



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

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July 30, 2023 – 11:00 am

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost



He has told you, human one, what is good and
what the LORD requires from you:
to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with your God.
Micah 6:8 (CEB)

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

*Welcome to our service of worship. Although we are worshipping in a variety of locations, we still affirm that God is present in our worship, whether in-person or virtually. Our prayer is that all who worship with us this day will truly feel the presence of God in this time. Know that you are loved and we are so glad you are here! Parts of today's liturgy are from *The Office of Theology and Worship for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, Book of Common Worship, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018); the Presbyterian Mission Agency, "8 Habits of Evangelism," <https://8habits.org/>; and LiturgyLink, <https://www.liturgylink.net>.*

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *Simple Blessings*

CHARITY BOYLES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN #485: *To God Be the Glory

FANNY JANE CROSBY

To God be the glory, great things He hath done!
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the life gate that all may go in.

Refrain:

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the people rejoice!

O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory: great things He hath done.

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see. **[Refrain]**

***OPENING SENTENCES**

"LITANY FOR URBAN MINISTRY," DELORES CARPENTER, ADAPT. FROM *AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE HYMNAL*

God tells us to spread the good news on the mountains, over the valleys, in the "hood," on street corners, in sanctuaries, in our homes, everywhere.

We go in faith and joy to tell the good news of God's unconditional love for all people.

God calls us to be in covenant relationships and covenant ministries: To love and care, to share and clothe, to feed and nurture, to counsel and teach, to be committed to the health and well-being of our communities.

We are called to be the living church in the world. The Church is the body of Christ, beyond these walls.

We go in faith to minister in hospitals, prisons, schools, high rises, business centers, city centers, rural and urban spaces, in places where people are gathered or scattered we go.

***GATHERING PRAYER**

Mighty and merciful God,
lover of justice and equity,
you call us to support the weak,
to help those who suffer,
and to honor all people.
By the power of your Holy Spirit,
make us advocates for your justice
and instruments of your peace,
so that all may be reconciled
in your beloved community;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. ***Amen.***

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

"Teach Us to Live," Nathan Williams

Risen Christ, fill us with your Spirit.
and speak peace to us through these words of scripture.
As we hear you, let our love overflow
with knowledge and insight,
and teach us to live in you,
to the glory and praise of God. ***Amen.***

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

MICAH 6:6-8

PEW BIBLE, 1129

ACTS 6:1-7

PEW BIBLE, 1331

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

AN OFFERING OF OUR PLEDGES

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY #428:** *We Give Thee But Thine Own*

WILLIAM WALSHAM HOW

We give Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

*BLESSING OUR GIFTS

***HYMN OF THE DAY #769 (GLORY TO GOD):** *For Everyone Born*

SHIRLEY ERENA MURRAY

For everyone born, a place at the table,
for everyone born, clean water and bread,
a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
for everyone born, a star overhead.

Refrain:

And God will delight when we are creators
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:
yes, God will delight when we are creators
of justice, justice and joy

For woman and man, a place at the table,
revising the roles, deciding the share,
with wisdom and grace dividing the power,
for woman and man, a system that's fair. **[Refrain]**

For young and for old, a place at the table,
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,
for young and for old, the right to belong. **[Refrain]**

For everyone born, a place at the table,
to live without fear, and simply to be,
to work, to speak out, to witness and worship,
for everyone born, the right to be free. **[Refrain]**

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

Let us come together to tell the truth about ourselves.

*Creative and loving God,
you have searched us out and known us
and all that we are is open to you.
We confess that we have sinned:
we have put up walls between ourselves and you,
closing our hearts to your gifts.
We have failed to respect and honor
the gifts you have given us in creation,
earth and all living things.
We squander the inheritance of generations to come.*

*We have sinned against each other:
we have put up walls between ourselves and our neighbors,
giving into fear, ignorance, and arrogance.
We are stained by the sin of racism
and fail to respect the gifts of all your peoples.*

*We have used our power to dominate
and our weakness to manipulate;
we have evaded responsibility
and failed to confront evil;
we have trusted false gods
and listened to their promises;
we have denied dignity
to ourselves and to each other;
we have fallen into deep despair.
In our despair we have forgotten you,
and have gone away from your path.*

*Forgive us for what we have done to hurt others
and the ways we have hurt the earth.
Give us your blessing and help.
Let us walk in your great love;
through the great peacemaker,
your Son, Jesus Christ.*

Silent prayer

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

I proclaim to you in the name of our creative and loving God that:

You are enough.

You are forgiven.

You are loved.

Alleluia! Thanks be to God!

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE: *Spirit of the Living God*

DANIEL IVERSON

Spirit of the Living God,
Fall afresh on me,
Spirit of the Living God,
Fall afresh on me.
Break me, melt me, mold me, fill me.
Spirit of the Living God,
Fall afresh on me.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *May This Journey (Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer)*

WORDS & MUSIC BY MARGARET BECKER & KEITH GETTY

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *"Habit 5 – Justice"*

REV. PHILLIPS

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

FROM THE CONFESSION OF BELHAR

We believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
who gathers, protects and nourishes the Church
from the beginning of the world to the end.

***The Church is holy; the Church is universal;
it is the fellowship of God's children,
called together from the whole of humanity
to proclaim God's wonderful deeds.***

We believe that the reconciling work of Christ
gives birth to a uniting Church,
because Church unity is a gift from God
and a goal we need to strive for.

***The unity of the Church must become visible
so that the people around us can see
how separation and hatred are overcoming in Christ.***

We believe that genuine faith in Jesus Christ
is the only condition for membership in this Christian church.

***We praise God that race, class, gender, or culture
does not determine who belongs to this Church.***

We believe that God has entrusted to the Church
the message of reconciliation;
and that the Church is called
to proclaim and embody this reconciliation;
to be peacemakers,
and to believe and to witness that God conquers all powers
of sin and death, of hate, bitterness and enmity,
through his life-giving Word and Spirit.

***We praise God that the gospel does not separate people
on the basis of race, gender, class, or culture,
but is the power of reconciliation in Christ.***

We believe that God wants to bring about true justice
and lasting peace on earth;
we believe that God is, in a special sense,
the God of the suffering, the poor and the downtrodden.

***We praise God who gives justice to the oppressed
and bread to the hungry;
who sets captives free and makes the blind to see;
who protects strangers, orphans, and widows
and obstructs the plans of the wicked.***

We believe that the Church belongs to God
and that it should stand where God stands:

against injustice and with those who are wronged.
***We commit ourselves to reject all forms of injustice
in ourselves and amongst us;
and to struggle against all forms of injustice
and every teaching that allows injustices to flourish.***

We are called to confess and do all this
in obedience to Jesus Christ, our only Lord,
even if authorities or laws oppose this,
even if punishment and suffering may be the consequence.
***Jesus is Lord! We will follow Him!
To the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory for ever and ever.***

THE LORD'S PRAYER

***...Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.***

***CLOSING HYMN #434:** *Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples*

H. KENN CARMICHAEL

Today we are all called to be
Disciples of the Lord,
To help to set the captives free,
Make plow-share out of sword,
To feed the hungry, quench their thirst,
Make love and peace our fast,
To serve the poor and homeless first,
Our ease and comfort last.

God made the world and at its birth
Ordained our human race
To live as stewards of the earth,
Responding to God's grace.
But we are vain and sadly proud,
We sow not peace but strife,
Our discord spreads a deadly cloud
That threatens all of life.

Pray justice may come rolling down
As in a mighty stream,
With righteousness in field and town
To cleanse us and redeem.
For God is longing to restore
An earth where conflicts cease,
A world that was created for
A harmony of peace.

May we in service to our God
Act out the living word,
And walk the road the saints have trod
Till all have seen and heard.

As stewards of the earth may we
Give thanks in one accord
To God who calls us all to be
Disciples of the Lord.

***SENDING**

ADAPT. FROM AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE HYMNAL

*We acknowledge that often the teachings of Jesus were at the table before, after or during a meal.
Bread and wine are sacramental symbols of his abiding presence with us, and of his anticipated return.*

Whether for food or fellowship, nourishment and nurture are set at the family table.

*Lord God, make us aware of the hunger in the world: of children who are deprived of an
adequate breakfast and of seniors who do not have the income necessary for an adequate diet.*

As we give thanks for your provision, may we do our part in responding to human need.

*May we become concerned and involved in the alleviation of hunger, wherever it is found.
Help us to realize there is much we can do.*

May we open our hearts and use our resources to ease pain and hurt.

CHORAL BENEDICTION: *Shalom to You*

ELISE S. ESLINGER

Shalom to you now, Shalom, my friends.
May God's full mercies bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving,
Christ be your Shalom, Christ be your Shalom.

POSTLUDE: *O Worship the King*

FRANKLIN RITTER/TUNE LYONS BY J. MICHAEL HAYDN

** Please stand in body or spirit.*

This Week's Calendar:

Sunday, July 30th - Nineth Sunday after Pentecost & Helping Hand Fund Collection

11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)

Wednesday, August 2nd

6:30 –Choir Practice

Sunday, August 6th - Tenth Sunday after Pentecost & Communion

11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)



Session

Moderator: Rev. Jon Phillips

Clerk: Randy Cousins

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

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