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Worship
February 28, 2021

(To watch the videotaped version of the worship service, click the link below)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/Uct8qX94ICK-omDHSc71en4w>

GATHERING

PRELUDE – “With Our Eyes on the Cross”

Erin/Kristan

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

OPENING HYMN – “In These Days of Lenten Journey”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Come, people of God, and worship the Christ.

Reader: Once we were separated from him, aliens and strangers who did not belong, without hope and without God in the world.

Once we loved darkness rather than light. Once we could not sing the Lord’s song.

But now we are joined with Christ, brought near through his blood, for He is our peace.

Now we who lived in darkness have come into the light have been given a new song.

Let us come and worship the Living Light of Christ!

A BRIEF CONFESSION

Pastor: Let us confess our sins, trusting in the abundant grace of Christ.

(A moment of silence)

Congregation: You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin: our own sins and the broken systems that bind us.

We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love.

We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to consider the generations to come.

Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone.

Yet we are forgiven by our God through the Risen Christ, and we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ’s justice and the Spirit’s reconciling peace. Amen

GREETING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Be filled with the spirit of God today.

C: We worship to open our hearts for God’s blessings.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading

Genesis 17:1-7,15-16

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

Reader: Here what the spirit is saying to us.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Psalm 22: 23-31

**You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
For he did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
he did not hide his face from me,
but heard when I cried to him.**

**From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD.
May your hearts live forever!**

**All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD;**

and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.
For dominion belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.

To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.
Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,
and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

Reader: Here what the spirit is saying to us.
Response: Thanks be to God.

PSALM RESPONSE – “I Will Praise You Lord”

GOSPEL READING

Mark 8:31-38

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, ‘Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.’

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.’

Reader: Here what the spirit is saying to us.
Response: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY – “To the Desert Follow Me”

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that God is Spirit, and we worship Him and must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

We believe that God is Light, and that if we walk in the light, we then have fellowship not only with one another, but with our Lord as well.

We believe that God is Love, and that everyone who loves is born of God and know God. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life and that whoever believes on Him, will abide forever.

(from the Book of Common Worship by Wilbur P Thirkield)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: As we are guided by the Spirit, let us offer our prayers for the church, for the nation, for all in need, and for our world.

(A brief silence)

Pastor: Gracious God, in this time of worry, fear, division, uncertainty, we pray that you will bring insight, compassion, understanding, and strength of character to our leaders of communities, churches, states, and nation that calm and direction will be restored to our people. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Congregation: Gracious God, we pray that we shall use wisely all the gifts of our world: the water that provides life to us all; the land that provides our food; for you call us to be good stewards of all that you have made, and we ask that you let it be so. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord, we pray for the safety of all who protect us: police officers and firefighters, military personnel, peacekeepers, and for the leaders of governments. We pray that all act with justice and understanding to all whom they encounter. And Lord, we pray for the time when peace will come, and violence will be no more. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Congregation: We pray for our world, nation, and community in the midst of this Covid-19 pandemic. We know that health care workers are having to make difficult decisions of life and death. Give them wisdom in those decisions. Give strength that they may give care to those suffering with Covid and other diseases, and we ask that you would protect them from illness and despair. We also pray for all who are ill here at Bethany and we ask for hand of wholeness and healing; comfort and strength for all who are ill of body, mind, or spirit. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pastor: Listen to each of us Lord, as we come to you in this moment of silent prayer.

It is into Your hands, great and compassionate God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God of all blessings, giver of all good gifts; day by day you shower us with what we need to live and prosper. With glad and generous hearts and in a response to thanksgiving, we return a portion of our wealth. May what we give be a symbol of our gratitude and a blessing of your love for those who may be helped through our offering. Amen.

MEAL

Communion Dialogue

P: For the spiritual hunger in our lives, Jesus said:

C: Eat this bread.

P: For the spiritual longing to have fellowship with God, Jesus said:

C: Drink this cup.

P: Jesus is the Bread of life, the risen Lord.

C: In him there is no hunger, in him there is no thirst.

P: On the night he was betrayed ...

Communion Invitation

P: Come to God's table; be fed and satisfied.

C: We come to feed our spirit and be in the presence of God.

Communion Music – “Take Up Your Cross”

Erin

Communion Blessing

P: Let us pray:

C: Radiant God, may your Word take flesh in us that we may be your holy people. May this meal empower us to better be your loving servants. AMEN.

THE 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.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ fill you with every good blessing. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN – “In the Cross of Christ I Glory”

DISMISSAL

Paster: Go in Peace...to live and serve in the way of the cross.

Response: Thanks be to God.