

# **Worship Service**

*November 8, 2020*

## **GATHERING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

## **UPDATE FROM SHETEK LUTHERAN MINISTRIES**

## **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (ELW p. 119)**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth,  
our light and our salvation.

**Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.*

We give you thanks, O God,  
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters  
and by your Word you created the world,  
calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.  
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.  
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,  
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,  
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.  
Shower us with your Spirit,  
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise  
through Jesus Christ our Lord  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **GATHERING SONG *Steal Away* (TFF 175)**

## Steal Away

*Refrain*

Steal a - way, steal a - way, steal a - way to Je - sus!

Steal a - way, steal a - way home, I ain't got long to stay here.

1 My Lord are calls me, he calls me by the thun - der;  
2 Green trees are bend - ing, poor sin - ners stand a - trem - bling;  
3 Tomb - stones are burst - ing, poor sin - ners stand a - trem - bling;  
4 My Lord are calls me, he calls me by the light - ning;

*Refrain*

the trum - pet sounds with - in - a my soul, I ain't got long to stay here.

Text: African American spiritual  
Music: STEAL AWAY, African American spiritual

### Words

#### Steal Away

#### Refrain

Steal away, steal away,  
steal away to Jesus!

Steal away, steal away home,  
I ain't got long to stay here!

1 My Lord calls me,  
he calls me by the thunder;  
the trumpet sounds within-a my soul,  
I ain't got long to stay here. Refrain

2 Green trees are bending,  
poor sinners stand a-trembling;  
the trumpet sounds within-a my soul,  
I ain't got long to stay here. Refrain

3 Tombstones are bursting,  
poor sinners stand a-trembling;  
the trumpet sounds within-a my soul,  
I ain't got long to stay here. Refrain

4 My Lord calls me,  
he calls me by the lightning,  
the trumpet sounds within-a my soul,  
I ain't got long to stay here. Refrain

#### **GREETING (ELW p. 120)**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

#### **PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 124)**

Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

#### **WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

#### **FIRST READING: Amos 5:18-24**

A reading from Amos.

*In the days of Amos, people thought that the day of the LORD would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said liturgy is no substitute for obedience. The LORD demands justice and righteousness in the community.*

18Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord!  
Why do you want the day of the Lord?  
It is darkness, not light;  
19as if someone fled from a lion,  
and was met by a bear;  
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,  
and was bitten by a snake.  
20Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light,  
and gloom with no brightness in it?

21I hate, I despise your festivals,  
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.  
22Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,  
I will not accept them;  
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals  
I will not look upon.  
23Take away from me the noise of your songs;  
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.  
24But let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 70**

You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry. (*Ps. 70:5*)

1Be pleased, O God, to deliver me;  
O Lord, make haste to help me.  
2**Let those who seek my life be put to shame and confounded;  
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be disgraced.**  
3Let those who say to me “Aha!” and gloat over me  
turn back because of their shame.  
4**Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
let those who love your salvation say forever, “Great is the Lord!”**  
5But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quickly, O God.  
You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry.

**SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

*Some of the Thessalonians are worried that dead Christians will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them with the word of hope that all Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.*

13We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. 15For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. 16For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. 18Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **CHILDREN'S SERMON- SHETEK**

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 124)**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**  
**Lord, to whom shall we go?**  
**You have the words of eternal life.**  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

#### **GOSPEL: Matthew 25:1-13**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus tells a parable about his own second coming, emphasizing the need for readiness at all times.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 1“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. 2Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. 3When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; 4but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. 5As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. 6But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ 7Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. 8The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ 10And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. 11Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ 12But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ 13Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON (ELW p. 125)

Dear friends, grace and peace to you from Jesus Christ this day and always.

This past week, I have found myself sucked into “doom scrolling” more than I have in the past 7 months of pandemic living. The endless amount of news and information at our fingertips at a moment’s notice has captured my waking hours. Election this, coronavirus that. There are the pleasant moments that come across my news feed too, like news of new babies, marriages, and my many friends baking endeavors. As much as I want to be entranced by the good news of the important people in my life, the uncertainty of the world around us has taken a front seat in my brain. I have dear friends who often deactivate their social media in the days leading up to big world events or when life is too much. However, that kind of self-discipline is not one of my spiritual gifts. I’m sure that I’m not the only one of us who has been sucked into doom scrolling, especially lately. If this is a new term for you, it was for me too! It is thought to have been coined in 2018, but has gained popularity during this time. It is defined as the act of consuming an endless procession of negative online news. It seems as though my anxiety has anxiety and it is exhausting. We have been living in an endless cycle of pandemic concerns, a volatile political climate, extreme climate change, and a drastic shift in our sense of routine. Amidst my doom scrolling, I saw this tweet that was captioned “Timeline of 2020, to scale.” I have to admit that it made me laugh harder than I anticipated. Everything before March was labeled “prehistory,” a sliver, and thinking back, January and February were a blur. March is the biggest chunk of this timeline, where we saw everything shut down in a matter of days and hours and then drag on. April through September follow in a smaller chunk, slightly bigger than prehistory, but smaller than March. The world around us started opening again, for better or worse and then there were a few more varying segments. I think that’s a good way to sum up so much of the past 7 months. Some days it feels as if the days, weeks and months fly by and I’m barely able to catch my breath. Other times, it feels like a slow crawl and each day feels like a week in itself. I know God’s concept of time is different from our human understanding, but I hope this isn’t what it’s like in heaven!

When we turned our clocks back last weekend, more than a couple people I know said “I can’t bear to add another hour to 2020.” I don’t blame them. The question I’ve asked the most this year “how long?” The echoes of how long have risen across social media channels, over physically distant coffee dates, on zoom calls, and in the streets as people advocate for those most marginalized. It has become a part of our very being and sometimes something we can feel in our bones. That exhaustion that cannot be relieved by any amount of sleep, the reminders to drop our shoulders from our ears. There is a weariness that has become a part of the norm. This weariness is physical and spiritual. It comes in waves, where some days don’t feel as heavy and others the weight of the world is real. We yearn for the past, wait anxiously for an uncertain future, and cling to certain truths, rituals, and practices that bring comfort in the how long. One place where people find refuge is in poetry and music. This is a place where I keep going as a holy grounding space in this “how long” time.

Psalms are songs and poems that address many different points and circumstances. They are a witness of real and broken people. We have Psalms that are filled with rejoicing, gratitude, and praise. We also have Psalms for lament, sorrow, and grief. Psalms for the in-between and the waiting. That is where our scripture meets us today. When looking at the Psalm for this week, I was struck by the parallel. This witness of lament could've been written today. Psalm 70 begins with a plea, "Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me. O Lord, make haste to help me!" Hurry up, and help. You and I both know that more often than not, God does not show up like that.

We have this skit at camp called the broken down car skit, where the main character's car breaks down and they pray to God to come and fix their car and they wait. One friend comes by and offers to help, but the main character refuses and says they're waiting for God and this happens again and again. Finally, one last person comes by and asks what is happening. The main character explains how they're just waiting for God to just reach God's hand down and fix it. If only it was that easy. If only God could just reach God's hand down from the clouds on a whim to fix the brokenness in the world, like the snap of a finger.

Our world is filled with brokenness. The weariness that invades our being and this "how long" time continues to show us that. We could sit here all day with a whiteboard and write out a list of laments that plague our mind, body, and spirit right now. However, I'll spare you and I the energy of rehashing that. Being a human in the world right now is exhausting, being a Christian is even more exhausting. How do we glorify God, how do we live in the "how long?" The truth is, we aren't promised all good days. God did not promise that we would live in happiness forever, without the "how long." The words of Psalm 70 will be our cry sometimes and that is okay. Lament is a different form of praise where we ask God to be the God that God has promised to be for us. God is faithful to God's people. God promised to love God's creation. You are God's creation. God promised to be present. God is present. God promised blessings.

Last week, we heard the beatitudes. We have heard those words many times. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted... Wherever you find yourself, whether that is crying out in holy grief and longing or if you still feel caught in the beatitudes of blessing, you are held. Even when we can't see it or believe it for ourselves, God continues to be present, just as God promised. I look at the faithful servants in the healthcare field, who are stretched thin and continue to care in an ongoing pandemic. God is present there, in every hospital room. I see our educators who continue to teach and invest in our children and rise to the challenges. God is present there. I see our children, who adapt and do their best in the face of adversity. God is present there. Grief, anger, pain, and longing is holy. This space, this time is holy. God remains faithful and present in our holy grief. Wherever you find yourself in holy longing, God is present with you and for you. When we cry out, "I am poor and needy; hasten to me O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay!" Jan Richardson is a poet and I have had the pleasure of getting to know her work through my advisor at seminary. She has an incredible poem, **Beloved is Where we Begin**. It reminds of rest on the journey in the wilderness of life, but that we are no less than beloved in the struggle, the longing.

### **Beloved Is Where We Begin**

If you would enter

into the wilderness,  
do not begin  
without a blessing.

Do not leave  
without hearing  
who you are:

Beloved,  
named by the One  
who has traveled this path  
before you.

Do not go  
without letting it echo  
in your ears,  
and if you find  
it is hard  
to let it into your heart,  
do not despair.

That is what  
this journey is for.

I cannot promise  
this blessing will free you  
from danger,  
from fear,  
from hunger  
or thirst,  
from the scorching  
of sun  
or the fall



of the night.

But I can tell you  
that on this path  
there will be help.

I can tell you  
that on this way  
there will be rest.

I can tell you  
that you will know  
the strange graces  
that come to our aid  
only on a road  
such as this,  
that fly to meet us  
bearing comfort  
and strength,  
that come alongside us  
for no other cause  
than to lean themselves  
toward our ear  
and with their  
curious insistence  
whisper our name:

*Beloved.*

*Beloved.*

*Beloved.*

God is holding out God's hand to walk with you where you find yourself. God holds you in the palm of God's hand. You are a beloved Child of God. In the yearning, God is waiting to help you. Beloved and blessed, no matter what. God is present. God shows up through you and to you

in these times of “how long.” In that camp skit, the last person asks the main character if maybe God was showing up in the people who stopped to help. That hand that we sometimes crave to come swooping out of the sky looks more like the gentle voice in the chaos, the hand on a shoulder, or shared laughter amidst this holy grief. Hold fast to the moments where God’s presence and help is so inexplicably real and tangible; remember to look when God seems less present, and hold fast to the one who calls you by name as a beloved child every moment of every day, even in moments of holy longing. The wilderness we are living in is treacherous, but hold fast to God who grounds us in something bigger than ourselves. God may not be reaching down a literal hand, but God dwells with us in the “how long” until we are able to raise our voices in loud praise again.

**HYMN OF THE DAY *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* (ELW 490)**

## Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence



1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;  
 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,  
 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard on the way;  
 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with sleep - less eye,



pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand  
 Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,  
 as the Light of light, de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,  
 veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry:



Christ our God to earth de - scend - ing comes full hom - age to de - mand.  
 he will give to all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.  
 comes, the pow'rs of hell to van - quish, as the dark - ness clears a - way.  
 "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James; tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1829–1885, alt.  
 Music: PICARDY, French folk tune, 17th cent.

## **Words**

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with fear and trembling stand;  
ponder nothing earthly-minded,  
for with blessing in his hand  
Christ our God to earth descending  
comes full homage to demand.

2 King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
as of old on earth he stood,  
Lord of lords in human vesture,  
in the body and the blood,  
he will give to all the faithful  
his own self for heav'nly food.

3 Rank on rank the host of heaven  
spreads its vanguard on the way;  
as the Light of light, descending  
from the realms of endless day,  
comes, the pow'rs of hell to vanquish,  
as the darkness clears away.

4 At his feet the six-winged seraph,  
cherubim with sleepless eye,  
veil their faces to the presence,  
as with ceaseless voice they cry:  
"Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Alleluia, Lord Most High!"

## **CREED (ELW p. 126)**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

\*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Lord, you know our nation is in need of healing. Help us to come together after this difficult election to care for each other and support each other. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy Judge, let justice roll down like waters over this world. Reign over the courtrooms of every land, in the hearts of those who guard the law and those who stand accused of crimes. Be present in cases where we long for both justice and mercy to prevail. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy Companion, console those who feel lonely or abandoned. Share the hours of those who live and eat alone. Comfort those who have few friends or who struggle with their identity and place in this world. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Lord, we pray for Lake Shetek. Provide for them financially in this challenging year. We thank you for their ministry. We ask that you bless their work. Help them to continue to share the Good News and help people rest in Your creation. Keep them safe. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy Protector, be with all observing Veterans Day. Guard the lives of active duty and retired military personnel. Comfort all who mourn those who have died in the line of duty. Heal the wounds, both physical and mental, experienced by service members. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Lord, we pray for our community as it struggles with COVID. Guide administrators as they make plans forward. Give teachers creativity and endurance as they do online learning. Provide for families in this confusing time. Help us to all be helpers in this time of crisis. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Lord we pray for those recovering from fire and hurricanes. Guide those leading rebuilding work. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy and Immortal One, we pray in thanksgiving for the lives of all who have died. Remind us of the frailty and shortness of our own lives and inspire us to use them for the building up of your kingdom. We especially remember ..... Be with their families as they grieve their passing. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

Lord, we remember all who are sick or suffering in any way. We especially remember..... Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.  
**Amen.**

## **OFFERING AND CGC MOMENT**

### **OFFERING PRAYER (ELW p. 129)**

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 134)**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

### **BLESSING (ELW p. 136)**

The God of steadfastness and encouragement  
grant you to live in harmony with one another,  
in accordance with Christ Jesus.

**Amen.**

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The God of all grace ✠ bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **SENDING SONG *Let Justice Flow like Streams* (ELW 717)**

#### Let Justice Flow like Streams

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has three vocal lines and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 1 Let jus - tice flow like streams of spar - kling wa - ter, pure, 2 Let righ - teous - ness roll on as oth - ers' cares we heed, 3 So may God's plumb line, straight, de - fine our mea - sure true, The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords in the right hand. The second system continues the vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: en - a - bling growth, re - fresh - ing life, a - bun - dant, cleans - ing, sure. an ev - er - flow - ing stream of faith trans - lat - ed in - to deed. and jus - tice, right, and peace per - vade this world our whole life through. The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic support.

Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926  
Music: ST. THOMAS, Aaron Williams, 1731-1776  
Text © 1984 Jane Parker Huber, admin. Westminster John Knox Press.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

## Let Justice Flow like Streams

1 Let justice flow like streams  
of sparkling water, pure,  
enabling growth, refreshing life,  
abundant, cleansing, sure.

2 Let righteousness roll on  
as others' cares we heed,  
an ever-flowing stream of faith  
translated into deed.

3 So may God's plumb line, straight,  
define our measure true,  
and justice, right, and peace pervade  
this world our whole life through.

### **DISMISSAL (ELW p. 137)**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

From [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com).

Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.