

Home Service for August 3, 2025

Welcome and Announcements

You may also find listening to some of your favorite hymns helpful in worship.

May the kindling of God warm our souls. May the winds of the Spirit nudge us onward. May the love of Christ transform us anew.

Call to Worship:

Give thanks to God, for God's steadfast love lasts forever.

God accompanies us in our distress, as we cross the threshold to worship's blessings. Give thanks to our God, for God's steadfast love abides with us. Let us enter this space for worship, celebrating God's works for humankind.

Opening Prayer:

Spirit of hope and renewal, as the dawn nudges us awake, summon us with your presence. Wrap us with the cloak of your wisdom and grace. As your light breaks the horizon this day, help us see the love revealed in your realm. Nourish us with your wisdom and guide us with your hope, for we hunger to know you better. Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

God of glory, you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world, to reveal your love for all people. We confess that our sin and pride hide the brightness of your light. We turn away from the poor; we ignore cries for justice; we do not strive for peace. Forgive us, God. In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin, and renew us once again with your Spirit, so that, as forgiven and renewed people, we may reflect the love and life of Jesus Christ into our world. Amen

Words of Assurance:

Our God is a God of grace and mercy and love; know that our sins have been forgiven. May we be strengthened in all goodness. Since we have been raised with Christ, let us seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Read Psalm 107:1-9

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

² Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story—
those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,

³ those he gathered from the lands,
from east and west, from north and south.^[a]

⁴ Some wandered in desert wastelands,
finding no way to a city where they could settle.

⁵ They were hungry and thirsty,
and their lives ebbed away.

⁶ Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.

⁷ He led them by a straight way
to a city where they could settle.

⁸ Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love
and his wonderful deeds for mankind,

⁹ for he satisfies the thirsty
and fills the hungry with good things.

Prayers of the People:

Lord, we stand in line for tickets, books, and gadgets. We place our energy in gathering things that might be of monetary value at some later point and justify this action by stating that it is for our children's good. When we have gathered enough, we tend to relax and say to ourselves that it is all right for us to "eat, drink, and be merry". We have done our best. But have we? Have we given thought to how we have given our best in service to others? Have we spent so much time gathering and building bigger containers for our trinkets, that we have overlooked the good we could have done? We are indeed foolish people, Lord. We want everything, yet the most important things are not the trinkets but the good that is offered to others. We have gathered here this day, asking for your healing mercies for people and situations that impact our lives. We place our trust in your compassionate love. Help us to gather peace, joy, justice, and hope as gifts to be given abundantly to all. Bring us again to your mercy and care, for we ask this in Jesus' 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 Old Testament Lesson: Hosea 11:1-11

“When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
² But the more they were called,
the more they went away from me.^[a]
They sacrificed to the Baals
and they burned incense to images.
³ It was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
taking them by the arms;
but they did not realize
it was I who healed them.
⁴ I led them with cords of human kindness,
with ties of love.
To them I was like one who lifts
a little child to the cheek,
and I bent down to feed them.
⁵ “Will they not return to Egypt
and will not Assyria rule over them
because they refuse to repent?
⁶ A sword will flash in their cities;
it will devour their false prophets
and put an end to their plans.
⁷ My people are determined to turn from me.
Even though they call me God Most High,
I will by no means exalt them.
⁸ “How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, Israel?
How can I treat you like Admah?
How can I make you like Zeboyim?
My heart is changed within me;
all my compassion is aroused.

⁹ I will not carry out my fierce anger,
nor will I devastate Ephraim again.
For I am God, and not a man—
the Holy One among you.
I will not come against their cities.
¹⁰ They will follow the Lord;
he will roar like a lion.
When he roars,
his children will come trembling from the west.
¹¹ They will come from Egypt,
trembling like sparrows,
from Assyria, fluttering like doves.
I will settle them in their homes,”
declares the Lord.

Read the Epistle Lesson: Colossians 3:1-11

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your ^[a] life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.
⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ^[b] ⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸ But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹ Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Read the Gospel Lesson: Luke 12:13-21

Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

¹⁴ Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” ¹⁵ Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

¹⁶ And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. ¹⁷ He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

¹⁸ “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. ¹⁹ And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’

²⁰ “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

²¹ “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

Message

The very first thing we want to remember this morning is that God is not unhappy with those who are wealthy. Having lots of money is not a sin. To be wealthy and rich does not oppose any of God’s laws. In fact, for the believer, we realize this can be a great blessing if it would be according to God’s will to make someone wealthy. Our Gospel and Epistle lessons fit perfectly together today. We are reminded that our trust and confidence is not in ourselves, our riches or our wealth but in God who provides. Again, wealth and prosperity is not a sin and is not wrong. God does not dwell upon it. But over and over again, Scripture warns everyone, because of our sinful nature, to be careful. God says to guard against all kinds of greed. There is the warning: Guard against the love of money, not money, but the love of money, against all kinds of greed.

For in the Gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ reminds us of the special relationship believers have with him. Our association with Jesus is the most important bond we have with anyone or anything. By faith we are bound to Jesus for time. For eternity. Worldly treasures perish. The love of our heavenly Father for his children is eternal and Perfect. While our Epistle lesson has words specifically pointed at believers. By grace God calls the believer out of darkness into his marvelous light! The life a believer lives after being called to faith is called a sanctified life. The Holy Spirit makes people holy by changing their hearts of stone into hearts of flesh. The Holy Spirit has sanctified the believer by this great change. Believers are made holy to lead and to live holy lives. We are to live holy lives by the power of Christ living in us. We live holy lives by the power of the resurrection of our Savior living in us.

So we ask: Do you have enough? This is an age old question. Our gracious God gives us daily bread, each and every day. But it seems that we are always still striving for just a little bit more. A little more will make us happier. Content.

Godliness with contentment is great gain. It takes faith in the Lord's loving care to be content. Earth bound attitudes will not bring contentment. May we learn contentment with God's gifts.

Let's face it: everything we desperately desire can disappear like vapor. One day earthly treasures are the desire of our hearts. The next day they may all be gone. Disappeared. Think of the people in Texas with the recent flood. Possessions, houses, and even entire communities are gone, let alone the lives lost. Jesus warned the people of his day to guard against all greed. They had very little in comparison to the worldly stuff we possess. Greed still rules the hearts of many today. Greed is a distraction that hinders our relationship with Jesus. That love for money is tempting. Only godliness can or will bring contentment.

We make many choices in our lives. Some are bad. Some are good and God-pleasing. We know how challenging it can be to stand toe to toe against our enemies. Earthly life deceives us with offers of a life of luxury. Earthly treasures. Our human nature wants to give up and give in to temporary treasures and pleasures. We want to be just like everyone else. The world wants us to surrender our Christian convictions and adapt to its wickedness. Being rich towards God matters most.

We are well aware of the strong pull of earthly treasures. We can see, feel, and touch the things of this world. Our Triune God is real. We cannot physically see or touch him. It is by grace through faith that we know, believe, and confess Christ is our only true and lasting treasure. The Holy Spirit works faith into our hearts. Our loving, heavenly Father provides blessing after blessing to strengthen our faith. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, became poor so that we will be rich. Forever. Perfectly. We can and must say "NO" to temptations. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Our loving, heavenly Father has graciously and abundantly provided for us in the past, in the present and most certainly also in the future. This truth moves us to be rich toward God. We will want to focus our attention on the spiritual rather than earthly. The righteousness of Jesus freely, completely covers up our unrighteousness. Our Savior gives us the peace the world does not and cannot give. Forgiveness. Faith gives us eternal joy in this sad, sad world. Righteousness and peace and joy freely given by the Lord makes us rich toward God. It is always all that matters.

Today God's word is still God's word. God's word and its meaning for our lives has not changed and will not change, for "You have been raised with Christ". The power of the resurrection of Jesus, our Savior, continues to live in believers. Daily we are being renewed though outwardly we are wasting away. The truth and the

power of God's word is our strength. This is not physical strength but spiritual. As we grow older our bodies do wear out. As we grow in the wisdom and knowledge of God our souls are strengthened. We are reminded time and again to put our hope in the Lord, not men.

"You have been raised with Christ". This statement reminds us of the importance of always remembering Easter, Jesus' resurrection. We may not daily think of Easter. Why do we worship on Sunday? We worship on Sunday because it was the day of the week that Jesus rose from the dead. It reminds us of the importance of Christ's resurrection. This is the power of Christ that is alive and well in us. This is the power of Christ that we reflect in our lives as shining lights in this sin-darkened world. This great power of Christ alive in us means nothing is impossible with God!

We have to admit that we are all too often a bit too preoccupied with the things of this world. Our lives, Our earthly treasures, but when we are thankful for God's gracious gifts we understand what it means to be rich toward God. Rather than looking inward we are to look upward. The less we concentrate on earthly treasures the more we are rich toward God. So may we "BE ON GUARD AGAINST ALL GREED," for earthly treasures do not matter. Being rich toward God is what really matters. Amen.

Benediction:

*May we secure the cords of kindness
and the bands of love on the path forward.
May we clothe ourselves in cloaks of renewal,
building the realm of God here on earth.
May we celebrate the steadfast love of God
and embracing Christ's presence.
Surely God journeys with us forever. Amen!*