

Trinitarian Congregational Church
TakeOut
November 1, 2020

Announcements

Prelude "Prayer of St. Francis" Lynne Walker
St. Francis of Assisi/HelenLitz 1980
[Video https://youtu.be/iwJMrLPY0_E]

Call to Worship

One: As we gather together we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses.

We join the many generations who have lived in covenant with God.

All: The God of our ancestors meets us here.

We unite our voices with the song of the saints.

One: Remember Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Beyond the cross Jesus anticipated the joy to come.

All: We turn from all that encumbers our discipleship.

We focus our attention on Christ as we seek to grow in his likeness.

One: God inspires us with a fresh and abiding hope.

God empowers us to live in faith-filled service.

All: We rest in God who calls us to live by faith.

We are blessed by God as we do good to all people.

Gathering Prayer

We gather before you, O God, with all your saints in every time and place to remember your mercy and receive your blessing. We know the suffering of our world and feel the weight of our burdens. We come that you may heal the brokenness within and among us. Rescue us from the cruelty we impose on one another through our fear, arrogance, and selfishness. Restore us to righteousness and goodness that are a mark of your children. Renew us in your love and empower us with your Spirit that we may live as true witnesses of your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Word of Assurance

Children of God, hear now God's word of promise to us.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves,
pray and seek my presence, and turn from their sinful ways;
then I will answer them from heaven. I will forgive their sin and I will heal their land.
2 Chronicles 7:14 adj

My friends, in Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven
and our lives are made new. Praise be to God.

Gloria Patri [Video - <https://youtu.be/OLz3R1hnUjs>]

Chris Harris

Scriptures

Hebrews 11:32-12:2

³² And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. ³⁹ Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

^{12:1} Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

John 13:12-17

¹² After he (Jesus) had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you?” ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

Special Music

“It Is Well With My Soul” Lynne Walker and Chris Harris
Spafford/ Bliss. Arr. Phillip Keveren.
[Video <https://youtu.be/ZsQofr-Kpoo>]

Sermon

Heroes One And All

Hebrews 11:32-12:2

Who is your hero? Who is the person you most respect, the person you would like to be like? Go on, take a minute and think about it. It can be someone living or someone who has died. It can be a famous person or someone known only by a few. It can be a person in Scripture, a historical person, or a family member. So who is your hero? And after you have this person in mind, think about why this person is important to you. Why are they your hero? What did they do, or not do, that makes them your hero?

In case you are wondering, Webster defines a hero as a person who is admired or idealized for courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities. A hero is selfless, a genuinely good person, and someone who gets our undivided attention and causes change. A hero can be someone who risks their own life to save another or who fights for a good cause and makes a positive difference in the world. They are truth-tellers and trailblazers and we admired them for their courage and faith.

Examples of modern heroes are Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Oscar Romero, and Ruth Bader Ginsberg, to name just a few. These amazing heroes have made a real difference in our world. There are, of course, countless heroes throughout history, from the creators of the pyramids, Plato and Aristotle to people like Darwin and George Washington Carver.

Then there are the heroes the church honors. They are known as the saints, and there are myriads of them too. We heard a brief list of these saints in today's epistle reading. And we heard some of the amazing things they did in their life-times. But there are many, many saints, many heroes of the faith, who were less spectacular.

Remember when I asked you who your heroes were? Well, two of my heroes are Abraham and Sarah. Now, think about their lives, what did they do? Did they part the Red Sea, establish a nation, stop the mouths of lions, raise the dead? No. All they did was raise a family – that's it. Nothing fancy, nothing earthshaking, just one kid. But they lived that life with God as their guide and friend. And Abraham, to this day, is called the 'father of our faith'. And he is the foundation of three major world religions; just an average dad who walked with God.

I take heart in Abraham's story because it gives me hope. So many of us look to the great souls, the great heroes, of our faith and we think 'Geez, I will never be like them'. Well, thank God you won't, and thank God I won't. My goal is to be like Abraham and Sarah; faithful and average, just me – living with and for God. I think that is enough. And I think that is what God actually wants. He did not make me to be a Nobel Peace Prize winner. He did not make me to be the new Moses or Miriam. He created me to be me. And he created me, like Abraham and Sarah, to 'walk' with him all the days of my life.

When we look to the stories of the Bible, we may be awed by some of the great accomplishments of these saints. But at their heart was the same character that Abraham was known for – they

walked with God, wherever that led them. That is their witness to us. That is their encouragement to us.

“All these faithful people surround us like a cloud,
so let us throw off everything that hinders us
and the sin that so easily entangles us.
And let us run life’s marathon race
with passion and determination,
for the path has already been marked out for us.
Let us fix our gaze on Jesus,
who has birthed faith within us
and will lead us forward to faith’s perfection.”

Heb 12:1-2a adj

That is the eternal fellowship we share, with the saints, big and small, in heaven, and the saints we rub elbows with every day. And yes, there are saints among us. You know them too. These saints labor to help the hungry, right here in Northfield. These saints teach our children and grandchildren; support our town, state and national government; and tend to the sick - even in the midst of a pandemic. They work for justice and peace, offer truth and hope, labor for a green earth and a fair economy. Some are working among us every day, right here in church; to keep this community of faith going and to move it forward toward God’s purpose for us. They are, one and all, our heroes. And they are our saints. And you just may be their saint too.

So, my dear, sainted friends, who is your hero?

Amen.

Remembrance of our Saints

Today we come before God to celebrate our saints, especially to remember of all those who have died and now are a part of the great cloud of witnesses that surround our walk with God.

We remember: Ruth Alice (Dawe) Johnson, JoAnn (Gay) Huber, John Thayer, Mary Jane Porter, Evelyn (Joslin) Dresser, Judith A. (Webster) Radebaugh, Brenda L. (Geddis) Baker, Alan Abel, Shirley Mae (White) Mills, Rev. Philip N. Nelson, Margot Parker, Unnamed individuals who remain in our hearts

May God grant us the comfort of our memories, the inspiration of our hope, and the courage to follow the example of his saints, living according to his good will.

“Hymn of Promise”

Lynne Walker

Natalie Sleeth

[Video – https://youtu.be/v_2W2cUUfYU]

1. In the bulb, there is a flower;
In the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise:
Butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
There's a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until its season,
Something God alone can see.

2. There's a song in every silence,;
Seeking word and melody
There's a dawn in every darkness,
Bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future;
What it holds, a mystery,
Unrevealed until its season
Something God alone can see.

3. In our end is our beginning;
In our time, infinity;
In our doubt, there is believing;
In our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection;
At the last, a victory;
Unrevealed until its season
Something God alone can see.

Joys and Concerns

As you meet with God in prayer, please lift up the joys and concerns shared through the Trumpet Blast. God is eager to be your help and strength, to listen to you and meet your needs. Prayer is a gift we can always use.

Prayers of the People

Holy God, we praise you and thank you for your faithfulness with us. You have lead people for generations, walking with them and leading them in ways that enrich our world. We thank you for Jesus Christ, who lived his faith as no other, and his Spirit who walks with us today, and continues to lead us in a living faith that serves your world. And so, we come before you asking for your strength to live as your people.

We pray for your church and for this congregation. May we continue to be inspired to live by the faith we have inherited from our forbearers. May your eternal truth finds fresh expression among us and leads us to a new future that will achieve your good purposes for us all.

We pray today for our world leaders. Grant them the wisdom they need to live in faithfulness to your righteousness and goodness, that all the world may know your blessings. We pray also for all who need your presence today. Grant your healing to the ill, your comfort to the sorrowful, and your aid to the needy. Grant also your courage and strength to those who labor for a better world, and your hope to those who long for your kingdoms ways. We especially lift up the needs of and we thank you for the blessings/joy of...

We praise you, Great God, for your faithful care and constant presence and holy calling through Jesus Christ who taught us to pray...

The Lord's Prayer

Choral Response [Video - https://youtu.be/1AivVHv_mbc]

Chris Harris

Offering

We are called as saints, to be a people of faith and faithfulness. When we invest in the work God calls us to do our lives are blessed, and we become a blessing to others. Our gifts serve as a witness in ways large and small. Let us dedicated them to that purpose.

Thank you, God, for including us in the long history of your heroic people. Thank you that you have claimed us for your good purposes. May all our offerings be an act of faith and faithfulness, that will bring good to our neighbors and glory to you. Amen.

Doxology [Video - <https://youtu.be/5I7PEGUPAXQ>]

Chris Harris

Communion

Hymn Reflection

"Nearer My God to Thee"

Lynne Walker

L. Mason/Arr. Mark Hayes

[Video <https://youtu.be/N2EaiixCep4>]

Invitation

Beloved in Christ, the Gospel of Luke records that on the first day of the week, the same day in which Jesus was raised from the dead, he sat at the table with two of his disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

And so for centuries men and women, youth and children, have come from east and west, north and south, and gather about Christ's table, for this is the joyful, welcoming feast of the people of God. Here Christ is the host and we are his guests.

This table is open to everyone who wishes to know the presence of Christ and share in the community of God's people.

Great Thanksgiving

We offer you our thanks and praise, wondrous God, for you have welcomed us as your people and included us in the roll of your saints. In the beginning you formed humanity in your image, that we might walk with you all the days of our lives. And when we turned from you, you did not forsake us but continued to seek us and offer us your mercy and grace. Calling a people to yourself, you made a covenant with them, and through your prophets spoke of one to come, who would achieve your true and holy purposes for us all.

In Jesus Christ you fulfilled your promise. He came among us inviting us once again to live with you, in the grace of hope and power of love. When he was rejected, and was put to death, you vindicated him, raising him from death and seating him at your right hand. And now through his Spirit you lead us in a life of faith toward the joy of heaven.

And so with deep gratitude, we come to this table with all your saints. We ask you to pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and cup, that they may be to us the life of Christ and that we might become his life in this world. Amen.

Consecration and Service

The Bread

We gather now and remember that on the night he was handed over, the Lord Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples saying, ***"Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."***

In his name, this bread is offered to you.
The body of Christ, the bread of heaven. Take and eat.

The Cup

When the supper was over, he took the cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying

***“Drink this, all of you; this cup is the new covenant in my blood.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”***

In his name, this cup is offered to you.

The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. Take and drink.

Prayer of Gratitude

We thank you God that at this table you have renewed our faith, strengthened our hope and rekindled our love. Through the power of the living Christ, at work with in us, may we now share your gift of life with all we meet. Amen.

Common Commission

Let us go forth into the world in peace, being of good courage, holding fast to that which is good, rendering to no one evil for evil, strengthening the faint-hearted, supporting the weak, helping the afflicted, honoring all persons, loving and serving the Lord, and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Benediction

Go now into the world

giving thanks to God who has made it possible for us to share in what he has promised to his saints in the kingdom of light. Col 1:12 TEV

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

Postlude

“The Northfield Benediction”

Lucy Rider Meyer

Lynne Walker

[Video <https://youtu.be/ZVFM7-CAeAo>]