**July Worship Theme: Hymn Stories ~ His-Story**

During July we are exploring the stories behind some of our favorite hymns. The hymns we sing each Sunday are testimonies of the Christian faith of the hymnwriters. Have you ever wondered what compelled these musicians to write or compose these beautiful and meaningful songs that have touched so many lives through the years? Many of the hymns and Christian songs we sing were inspired by the life experiences or historical situations of the authors or composers. Each Sunday we will sing and hear the history of hymns that help us to sing our own faith testimonies to His story.

July 4: Celebrating Our Land and Freedom

Opening Hymn: “O Beautiful for Spacious Skies” (“America the Beautiful”)

Words: Katharine Lee Bates Music: “Moterna”: Samuel A. Ward

Communion Hymn: “Let Us Break Bread Together”

 Words & Music: African American Spiritual

Closing Hymn: “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory” (Battle Hymn of the Republic)

Words: Julie Ward Howe Music: American Melody

July 11: Celebrating the Children of God

Opening Hymn: “Jesus Loves Me!”

 Words: Anna B. Warner Music: William B. Bradbury

Closing Hymn: “Children of the Heavenly Father”

Words: Lina Sandell (Carolina Sandell Berg 1832-1903) Music: Swedish folk tune

July 18: Celebrating Faith in Jesus

Opening Hymn: “The Church’s One Foundation”

 Words: Samuel J. Stone, 1839-1900 Music: Samuel S. Wesley, 1810-76

Psalm: “My Shepherd, You Supply My Need”

 Words: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748 Music: North America Traditional

Closing Hymn: “Beautiful Savior”

 Words: Gesangbuch, Munster, 1677; tr. Joseph A. Seiss (1823-1904)

 Music: Silesian folk tune, 19th cent.

July 25: Celebrating Christmas in July

Opening Hymn: “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

 Words: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788 Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847

Sermon Hymn: “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

 Words: James Montgomery, 1771-1854 Music: Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879

Closing Hymn: “Away in a Manger” (“Luther’s Cradle Hymn”)

Words: Anonymous Music: James R. Murray