

Home Service for June 21, 2026

Welcome and Announcements

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

Happy Father's Day!

Loving God, Our Lord Jesus Christ called you Father. Remembering his love for you, we pray today for all human fathers. May they be like Abraham, welcoming you with hospitality and laughter, and receiving in return a legacy of faith for generations to come. May they rely upon your grace as they answer the call of parenting. And may they show to their children the compassion of Jesus Christ, who responds to human suffering and need with limitless love. In Jesus's name, we pray. Amen.

Following the leader was simple in childhood. But following our leader, Christ Jesus, is far from simple—and often entails dangers, toils, and snares that only grace can guide us through.

Call to Worship:

Through many dangers, toils, and snares, we have already come.
Through days of joy and nights of fear, we've traveled this far by faith.
Through life, through death, Christ walks with us.
We are not alone. Thanks be to God!
In this promise, let's worship God together.

Opening Prayer:

Holy One, come to us now in this time of worship. Be present our lives, that you may hear our cries, and speak to our souls. Give us your strength, that we may live all the days of our lives in steadfast faith and hope. Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

Merciful God, hear our prayer. Hear the cries of our hearts and the needs of our souls. When we are cast aside or falling apart, hold us in your arms of love. Help us sing once again of your love and proclaim your strength and grace. Show us signs of your goodness, your presence, and your love, over and over again. Teach our hearts that we never walk alone. In your mercy and grace, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance:

*God is a wonder-worker, and Christ is the wonder of love in our midst.
This wondrous love is enough for every trouble we face.*

Read Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17

Hear me, Lord, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.

² Guard my life, for I am faithful to you;
save your servant who trusts in you.

You are my God; ³ have mercy on me, Lord,
for I call to you all day long.

⁴ Bring joy to your servant, Lord,
for I put my trust in you.

⁵ You, Lord, are forgiving and good,
abounding in love to all who call to you.

⁶ Hear my prayer, Lord;
listen to my cry for mercy.

⁷ When I am in distress, I call to you,
because you answer me.

⁸ Among the gods there is none like you, Lord;
no deeds can compare with yours.

⁹ All the nations you have made
will come and worship before you, Lord;
they will bring glory to your name.

¹⁰ For you are great and do marvelous deeds;
you alone are God.

¹⁶ Turn to me and have mercy on me;
show your strength in behalf of your servant;
save me, because I serve you
just as my mother did.

¹⁷ Give me a sign of your goodness,
that my enemies may see it and be put to shame,
for you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Prayers of the People:

Lord Jesus, you reached out to us in our distress and lifted us up. You give us new life and we are grateful. For some of us this has been a wonderful week; but for others trials and troubles seem to crowd into their lives. We ask your loving

presence with all your people, O Lord. Heal our wounded spirits; restore a sense of joy in our lives. Today we name in our hearts and with our voices those who are in need of your healing love. We also pray for those we may not even know that grieve the loss of a loved one or the loss of their health or even the loss of their independence. We thank you that you reach out to them, to all those whom we have named and for those whose names are in our hearts. Help us to be witnesses to the power of Jesus Christ to make those changes in our lives. As we pray the prayer your Son taught us:

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: Genesis 21:8-21

The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. ⁹ But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, ¹⁰ and she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac."

¹¹ The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. ¹² But God said to him, "Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring^[a] will be reckoned. ¹³ I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring."

¹⁴ Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the Desert of Beersheba.

¹⁵ When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. ¹⁶ Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she thought, "I cannot watch the boy die." And as she sat there, she^[b] began to sob.

¹⁷ God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. ¹⁸ Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation."

¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. ²¹ While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.

Read the Epistle Lesson: Romans 6:1b-11

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with,^[a] that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Read the Gospel Lesson: Matthew 10:24-39

“The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

²⁶ “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.^[a] ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

³² “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

³⁴ “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn

“a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—

³⁶ a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’^[b]

³⁷ “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

Message

What do you fear? I think all of us fear something and many times more than one thing. They even have fancy names for many of our fears. I have claustrophobia, so small confined spaces are not well liked especially the older MRI tubes or tunnels. Are you afraid of spider? Do you fear lightning and thunder? Some people fear heights and won’t even climb ladders. We all fear rejection. That is why walking into a room full of strangers is a bit unsettling. Is there a way to overcome our fears no matter what they are? Our greatest comfort in any fear that we might face is knowing that someone really cares. At times there can be nothing more frightening than loneliness. Knowing that someone cares for us can make all the difference in the world. Today’s Gospel is a reminder of just how much God cares for us. God’s promise of care and concern for his people extends from the pages of the Old Testament into the New Testament and even right into our own lives today.

We take our theme today from the words of Jesus in our Gospel when he said, “So do not be afraid.” Why? We are valuable in God’s eyes so we should be sharing God’s valuable message. Jesus spoke these words to prepare his disciples for missionary work, the work of telling others about their sin and their savior. They would be well prepared for this effort because Jesus had given his disciples the power to heal the sick and drive out demons. Still, their task would not be easy.

Jesus warned his disciples that since he had been harassed, the disciples could expect to be hassled too and this should not surprise them. Think for a moment, that is a good reminder for us is not it? Although we would love it if news about Jesus was always as welcomed as a coupon for a free ice cream cone on a hot

summer day, telling others about Jesus does not always get a joyful response, not even from those who should know better like people who grew up in the church. But we should not become discouraged. Jesus was often rejected and so will we if we are truly his followers. Today Jesus is assuring his disciples and each of us that we are valuable in God's eyes.

Jesus provides his disciples with another encouraging solution to combat their fears. For in verse 28 He reminds everyone that men, no matter how wicked, cannot kill the soul. They can only harm the body. We are to have respect and honor God, who is the Author of life. Have you ever felt lonely? This can easily happen even though we are surrounded by family and friends and many others who care for you. Our gracious God and loving Father always reminds us that we are valuable. Since we are valuable and important in God's eyes, he will not leave us nor forsake us. In Hebrews 13:5-6 it states: "God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.' So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?'" At times we may turn away from God, but God never ever turns away from us.

It is true that in this life we may be persecuted. In this life we may face severe difficulties, hardships, heartaches, and even sorrows. Sometimes the world around us may even heap scorn and abuse upon us for the faith that is ours by grace. But rest assured that in the end, it is eternity that really matters. Rest assured that our loving Father has everything in control for our eternal welfare. We need to fear, love, and respect God above all things!

Today we rejoice and are eternally grateful for God's free gift of grace that comes to each and every one of us through his Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Our eternal destination is so very, very important that God does not and cannot entrust our eternity to anyone but his Son. Simply put, we cannot save ourselves. We cannot pay the price for our salvation. We cannot earn heaven. We cannot pray our way into heaven or believe "hard enough". Rather, we are simply, freely saved by God's grace, his undeserved love for us undeserving Christians. As GALATIANS 1:4 states: "The Lord Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father." We need to praise God! No wonder Jesus boldly declares: Do not be afraid!

We also live in a time of fear. The media loves to exploit the fears that our modern age seems to offer at every turn. Therefore, God's choice is as important as ever in our lives. God's choice is important not just for ourselves but especially for those sitting in the darkness of fear all around us. We are reminded of God's grace; a Father's undeserved love for his disobedient children. By no choice of our own and

by no doing of our own God has saved us. So do not be afraid. Share God's valuable message with others. Christians have a simple truth of comfort in any and every situation. Boldly Jesus declares to each and every one of us: "So do not be afraid..." God's word reminds us again and again and over and over that we really have no reason to be lonely, frightened, or terrified, for God is with us. The fact is: we are valuable in God's eyes. We are so valuable in God's eyes that he sent his Son to die in our place. God sent his Son to pay that price that we could not afford. This is God's valuable message that we know, believe, confess, and live. This is God's valuable message that we are privileged to share with the many who still feel lonely, frightened, and terrified. That message is simply stated in Psalm 27 verse 1: "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" For believers, for Jesus' followers, for Christians great blessings await and that is eternal life with Jesus in heaven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Benediction:

Guided by God, we go into the world.

Led by Christ, we go with love and grace.

Strengthened by the Spirit, we go to make the world a better place.

Amen and Amen.