



Photo by Sangui Andria

Virtual Worship Service for The Lord's Day *Crossnore Presbyterian Church* Sunday, July 5, 2020

Welcome: This morning, as our mountain congregation gathers for outdoor worship, we are One Body in Christ gathering with you as you worship virtually. Attached you will find the sermon and also the updated announcements and prayer requests.

As we celebrate Independence Day this weekend, may we give thanks to God to all who have paid a sacrifice for our freedom and may God give us the courage to fight for unity, to see all Americans, our brothers and sisters, as one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

A Prayer for Our Nation:

A couple of years ago, when the General Assembly of the PC(USA) was meeting during the first week of July, Presbyterian and Rear Admiral Mark Tidd led the whole church in prayer for the Fourth of July. May his prayer be our prayer this holiday weekend:

Everlasting God of righteousness and grace, as our nation celebrates this Independence Day, remind us of our complete dependence upon you. We look to you for your wisdom and mercy as important issues are discussed. On this day, we ask you to keep this nation, and all nations, under your care, that we may be peoples who are at peace, and who are a blessing to others in this earth. Grant our nation's leaders wisdom, that there would be times of peace and justice in our land and in our world.



On this day, we lift up to you all who serve in our Armed Forces, who serve as the centurion did as ones who are under authority—brave men and women who risk their lives for their country. Remind us of those who are far from home and loved ones, who on this day sail or fly or walk in harm's way, and keep them always close to you. Where there is combat, grant them compassion for their enemies, and keep them brave in the face of evil. Hold in your loving hands the families of those who are far away. Grant them comfort in their anxieties. And comfort those who grieve, because they have received the dreaded message that their loved one has died. Strengthen those who carry the wounds of war, visible and invisible, and be to them a sure presence.

On this day keep all of us grounded not in our strength but in yours, ever relying upon the promise that "those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength ... They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." All of this we pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

And in these troubled times across the globe, may we also pray for the freedom of all God's children, trusting that the day is surely coming when the ancient promises of faith may indeed be a blessing to all the families of the earth.

***Hymn: O Beautiful for Spacious Skies**

Text: Katherine Lee Bates, 1893; Music: Samuel Augustus Ward, 1882

Sing along with First Plymouth Church, Lincoln, NE:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sY9-WaiXuJg>

**O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain,
for purple mountains majesties above the fruited plain!
America! America! God shed his grace on thee,
and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!**



O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,
who more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life!
America! America! God mend thine every flaw;
confirm thy soul in self control, and liberty in law!

O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years
thine alabaster cities gleam, undimmed by human tears!
America! America! May God thy gold refine
till all success be nobleness and every gain divine!

***Call to Worship:**

Come all who are weary
of wealth, of poverty, of power, of struggle, of division
Come all who are heavy-laden
with too much, with too little, with anxiety, with fear, with anger
Come all who have hope
for liberation, for peace, for freedom, for the kingdom
Hear these words
“See, I am making all things new.”

Hymn of Praise: *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Text: Edward Mote, c. 1834, alt.; Music: William Batchelder Bradbury, 1863, alt.

Sing along with First Plymouth Church, Lincoln, NE:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFktMLdeFac&feature=youtu.be>

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name,

Refrain:

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand;
all other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness seems to hide his face, I rest upon unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil.

Refrain

His oath, his covenant, his blood support me in the whelming flood;
When all around the soul gives way, he then is all my hope and stay.

Refrain

When he shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in him be found,
dressed in his righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.

Refrain

Call to Confession:

As God’s beloved children, we are invited to come to our God with the fullness of our lives, to admit our love and our hate, to admit our faith and our fear. Trusting in God’s mercy, let us make our confession.

Unison Prayer of Confession:

Holy and gracious God, at times we feel so frail and fragile, getting blown about by the latest crisis, by bad news, by our own short tempers and failings. You call us to hold fast to what is good, but so often we flounder, unable to find that solid thing that will center us again. Help us, we pray. Help us to see you as our center,



and to cling to the good that you create in the world. Help us to set aside all our jealousies and prejudices, all of our betrayals and lies, all that adds to the world's hurt. Help us to grow even more into Christ's likeness, that we will bear his love and truth to the world (moment of silent confession). We pray in his name. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

The good news is that Christ calls us to new life and enables us to begin again and again and again and again. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Response to God's Grace and Mercy: *Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me*, verses one and two

Text: Augustus M. Toplady, 1776, alt.; Music: Thomas Hastings, 1830, alt.

Sing along with Antrim Mennonite Choir:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gM7gt_cSxjw&feature=youtu.be



**Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.
Let the water and the blood from thy wounded side which flowed
be of sin the double cure, cleanse from guilt and make me pure.**

**Not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone. Thou must save, and thou alone.**

First Lesson: Psalm 62:5-12

For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.
Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.
Those of low estate are but a breath, those of high estate are a delusion;
in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath.
Put no confidence in extortion, and set no vain hopes on robbery;
if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.
Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God,
and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord. For you repay to all according to their work.

Special Music: *Jesus is My Rock and Rock of Ages*

sung Rev. Gerald Thompson and the Tennessee Full Gospel Baptist Church Mass Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SreJFU4-JI>

Second Lesson: Exodus 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarrelled with Moses, and said, 'Give us water to drink.' Moses said to them, 'Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?' But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?' So Moses cried out to the Lord, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.' The Lord said to Moses, 'Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.'

Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, 'Is the Lord among us or not?'

Sermon: "Testing the Rock"

***A Litany of Faith:**

(paraphrased from the Confirmation Class of Henrietta United Church of Christ statement of faith, November, 2013)

We believe in God, our rock and our river, our loving foundation who is always there, who creates the world and stirs things up, and can make anything happen, who lets us choose and make mistakes, but wants the best for us, who protects and shelters us as we explore the world, who sends the sun and rain on EVERYONE, who believes in us and helps us to believe in each other;

We believe in Jesus, Mary and Joseph's boy, God's Son and our Savior, too! He was humble and willing to help, a surprising teacher and healer, who carried out God's vision and called us to do the same; a Jewish rabbi who loved and challenged everyone; a courageous, non-violent lawbreaker and risk-taker, who stayed in relationship with those who hated him and cared for them to the very end. He lived—and died—and rose again—and lives in us— and points us toward God.

We believe in the Holy Spirit who gives us life and breath, who reminds us we're loved and inspires us to love others, who guides and comforts, blesses and plays with us, who gives us faith and drives us to acts of courage, who forgives and cleanses, anoints and sanctifies us for God's holy purpose.

We celebrate the Church, a place of conversation and sharing from the heart, a community of fun and bonding, acceptance and challenge, seeking and welcoming, a home where questions are allowed and doubts are explored, a family where joys and sorrows are shared, a support for people in any kind of trouble, a symphony of prayer and poetry, music and melody, a body of believers, forgiving and embracing, standing up and speaking out, a table set for friends and strangers.

Yes, we believe! Yes, we celebrate! Hallelujah!

Hymn of Meditation: *Called as Partners in Christ's Service

Text: Jane Parker Huber, 1981; Music: John Zundel, 1870

Sing along with St. Andrews Owen Sound:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRsQnmE9aVc&feature=youtu.be>

**Called as partners in Christ's service, call to ministries of grace,
we respond with deep commitment fresh new line of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.**

**Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folks on earth.
Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,
blending human skills together gracious gifts of God unfold.**

**Thus new patterns for Christ's mission in a small or global sense,
help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,
bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues free and fair.**



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**So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life
that surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.**

Prayers of the People:

Gracious God of love,
we are grateful that you have revealed yourself to us,
each of us loved by you as children, each of us precious in your sight,
each of us a reflection of you, each of us bound together by love,
which is in fact your presence among us.

We come to you, O God, weary and carrying heavy loads:
Some of us bear the burden of illness; the burden of loss and grief;
the burden of caring for those who cannot care for themselves;
the burden of unemployment or underemployment; the burden of hunger;
the burden of homelessness; the burden of oppression or marginalization;
the burden of violence; the burden of anger;
the burden of depression; the burden of addiction.
From these heavy loads and from so many other burdens, dear God,
we pray for rest; we pray healing; we pray for release; we pray for wholeness.



On this holiday weekend, we recognize that our nation also bears many burdens:
we don't trust our leaders; we cannot find ways to work together for the common good;
we allow the least among us to suffer and languish;
we fixate on what divides us rather than on what brings us together as one people.

Remind us of our holy calling.
Remind us of our common creed that all people are created equal.
Inspire us to ensure that all of your children enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
Help us to be profoundly grateful for our freedom and security,
to never take these gifts for granted, and to use them for the betterment of all.

Gracious God, bind us together, tethered by your love, guided by your presence,
bringing your kingdom into this world.
It is for this kingdom that we now pray, using the words Jesus taught us.
Our Father...

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings:

Out of our gratitude for the blessings God showers upon us with each new morning, let us commit our time,
our talents, and our financial resources towards God's ministry to and through this congregation. Let us
receive this morning's offering.

***Doxology: Text: Brian Wren; Music: Geistliche Kirchengesang, 1623.**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known:
Creator, Word, and Spirit, one.
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

***Unison Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:**

For the blessings of this and all our days, we thank you, gracious God. Accept, we pray, not just this money but also our lives freely offered in gratitude for all you have done for us. Use them both, in this place and wherever you might take us. Amen.

***Closing Hymn: *Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing*, verse one**

Text: Attr. John Fawcett, 1773; stanza 3, alt. Geoffrey Thring, 1880, alt.; Music: Sicilian melody, 18th century

Sing along with pianist, Andrew Remillard: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tHlwADzfc0>

Lord, dismiss us with your blessing; fill our hearts with joy and peace;
let us each your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace.
O refresh us, O refresh us, traveling through this wilderness.

***Charge and Benediction:**

When life seems shaky and confusing,
remember that you are standing on solid ground.
Christ is our sure foundation—
trust in God to lead you on the path
leads to peace and hope, to joy and justice.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you and with our world now
and forevermore. Amen.



Postlude: *Rock of Ages Keep My Soul*

sung by Joe Mullins and the Radio Ramblers

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxHA5haRg7s&list=RDfxHA5haRg7s&start_radio=1&t=0