

GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

PRAYER

from Psalm 106

We praise you, God, with words of thanksgiving in our mouths and in our hearts—words which can never really do justice to the depth of your care for us. We rejoice in your blessings, yet we so often fail to live up to them. Knowing these failings of ours as you do, you still invite us to share your life of grace and abundant love by being united with Jesus Christ through the power of your Spirit. We do not deserve such gifts. May this time of worship and our daily living proclaim our thanksgiving for these undeserved and lavish gifts of grace. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

GREETING

Joining my voice with the voice of all who worship at Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Dallas, we are glad you have joined us on this beautiful Lord's Day and you are invited in these few moments of silence to be still and know that the Spirit of God is in this and every place.

A very huge thank you to all who prayed for, planned, helped with or showed up for last week's wonderful ministries: from the Blessing of the Animals, the transformation of the nursery, our outdoor World Communion Service and a cleaning party! The energy of the Spirit was present! Thank you to Tony and Denise who served as our liturgist the last Sunday of September, and today thanksgiving for Jo Byrd as she serves in worship leadership. To Chandra and Fred, who continue to make possible the sharing of our worship services, thank you!

A list of prayer joys and concerns are included in the written liturgy for this service, which is emailed to members and friends and can also be found on our website at www.eastminsterdallas.org

Our Re-Entry Task Force continues to meet each week and offer reports to the Session. Even as we continue to follow the wisdom of the Spirit and factual information about Covid-19, we are preparing behind the scenes for a safe re-entry to in-person worship when that time comes.

CALL TO WORSHIP

from *Psalm 106*

In the midst of fear and anger; in the midst of mayhem and destruction, God calls us. With everything else going on, who has time for a feast? We are busy, we will get around to eating eventually. In the midst of our anxiety, our worry; in the midst of bill-paying and appointments, God invites us. We are tempted to just grab a bite, a sandwich between errands, a snack we can eat while driving, or checking email, or working on today's big project. The feast is spread! All are invited, all are welcome! We are invited. We are welcome. We are worthy. How will we respond?

VOLUNTARY

Great is Thy Faithfulness
Melody Davis and Guest Violinist

William R. Runyon

*OPENING HYMN 611 *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You*

CALL TO CONFESSION

As we come to our time of confession we are called to have the same mind as Christ, we often spend too much time thinking about all those ways which then lead us astray. But, if we confess our sins, God will forgive us, and strengthen us to be Christ's sisters and brothers. Join me as we pray together, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

You would call us to your feast, God, but our busy lives keep us from responding. Forgive us and fill us with the desire to think about whatever is true, honorable, just, whatever is pure, pleasing, commendable, whatever is excellent and worthy of praise, for only then can we hope to have the same mind in us that was in Jesus in whose name we pray. Amen

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

As we are forgiven by God, we can begin to reflect on all those ways in which we can live justly, act honorably, and love completely. This is indeed good news for us. Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE 582 *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

As we prepare to hear the Word of the Lord, we join our hearts in prayer. By the power of your Spirit, align our hearts with yours, God, so that we can speak the words to others which you have spoken to us in Christ. In his name we pray. Amen.

EPISTLE READING (Pew Bible, page 198)

Philippians 4:1-9

In Philippians 4: 1-9, Paul encourages to the church in Philippi to live the transformed life, to turn away from trying to be better than the other, to turn away from paying lip service to the faith but to living out the faith in love and peace with one another. Hear the Word of the Lord:

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, 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. Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, 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. Keep 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.

ANTHEM

Are You Dressed for the Wedding
Sanctuary Choir

J. Martin and D. Angerman

NEW TESTAMENT READING (Pew Bible, page 24)

Matthew 22: 1-14

In this parable of the Wedding Feast from the 22nd chapter of Matthew, we are reminded that when we enter into relationship with Christ, we are called into a deeper relationship with others. We are called to see the needs of our neighbor and to love our neighbors as ourselves. As we heard in Philippians, the Christian faith is not something you can pay lip service to; it requires a transformation of our lives.

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again 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.' But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was

filled with guests. “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. Then 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.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

The grass withers. The flowers fade. But, this, the Word of our Lord lasts forever. Thanks be to God.

*HYMN 623 *I've Got Peace Like a River*

SERMON

Peace...Piece by Piece

Sherry Holloman

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from *Faith and Worship*

This world would deny you, Lord, and rely on human wisdom in their search for answers to questions they have yet to ask, but we will praise you, and exalt your name, for we know that you are Alpha, the beginning of all things, and Omega, the end, and all that is between. We have known your healing. We have known your provision, We have known your victory. Our sorrow has turned into dancing and our tears to songs of joy. We shall praise you ever more. Amen

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Holy Lord, please give us a measure of the Spirit of Christ, that we may exhibit more of his courage and compassion for all who share this small planet with us. May your new world come, and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We pray for Christ's church: our church, our denomination, and the many other Christian churches spread across the world.

We pray for our nation, for its internal well-being and its international relations.

We pray for the many places and people around the world, and here at home, where there is disaster and suffering whether that be through natural disaster, human violence, diseases, hunger

We pray for friends, neighbors and fellows church members who are going through hard times, today we especially remember: the Nixon family as they grieve the loss of Will; Alice Brooks' family as they mourn her loss; Bobbe Brown as she recovers from a heart procedure; Janice Bell as she moves forward with cancer treatment; our continued prayers for Janet, Sylvia, Lewis, Bettye and for whom our hearts are holding; strength and hope for our families and friends along the Texas coast; the silent prayers upon each of our hearts, and the prayers so deep that the Spirit prayers them for us. Lord, hear our prayers.

God our merciful friend, please encircle us all with your saving love, that no person may be seen as useless and no situation irredeemable. Fill us with the quiet optimism of Christ Jesus, that in all things and at all times we may trust your providence and play our small part in supplying the signs of your love to those whose fears outweigh their hope. May your new world come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Through Christ Jesus our Lord, we pray saying: **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.**

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

It is in giving we stay connected to what is really important in life and not allow materialism to define who we are; and it is in giving that we gain a deeper understanding of the depth of sacrificial love God has for us. It is in

giving that we grow in our own personal journey as a follower of Jesus. It is in giving we say to God and to the world those simple, yet life-defining words: "I love you first, and I will love you always."

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me
Summer Choir

*RESPONSE 605 *Praise to God the Father*

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of extravagant love, you have reached out to us and blessed us in so many ways - especially through your most extravagant gift of all – Jesus Christ. We rejoice in your invitation to share our lives with him. Bless us as we respond by offering these gifts and by dedicating ourselves anew as disciples of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen

GOING INTO THE WORLD WITH GOD'S WORD

* INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND BENEDICTION

We go now, strengthened to do the work of Christ, standing in the gap, extending the invitation to the eternal banquet, rejoicing in God. May our gentleness be known to everyone and may we let go our worry. The God who created us, the Christ who redeems us and the Spirit who empowers us is with us today and ever more. Amen

*CLOSING HYMN 804 *Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart*

**Stand as you wish*