

July 5, 2020 – 10:00 AM

5th Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE *A Patriotic Suite* Setting by Charles Callahan
“A Processional,” “Improvisation”

WELCOME AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOD'S KINGDOM

CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, [☩] one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. Amen.

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,
we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through [☩] Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG “America the Beautiful” ELW #888

The image shows the musical score for "America the Beautiful" in four staves. The top staff is for the soprano voice, the second for the alto, the third for the tenor, and the bottom for the bass. The lyrics are as follows:

1 O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies, for am - ber waves of
2 O beau - ti - ful for he - roes proved in grain, strife,
3 O beau - ti - ful for pa - triot dream that sees be - yond the years

for pur - ple moun - tain maj - es - ties a - bove the fruit-ed plain:
who more than self their coun - try loved, and mer - cy more than life:
thine al - a - bas - ter cit - ies gleam, un - dimmed by hu - man tears:

A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God shed his grace on thee,
A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! May God thy gold re - fine,
A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God mend thine ev - 'ry flaw,

and crown thy good with broth - er-hood from sea to shin-ing sea.
till all suc - cess be no - ble-ness, and ev - 'ry gain di - vine.
con - firm thy soul in self - con-trol, thy lib - er - ty in law.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Zechariah 9:9-12

A reading from Zechariah.

The coming messianic king will inaugurate an era of disarmament and prosperity. Because of God's covenant with Israel, the people are designated as "prisoners of hope."

⁹Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!

Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war-horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

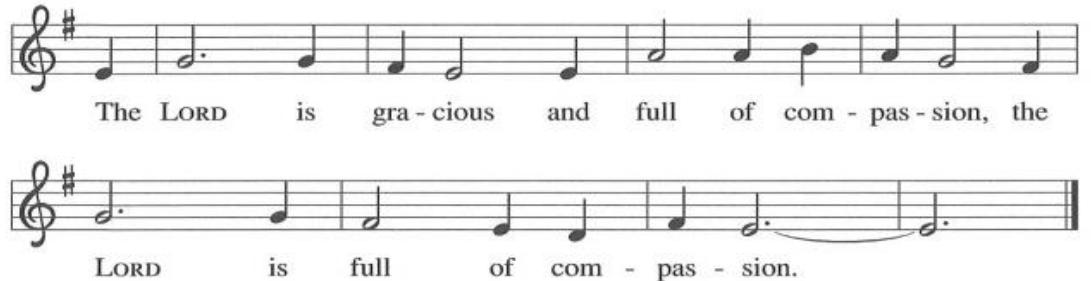
¹¹As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

¹²Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 145:8-14; refrain, Ps. 145:8



The LORD is gra - cious and full of com - pas - sion, the
LORD is full of com - pas - sion.

⁸The LORD is gracious and full | of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.

⁹**LORD, you are | good to all,
and your compassion is over | all your works. R**

¹⁰All your works shall praise | you, O LORD,
and your faithful | ones shall bless you.

¹¹**They shall tell of the glory | of your kingdom
and speak | of your power,**

¹²that all people may know | of your power
and the glorious splendor | of your kingdom.

¹³**Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your dominion endures
through- | out all ages.**

**You, LORD, are faithful in all your words, and loving in | all your
works.**

¹⁴The Lord upholds all | those who fall
and lifts up those who | are bowed down. R

SECOND READING: *Romans 7:15-25a*

A reading from Romans.

Life captive to sin is a catch-22 existence in which we know good but do not do it and do things we know to be wrong. Through Jesus Christ, God has set us free from such a futile existence.

¹⁵I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good.

¹⁷But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. ²²For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, ²³but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ^{25a}Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: *Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30*

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus chides people who find fault with both his ministry and that of John the Baptist. He thanks God that wisdom and intelligence are not needed to receive what God has to offer.

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] ¹⁶“To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

¹⁷‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; ¹⁹the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

²⁵At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor David Armstrong-Reiner

HYMN OF THE DAY *"Light Dawns on a Weary World"* ELW #726

1 Light dawns on a weary world when eyes begin to
 2 Love grows in a weary world when hungry hearts find
 3 Hope blooms in a weary world when creatures, once for -

see all peo - ple's dig - ni - ty. Light dawns on a
 bread and chil - dren's dreams are fed. Love grows in a
 lorn, find wil - der - ness re - born. Hope blooms in a

wea - ry world: the prom-ised day of jus - tice comes.
 wea - ry world: the prom-ised feast of plen - ty comes.
 wea - ry world: the prom-ised green of E - den comes.

Refrain

The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;
 the hills and moun - tains shall break forth with sing - ing!
 We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,
 as all the world in won - der ech - oes sha - lom.

APOSTLES CREED

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 was 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 INTERCESSION

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

We pray for the church. Sustain us as we share your word. Embrace us as we struggle to find our common ground. Lift up leaders with powerful and prophetic voices. Free us from stagnant faith. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for the well-being of creation. Protect the air, water, and land from abuse and pollution. Free us from apathy in our care of creation and direct us toward sustainable living. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for the nations. Guide leaders in developing just policies and guide difficult conversations. Free us from patriotism that hinders relationship-building. Lead us to expansive love for our neighbor. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all in need. For all who are tired, feeling despair, sick, or oppressed (*especially*). Take their yoke upon you and ease their burdens. Give your consolation and free us from all that keeps us bound. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

We pray for this congregation. Bless pastors, deacons, and congregational leaders. Energize children's ministry volunteers, church administrators, and those who maintain our building. Shine in this place that we might notice the ways your love transforms our lives. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

We give thanks for those who have died in faith (*especially*). Welcome them into your eternal rest and comfort us in our grief until we are joined with them in new life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

OFFERTORY

"God Bless America"

Irving Berlin
Sung by Lane Carlisle

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

LITANY IN THE ABSENCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

P: We are isolated and separated.

C: **This is for the good of all, but it is painful and lonely.**

P: In this time when we are not sharing the Lord's Supper,

C: **We know our hunger for your grace even more palpably.**

P: This meal – its forgiveness, healing, solidarity, and abundance --

C: **is meant for all.**

P: This feast is meant to be shared in person, in community,

C: **because your love is an embodied reality, given and shed for all.**

P: So we wait, listen, watch, even more intently than usual,

C: **For the crisis to pass,**

P: for your creatures to live in greater harmony,
C: for your Word to become flesh again, among us again in this sacrament.

P: Let us sing in anticipation of the day we return to each other in person,
C: Amen!

C: "My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart ... I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You."

BLESSING

God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.

God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace.

God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.

And God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done.
The God of all grace  bless you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING SONG *"Lift Every Voice and Sing"*

1 Lift ev'ry voice and sing till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.
Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.

2 Stony the road we trod, bitter the chast'ning rod,
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet
come to the place for which our parents sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;
we have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

3 God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
thou who hast by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met thee;
lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee;
shadowed beneath thy hand may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.

Text: James W. Johnson, 1871-1938

DISMISSAL:

[ALL] Follow Christ. Live Faithfully. Serve All. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"Finale"

Epiphany Lutheran Church
2375 Georgia Highway 20, SE
Conyers, GA 30013



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