

Sunday Worship Service – Oct 18, 2020

Prelude – Joshua Hendricksen

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Moment of Reflection: *Prepare our hearts and minds for worship*

Introduction*

Jesus' encounters with the Pharisees challenge us to engage God's teachings more fully and to live God's teachings more completely. The point of God's teachings is that God is our center and our source. As we remember and live this truth, returning our first fruits to God and doing God's work in the world flows naturally. As we remember and live this truth, we yearn for deeper connection with God.

Call to Worship¹

Though there are mayors, premiers, and prime ministers,
God is the Lord of all life.

In God we live and move and have our being.

God desires our faithfulness and our service.

**We reach out to others with the same kind of love
with which God has touched our lives.**

Come, let us worship the Lord who is always with us.

Let us praise God who walks daily by our side.

Opening Hymn "*God Is Here!*" #526

- God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer,
may we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts
wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.**

¹ Nancy C. Townley, posted on the [Ministry Matters](#) website.

2. **Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace; here are table, font and pulpit; here the cross has central place. Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech, here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.**
3. **Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold; here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old. Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore what it means in daily living to believe and to adore.**
4. **Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt, keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out. Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive; we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!**

Prayer of Confession*

O God, you have shown us your ways and promised to walk with us. Through your Son, Jesus, you have given us an example to follow, that we might be imitators of your divine love. Lover of justice, forgive us when we forget whose image we bear. May the deep convictions of our faith be displayed through acts of kindness, compassion and mercy, in your holy name we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance*

Our God is a God who forgives, showing kindness and compassion to all. When we call on God, God hears and answers us. We are forgiven, in the name of the + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer of the Day*

Holy One, send your word, like rain in the desert, to satisfy our thirsty souls. Nurture us and strengthen our spirits, that we may be centered on your ways and empowered by your Holy Spirit. Inspire us that our actions may be just and our words be true reflections of your love and grace, as we bear your image in the world. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Psalm 96:1-9²

Sing to God a new song! Sing to God all the earth!

Sing to God, bless God's name! Proclaim God's salvation day after day.

Declare God's glory among the nations, God's marvels to every people.

God is great, most worthy of praise, God is to be revered above all gods.

The gods of the nations are nothing,

they don't exist – but God created the universe.

In God's presence are splendor and majesty,

in God's sanctuary power and beauty.

Pay tribute to god, you tribes of the people;

pay tribute to the God of glory and power.

Pay tribute to the glorious name of God;

bring out the offering, and carry it into god's courts.

Worship God, majestic in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 – D (lectern)

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

From Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy. To the Thessalonians' church that is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and peace to all of you.

²We always thank God for all of you when we mention you constantly in our prayers. ³This is because we remember your work that comes from faith, your effort that comes from love, and your perseverance that comes from hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father. ⁴Brothers and sisters, you are loved by God, and we know that he has chosen you. ⁵We know this because our good news didn't come to you just in speech but also with power and the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know as well as we do what kind of people we were when we were with you, which was for your sake. ⁶You became imitators of us and of the Lord when you accepted the message that came from the Holy

² *The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation*

Spirit with joy in spite of great suffering. ⁷ As a result you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ The message about the Lord rang out from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia but in every place. The news about your faithfulness to God has spread so that we don't even need to mention it. ⁹ People tell us about what sort of welcome we had from you and how you turned to God from idols. As a result, you are serving the living and true God, ¹⁰ and you are waiting for his Son from heaven. His Son is Jesus, who is the one he raised from the dead and who is the one who will rescue us from the coming wrath.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 22:15-22 – L (pulpit)

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 22nd chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then the Pharisees met together to find a way to trap Jesus in his words. ¹⁶ They sent their disciples, along with the supporters of Herod, to him. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are genuine and that you teach God's way as it really is. We know that you are not swayed by people's opinions, because you don't show favoritism. ¹⁷ So tell us what you think: Does the Law allow people to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

¹⁸ Knowing their evil motives, Jesus replied, "Why do you test me, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used to pay the tax." And they brought him a denarion. ²⁰ "Whose image and inscription is this?" he asked.

²¹ "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." ²² When they heard this they were astonished, and they departed.

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

Sermon: *Bearing God's Image*

Hymn of the Day "Give to God what is God's own."³(sung to tune of ELWB #445)

1. **"Is it lawful to pay taxes when they prop up Caesar's rule?"
So some people asked of Jesus, wanting him to seem a fool.
Saying "no" would be sedition; saying "yes" would be a sin.
Jesus changed the conversation, calling them to look within.**

2. **"Find a tax coin in your treasure; see the image that it bears.
Give to Caesar what is Caesar's. (Give to rulers what is theirs.)"
Yet he pressed on with his message; "Give to God what is God's own."
We who bear our Maker's image worship God and God alone.**

3. **Lord of all, in every nation, may your word be understood —
That we have an obligation to support the common good.
May our taxes, all together, fund our working hand in hand
So that life will be made better for all people in this land.**

4. **Still, we also hear your teaching: "Give to God what God is due."
May no ruler — overreaching — try to take the place of you.
May we listen to your message, may we honor what is yours;
May we, living in your image, seek your kingdom that endures.**

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.**

³ Text Copyright © 2014 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Prayers of Intercession⁴

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

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*

Generous God, these offerings represent only a part of what we owe you.
 Our currency bears the imprint of worldly powers,
 but we bear the holy image you inscribe on our hearts.
 All that we have and all that we are belong to you, O God.
 As we give these gifts and ourselves freely to you,
 may others know your goodness and your love,
 through the offerings of our lives. Amen

Closing Hymn *"God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending"* #678

(sung to tune of ELWB #836)

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.**

⁴ <https://blogs.elca.org/worship/2887/>

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.**

Blessing*

Strengthened by the presence of God,
we go forth in hope.

Guided by the teachings of Christ,
we go forth to serve.

Led by the power of the Holy Spirit,
we go forth to love.

In the name of the + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Commission

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 Common English Bible (CEB).

Those parts of this worship service marked with an asterisk (*) are adapted from:

The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020, 2017, 2014 Compilation © 2019, 2016, 2013
Abingdon Press. Used by permission.