

Sunday Worship Service – November 15, 2020

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Prelude – Joshua Hendricksen

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Call to Worship

God calls out: “Come and enter my joy!”

**We gather in thankfulness this day,
as servants of God’s blessings.**

God calls out: “Come, stay awake and be alert!”

**We gather in expectation this day,
as children of God’s light and love.**

God calls out: “Come and share in my happiness!”

We gather in faith this day to worship our God.

Gathering Hymn “O Day of Rest and Gladness” #521 (verses 1,3,4)

1. **O day of rest and gladness, O day of joy and light,
O balm for care and sadness, most beautiful, most bright:
on you the high and lowly, through ages joined in tune,
sing, “Holy, holy, holy,” to the great God triune.**
3. **Today on weary nations the heav’nly manna falls;
to holy convocations the silver trumpet calls,
where gospel light is glowing with pure and radiant beams
and living water flowing with soul refreshing streams.**
4. **New graces ever gaining from this our day of rest,
we reach the rest remaining to spirits of the blest.
We sing to you our praises, O Father, Spirit, Son;
the Church its voice upraises to you, blest Three in One.**

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we are aware of the ways our faith falls short.

In our pride, we wait too long to ask for your help.

In our self-absorption, we ask that our will, not your will, be done.

Even when you rescue us from our misery,

we quickly return to our careless ways.

**Aware of these failures, we turn our eyes to you,
trusting in your love and mercy. Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness

Friends, you do not live in the night or belong to the dark.
 You have obtained life and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.
 In him, you belong to the day.

Hymn of Praise “God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending” #678

1. **God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store:
 nature’s wonder, Jesus’ wisdom, costly cross, grave’s shattered door,
 gifted by you, we turn to you, off’ring up ourselves in praise;
 thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.**
2. **Skills and time are ours for pressing
 toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
 all at peace in health and freedom,
 races joined, the Church made one.
 Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone;
 born with talents, make us servants fit to answer at your throne.**
3. **Treasure, too, you have entrusted,
 gain through pow’rs your grace conferred;
 ours to use for home and kindred, and to spread the gospel word.
 Open wide our hands in sharing, as we heed Christ’s ageless call,
 healing, teaching, and reclaiming, serving you by loving all.**

Prayer of the Day

**You, O God, are our dwelling-place from generation to generation,
 our shield from anguish and distress.
 You arm us as children of light with the hope of salvation,
 and you protect us by your love.
 Give us grace to build up and encourage one another,
 as we seek wisdom and abundant life in the strength of your Word
 and the assurance of your Spirit. Amen.**

Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

We don’t need to write to you about the timing and dates, brothers and sisters. You know very well that the day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night. When they are saying, “There is peace and security,” at that time sudden destruction will attack them, like labor pains start with a pregnant woman, and they definitely won’t escape. But you aren’t in darkness, brothers and sisters, so the day won’t catch you by surprise like a

thief. All of you are children of light and children of the day. We don't belong to night or darkness. So then, let's not sleep like the others, but let's stay awake and stay sober. People who sleep sleep at night, and people who get drunk get drunk at night. Since we belong to the day, let's stay sober, wearing faithfulness and love as a piece of armor that protects our body and the hope of salvation as a helmet. God didn't intend for us to suffer his wrath but rather to possess salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with him. So continue encouraging each other and building each other up, just like you are doing already.

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

Gospel Acclamation “God’s Word is Our Great Heritage” #509

**God’s word is our great heritage and shall be ours forever;
to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief endeavor.
Through life it guides our way; in death it is our stay,
Lord, grant while time shall last your church may hold it fast
throughout all generations.**

Gospel Reading: Matthew 25:14-30

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 25th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who was leaving on a trip. He called his servants and handed his possessions over to them. To one he gave five valuable coins, and to another he gave two, and to another he gave one. He gave to each servant according to that servant’s ability. Then he left on his journey.

“After the man left, the servant who had five valuable coins took them and went to work doing business with them. He gained five more. In the same way, the one who had two valuable coins gained two more. But the servant who had received the one valuable coin dug a hole in the ground and buried his master’s money.

“Now after a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The one who had received five valuable coins came forward with five additional coins. He said, ‘Master, you gave me five valuable coins. Look, I’ve gained five more.’

“His master replied, ‘Excellent! You are a good and faithful servant! You’ve been faithful over a little. I’ll put you in charge of much. Come, celebrate with me.’

“The second servant also came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two valuable coins. Look, I’ve gained two more.’

“His master replied, ‘Well done! You are a good and faithful servant. You’ve been faithful over a little. I’ll put you in charge of much. Come, celebrate with me.’

“Now the one who had received one valuable coin came and said, ‘Master, I knew that you are a hard man. You harvest grain where you haven’t sown. You gather crops where you haven’t spread seed. So I was afraid. And I hid my valuable coin in the ground. Here, you have what’s yours.’

“His master replied, ‘You evil and lazy servant! You knew that I harvest grain where I haven’t sown and that I gather crops where I haven’t spread seed? In that case, you should have turned my money over to the bankers so that when I returned, you could give me what belonged to me with interest. Therefore, take from him the valuable coin and give it to the one who has ten coins. Those who have much will receive more, and they will have more than they need. But as for those who don’t have much, even the little bit they have will be taken away from them. Now take the worthless servant and throw him out into the farthest darkness.’

“People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth.”

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

Sermon: A Hidden Opportunity

Hymn “O God We Yearn for Safety”¹ (sung to #820)

1. **O God, we yearn for safety; we long to be secure.
Yet faithful, loving service is what you value more.
You give us what is needed; you love, forgive and save.
Then, sending us to serve you, you call us to be brave.**
2. **You give to some ten talents – to others, two or three;
To some you give one blessing to manage faithfully.
For you, O Lord, are loving and don't demand success;
You daily call your people to lives of faithfulness.**

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3. **You give your church the gospel — Good news for us to share.
You give us great compassion for neighbors everywhere.
You give us skills to serve you and loving work to do.
We're blest to be a blessing, and called to risk for you.**
4. **O God, it seems much safer to live from day to day,
Protecting what you lend us and hiding it away.
Yet all these gifts can't flourish when hidden in the ground;
When we are brave to share them your blessings will abound.**

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

After each petition:
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Offering Prayer

Giver of gifts, you know the true value of the talents you bestow upon us.
 Open our eyes to see the possibilities they hold for our world.
 Transform the gifts we offer this day into signs of our commitment
 to bring light and love to every task we do.
 Transform our understanding of our potential, that we may shine forth:
 as children of light, as people of faith, and as bearers of hope,
 through Christ our Lord, who loves and strengthens us. Amen.

Closing Song *“Lord of Light”* #688 (verses 1,2,4)

1. **Lord of light, your name outshining all the stars and suns of space,
 use our talents in your kingdom as the servants of your grace;
 use us to fulfill your purpose in the gift of Christ your Son.
 Father, as in highest heaven, so on earth your will be done.**
2. **By the toil of faithful workers in some far outlying field,
 by the courage where the radiance of the cross is still revealed,
 by the victories of meekness, through reproach and suffering won:
 Father, as in highest heaven, so on earth your will be done.**
4. **By the prayers of faithful watchers, never silent day or night;
 by the cross of Jesus, bringing peace to all and healing light;
 by the love that passes knowledge, making all your children one:
 Father, as in highest heaven, so on earth your will be done.**

Benediction

Go forth as children of light, as children of the day,
 Go into the world, knowing that God’s gifts
 of faith, love, and hope shield you
 as you share those gifts with others.
 Beloved, go forth to share in God’s joy. Amen.

Commission

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

Postlude – Joshua Hendricksen