

TCC Takeout

An Order of Service for Worship at Home

God's Extravagant Welcome:
**"No matter who you are or where
you are on life's journey, YOU are
welcome here!"**



Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 17, 2020

Announcements:

From Ted Thornton

TCC Takeout is a liturgy for these times when we find ourselves without a settled pastor and apart from one another physically.

Send announcements for the weekly Trumpet Blast and prayers for Joys and Concerns to me as soon as possible and no later than Tuesday noon for inclusion in the following Sunday's Order of Service. Printed copies of both this service and the Blast will be mailed or delivered to the doorsteps of members who do not use computers. Thanks for your prayers and support.

Many thanks to Chris and Heather for providing the music for this service this week.

From Chris Harris

"At my piano: I learned this gospel classic, 'I Still Have Joy,' from Rev. Julie, who taught it to our choir, and it still brings me joy today. [You can listen to it here](#).
I hope our choir sings it again for you soon."

"I Still Have Joy," by Danny Mccrimmon, Joseph Calvin Jackson

(chorus)

I still have joy, I still have joy,
After all the things I've been through
I still have joy.
I still have joy, I still have joy,
After all the things I've been through

I still have joy.

(verse)

There are times in my life when I felt
I couldn't go on
But the Lord He blessed me and
he made me strong

I kept the faith and I held on through
the night

This is my testimony, he'll make every thing
all right ('cause you know that I ...)

Prelude: [Dvorak: Going Home](#) [Yo Yo Ma](#)

Introit: [This is My Commandment](#)

Call to Worship *(based on Psalm 67)*

One: May God be gracious to us, and bless us,
and cover us with the radiance of grace.

All: May your way be known everywhere, God:
in the hidden places of our hearts;
in the comfort of our homes;
in every corner of our world;
in the farthest reaches of creation.
You transform us; you heal our lives;
you renew the earth and every creature:
Let our praise for you shake the rafters with songs of joy!

Opening Hymn [Come Down O Love Divine](#)

Come down, O love divine, seek Thou this soul of mine,
And visit it with Thine own ardor glowing.
O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear,
And kindle it, Thy holy flame bestowing.

O let it freely burn, til earthly passions turn
To dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
And let Thy glorious light shine ever on my sight,
And clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

Let holy charity mine outward vesture be,
And lowliness become mine inner clothing;
True lowliness of heart, which takes the humbler part,
And o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long,
Shall far out-pass the power of human telling;
For none can guess its grace, till he become the place
Wherein the Holy Spirit makes His dwelling.

Gathering Prayer

God, we remember with wonder and joy
that your spirit is reaching everywhere:
rejoicing in the liveliness of all living things;

touching what is wounded or ill with healing power;
 gathering in the lonely, the lost, the least;
 soothing ancient animosities;
 creating and recreating a vision of hope.
 Come now, Holy Spirit.
 Let our worship rejoice in you,
 and lift our hearts,
 and bind us in one family of loving grace.
 We ask in Jesus' name; Amen.

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost
 As it was in the beginning,
 Is now and ever shall be,
 World without end,
 Amen, Amen

Anthem [If You Love Me, Keep My Commandments](#)

Readings From Scripture: [Acts 17:22-31](#) and [John 14: 15-21](#)

“For the word of God in Scripture, For the Word of God Among Us, For the Word of God Within Us, Thanks Be to God”

Reflection: Ted

Acts 17:22 “Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: ‘People of Athens, I see that in every way you are very religious.’”

The Areopagus is an outcropping of rock that looms high above the city of Athens. Up on that lofty pinnacle was where the equivalent of Athens' supreme court met. Athens' politics had a highly visible geological character, reminding citizens daily as they looked up at the monuments that surrounded them of the city's hierarchy of authority and institutional values. At ground level was the commercial center - the Agora. Next, higher up was the Pnyx, the assembly where public affairs were discussed. Next higher up came the Areopagus. Finally, at the highest point in the city came the Acropolis with its Parthenon, temple of the city's patron deity, the goddess Athena. Athena was the city's “chief justice. She presided over the trials held on the Areopagus. The message to all Athens' citizens was, “The law is sacred.”

That Paul was permitted to speak in such a highly respected venue as the Areopagus is an indication of the magnanimous, generous, and inclusive manner in which the citizens of Athens regarded and treated all religions, not just their own. Was Paul himself actually on trial there on the Areopagus? Probably not. However, what is clear is that Paul thought Christianity was on trial for the hearts and minds of Athens' citizens.

There was very little religious intolerance in Paul's day. The Greco-Roman world was still a few decades away from the persecutions of Emperors Nero and Domitian. Competition between religions in the ancient world of Paul's time and before was mostly brisk, friendly, respectful, and tolerant; so friendly and tolerant, in fact, that many people openly practiced more than one religion at the same time. Besides the religions of the Greek and Roman gods and goddesses, even Buddhism had a thriving presence. There was a major Buddhist center in Alexandria, Egypt from which missionaries fanned out to areas throughout the Mediterranean world. Jesus must surely have known of them.

Athens was famous for the sheer number of religions practiced there. Some observers reckoned the gods and goddesses at up to 30,000. That was surely an exaggeration. Yet, the Roman writer Petronius used to quip, "It's easier to find a god than a man in Athens." Besides the Olympian gods, there were gods of Fame, Modesty, Energy, Persuasion, Love, and many such others.

At the end of Paul's speech in Acts 17:28 comes one of the most important passages in all scripture for our faith and one of my personal favorites: "For in him we live and move and have our being." This is a form of panentheism: the theological teaching that everything in the universe - everything that exists - exists inside God. One chief conclusion we may draw from this teaching is that since everything is inside God, no one person or thing is capable of encompassing or understanding the whole that we call "God." The stomach cannot see the brain, nor the eye, the heart, yet all organs exist inside the whole, in this case the body, and contribute to the good of the whole. Like so many things spiritual, the chief lesson is that none of the parts can lay exclusive claim to the whole or claim to speak exclusively for it. In the face of this reality our response should be tolerance, respect, and humility, not the cudgel of dogmatic authoritarianism.

The bottom line in all this is that because all that exists does so inside God, God is a mystery. One day this became clear to Saint Augustine, the most famous theologian of his time. Theologians are paid to think, talk, and teach about God. Augustine was walking along the beach beside the Mediterranean Sea when he saw a child running back and forth from the sea to a hole he'd dug in the sand. The child carried a bucket, filled the bucket with seawater, dumped it into the hole he had made and did this over and over again. Augustine asked him why he was doing that. The child replied, "I'm trying to put the sea into this hole." Augustine responded, "You can't do that. It won't fit." The child, who was really an angel in disguise, said "Neither can you put the Mystery of God into your mind. It won't fit."

Paul's own panentheism - "everything is inside God" - comes right from Jesus' own mouth. In John 14:20-21, we hear Jesus say, "I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. **21** Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me." Muslims, too, believe that God lives in them. One of the most beautiful verses in the Qur'an (50:16) says Allah is closer to you than your jugular vein.

Jesus' commandments, as we know, begin and end with love. It's in the act of loving, and only in the act of loving, that the gospel makes rational sense and establishes God as the one "in whom we live, and move, and have our being," our existence, our life.

Hymn of Reflection [Breathe on Me, Breathe of Life](#)

Poem “‘Hope’ is the Thing With Feathers,” by Emily Dickinson

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird

That kept so many warm -
I’ve heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.

Anthem [Ubi Caritas](#)

Latin Text

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsultemus, et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.
Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Simul ergo cum in unum congregamur:
Ne nos mente dividamur, caveamus.
Cessent iurgia maligna, cessent lites.
Et in medio nostri sit Christus Deus.
Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Simul quoque cum beatis videamus,
Glorianter vultum tuum, Christe Deus:

Gaudium quod est immensum, atque
probum,
Saecula per infinita saeculorum. Amen.

English Translation

Where charity and love are, God is there.
Love of Christ has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice in Him and be glad.
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.
And from a sincere heart let us love one.
Where charity and love are, God is there.
At the same time, therefore, are gathered
into one:
Lest we be divided in mind, let us beware.
Let evil impulses stop, let controversy
cease.
And in the midst of us be Christ our God.
Where charity and love are, God is there.
At the same time we see that with the saints
also,
Thy face in glory, O Christ our God:
The joy that is immense and good, Unto the
World without end. Amen.

Joys and Concerns

Patter and Ted lost Patter's younger sister Lula to cancer in the early morning hours on Wednesday, May 13 just nine hours after her arrival from the hospital and her entrance into hospice care at their home.

Please continue to pray for Margot Parker who is ill with cancer.

Pastoral Prayer

Dear God, linking love with obedience is not the thing we do best.

We confess to preferring a teary-eyed sentimental love that makes no demands, requires no allegiance.

But, here you are again, calling us to love and obedience; calling us to a different kind of love -- love that does (or doesn't do), love that demonstrates itself in style of life, thoughts, emotions, or actions.

Lead us into this kind of love, we pray, so that the world might know that we are your disciples.

Creator of the universe,

you made the world in beauty,

and restore all things in glory

through the victory of Jesus Christ.

We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured

by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,

the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace,

to the glory of your name. Amen.

A Prayer for a Time of Coronavirus

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness." At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2020/03/02/coronavirus-prayer>

Intercessions

Hear O Lord, we pray, our petitions of general intercession. We pray for the lonely, for the bereaved, for the sick, for the aged, for those who feel overwhelmed by personal problems. We ask, on their behalf, for the comfort of your presence.

We pray especially for those in need who are on our hearts and minds and lips this morning.

We pray for all who are ill or who suffer from any affliction: physical, mental, or spiritual. Bring healing and comfort to them, their families, and to those who care for them and to others who love them.

Bless and protect from harm all workers who risk their health and their lives in the service of

others: first responders, police, doctors, nurses, and all others who work in the healing professions. We ask these things in the Name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Now praying together as Jesus taught us, we say,

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 sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

Prayer Response - NCH 769 - *Hear Our Prayer, O God* -- [Audio version](#)

Hear Our Prayer, O God,
Hear our prayer, O God,
Incline Thine ear to us,
And Grant us your peace.

Closing Hymn [God of Our Life](#)

God of our life, through all the circling years,
we trust in you;
in all the past, through all our hopes and fears,
your hand we view.
With each new day, when morning lifts the veil,
we own your mercies, Lord, which never fail.

God of the past, our times are in your hand;
with us abide.
Lead us by faith, to hope's true Promised Land;
be now our guide.
With you to bless, the darkness shines as light,
and faith's fair vision changes into sight.

God of the coming years, thro' paths unknown
we follow you;
when we are strong, Lord, leave us not alone;
our faith renew.

Be now for us in life our daily bread,
our heart's true home when all our years have sped

Choral Benediction [It Only Takes a Spark](#)

Pastoral Benediction

Lift up your hearts:

Lift up your hopes:

Lift up your dreams!

God bless you and watch over you
and carry you all the way home.

In Jesus' name, go in peace.

Amen.

Postlude [Saya Thari Baaja at Bhaktapur](#) by Kutumba

Heather writes about this piece: "Kutumba is the much beloved folk group in Nepal. This performance was in the square of the city where I started my trip. We ate just across from this temple. We had the pleasure of a private audience with the leader, Rashil Palanchoke whose instrument is the Sarangi, a string instrument."



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