

Sunday, September 13, 2026
Welcome Back Sunday | Blessing of the Bags

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

“Lift Your Light” by Mary McDonald

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Call to Worship

Jane Storrs

Come, beloved of God – young and old, searching and sure, restless and at peace.

We come as God’s children, welcomed and loved.

In this place, no voice is too small, no question too simple, no laugh too loud.

Here, the gifts of every age are cherished and needed.

The good news is proclaimed in God’s words;
and also with crayons, silly songs, snacks, and rest time.

Let us worship together, every generation.

We come together with different abilities and disabilities,
learning in a rainbow of ways and styles.

Let us worship together, with our family of faith.

God gathers us together as beloved children, with joy, with patience, with delight.

We come to worship the One who calls us beloved.

Come, let us worship God together!

***Hymn**

“From All That Dwell Below the Skies”

NCH #27

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Prayer for Illumination

Jane Storrs

Gracious and Welcoming God, we thank you for the joy of gathering together again as a community of faith. As we return to this sacred space, we open our hearts and minds to your living Word. By the power of your Holy Spirit, illuminate these scriptures today. Let your voice rise above the noise of our lives. Ground us in your truth, refresh our spirits, and remind us of who we are in you. May the words we hear inspire us to love deeper, serve bolder, and walk together in unity during this coming season. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Anthem

“Finally Home” by Thomas H. Roehrich

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Scripture

Psalm 103:1-13

Jane Storrs

Blessing of the Bags: *Backpacks, purses, hobby bags, work bags...etc. All are welcome!*

***Hymn**

“This Little Light”

NCH #524

Contributors: African-American Spiritual; Tune: THIS JOY arr. Jeffrey Radford © 1995, Pilgrim Press. The. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under One License #739919-A. All rights reserved.

Sermon

Let YOUR Light Shine!

Rev. Abby Gackenhimer

Music of Reflection

Joys and Concerns

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, forever. Amen.

Prayer Response

“May the Peace of God” by K. Lee Scott

Contributors: K. Lee Scott © 1994 MorningStar Music Publishers. All rights reserved. Streamed with permission under One License #739919-A. All rights reserved. (this song is reported under the title of the service music book Rejoice in the Lord...)

Call to Offering

Offertory

**Doxology Pilgrim Hymnal #515 *[alternative words]*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise Him [God], all creatures here below

Praise Him [God] above, ye heavenly host

Praise Father [Creator], Son [Christ], and Holy Ghost. Amen

*Unison Prayer of Dedication

God, we offer you these gifts, and pray that you would take this offering and turn it into ministry. Use these gifts to transform the world we live in to better reflect the home you have envisioned for us—a home of peace, a home built on the foundation of love.

Gratefully we pray, amen.

*Hymn

“O God, Who Teaches Us to Live”

NCH #359

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Benediction

Benediction Response

“O Lord, Seek Us” by K. Lee Scott

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Postlude

From All That Dwell below the Skies

*Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.**Ps. 117*

Unison

1 From all that dwell be - low the skies let the Cre - a - tor's praise a -
2 E - ter - nal are your mer - cies, God; your truth stands ev - er high and

(Harmony) *(Unison)*

rise; Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Let the Re - deem - er's name be
broad: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Your praise shall sound from shore to

(Harmony)

sung through ev - ery land, by ev - ery tongue. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
shore till suns shall rise and set no more.

(Unison)

lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

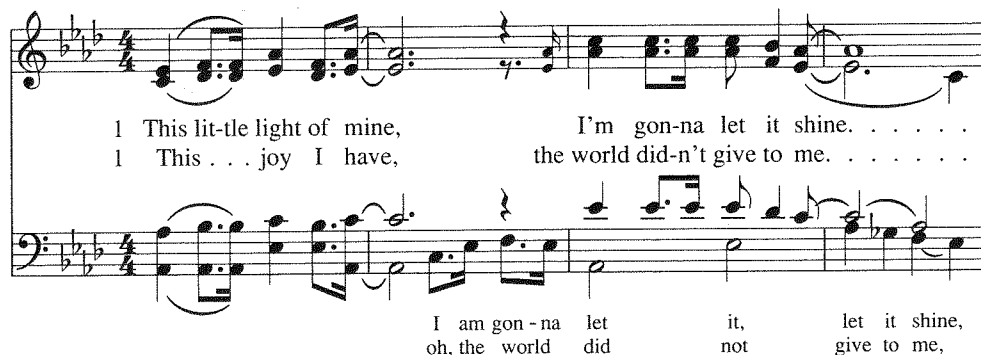
Isaac Watts, author of more than 600 hymns, paraphrased the two verses of Psalm 117 into this two-stanza hymn, which was included in his Psalms of David, 1719. The tune originated in a German Catholic hymnal.

Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN
8.8.4.4.8.8. with alleluias
Geistliche Kirchengesäng, Cologne, 1623
Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

This Little Light/This Joy I Have

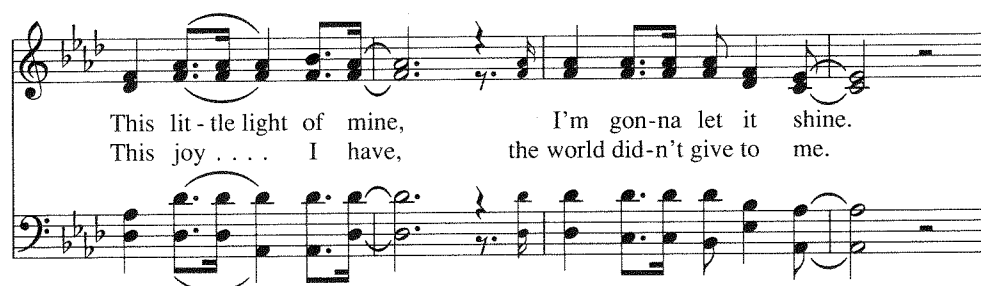
Matt. 5:14-16

African-American spiritual



1 This lit-tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine.
 1 This . . . joy I have, the world did-n't give to me.

I am gon - na let it, let it shine,
 oh, the world did not give to me,

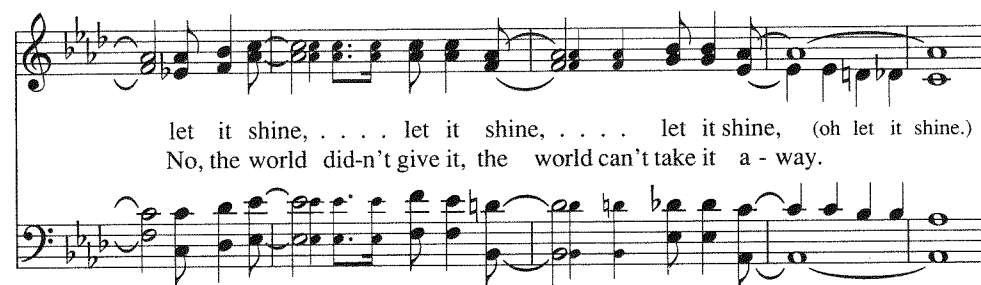


This lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine.
 This joy . . . I have, the world did-n't give to me.



This lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine,
 This . . . joy I have, the world did-n't give to me.

Hal - le-lu - jah,
 Hal - le-lu, the



let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, (oh let it shine.)
 No, the world did-n't give it, the world can't take it a - way.

The texts of these two spirituals may be used interchangeably with the tune This Joy. For an alternate version, this melody may be sung with the accompaniment of "Glory, Glory Hallelujah." A more traditional setting of "This Little Light" is provided with the tune Lattimer.

Tune: THIS JOY Irr.
 African-American spiritual
 Arr. Jeffrey Radford, 1993
 See also LATTIMER

O God, Who Teaches Us to Live

359

Tom Hunter, 1992

1 O God, who teach - es us to live and
 2 For love that wel - comes chil - dren in and
 3 For wis - dom, skills, and con - fi - dence where
 4 For words and num - bers, hopes and dreams that
 5 For all who fol - low teach - ing's call with

guides us on our way, For all the teach - ers
 holds them when they stray, For knowl - edge hearts and
 won - der leads to faith, For those who ask and
 grow from day to day, For in - spi - ra - tion's
 cour - age and with grace To build a fu - ture

in our midst, we give you thanks and praise.
 souls re - ceive, we give you thanks and praise.
 those who hear, we give you thanks and praise.
 mes - sen - gers, we give you thanks and praise.
 for us all, we give you thanks and praise.

United Church of Christ minister Tom Hunter describes himself as a "minstrel" for schools and churches across the United States. This hymn was written "to celebrate and thank teachers in both Sunday and weekday schools because their work shapes the future for us all."

Tune: ST. ANNE C.M.
 William Croft, 1708