

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.

May we together experience the presence of God

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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Prelude

Welcome

Announcements/Joys & Concerns

What are you distracted by? That’s a question underlying scripture our today. What is it that draws your attention away from your call to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world? Not that followers of Jesus aren’t allowed to enjoy the beauty and wonder that this world has to offer. The Christian life is marked by joy and surrounded by wonder. Yet, like the disciples in today’s text, we can be distracted by what we see around us and lose sight of our reason for being, to live a life of proclamation and invitation.

While the distraction in our text is about something beautiful, even something of God—the temple itself—Jesus’s discourse tells us that sometimes it is terrible things that distract us. Wars and rebellions can distract us; false prophets or those who claim to represent Jesus but who really don’t, can distract us; natural disasters can distract us. All sorts of things can distract us from lifting up the name of Jesus and living in hope and confidence that indeed God has the whole world in His divine hands.

Each week, worship is an opportunity to reorient ourselves toward God. Yes, the object of worship is giving praise to God and lifting up the name of Jesus. Yet, at the same time, we come to His sanctuary to redeclare our commitment to walk the path of discipleship and live as though we were a part of the kin-dom of God, because we are. It is a moment of perspective, or of realignment.

We come to hold on to hope by declaring that God cares about the brokenness of the world and the people who are harmed by that brokenness. And we declare it by caring too, by serving, by giving, by advocating for change and for peace and for reconciliation. Not out of a sense of despair, but out of that very hope that says God is still God and there is good in the world. There is grace and there is a way that leads to salvation.

So, as we gather, let our prayers reach out into the whole world. Let our songs praise the God of creation and instill in us a sense of mission and purpose to bring transformation. In other words, let us stop being tourists wandering around just taking in the sights of this world, for good or for ill, and let us be engaged with the Spirit in working transformation right where we are.

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in the beautiful space

To worship an amazing God.

Surrounded by art and craft made by hands like ours

To give praise to the source of all our gifts

We are blessed to have this space to call our church home.

We are more blessed to be disciples of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us worship in this place, giving praise to God

We will worship in joy and in truth. Amen.

PRAYING THAT WE MAY BE READY

(based on Matthew 24:1-14, Mark 13:1-13, Luke 21:5-19)

When the skies grow dark and buildings fall, then hear us:

have mercy on us, Lord.

When deceivers come and the nations rise in anger, then hear us:

have mercy on us, Lord.

When famines begin, and when the earth shakes to bring the future to birth,
then hear us:

have mercy on us, Lord.

When we take our stand to witness to your truth,
when our people are arrested and betrayed, then hear us:

have mercy on us, Lord.

When the sun is darkened and the moon fails to give us light,
and when the stars fall from the sky, then hear us:

have mercy on us, Lord.

When you come in your great power and glory with your angels from heaven:

Then, Lord, gather us from the four winds—

from the ends of the earth,

to be with you for ever and ever. Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE UMH #519 “Lift Every Voice and Sing”**

Author: James Weldon Johnson (1921)

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Notes: Now Public Domain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpj3K1N0r8g>

1 Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring,

ring with the harmonies of liberty;

let our rejoicing rise high as the listening skies,

let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;

sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;

facing the rising sun of our new day begun,

let us march on till victory is won.

2 Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,

felt in the days when hope unborn had died;

yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet

come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

**We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;
we have come, treading our path thru the blood of the slaughtered,
out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.**

**3 God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
thou who hast by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met thee;
lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee;
shadowed beneath thy hand, may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.**

We Hear God's Word

**Gospel Reading..... Luke 21:5-19
New Revised Standard Version**

The Destruction of the Temple Foretold

5 When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, 6 "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down."

Signs and Persecutions

7 They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" 8 And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray, for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!'[a] and, 'The time is near!'[b] Do not go after them.

9 "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified, for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." 10 Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; 11 there will be great earthquakes and in various places famines and plagues, and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

12 "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. 13 This will give you an opportunity to testify. 14 So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance, 15 for I will give you words[c] and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. 16 You will be betrayed even by parents and siblings, by relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. 17 You will be hated by all because of my name. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish. 19 By your endurance you will gain your souls.

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FAITH HYMN FWS #2142 "Blessed Quietness" (verse 1-2)

Author: Manie P. Ferguson

Copyright: Public Domain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-s9Qb0GIlk>

**1 Joys are flowing like a river,
since the Comforter has come;
Christ abides with us forever,
makes the trusting heart a home.**

Refrain:

**Blessed quietness, holy quietness,
what assurance in my soul,
On the stormy sea, Jesus speaks to me,
and the billows cease to roll.**

**2 Bringing life and health and gladness
all around, this heavenly Guest
banished unbelief and sadness,
changed our weariness to rest. [Refrain]**

"Message"

Pastoral Prayer for Our Worship

Holy one, to you forever, let all thanks be sung! Father, may we be glad when it is said to us, "Let us go into the house of the Lord!" Let it be our delight as well as our responsibility to worship you in the fellowship of your church. Prepare us in mind and spirit for our worship and tune our voices to sing and speak your praise. May we receive all that you have to give to us and offer all that you require from us. May our lives as well as our lips glorify you.

Amidst this silence we are overawed by the thoughts of your love for us; for you love us so much that you gave your only son to suffer and die for us. Yet to think that you love us like that, makes us long to break our silence - to shout for joy and sing your praise.

You have given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In him we are loved, ransomed, healed, restored and forgiven. This morning give us a heart to praise you our God and father. Accept our worship and praise both silent, spoken and sung to the glory of your holy name we pray using the words that Jesus taught us. Our Father...

Offertory & Doxology (UM Hymnal 95)

(Wykoff only)

Offertory Prayer

Holy God who calls us to the journey: we set aside this time to bring our gifts to you, may you draw our attention back to the wisdom and guidance that you put before us, and may it lead us to endurance that will carry us to kingdom presence! In Christ, we pray. Amen. (Luke 21:5-19)

Departing Hymn UMH #671 “Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing”

Author: John Fawcett (1773)

Publication Date: 1989

Tune Information

Name: SICILIAN MARINERS

Meter: 87.87.87

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIIAJHoO1FA>

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

**2. Thanks we give and adoration
for thy gospel's joyful sound.
May the fruits of thy salvation
in our hearts and lives abound;
ever faithful, ever faithful
to the truth may we be found.**

Benediction

(Isaiah 65, Luke 21)

Go forth into a world that needs new visions.
Bring the message of hope and love,
of justice and peace, to all you meet.
Live the dream. Make it reality.
Celebrate endings and new beginnings,
challenges and promises.
Live the new creation. Amen.

***POSTLUDE**