

Liturgy for Worship

March 22nd, 2020

Call to Worship:

Once we lived in darkness, but now the light of God has shown upon us.
Once we walked, stumbling and falling without direction,
but now God's Word is a light to our feet.
Once we were unable to see, but now our eyes are open to the love and grace
of Jesus our Savior, who opens our minds and eyes to see the gifts of God's love.

Hymn #339 *Be Thou My Vision*

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art--
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
Great God of heaven, my treasure Thou art.

Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Text: 10 10 10 10; ancient Irish; tr. by Mary E. Byrne, 1905; fr. Eleanor Hull's Poem Book of the Gael, 1912, alt. Music: Trad. Irish melody; adapt. fr. The Church Hymnary, 1927. Contributors: SLANE All rights reserved. First Presbyterian Church
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Prayer of Adoration:

Holy God, Source of Our Light, we come to you seeking restoration of our sight. Through fear and anxiousness, through selfishness and hostility, we have been blinded to what is good and what You have given to us in Jesus our Savior. Give us strength and confidence to truly witness to your abiding love and faithfulness. For we offer this prayer in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

Healing God, our self-centeredness and fear blinds us to what is true. Our insecurity and worry cause us to lose perspective on what really matters. As we are moved from what has been familiar, regular, and dependable we become afraid as if our disruptions matter so much. We lack perspective because we do not see through faith. Forgive our fearfulness, our judgmentalism, and our worry. Free us to reach out in love and compassion in our prayers for

one another, and for all of our world. Forgive us for our blindness and transform us by Your mercy we pray, in the name of Jesus our Savior. Amen.

Assurance of Hope and Forgiveness:

Even though we have lived in darkness, God's light is being poured out upon us. We will walk in the light and love that is freely given to us through Jesus our Lord and Savior. Through Christ our Savior we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Holy Lamb of God Hymn #602 from *Glory to God Hymnal*

Holy Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world.
Have mercy on us.
Holy Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world.
Grant us your peace;
grant us your peace;
grant us your peace.

Service Music: © 2003 Yusuf Khill

Scriptures: Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— ⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,
'Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.'

John 9:1-41

^{9:1} As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' ³Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' ⁹Some were saying, 'It is he.' Others were saying,

‘No, but it is someone like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’ ¹⁰But they kept asking him, ‘Then how were your eyes opened?’ ¹¹He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, “Go to Siloam and wash.” Then I went and washed and received my sight.’ ¹²They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, ‘He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.’ ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, ‘This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.’ But others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?’ And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, ‘What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.’ He said, ‘He is a prophet.’

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, ‘Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?’ ²⁰His parents answered, ‘We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.’ ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, ‘He is of age; ask him.’

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, ‘Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.’ ²⁵He answered, ‘I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.’ ²⁶They said to him, ‘What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?’ ²⁷He answered them, ‘I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?’ ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, ‘You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.’ ³⁰The man answered, ‘Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.’ ³⁴They answered him, ‘You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?’ And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, ‘Do you believe in the Son of Man?’ ³⁶He answered, ‘And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.’ ³⁷Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.’ ³⁸He said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshipped him. ³⁹Jesus said, ‘I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.’ ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, ‘Surely we are not blind, are we?’ ⁴¹Jesus said to

them, 'If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see", your sin remains.

Message: "Choosing the Light"

Pastor Jack Harrison

Doxology: *Praise God From Whom all Blessings Flow*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.
Thomas Ken (1695, 1709), OLD HUNDREDTH

Prayers of the People:

We pray for the family of Bertie F. who passed away on Friday, March 13, 2020, and her family has held a private family funeral. Prayers for all of those who have been ill this week and particularly for those who struggle with the Coronavirus. Prayers for those who are feeling alone and isolated, that God's Holy Spirit may draw us together. We continue to pray in the words that Christ our Lord gave 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,
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who have sinned 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.

Hymn #399 *We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight*

(melody hymn #81 Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days)

We walk by faith and not by sight;
No gracious words we hear
From Christ Who spoke as none e'er spoke;
But we believe Him near.

We may not touch His hands and side,
Nor follow where He trod;
But in His promise we rejoice,
And cry, "My Lord and God!"

Help then, O Lord, our unbelief;
And may our faith abound
To call on You when You are near
And seek where You are found:

That, when our life of faith is done,
In realms of clearer light
We may behold You as You are,
With full and endless sight.

Text: Henry Alford (1844; alt.) Tune: ST. FLAVIAN Day's Psalter, 1562

Benediction:

May the Lord Bless you and keep you,
The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
May the Lord lift the light of his countenance upon you and give you life,
Both now and in the life ever after.
Amen.