

## Home Service for June 28, 2020

### Welcome and Announcements

Although we cannot meet together in the church building we can share worship together in our individual homes. We will continue to work to stay connected and be there for each other during the difficult time. We are going through something never experience before. I hope this will help you worship God today with those who are in your home. Add hymns if possible, too.

### Gathering Prayer:

Redeeming Christ, you welcome us today with joy and peace. Impart those attributes in each of us that as we are called to serve in your world we may feel the power of your love and peace. In Jesus' name, we pray. AMEN.

*Our hearts are weighed down by our attachments in this life. As we enter a time of worship, may we exhale our worries and inhale the Spirit of God that surrounds us. May we find here a space for release and reflection; a space to empty our souls and create a refuge for Sabbath rest.*

### Opening Prayer:

Holy One, in whom we bear our souls, we take comfort and courage in your presence. Through your love and light, we are able to explore what it takes to place our trust entirely in you. Help us lovingly put you before all else, as we journey the corridors of uncertainty, knowing that your steadfast love shepherds us on paths unknown. Amen.

### Prayer of Confession:

Patient God, each and every day you offer to us new hope and special blessings. From the rising of the sun to its descent, the light of your love pours on your creation. We love all these things, but we want to hold onto each of your blessings just for ourselves. Teach us to share openly and willingly with others. Forgive our selfishness and turn it to selflessness in service to you. Clear our minds and spirits from sadness to a sense of joy and adventure; for we offer this prayer in Jesus' name. AMEN.

## Words of Assurance

*Hear the good news! God has again blessed our lives with hope and joy. Be at peace, dear ones, for God is with us. AMEN.*

## Read Psalm 13

How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

<sup>2</sup>How long must I wrestle with my thoughts  
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

<sup>3</sup>Look on me and answer, LORD my God.

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,

<sup>4</sup>and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"  
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

<sup>5</sup>But I trust in your unfailing love;  
my heart rejoices in your salvation.

<sup>6</sup>I will sing the LORD's praise,  
for he has been good to me.

## Prayers of the People:

Lord, we talk so easily about being a friendly church. We like to think of ourselves as people who welcome everyone. But our welcome should not stay confined to those people we know. We are called to adopt attitudes of hospitality to others who may not return the favor. We are called to be willing to take the risk of hospitality in our workplace, our homes, our community, everywhere we go. You reached out to people in all kinds of conditions. Many of those people had been rejected by their society, their families. They were in need of compassionate greeting and friendship. Lord Jesus, as you have welcomed us regardless of our faults and failings, let us also be a welcoming presence to all in your name. AMEN.

## Lord's Prayer

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

Read the Lesson: Genesis 22:1-14

Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

<sup>2</sup> Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

<sup>3</sup> Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. <sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. <sup>5</sup> He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.”

<sup>6</sup> Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, <sup>7</sup> Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?”

“Yes, my son?” Abraham replied.

“The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”

<sup>8</sup> Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together.

<sup>9</sup> When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. <sup>10</sup> Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. <sup>11</sup> But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

<sup>12</sup> “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.”

<sup>13</sup> Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram<sup>[a]</sup> caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.”

## Read the Epistle Lesson: Romans 6:12-23

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. <sup>13</sup> Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

<sup>15</sup> What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! <sup>16</sup> Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. <sup>18</sup> You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

<sup>19</sup> I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. <sup>20</sup> When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. <sup>21</sup> What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in <sup>[a]</sup> Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Read the Gospel Lesson: Matthew 10:40-42

“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. <sup>41</sup> Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. <sup>42</sup> And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

Message:

In Paul's letter to the Romans, he is trying to take the theological principles that Christ's death and resurrection provided and guides us on how we are supposed to put the principles to work in our lives. I would like to add the verse 11 from last week's Epistle lesson to start today's message. Romans 6:11 – "In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

Paul wants us to understand that being alive to God in Christ produces a triumphant existence characterized by an entirely new and different kind of life, a new life we are able to choose. This new kind of life is called to be alive to God in Christ Jesus. But the question for us is and needs to be answered is: "What does it mean to be alive to God in Christ Jesus?"

Well, if we start with verses 12 through 14, we discover that we are being told that to be alive to God means we are to choose a new lifestyle. We are to choose to live godly lives and that choice is ours and is a necessity. Paul tells us that the power of sin has been broken and we are free to choose to live for God rather than being bound to sin.

The word that comes up over and over is choose, for God has given us free will and waits for us to choose to live for Him. Remember John 3:16 – "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." God loved us first and loved us greatly, so much so Christ was crucified and resurrected from the dead, so that we can choose to live for God.

Sin is still present, all we have to do is look around and see its presents everywhere. There is a good reason believers should be concerned about sin. As a believer we have not been transformed by some magic into a state in which we are no longer tempted by sin. In fact we are tempted every day and sometimes we loose the fight with temptation, but Jesus has made it possible for our forgiveness when we do. We are to try hard to not give in to temptation. We must not allow sin to reign or have any hold in our lives; for Christ alone must be Lord. We will face the constant temptation of sin everyday of our lives on this earth. Sometimes we may find ourselves rationalizing that it's just a "little sin" and won't do any permanent harm or no one will ever know, but God will know and we will know, so we should ask Go for the strength to turn our backs on the temptation. We all should know that evil can be seductive, and it may seem harmless, but we have

been made alive to God in Christ, and sin has no place in our lives. We have been called to a new lifestyle; we have chosen a new lifestyle.

Paul continues in verses 15 through 21 to tell us that being alive to God in Christ means we have to choose a new priority for our lives. Paul uses the word slavery as a metaphor for human existence, the idea we are all slaves to something or some way of thinking, so it is not a question if we are slaves, but what or whom do we choose to owe our allegiance? We have been told many times that we all were once slaves to sin, but Christ has paid the price for our freedom from sin. Knowing that, don't we owe our allegiance to God? Shouldn't we serve God with our lives? Shouldn't our new and first priority be to live for Christ? It has been said and I believe it is true; you cannot be a slave to two different masters. The word slavery implies an absolute allegiance and obedience. We are to be wholehearted in our commitment to walk with Christ every day of our lives. What is your first priority in your life?

Continuing with verses 22 to 23, Paul shares the good news that being alive to God in Christ means we have a new future, of eternal life with God. Before we chose to live in God we were slaves to sin, and our future was grim for it was death, for the consequence of sin is death, which is the wages or pay for sin. Paul's point was clear: if you serve sin and evil, you will receive the promised payment for such service, which is death.

But when we choose to be alive to God in Christ, we have been freed from sin and placed in a new relationship with God in Christ, we have a new future which is eternal life. This new future we cannot earn for it is a totally free gift, totally given at God's discretion. It is a new kind of life, a new lifestyle for sure. A life to be experienced both now and beyond this present life.

This is the life we can choose. This is how we are able to live triumphantly for we have been freed by Christ from our bondage to sin, and we are assured of eternal life with God. It is truly a great motivation to live true to the One who has freed us!

Paul's letter to the Romans reminds us that God's grace releases us from the sin and shame we amass when we wander away from Him. Becoming free from the weights of this life, and placing our trust in the divine, allows us to focus on God. Psalm 13 in verse 5 addresses what allows us to release when it says, "I trusted in your steadfast love." Amen.

**Benediction:**

Do not ever be afraid to welcome others. Bring your welcoming, accepting spirit to all those whom you meet. May God go with you on your journey this week and all of your days. May the God of peace and mercy, send us into His world with confident joy. Ay we allow Him to help us to reach out to others and care for them as you always care for us. AMEN.