

Service of Holy Communion

October 11, 2020

WELCOME

PRELUDE

"At Your Name" Phil Wickham & Tim Hughes

One Voice

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims:

Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG *"Come, Now is the Time to Worship"*

Chorus

Come now is the time to worship
Come now is the time to give your heart
Come just as you are to worship
Come just as you are before your God
Come
(repeat)

One day every tongue
Will confess You are God
One day every knee will bow
Still the greatest treasure remains

For those who gladly choose You now
(chorus 1x)

One day every tongue
Will confess You are God
One day every knee will bow
Still the greatest treasure remains
For those who gladly choose You now
(chorus 1x)

Ending
Come come just as you are come come

CCLI Song # 2430948
Brian Doerksen
CCLI License # 11534117

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE *“Step By Step”*

Chorus
O God You are my God
And I will ever praise You
O God You are my God
And I will ever praise You
I will seek You in the morning
And I will learn to walk in Your ways
And step by step You'll lead me
And I will follow You all of my days
(repeat 3x)

CCLI Song # 696994
David (Beaker) Strasser
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PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lord of the feast, **you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

THE WORD

FIRST READING: *Isaiah 25:1-9*

After a hymn of praise acknowledging God as a shelter for the poor, the prophet portrays a wonderful victory banquet at which death – which in ancient Canaan was depicted as a monster swallowing up everyone – will be swallowed up forever. The prophet urges celebration of this victory of salvation.

¹O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you, I will praise your name;
for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure.

²For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin;
the palace of aliens is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt.

³Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you.

⁴For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress,
a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.

When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm,

⁵the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place,
you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled.

⁶On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.

⁷And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;

⁸he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken.

⁹It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he
might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: *Psalms 23*

¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.**

³You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

SECOND READING: *Philippians 4:1-9*

Though writing from prison and facing an uncertain future, Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice and give thanks to God no matter what the circumstance. God's peace is with us and binds together our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, especially when things around us do not seem peaceful.

¹My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

²I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION “Sing Alleluia”

Sing Alleluia to the Lord. Sing Alleluia to the Lord.

Sing Alleluia, sing Alleluia, sing Alleluia to the Lord. (*repeat*)

GOSPEL: *Matthew 22:1-14*

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-second chapter

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus tells a parable indicating that the blessings of God's kingdom are available to all, but the invitation is not to be taken lightly.

¹Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ ⁵But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those

invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' ¹⁰Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹"But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹²and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen."

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

When I was in 5th grade, I was invited to a neighbor girl's birthday party. Lisa's grandmother lived up the street from us and I had enjoyed playing with her from time to time when she was visiting. I accepted the invitation; my Mom and I went and got Lisa a present; and I told my other friend, Alla, that I was going to Lisa's party.

I guess Alla had not been invited. When I told her about the party, she screwed up her nose and said, "Lisa? She's a 4th grader, isn't she?" I hadn't thought of that and wasn't sure why it mattered, but hesitantly, I said, "Yes." Alla looked at me and said, with a slight sneer, "You're going to a party with a bunch of 4th graders? I wouldn't be caught dead doing that." Then she laughed. I was embarrassed and feared she might tell others that I was, indeed, attending a 4th grader's birthday party.

So I went home and told my Mom I had changed my mind. I didn't want to go to Lisa's party after all. Mom put down what she was doing and said, "What do you mean?"

"I just don't want to go, that's all."

"But you told her you were going," Mom said.

"I know, but now I don't want to," I said.

"What if you gave a party and no one came. How would you feel?" my Mom asked.

I squirmed. That wouldn't feel good at all.

"You're going to her party," Mom said, "just like you said you would."

I went, determined not to enjoy being with a bunch of 4th graders, but in spite of myself, I had a good time. I've never forgotten Mom's question to me and how it hit me: "What would you do if you gave a party and no one came." The thought made me feel lonely and sad.

The King in today's gospel reading was more offended and enraged than lonely or sad. But it was a terrible insult to him and his family that all the people he had invited refused to come to the wedding banquet for his son. Think of the effort and the expense one goes to, to throw a wedding feast: getting a large tent and cloth covered tables with slender vases holding fresh-cut flowers; hiring a band to play softly during dinner and then later for an all night dance party; buying and preparing the food – choice meats and delicious sides, wines and champagnes, bride's and groom's cakes and after-

dinner drinks. Imagine going to all that trouble to plan and host an incredible celebration, and then have no one show up.

We can empathize with the King's frustration and anger, although not with his violent reaction. The whole situation gets violent without cause – some of the townspeople killing the King's servants and then the king wiping out the whole city. My goodness! I'm not sure what to make of that, or of this entire gospel reading, frankly. I am sure, however, that it is not giving us examples of how to behave. Nor is it giving us answers to common questions in daily life. But the parable certainly makes us wonder, makes us ask, "What is going on here?" There's a lot to puzzle over in this story.

First of all, why don't people show up to the king's banquet? Do they dislike him, or are they simply not interested? Where are we supposed to see ourselves in this parable? Are we the king, the guests who don't come, or the poor people who get invited in the end? Is this gospel reading telling us there's a banquet we're invited to, and asking whether we'll show up? Have we heard such an invitation? Or are we too busy, too distracted, too caught up in our own plans and our own dramas?

This is a strange story, especially with the ending tacked on about the man who didn't have on the proper clothes (though the king had gathered people in off the streets) and so he was thrown into the "outer darkness." That doesn't sound good. When I encounter this text, I pull back into my shell and hide, because I'm not sure what is expected of me. Am I being scolded? Am I being judged because I haven't gone out into the streets and invited the poor and the lame to come eat at my house? I'm not sure.

Maybe the text is asking whether we have regarded God's invitation to live in the kingdom of Jesus here and now, with the urgency it deserves. Sometimes Christian faith sounds primarily concerned with life after death, not with life now. Faith becomes like a savings account that accumulates, whether or not you make deposits, and when you die, you cash in and go straight to heaven. If that's how we understand being followers of Jesus, then this parable shakes us up, makes us stop and look at ourselves. Are we responding to God's invitation? Is God's invitation a priority in our daily lives, or do we keep putting it off until later?

God's invitation is to live as people of the kingdom today, every day of our lives, and not wait for the next world. In Jesus, God invites us to have our faults and failings wiped away, to find the door to everlasting life thrown wide open for us. That 'everlasting life' is not something we'll inherit only after we die; it is available now. The door is open, now. "Come on in," Jesus says. "There's a celebration going on, and we want you to be part of it."

In Jesus' kingdom, there is no more fear or greed or division or anger or distrust. In Jesus' kingdom everyone has enough, so people don't need to fuss and quarrel with each other. In Jesus' kingdom, we know we are loved and that makes us feel safe and contented. In Jesus' kingdom, because we are loved and safe, it's not hard for us to care about and tend to the ups and downs, joys and sorrows of our neighbors. Because God gives us all we need, we are generous. Because nothing can separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ, we are open and ready to share that love with everyone.

Knowing these things to be true, trusting in them because we know Jesus – that is to live in God’s kingdom now.

In Philippians 4, Paul reminds us how to live as citizens of God’s kingdom. “Rejoice in the Lord always,” he says. And, “Don’t worry... make your requests known to God.” Trust in God brings the peace that passes understanding, and that peace stands guard over our hearts and minds. “Think about these things,” Paul says, “whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, commendable, excellent. Think about *these* things, and the God of peace will be with you.”

Come to the banquet of the Son in God’s kingdom. So many other things try to distract and detain us: financial concerns, health issues, worry about the kids or about our parents, or our spouse, unrest in the nation, the upcoming elections. Those things matter, and deserve some of our attention. But so much greater is the undying love God has for us in Jesus, a love that welcomes us into God’s presence, gives us all we need, reconciles us to each other, and lasts beyond death and the grave. Look, the banquet is spread before you, the celebration is begun. Come on in to the everlasting fellowship of Jesus, and rejoice.

HYMN OF THE DAY *“The Table”*

Verse 1

I will feast at the table of the Lord
 I will feast at the table of the Lord
 I won't hunger anymore at His table
 (repeat)

Chorus

Come all you weary come and find
 His yoke is easy His burden is light
 He is able He will restore
 At the table of the Lord
 (At the table of the Lord)

Verse 2

There is peace at the table of the Lord
 There is peace at the table of the Lord
 I won't worry anymore at His table

Verse 3

There is healing at the table of the Lord
 There is healing at the table of the Lord
 Oh and I won't suffer anymore at His table
 (chorus)

Bridge

I know He has a place for me
 Oh what joy will fill my heart
 With the saints around the mercy seat of God
 (chorus)

Verse 4

I'm invited to the table of the Lord
 I'm invited to the table of the Lord
 He says come just as you are to His table

CCLI Song # 7028956
 Chris Tomlin | Ed Cash | Wayne Jolley
 CCLI License # 11534117

APOSTLES' CREED

With the whole Church let us confess our faith.

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 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 THE PEOPLE

With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious host, fill your church with a spirit of joyous hospitality. We pray for bishops, teachers, church leaders, and all children of God as they invite others to your table of boundless grace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious host, as creation waits with eager longing for redemption, protect your creatures that are mistreated. Restore valleys, mountains and pastures, and still and running waters. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious host, as you set a table in the presence of enemies, so bless the efforts of diplomats, international peace workers, and world leaders who navigate conflict. May

they proceed with dialogue and understanding, so that justice and peace prevail. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious host, let your gentleness be known among those who are weary or ill. Strengthen doctors, medical care workers, and caretakers who see to their needs. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious host, when we are quick to judge outward appearance, remind us how you clothe all in your mercy. We pray for ministries that provide needed clothing and other personal care assistance in this community. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious host, receive the prayers of this worshipping people...
We ask your healing for Barbara, Jennifer, Lynnae, Janice,

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.
You have set before us these gifts of your good creation.
Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink,
and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world,
through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

(Please have the bread and wine/juice ready for Holy Communion)

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE FOR SUNDAYS

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ;

who on this day overcame death and the grave,

and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

God of marvel and might, from chaos and disorder, you created the heavens and the earth. You formed humans from dust and gave them the breath of life. You brought a weary, abused people out of slavery into the freedom of the Promised Land. And when the time had come, you sent your Son, not to condemn, but so that the world might be saved through him. We celebrate his life, death, and resurrection, as we remember...

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet table where Christ gives himself as food and drink.

Take the bread and eat, this is the body of Christ, given for you. (*please consume the bread*)

Take the cup and drink, this is the blood of Christ, shed for you. (*please drink from the cup*)

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our adult education book discussion meets tomorrow evening, Monday, October 12, from 7:00 to 8:00. We are reading *The Sunflower* by Simon Weisenthal. Tomorrow we'll discuss the first 43 to 47 pages.

On Tuesday, there will be a brief prayer service in the Huth Garden, from 4:30 until 5:00. Please bring your own chair, wear a mask, and social distance.

Build your Ofrenda for All Saints Sunday – Nov. 1. Take picture and send it to Courtney at church office via email or text.

We are looking for folks to write up an Advent or Christmas memory to share in the December Newsletter. Those, and the pictures of your ofrendas, need to be sent to Courtney no later than Monday, November 9.

BLESSING

sung by **One Voice**

The Lord bless you and keep you.
 Make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.

Chorus

Amen, Amen, Amen
 Amen, Amen, Amen

(repeat all)

CCLI Song # 7147007
 Chris Brown | Cody Carnes | Kari Jobe | Steven Furtick
 CCLI License # 11534117

CLOSING HYMN *“God Be with You Till We Meet Again”*

1 God be with you till we meet again;
 by good counsels guide, uphold you,
 with a shepherd's care enfold you;
 God be with you till we meet again.

Refrain

Till we meet, (till we meet,)

till we meet, (till we meet again,)

till we meet at Jesus' feet; (till we meet,)

till we meet, (till we meet,)

till we meet, (till we meet again.)

God be with you till we meet again.

2 God be with you till we meet again;
 holy wings securely hide you,
 daily manna still provide you;
 God be with you till we meet again. *Refrain*

3 God be with you till we meet again;
 when life's perils thick confound you,
 put unfailing arms around you;
 God be with you till we meet again. *Refrain*

Text: Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1828-1904, alt.

DISMISSAL

Go about your day in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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