

**SERVICE OF WORSHIP
TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
NOVEMBER 8, 2020**

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE: *OH, THAT I HAD A THOUSAND VOICES* – Max Reger

A PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Holy Leader, we are presented once again with many choices. Today we have chosen to worship together in thanksgiving and praise. We have found the freedom and joy of being able to gather in peace; we have found the time and resources to be able to enjoy this precious opportunity; and we have followed the calling of our faith to come together in supplication, intercession, and gratitude. Be with us as we worship, and help us to choose you over and over. Help us to recommit ourselves to the blessings and challenges of our devotion to you and your love. Be made known to us, and help us to feel you near, we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

SENTENCES OF ADORATION

OPENING HYMN: *MY HOPE IS BUILT ON NOTHING LESS*

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Pastor: Give ear, O people, to God's teachings.

Unison: For in parable and story God's wisdom is revealed.

Pastor: Come, let us remember the stories of our ancestors in faith.

Unison: Let us share them with our children, and celebrate the goodness that has come from them.

Pastor: God has established decrees with our grandparents and all generations:

Unison: and God has asked us to teach and continue them.

Pastor: Come, people of God, let us raise our hope in God, and remember our blessings;

Unison: let us never forget God's glorious works in our lives.

Pastor: Come, let us worship!

REJOICING IN GOD'S GRACE

CALL TO AND CONFESSION OF SIN:

Abiding God, there have been times when we have chosen the gods of our contexts, over full devotion to you. We have worshipped at the altars of progress, efficiency, competition, and acquisition. We have claimed to be your people while behaving in ways that do not bear this out. We have allowed the obsessions of the "world" and the scarcity mentality of our cultures to permeate our spirits and cause us to wander. We imagine we are ready to be in your presence, but in truth are often asleep to the true preparedness of constant vigilance in your grace. Forgive our shallow ways, and wake us up to what it means to be ready to follow wholeheartedly. Jostle us into alert

commitment. Teach us to embrace the responsibilities that come with helping to bring about your realm on Earth. And help us to stay awake and prepared, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON:

Darin Jellison, Lay Reader

Old Testament: Joshua 24:1 – 3a, 14 – 25

New Testament: Matthew 25:1 – 13

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON: *Preparation Means Participation*

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD'S WILL AND WORK

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

Unison: I believe in truth as a living Reality, not captured in theory or a creed, but revealed to those who love; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God.

Because I believe I trust, not blindly but open eyed and bold as a child climbing into a mother's lap; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God.

Because I believe I serve, not as a slave that serves a tyrant but like farmers reaping a harvest; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: Loving God, we are a people who have often taken our faith for granted. We have allowed ourselves to become distracted by the constant light show that is human life on this planet in this age. And yet, we gather desiring to be your people in truth and honesty. Although we are surrounded by the glittering masterworks of technology and entertainment, we sometimes struggle to find your light. We long for clarity of life in your love, but the temptations of our culture can consume us. Help us to be ready and to be renewed when we fall short. Fill us with your joy, humility, justice, grace, and mercy. Help us to be replenished by your forgiving love and teach us to renew others as we go. Renew your planet, we pray. Teach us to walk gently upon it, as readiness in your reign. Renew your communities, we pray.

Teach us to work and live in harmony and justice, as readiness in your reign. Renew your children, we pray. Teach us to find deep purpose and satisfaction in worshipping you, as readiness in your reign. Renew your leaders, we pray. Guide them to be led by compassion and wisdom, and help us to support them in their endeavors toward the common good, as

readiness in your reign. Renew your presence among us. Help us to discern your light, even in the brightness of the lights of this world, as readiness in your reign. And receive us into holy communion with you – united in the glorious fruition of love imagined, designed, and embodied. We pray in the name of the embodied one, Jesus the Christ.

Pause for private intercessions

Gracious God, as you have promised, may it come to pass.

We pray in Christ's name and offer the prayer He offered;

Unison: 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SHARING

SPECIAL MUSIC: NO LONGER SLAVES - Bethel Music

Darin Jellison

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Unison: Today, more than most, we ask you to hear our prayer of dedication. We dedicate ourselves again to you. We are ready to be in your presence and to be your people. Receive our worship, and our promises, as evidence of our commitments and love. And bless them all, we pray. Amen.

GO IN GOD'S NAME

CLOSING HYMN: LEAD ON ETERNAL SOVEREIGN

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: TRUMPET RECESSIONAL – Robert Lau

Special thanks to Darin Jellison for the gift of music and song, and to Wes, Justin and Avery Koser for editing the service. Blessings to all!