiliency and faith.

For more information on African American music and sacred music:

<https://www.npr.org/series/726103231/wade-in-the-water>

---

Rev. Dr. Mark E. Yurs, Pastor  
Dawn Lingard, Organist/Pianist

502 Mark Drive, P.O. Box 930125, Verona, Wisconsin 53593  
608-845-7315 • salemchurchverona.org

