

Sunday Worship Service – September 5, 2021

Prelude – Joshua Hendricksen

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Call to Worship ¹

God is here in this place, calling all God's children
to worship with their whole lives.

**We come, bringing our faith made alive
through works of love and mercy and liberation.**

Come, trusting that God will always respond to our need.

We come in trust and joy and faith and deeds.

Gathering Hymn “Healer of Our Every Ill” #612

**Refrain: Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.**

- 1. You who know our fears and sadness,
grace us with your peace and gladness;
Spirit of all comfort, fill our hearts. (Refrain)**
- 2. In the pain and joy beholding
how your grace is still unfolding,
give us all your vision, God of love. (Refrain)**
- 3. Give us strength to love each other,
ev'ry sister, ev'ry brother;
Spirit of all kindness, be our guide. (Refrain)**
- 4. You who know each thought and feeling,
teach us all your way of healing;
Spirit of compassion, fill each heart. (Refrain)**

Prayer of Confession ²

**God of us all, your grace and mercy fill our lives every day.
We give you our thanks and praise.**

Too often, we forget or ignore your presence in our lives.

¹ from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2015 Edition*, edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu. Copyright © 2014 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

² from *Ministry Matters* website. Used by permission.

**Too often, we treat your children unequally,
deeming some more important than others.
Too often, we forget that our daily actions need to reflect our faith.
Forgive us, and lead us to embrace abundant life
for all of your children.
In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.**

(Silence for reflection)

Words of Assurance

Brothers and Sisters, Christ, the great Healer,
brings healing and wholeness to our lives.
In the name of Christ, you are forgiven.
In the name of Christ, you are forgiven. Amen.

Hymn of Praise “Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” #886

1. **Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer’s praise,
the glories of my God and king, the triumphs of his grace!**
2. **My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad the honors of your name.**
3. **The name of Jesus charms our fears, and bids our sorrows cease,
sings music in the sinner’s ears, brings life and health and peace.**
4. **He speaks, and list’ning to his voice, new life the dead receive,
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice, the humble poor believe.**
5. **Look unto him, your Savior own O fallen human race!
Look and be saved through faith alone, be justified by grace!**

Prayer of the Day ³

**Creating, loving, and healing God, we gather together this day,
coming from different places and situations in life.
In faith, we fall before you in praise and worship,
desiring to be fed with your love and healed with your grace.
Fill us with wonder, O God,
that we may proclaim your good news for all to hear.
Open up our ears, our mouths, and our hearts this day.
In Christ Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.**

³ from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2015 Edition*, edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu. Copyright © 2014 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

Psalm 146 ⁴

Our God keeps faith for - ev - er! Hal - le - lu - jah!

O my soul, praise the Holy One!

**I will praise the Holy One all my life,
sing to my God while I have my being. (Refrain)**

Trust not in rulers,
**or in any mortals,
who have no power to save.**
When they breathe their last,
they return to the dust.

On that day their very thoughts perish.

Happy are those whose helper is Jacob's God,
**whose hope is in the holy One, their God,
Creator of heaven, earth, and sea,
and of all that is in them.**

The Holy One keeps faith forever,
does what is right and just for the oppressed,
gives bread to the hungry,
sets the prisoners free.

**The Holy One gives sight to the blind,
raises up those who are worn down. (Refrain)**

The Holy One loves the just and faithful,
**cares for the stranger,
gives aid to the orphan and widow,
but destroys the way of the wicked.**

The Holy One reigns forever,
Zion's God for all generations. (Refrain)

Scripture Reading: James 2:1–10, 14-17

My brothers and sisters, when you show favoritism you deny the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has been resurrected in glory. Imagine two people coming into your meeting. One has a gold ring and fine clothes, while the other is poor, dressed in filthy rags. Then suppose that you were to take

⁴ from Songs for the Holy One: Psalms & Refrains for Worship. Copyright © 2004 Thomas Barnett and Donald Patriquin. Usage covered under Christ Lutheran Church's LicenSing licence.

special notice of the one wearing fine clothes, saying, “Here’s an excellent place. Sit here.” But to the poor person you say, “Stand over there”; or, “Here, sit at my feet.” Wouldn’t you have shown favoritism among yourselves and become evil-minded judges?

My dear brothers and sisters, listen! Hasn’t God chosen those who are poor by worldly standards to be rich in terms of faith? Hasn’t God chosen the poor as heirs of the kingdom he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor. Don’t the wealthy make life difficult for you? Aren’t they the ones who drag you into court? Aren’t they the ones who insult the good name spoken over you at your baptism?

You do well when you really fulfill the royal law found in scripture, Love your neighbor as yourself. But when you show favoritism, you are committing a sin, and by that same law you are exposed as a lawbreaker. Anyone who tries to keep all of the Law but fails at one point is guilty of failing to keep all of it.

My brothers and sisters, what good is it if people say they have faith but do nothing to show it? Claiming to have faith can’t save anyone, can it? Imagine a brother or sister who is naked and never has enough food to eat. What if one of you said, “Go in peace! Stay warm! Have a nice meal!”? What good is it if you don’t actually give them what their body needs? In the same way, faith is dead when it doesn’t result in faithful activity.

Here ends the reading.

Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

Gospel Acclamation “*Word of God, Come Down on Earth*” #510 (verses 1, 3)

1. **Word of God, come down on earth,
living rain from heav’n descending;
touch our hearts and bring to birth
faith and hope and love unending.
Word almighty, we revere you;
Word made flesh, we long to hear you.**

3. **Word that speaks God’s tender love,
one with God beyond all telling,
Word that sends us from above
God the Spirit, with us dwelling,
Word of truth, to all truth lead us,
Word of life, with one bread feed us.**

Gospel Reading: Mark 7:24-37

The holy gospel according to Mark, the 7th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus left that place and went into the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know that he had entered a house, but he couldn't hide. In fact, a woman whose young daughter was possessed by an unclean spirit heard about him right away. She came and fell at his feet. The woman was Greek, Syrophenician by birth. She begged Jesus to throw the demon out of her daughter. He responded, "The children have to be fed first. It isn't right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

But she answered, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

"Good answer!" he said. "Go on home. The demon has already left your daughter." When she returned to her house, she found the child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

After leaving the region of Tyre, Jesus went through Sidon toward the Galilee Sea through the region of the Ten Cities. Some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly speak, and they begged him to place his hand on the man for healing. Jesus took him away from the crowd by himself and put his fingers in the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. Looking into heaven, Jesus sighed deeply and said, "*Ephphatha*," which means, "Open up." At once, his ears opened, his twisted tongue was released, and he began to speak clearly.

Jesus gave the people strict orders not to tell anyone. But the more he tried to silence them, the more eagerly they shared the news. People were overcome with wonder, saying, "He does everything well! He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who can't speak."

The gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon: The Royal Law

Hymn of the Day "O Lord, May All We Say and Do" ⁵ (sung to #565)

1. **O Lord, may all we say and do reflect the faith we have in you;
For faith is meant to change the way we live our lives from day to day.**

⁵ Text Copyright © 2012 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

2. **God, may we open wide the door
And welcome people who are poor;
And may we share with them our bread,
For faith without good works is dead.**
3. **Just as a spark can start a fire,
Our words can damage or inspire;
We pray for wisdom from above
To speak and act in gentle love.**
4. **May we not covet earthly things
Or seek the riches this world brings;
May we not boast of all our plans,
For, Lord, our lives are in your hands.**
5. **O Lord, possessions rust away,
But your love fills us every day;
Through prayer and service in your name,
May we live out the faith we claim.**

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 (inspired by the book of James)⁶
 Each petition will end with “Lord, in your mercy,”
 with the response “**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 / Offertory Prayer⁷

Gracious God, thank you for these gifts.
 We offer them to you and ask that you bless them,
 that all may have food, clothing, and shelter.
 We also offer you our very lives, asking that you bless us and use us,
 that all may come to know your steadfast love
 and your unending grace.
 In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Sending Hymn “O God of Mercy, God of Light” #714

- 1. O God of mercy, God of light,
 in love and mercy infinite,
 teach us, as ever in your sight,
 to live our lives in you.**
- 2. You sent your Son to die for all
 that our lost world might hear your call;
 oh, hear us lest we stray and fall!
 We rest our hope in you.**
- 3. Teach us the lesson Jesus taught:
 to feel for those his blood has bought,
 that ev’ry deed and word and thought
 may work a work for you.**

⁶ adapted from a prayer written by Rick Morley, and posted on his *A Garden Path* blog.
<http://www.rickmorley.com/archives/1895>

⁷ from *Ministry Matters* website. Used by permission.

4. **For all are kindred, far and wide,
since Jesus Christ for all has died;
grant us the will, and grace provide,
to love them all in you.**
5. **In sickness, sorrow, want, or care,
may we each other's burdens share;
may we, where help is needed, there
give help as though to you.**

Blessing⁸

Go now, and invest your lives in the works of faith.
Make a name for yourselves for generosity and compassion.
Fulfill God's royal law
by putting love into action as eagerly for others
as you would for yourselves.
And may God be your defender and provider;
May Christ Jesus dispel all that disturbs or disables you;
and may the Holy Spirit make you rich in faith
and loving and merciful in action. Amen.

Commission

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

Postlude – Joshua Hendricksen

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