

A SERVICE OF THE WORD & SACRAMENT

October 8, 2023

The Prelude

The Welcome & Announcements

The Silent Preparation

-THE LORD CALLS US TO WORSHIP-

The Salutation

Philippians 1:2

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Call to Worship

Psalms 148 (Responsively)

¹ Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

² **Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his hosts!**

³ Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, all you shining stars!

⁴ **Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!**

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD!
For he commanded and they were created.

⁶ **And he established them forever and ever;
he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.**

⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth,
you great sea creatures and all deeps,

⁸ **fire and hail, snow and mist,
stormy wind fulfilling his word!**

⁹ Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!

¹⁰ **Beasts and all livestock,
creeping things and flying birds!**

¹¹ Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!

¹² **Young men and maidens together,
old men and children!**

¹³ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.

¹⁴ **He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to him.
Praise the LORD!**

Hymn #227
How Great Thou Art

1. O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the worlds thy hands have made.
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed.

Refrain:

*Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
how great thou art, how great thou art!*

*Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
how great thou art, how great thou art!*

2. When thro' the woods and forest glades I wander
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; *[Refrain]*

3. And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin. *[Refrain]*

4. When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
and there proclaim, my God, how great thou art. *[Refrain]*

The Invocation & Prayer of Praise

-THE LORD ASSURES US OF HIS FORGIVENESS-

The Call to Confession

Mark 12:28-31

²⁸ And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" ²⁹ Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

The Confession of Sin

- ❖ Silent Prayers of Confession
- ❖ General Prayer of Confession

Unison:

Most merciful Father in heaven above, we are your people because of Jesus Christ your eternal Son who died for the forgiveness of our sins and rose again for our justification.

O God, we are your children because you have sent to us your Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of Adoption, who has transformed our stony hearts into hearts of flesh.

Yet, O Lord, even as your people and your children, being still in our fallen flesh, we confess that we so often break your holy laws and disobey your righteous commands. We confess that we do what we ought not to do and leave undone what we ought to do.

Please, gracious Father, forgive us and cleanse us again by the blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and fill us afresh with your Holy Spirit that we may go forth to live holy lives as you are holy until Christ comes again. We ask these things in his name. Amen.

The Assurance of Pardon

Psalm 32:5

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Hymn

From Depths of Woe

1. From depths of woe I raise to Thee
the voice of lamentation;
Lord, turn a gracious ear to me
and hear my supplication;
If Thou shouldst be extreme to mark
each secret sin and misdeed dark,
O who could stand before Thee?
O who could stand before Thee?
2. To wash away the crimson stain,
grace, grace alone availeth;
Our works, alas! are all in vain;
In much the best life faileth:
No man can glory in Thy sight,
all must alike confess Thy might,
and live alone by mercy,
and live alone by mercy.
3. Therefore my trust is in the Lord,
and not in mine own merit;
On Him my soul shall rest,
his Word upholds my fainting spirit:
His promised mercy is my fort,
my comfort and my sweet support;
I wait for it with patience,
I wait for it with patience.
4. What though I wait the live-long night,
and till the dawn appeareth,
my heart still trusteth in His might:
It doubteth not, nor feareth:
so let the Israelite in heart,
born of the Spirit, do his part,
and wait till God appeareth,
and wait till God appeareth.
5. Although our sin is great indeed,
God's mercies far exceed it;
His hand can give the help we need,
however much we need it:
He is the Shepherd of the sheep
who Israel doth guard and keep,
and shall from sin redeem Him,
and shall from sin redeem Him.

The Prayer of the Church

James 5:16b-18

^{16b} The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. ¹⁸ Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.

-THE LORD INSTRUCTS US FROM HIS WORD-

The Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 65:17-25

¹⁷ “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. ¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. ²⁰ No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. ²¹ They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ²² They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. ²³ They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord, and their descendants with them. ²⁴ Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. ²⁵ The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,” says the Lord.

The New Testament Reading

2 Peter 3:1-13

¹ This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ² that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, ³ knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. ⁴ They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” ⁵ For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, ⁶ and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. ⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. ¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

The Sermon

Rev. Dr. Michael J. Matossian

Heaven: A Place of Righteousness

2 Peter 3:11-13

Hymn #513

Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken

1. Jesus, I my cross have taken,
all to leave and follow thee;
destitute, despised, forsaken,
thou from hence my all shalt be.
Perish ev'ry fond ambition,
all I've sought or hoped or known;
yet how rich is my condition,
God and heav'n are still my own.
2. Let the world despise and leave me,
they have left my Savior too;
human hearts and looks deceive me;
thou art not, like man, untrue;
and, while thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
foes may hate and friends may shun me;
show thy face, and all is bright.
3. Man may trouble and distress me,
'twill but drive me to thy breast;
life with trials hard may press me,
heav'n will bring me sweeter rest.
O 'tis not in grief to harm me
while thy love is left to me;
O 'twere not in joy to charm me,
were that joy unmixed with thee.
4. Take, my soul, thy full salvation,
rise o'er sin and fear and care;
joy to find in ev'ry station
something still to do or bear;
think what Spirit dwells within thee,
what a Father's smile is thine,
what a Savior died to win thee:
child of heav'n, shouldst thou repine?
5. Hasten on from grace to glory,
armed by faith and winged by prayer;
heav'n's eternal day's before thee,
God's own hand shall guide thee there.
Soon shall close thy earthly mission,
swift shall pass thy pilgrim days;
hope shall change to glad fruition,
faith to sight, and prayer to praise.

-THE LORD FEEDS US FROM HIS TABLE-

The Confession of Faith

The Heidelberg Catechism Q & A #1

Q. *What is your only comfort in life and in death?*

A. Unison:

That I am not my own, but belong —body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has delivered me from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven; in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.

Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, also assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him. (*Trinity Psalter Hymnal, p. 872*)

The Celebration of the Lord's Supper

- ❖ Words of Institution
- ❖ The Breaking of the Bread
- ❖ The Sharing of the Cup

-THE LORD DISMISSES US TO HIS SERVICE-

The Benediction

2 Corinthians 13:14

¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

The Doxology - Gloria Patri (Tune: Regent Square #213)

Glory be to God the Father;
Glory be to God the Son;
Glory be to God the Spirit, ever three and ever one:
As it was in the beginning, now and evermore shall be.