

Newtonville United Methodist Church

Sunday Worship for September 13, 2020

Centering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship (from Exodus 15):

O Lord, majestic in holiness, who is like you?

In the greatness of your majesty you overthrew your adversaries.

O Lord, awesome in splendor, who is like you?

Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power, shattered the enemy.

O Lord, worker of wonders, who is like you?

Sing to the Lord, my strength and my might, you are my salvation!

Litany of Praise: "Who Is Like You, O God?" by Eugene Blair

I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed.

Our enemies have been thrown into the sea; they threaten us no more.

The Lord is my strength. The Lord gives me a song to sing.

The Lord has been our God, our strength, our praise for many generations.

The Lord is greatly to be feared by those who do evil.

The right hand of the Lord is sure, full of excellence, power and righteousness.

You cast your enemies into the sea with breath from your nostrils.

Who is like you, O God, glorious and holy?

All people will hear of your glorious power and will give you praise.

The mightiest of all nations will fall down and worship you.

Musical Reflection

Morning Prayer:

When we look over our shoulders at fear shadowing us today, you go before us into tomorrow, making a path through the sea of yesterday's doubts. When our legs tremble from the effort of standing up for what you hope for all creation, you are at our side, offering your heart's strength.

Cloud of Grace, we offer our love to you.

When we turn our hearts into deserts of stony bitterness, you transform them into oases of joy.

When we come up with all sorts of rules for those who come to us seeking to find you, you tear up the list, stretching wide your arms in welcoming grace.

Servant of all, we offer our lives to you.

When we would clasp old worries to our hearts, you open our eyes to that hope which paves the path ahead of us. When we spend each day consumed with doubts and fears, you remind us that this day is the time to honor God, by serving God's children.

Mist of Mercy, we offer our hearts to you.

God in Community, Holy in One, as you are all to us, so we would offer all we are to you, even as we pray as Jesus taught us: **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. Amen.**

Children's Message: Sandy Rivenburg

Scripture Lessons: Exodus 14:19-31; Matthew 18:21-35

Message: "Through the Wilderness: Into the Sea"

Musical Reflection

The Great Thanksgiving:

May the God of hope be with you!

And also with you!

God, our God, leads us through the flood of fears into the future of wonder and hope.

We open our hearts to the One who journeys with us, in the past, in the present, into tomorrow.

God goes before us, preparing the Table piled high with grace and peace.

We sing songs of glad thanksgiving to the One who fills us with goodness and mercy.

You stretched out your hand, Cloud of Glory, parting a way through chaos, so your goodness might come forth. You looked, and laughed out loud, as seas ran forth in joy, mountains played leapfrog, and hills hopscotched with valleys. Creation became a sanctuary for those created in your image. But we decided to live for ourselves, every day becoming one in which we could turn your dreams to ashes, your overflowing love into dust bowls of despair. Out of pity, you sent the prophets, those pillars of faithfulness, but we wrangled with their gentle words. So, you sent Jesus, to lead us through evil's deeps, to that freedom found only in your kingdom of life. Therefore, on this day, when we stand in your grace around your Table of life, we join our voices with all who offer praise to the One who saves:

Living, we serve others in God's name; serving, we die unto ourselves; dying, we are given life eternal with God. Blessed is the One who comes forgiving us more times than we can count.

Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you, Cloud of Joy, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Servant. When we were weak in faith, he came to strengthen us with your everlasting hope; when we were slaves to sin, he came to lead us into the promised land of mercy; when our hearts became like flint, he softened them with compassion; when we could only focus on ourselves, he came to die for us. As we gather at your Table, we remember his love for us, his patience with our failings, his hope in our willingness to follow, his trust in that mystery we call faith:

Baptized in Christ, we would live for him; forgiven through Christ, we would emulate him; putting on Christ, we wait for his return. Alleluia! Amen!

Creator God, send your Spirit in peace upon us and these simple gifts of the bread and of the cup. As we share the bread, we share the presence of Christ, strengthened to go out with forgiveness in our hearts. As we pass the cup, we share Christ's Spirit with our neighbors, and are called to welcome all as our sisters and brothers, especially those held captive by the bitterness of the world. As you gathered your children to lead them to that promised land, so you will bring all your children from the very ends of time itself, to seat us around your heart, where we will feast on your grace, lifting our hearts to praise you forever: God our Maker, Christ our Brother, Spirit our Compassion, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Sending Forth:

In every person, God is with us.

We will welcome God in the family we know all too well, and in the strangers we will meet in the coming days.

In every choice, Jesus is with us.

We will welcome the Christ who serves us unexpectedly, and in those who will offer us forgiveness.

In every moment, the Spirit is with us.

We will welcome the Spirit who calls us to live as well as calling us to give of ourselves without question.

Thank you for worshiping with us today! If you wish to make an offering this morning you may leave it in one of the baskets at the front or rear of the sanctuary as you exit. Please depart as directed at the conclusion of the service. For the latest news and updates go to www.numc.net. Online programs for children age 4 through grade 7 begins next Sunday, September 20. See the website for details. The church office is now staffed Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 am to noon. Please call ahead.