

**Sunday Worship Service – July 11, 2021**  
**Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

**Prelude** – Joshua Hendricksen

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Moment for Reflection**

**Lighting of the Altar Candles**

**Introduction**

**Prayer of Confession**

Holy one, when we reject the truth, loose our focus on you and return to foolish ways.

**Make us blameless in your eyes.**

When we harbor hurtful thoughts against others for speaking the truth.

**Forgive us, O Holy One.**

For times when we reject your plan to bring all things together in your Son.

**Make us blameless in your eyes.**

You ask us to do your work and be the living body of Christ in this broken world.

**Forgive us, gracious God, when we focus much of our time and effort on making ourselves look good in the eyes of others, instead of serving your children in need.**

**Words of Forgiveness and Assurance**

God, the source of truth and light, in your everlasting compassion and faithful love, you offer the gift of eternal life to all your people.

We are forgiven, loved and free, in the name of + the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Opening Hymn “*For the Beauty of the Earth*” #879**

- 1. For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies,  
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies:**

**Refrain**

Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

2. For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,  
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:

**Refrain**

3. For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,  
for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight:

**Refrain**

4. For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,  
friends on earth and friends above; for all gentle thoughts and mild:

**Refrain****Call to Worship**

The Lord, our God of all spiritual blessings is in our presence.

**We give honor to your glory.**

O God, in your abundant grace you have forgiven us our failures.

**We come to worship today grateful that you have, through Jesus Christ,  
made us blameless in your presence.**

The One who adopted us as children through Jesus Christ is with us  
today.

**Let us worship the Lord.**

**Baptism****Prayer of the Day<sup>1</sup>**

*God of the ages, you have been present with us since the beginning. You have showered us throughout history with the blessings of your love. In this place, at this moment, we join together to praise you, to worship you, and to rejoice in your saving grace. For bringing heaven and earth together in the love of Jesus Christ, we thank you. Empower our voices to proclaim your greatness and the good news of your love for all the earth. Amen.*

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<sup>1</sup> Abingdon, 2015.

**Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14**

*In the reading from Ephesians we hear that in Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.*

The reading according to Ephesians, chapter 1, read from the Message, a paraphrase of the Bible:

3-6 How blessed is God! And what a blessing God is! Praised be the Maker of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has bestowed on us in Christ every spiritual blessing in the heavens! Long before God laid down earth's foundations, God had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of God's love, to be made whole and holy by God's love. Long, long ago God decided to adopt us into God's family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure God took in planning this!) God wanted us to enter into the celebration of God's lavish gift-giving by the hand of Jesus Christ.

7-10 Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, Jesus' blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we're a free people—free of penalties and punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds. And not just barely free, either. Abundantly free! God thought of everything, provided for everything we could possibly need, letting us in on the plans God took such delight in making. God set it all out before us in Christ, a long-range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in Christ, everything in deepest heaven, everything on planet earth.

11-12 It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, God had an eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose God is working out in everything and everyone.

13-14 It's in Christ that you, once you heard the truth and believed it (this Message of your salvation), found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. This down payment from God is the first installment on what's coming, a reminder that we'll get everything God has planned for us, a praising and glorious life. (MSG)

Here ends the reading. **Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.**

**Gospel Acclamation "*Voice of Creation*" (2x)**

**Voice of creation, open our ears to hear your word.**

**Source of salvation, open our hearts to hold your love.**

**Soul's inspiration, open our minds to know your grace.**

**Three in relation, transform our lives with your embrace.**

**Gospel Reading: Mark 6:14-29**

*In the gospel reading we hear that as Jesus and his disciples begin to attract attention, Mark recalls the story of John the Baptist's martyrdom. Like John, Jesus and his disciples will also suffer at the hands of those opposed to the gospel of salvation.*

The holy gospel according to Mark, the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

14 Meanwhile Herod, the ruler of Judea, had heard about Jesus, whose reputation had become widespread. Some people were saying, "John the Baptizer has been raised from the dead, and that is why such miraculous powers are at work in him." 15 Others said, "He is Elijah"; still others, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." 16 When Herod heard of Jesus, he exclaimed, "John, whom I beheaded, has risen from the dead!"

17 Now it was Herod who had ordered John arrested, chained and imprisoned on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, whom Herod had married. 18 For John had told Herod, "It is against the Law for you to have your brother's wife." 19 As for Herodias, she was furious with John and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so. 20 Herod feared John, knowing him to be good and holy, and kept him in custody. When Herod heard John speak he was very much disturbed; yet he was moved by John's words.

21 Herodias had her chance one day when Herod on his birthday held a dinner for the court circle, military officers and leaders of Galilee. 22 When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, this delighted Herod and the guests so much that he told the young woman, "Ask me anything you like and I will give it to you." 23 And Herod swore an oath, "I will give you anything you ask, even half of my entire realm!"

24 She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?"

Herodias replied, "The head of John the Baptizer."

25 The woman hurried back to Herod and made her request: "I want you to give me the head of John the Baptizer on a platter."

26 Herod was deeply distressed by this request, but remembering the oath he swore before the guests, he was reluctant to break his oath to her. 27 So Herod immediately sent one of the bodyguards with orders to bring John's head. The guard beheaded John in prison, 28 then brought the head in on a platter and gave it to the young woman, who gave it to her mother.

29 When John's disciples heard about this, they came and took the body away and laid it in a tomb.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Sermon

### Hymn of the Day "*O Christ the Same*" #760

1. O Christ the same, through all our story's pages,  
our loves and hopes, our failures and our fears;  
eternal Lord, the king of all the ages,  
unchanging still amid the passing years:  
O living Word, the source of all creation,  
who spread the skies, and set the stars ablaze,  
O Christ the same, who wrought our whole salvation,  
we bring our thanks for all our yesterdays.
2. O Christ the same, the friend of sinners, sharing  
our inmost thoughts, the secrets none can hide,  
still as of old upon your body bearing the marks of love,  
in triumph glorified:  
O Son of Man, who stooped for us from heaven,  
O Prince of life, in all your saving pow'r,  
O Christ the same, to whom our hearts are given,  
we bring our thanks for this the present hour.
3. O Christ the same, secure within whose keeping  
our lives and loves, our days and years remain,

our work and rest, our waking and our sleeping,  
 our calm and storm, our pleasure and our pain:  
 O Lord of love, for all our joys and sorrows,  
 for all our hopes, when earth shall fade and flee,  
 O Christ the same, beyond our brief tomorrows,  
 we bring our thanks for all that is to be.

### Prayers of Intercession

Lord's Prayer (*sung*)

### Offering Prayer

### Closing Hymn "Go, My Children, with My Blessing" #543

1. Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.  
 Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.  
 In my love's baptismal river I have made you mine forever.  
 Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.
2. Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.  
 Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.  
 Here you heard my dear Son's story, here you touched him, saw his glory.  
 Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.
3. Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me.  
 Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.  
 Here my Spirit's power filled you, here my tender comfort stilled you.  
 Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free.

### Blessing

Live in peace, inspired by Christ to love and serve. **Thanks be to God!**

### Postlude – Joshua Hendricksen

Sources: Bible passages (except where otherwise indicated) from *The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation*.