

# Service of Holy Communion

## November 8, 2020

### WELCOME

### PRELUDE

*"Even So Come"* Chris Tomlin, Jesse Cates & Jason Ingram

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, in whose image we are made,  
who claims us and calls us beloved.

**Amen.**

*Silence for reflection*

Holy One, **we confess that we are not awake for you. We are not faithful in using your gifts. We forget the least of our siblings. We do not see your beautiful image in one another. We are infected by sin that divides your beloved community. Open our hearts to your coming, open our eyes to see you in our neighbor, open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.**

Beloved, we are God's children, and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.

Through † Jesus you are forgiven, by Jesus you are welcome, in Jesus you are called to rejoice! Let us live in the promises prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

**Amen.**

### GATHERING SONG # 638 *"Blessed Assurance"*

- 1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

#### *Refrain*

This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior, all the day long:  
this is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long.

- 2 Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
angels descending bring from above  
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. *Refrain*

- 3 Perfect submission, all is at rest;  
 I in my Savior am happy and blest,  
 watching and waiting, looking above,  
 filled with his goodness, lost in his love. *Refrain*

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915

## **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**      *"I Exalt Thee"*

Verse

For Thou oh Lord art high above all the earth  
 Thou art exalted far above all gods  
 For Thou oh Lord art high above all the earth  
 Thou art exalted far above all gods

Chorus

I exalt Thee  
 I exalt Thee  
 I exalt Thee oh Lord  
 I exalt Thee  
 I exalt Thee  
 I exalt Thee oh Lord

(repeat chorus)

CCLI Song # 17803  
 CCLI License # 11534117

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O God of justice and love, **you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## THE WORD

### FIRST READING: Amos 5:18-24

*In the days of Amos, people thought that the day of the LORD would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said liturgy is no substitute for obedience. The LORD demands justice and righteousness in the community.*

<sup>18</sup>Alas for you who desire the day of the LORD!

Why do you want the day of the LORD?

It is darkness, not light;

<sup>19</sup>as if someone fled from a lion, and was met by a bear;  
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,  
and was bitten by a snake.

<sup>20</sup>Is not the day of the LORD darkness, not light, and gloom with no brightness in it?

<sup>21</sup>I hate, I despise your festivals,  
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

<sup>22</sup>Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,  
I will not accept them;  
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon.

<sup>23</sup>Take away from me the noise of your songs;  
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

<sup>24</sup>But let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

### THE PSALM: Psalm 70

<sup>1</sup>Be pleased, O God, to deliver me; O LORD, make haste to help me.

<sup>2</sup>**Let those who seek my life be put to shame and confounded;  
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be disgraced.**

<sup>3</sup>Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over me turn back because of their shame.

<sup>4</sup>**Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great is the LORD!"**

<sup>5</sup>But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quickly, O God.  
You are my helper and my deliverer; O LORD, do not tarry.

### SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

*Some of the Thessalonians are worried that dead Christians will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them with the word of hope that all Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.*

<sup>13</sup>We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. <sup>15</sup>For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who

are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage one another with these words.

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 READING:** *Matthew 25:1-13*

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 25th chapter

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus tells a parable about his own second coming, emphasizing the need for readiness at all times.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; <sup>4</sup>but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup>But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' <sup>7</sup>Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' <sup>9</sup>But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' <sup>10</sup>And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' <sup>12</sup>But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' <sup>13</sup>Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

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

**SERMON**

Everything was going along normally, for years, for generations. Children were born; they learned to walk and speak; they learned manners and how to share with others; they went to school, and when school was finished they got a job or got married or both. Grocery stores had food; hardware stores sold things to fix up your house; everybody paid taxes so roads would be paved and first responders would be ready.

Some citizens were wealthy, others were middle class, and still others were poor. Worship was held on Sunday mornings, or Saturday mornings, or Friday evenings. At a restaurant the hostess seated you and brought you menus, a waitress took your order, the food came, you ate, got the bill, and paid on your way out. Forty hour work weeks

were the norm, with weekends and two weeks paid vacation off. Everything went along normally, until suddenly it didn't.

The abrupt change was a shock. Worship? – Not in person; look online for virtual services. School? – Teach your kids at home. Eat at a restaurant? – Nope, take out only. Holidays? – Stay at home. Vacation? – Not this year and maybe not next year either. Work? – Yes, if you have a job that can be done from home on a computer. Family gatherings for Thanksgiving or Christmas? – Use Zoom, not in person. Need your hair cut? – Maybe someone in your household can do it. Funerals? – Ten people or fewer. Loved one dying in a nursing home? – First, no one could be with them; now a few people are allowed. Everything has changed.

Maybe we should have been more prepared for this. I could have learned how to use technology better, sooner, but I assumed I'd get by without it. Medical supply companies could have had more masks and gloves and respirators available; schools could have explored options for distance learning. But who knew the whole world would change overnight?

One of the most urgent questions in our society used to be: will today's children be better off than their parents? That assumes a lot. It assumes commerce will function without drastic disruptions; children and young adults will have access to quality education; college graduates will find work; people will be healthy or able to seek medical care. It assumes the government will run smoothly; there won't be another World War (or Civil War); the opportunities we've been used to for hundreds of years will continue. Now the most urgent question is: what will the new normal be like, and when will it get here?

It's easy to be complacent when our world is stable year after year after year. Not have graduation ceremonies? That's crazy. Not have a football season? Crazier, still. Not have Christmas with our church family and our family-family? You must be out of your mind. Week after week, year after year, we do the same things – go to work or school, come home, eat and sleep, play on Saturday, worship on Sunday and back to work or school on Monday. Everything seemed to be going fine.

But maybe it wasn't going as fine as we thought.

There is a theme in today's scripture readings, a theme of urgency. "Wake up! Pay attention! Get ready! Now!"

Listen to what God said to God's faithful people – those who regularly went to worship – back in Amos's day: God said, "I hate your festivals and your carefully planned worship services. Keep your offerings – you think I can be bought? Turn off the music; I am tired of the noise of your songs."

What a shock that must have been. It would certainly be a shock to me if God stepped in here one morning and said "Enough! No more creeds and prayers, sermons and singing. I can't listen to this anymore." I'd probably stand like a statue with my mouth open, wondering what had happened.

"I hate, I despise your festivals!" If God is sick of the worship we've offered for ages and ages – sick of the words and the music, sick of the kneeling and the bowing – what can we do? What else do we have to give God?

The prophet knows what else we have to give; the prophet who listens to God always knows. We have our daily living, what we value and what those values lead us to do, how we see and understand the world, how we regard and respond to other people.

Amos looked around at Israel all those years ago, and sent out a warning on God's behalf. "Wake up! Turn back to God!" Life might have been going along fine for some of the people in Israel – the economy worked for them, the laws supported their lifestyle, society ran smoothly and could be counted on decade after decade... but Amos saw other things, things most of the population ignored.

Chapter 5 verse 10 - "Y'all hate anyone who points out your wrong-doing, y'all abhor anyone who speaks a hard-to-hear truth." Verse 11 – "So, because you trample on the poor and lay heavy taxes on them, you have built houses of hewn stone but you shall not live in them. You have planted vineyards but you shall not drink their wine." Verse 12 – "For I know how many are your transgressions, and how great are your sins – you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe, and push aside the needy at the gate." That's what Amos saw.

We're in the season of the church year – end of Pentecost and the beginning of Advent – where the scripture readings are difficult to hear. They warn that as you escape a bear you'll run into a lion; or when you take shelter inside and rest your hand on the wall, a snake will bite you. There's not a lot of comfort in these readings. I would rather preach comfort to you; I would rather hear comfort myself. But these difficult words of scripture are also true and important; we cannot simply ignore them.

This is what I hear in today's scripture readings. 1) God is serious about justice and righteousness. We might fool ourselves, thinking the world is "just" when it simply bends in our favor. But God is not fooled. And God wants justice for everyone (pay special attention in the pursuit of justice, to the poor. God is always watching out for them and expects us to do the same.)

2) This is no time to be complacent about the way things are. In the United States, it's no time to take our democracy for granted. Our fore-fathers and fore-mothers built this society; it falls to us now to uphold its founding principles – all people are created equal; all are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

3) This is a time to be awake and alert, to notice what is going on around us, to listen for God's guidance in these strange days. How does God want us to be the Body of Jesus Christ in our homes and our neighborhoods and our church-families now? How might we care for the poor, defend the weak, check on the sick? How might we see other people, whose experience differs from our own, and hear – truly hear – what they tell us? This is no time to go to sleep on the world, but time to be fully present, fully ready to give the best of ourselves to the needs of those around us through the love of Jesus.

In the story from Matthew, everything is unexpected: the wedding is ready but the bridegroom is delayed; the bridesmaids fall asleep as they wait; the bridegroom appears and five bridesmaids realize they don't have enough oil. The other five refuse to share and send them off to buy their own (seems rather selfish). The bridal party

doesn't wait for them to return (a bit unkind); and when the stragglers get to the celebration, the bridegroom won't let them in (pretty harsh). Everything is unexpected.

This parable is not telling us "Be stingy with your oil." It is not saying, "Don't wait for those who fall behind." Nor does it advise, "If people can't arrive on your schedule, lock them out." It is showing us a series of events that catch us off guard, and saying, "Be ready."

Be ready to love your neighbor. Be ready to conduct yourself as a mature, responsible citizen of this nation. Be ready to share – food, clothes, shelter, the load someone else is bearing – be ready to share when the opportunity arises. Strive to see life through someone else's eyes. Listen to the griefs of people who don't think like you. Reject violence. Be mindful of those who are giving their all and still might not make it.

Now is the time to let the love of Jesus flow through you and spill out onto everyone around you. Now is the time to trust that the world belongs to God, to trust that Jesus is with us, leading us into the future. Now is not time to be afraid, but time to show that Jesus is your Lord, in all that you say, and do, and pray.

Stay awake! Watch for every opportunity to do good in Jesus' name.

### **HYMN OF THE DAY**    *"Shield About Me"*

Verse

Thou O Lord are a shield about me  
You're my glory You're the lifter of my head  
(repeat)

Chorus

Hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah  
You're the lifter of my head  
(repeat)

(Repeat all)

CCLI Song # 14882

Charles Williams | Donn Thomas

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**

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, rouse us to true worship of you – hearts full of ardent praise and lives dedicated to seeking your will of good for all people. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Creator, we find comfort and delight in the beauty of the world you have made. Bless the work of landscapers, architects, and artists whose work invites us into harmonious living with your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Judge, let justice roll down like waters over this world. Reign over the courtrooms of every land, in the hearts of those who guard the law and those who stand accused of crimes. Be present in cases where we long for both justice and mercy to prevail. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Companion, console those who feel lonely or abandoned. Share the hours of those who live and eat alone. Comfort those who have few friends or who struggle with their identity and place in this world. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Protector, guide our nation in the ways of righteousness and loving-kindness. Thank you for all veterans who have served this nation. Guard the lives of active duty and retired military personnel. Comfort all who mourn those who have died in the line of duty. Heal the wounds, both physical and mental, experienced by service members. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy, Immortal One, hear us now as we raise our thanks and concerns to you...

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever. **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**

God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.

**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.**

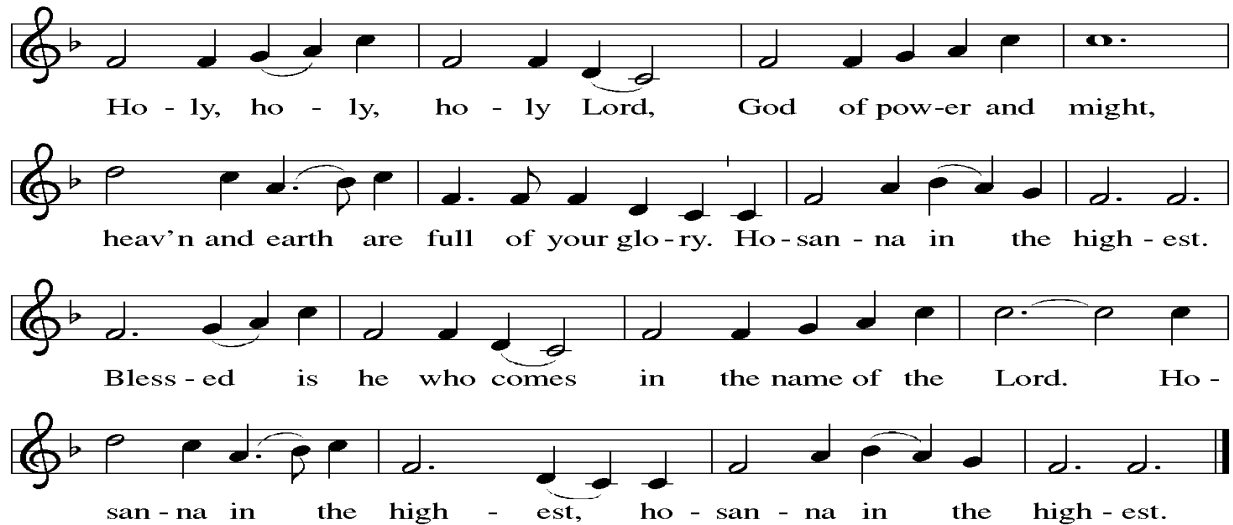
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**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**

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come... through all generations you have heard the cries of your people, bringing them from hardship and death into life. You gave Abraham and Sarah a child in their old age; you brought Israel out of slavery into the freedom of the Promised Land; you sent judges, kings, and prophets to rule your people and return them to you when they had strayed. And when the time had come, you sent your Son Jesus to be our brother, our teacher, and our Savior. We remember, that...

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**

There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table.

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**

Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way.

**Amen.**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Tomorrow evening, November 9, the adult book discussion group will meet on Zoom to continue discussing *The Sunflower* by Simon Weisenthal,

Tuesday late afternoon, November 10 (Martin Luther's birthday) we will have a brief prayer service in the Huth Garden, weather permitting. We'll begin at 4:30 and be done by 5:00. Bring your own chair, wear a facemask, and social distance.

Submissions for the Newsletter need to be in the office by tomorrow, November 9. If you haven't already, please send pictures of your home altar/ofrenda, and also your thoughts on an Advent or Christmas memory for the December Newsletter. Thank you.

We are planning to begin limited in-person worship on Sunday, November 29. The service will also be live-streamed on Facebook as we've been doing. If you choose to attend in person, you will need to call the church office and RSVP. The church building

can only accommodate 50 people at a time. Call and let us know you are planning to attend – your name and how many people will be with you. You will also need to wear a mask the whole time you are in the building (except when you consume the bread and the wine). Volunteers will greet you at the front door, take your temperature, and give you a plastic bag with the bulletin, your communion, and a napkin in it. Then an usher will guide you to a place to sit.

## **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**    *“Jesus At The Center”*

Verse 1

Jesus at the center of it all  
 Jesus at the center of it all  
 From beginning to the end  
 It will always be it's always been You Jesus Jesus

Chorus

And nothing else matters  
 Nothing in this world will do  
 Jesus You're the center  
 Ev'rything revolves around You Jesus You

Verse 2

Jesus be the center of my life  
 Jesus be the center of my life  
 From beginning to the end  
 It will always be it's always been You Jesus Jesus  
 (Chorus)

Verse 3

Jesus be the center of Your church  
Jesus be the center of Your church  
And ev'ry knee will bow  
And ev'ry tongue shall confess You

Interlude

Jesus Jesus Jesus Jesus  
Jesus Jesus Jesus

CCLI Song # 6115180  
Adam Ranney | Israel Houghton | Micah Massey  
CCLI License # 11534117

**DISMISSAL**

Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

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