

# THE LORD’S DAY EVENING

September 24, 2017  
Six O’clock

## Welcome and Announcements

### Prelude

Heavenly Father, I can't imagine navigating storms, bearing burdens, and handling heartaches without good friends. Thank you for the gift of friendship--for the perspective, refreshment, and hope encouragement you give us through our friends.

Sometimes we're inclined to think, “No one can possibly understand what I’m going through. No one can relate to my feelings and confusion. Nobody's as big of a mess as me.” Those are the times when it’s easy to withdraw into isolation, fall into condemnation, and reach for some ill-chosen medication. That’s when the gift of grace-marked friends becomes especially precious.

These two well-timed words, “Me too,” have often been an elixir of grace, a kiss of mercy--better than an angelic visitation. Thank you for friends who know how to “refresh the hearts of the saints”--including this saint. Thank you for friends who remind me of the truth of the gospel, the love of Jesus, and the bigger story you're always writing.

Thank you for friends who share their lives, and not just their gospel--those who offer tears and not just answers, their brokenness-birthing wisdom, not just mess-fixing formulas. Thank you for friends who can say hard things I need to hear, but in a way I can actually hear those things. Thank you for friends with whom it’s easy to pray and play, eat cheesy nachos and the Lord's Supper, watch a sunset and seek the Son.

Father, these cherished friendships turn my heart heavenward. They simply remind me that the foundation and fountain of all good friendship is found in you. Thank you for befriending us in the gospel. It's settling and centering to hear Jesus say to us, “I no longer call you servants; I call you friends” (John 15:15).

What wondrous love is this, indeed? “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13). Hallelujah, what a salvation! Hallelujah, what a Savior! So very Amen I pray, in Jesus’ most glorious and gracious name. (*365 Everyday Prayers*, Scotty Smith)

**Call to Worship** ..... John 15:12-17

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

**Invocation** .....Rev. Knox Baird

**Hymn 498** .....Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners

**Responsive Reading** ..... 1 John 4:13-21

MINISTER: By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

**PEOPLE: Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.**

MINISTER: By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

**PEOPLE: We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.**

**ALL: And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.**

**Hymn 116** .....For the Beauty of the Earth  
(*Children will be dismissed to 4 Corners on last verse.*)

**Prayer of Illumination**

**Scripture Reading** .....1 Samuel 18:1-4; 1 Samuel 19:1-7;  
1 Samuel 20:1-17, 41-42; 1 Samuel 23:15-18

**Sermon**..... Rev. Knox Baird  
*“David and Jonathan: A Covenant Friendship”*

**Hymn 359** .....Blest Be the Tie That Binds

**Benediction**

**Postlude**



*September 24, 2017*  
*6:00 p.m.*

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI