

“Within these walls let no-one be a stranger”

August 16th 2020

Welcome

Call to Worship *during which you are invited to light a candle*

From before the dawn of creation
and after the end of time,
You are God;
You are our God.

Of light and darkness,
of height and depth,
You are God,
You are our God.

Over all that lives and moves in earth, sea, and sky,
over inert matter and dynamic energy,
You are God;
You are our God.

In faith and doubt, joy or sorrow,
whether we are gathered or scattered,
You are God.
**You are our God
and we bless You.**

Hymn 157

1. Sing of the Lord's goodness,
Father of all wisdom,
come to him and bless his name.
Mercy he has shown us,
his love is for ever,
faithful to the end of days.

*Come, then, all you nations,
sing of your Lord's goodness,
melodies of praise and thanks to God.
Ring out the Lord's glory,
praise him with your music,
worship him and bless his name.*

2. Power he has wielded,
honour is his garment,
risen from the snares of death.
His word he has spoken,
one bread he has broken,
new life he now gives to all.
3. Courage in our darkness,
comfort in our sorrow,
Spirit of our God most high;
solace for the weary,
pardon for the sinner,
splendour of the living God.
4. Praise him with your singing,
praise him with the trumpet,
praise God with the lute and harp;
praise him with the cymbals,
praise him with your dancing,
praise God till the end of days.

Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Children's Talk

1st Reading: Isaiah 56 v 1-8

This is what the Lord says:

“Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed. ²Blessed is the one who does this—the person who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath without desecrating it, and keeps their hands from doing any evil.”

³Let no foreigner who is bound to the Lord say, “The Lord will surely exclude me from his people.” And let no eunuch complain, “I am only a dry tree.” ⁴ For this is what the Lord says:

“To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant—⁵to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever. ⁶And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant — ⁷these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.” ⁸The Sovereign Lord declares — he who gathers the exiles of Israel “I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered.”

Sermon Part 1

Music in Worship *Shall We Gather at the River* - Robert Lowry, arr. by Donald Moore

Second Reading: Acts 8:26-40

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian[a] eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." ³⁰Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. ³¹"How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³²This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ³³In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth." ³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" ³⁸And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Sermon Part 2

Hymn 710

1. "I have a dream", a man once said,
"where all is perfect peace;
where men and women, black and white,
stand hand in hand, and all unite
in freedom and in love,
in freedom and in love."
2. But in this world of bitter strife
the dream can often fade;
reality seems dark as night,
we catch but glimpses of the light
Christ sheds on humankind,
Christ sheds on humankind.
3. Fierce persecution, war, and hate
are raging everywhere;
God calls us now to pay the price
through struggles and through sacrifice
of standing for the right,
of standing for the right.
4. So dream the dreams and sing the songs,
but never be content:
for thoughts and words don't ease the pain:
unless there's action, all is vain;
faith proves itself in deeds,
faith proves itself in deeds.
5. Lord, give us vision, make us strong,
help us to do your will;
don't let us rest until we see
your love throughout humanity
uniting us in peace,
uniting us in peace.

Prayers

Words of Dedication

All things come from you
and of your own we give you -
our time, our treasure
and love without measure,
this day and forever,
Amen.

Hymn 456

1. Christ is the world's true light,
Its captain of salvation,
The daystar clear and bright
Of every race and nation;
New life, new hope awakes
Where people own his sway:
From bondage freedom breaks,
And night is turned to day.
2. In Christ all races meet,
Their ancient feuds forgetting,
The whole round world complete,
From sunrise to its setting:
When Christ is throned as Lord,
We shall forsake our fear,
To plowshare beat the sword,
To pruning hook the spear.
3. One Lord, in one great name
Unite us all who own you,
Cast out our pride and shame
That hinder to enthrone you;
The world has waited long,
Has travailed long in pain,
Come, heal its ancient wrong,
Come, Prince of Peace, and reign.

Blessing