

*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.
May we together experience the presence of God*

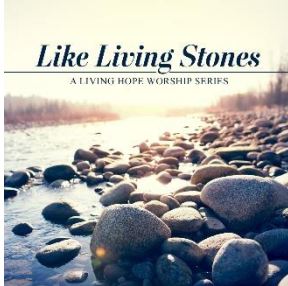
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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord

Prelude

Welcome

Announcements – Joys/Concerns



Take a moment to look at your rock. What color is it? How does it feel? Is it smooth or rough, jagged or well worn? Does it weigh heavy in your hand or feel almost as light as a feather?

What you are holding is an ordinary rock. And yet, it is not so ordinary. It has gone through transformation after transformation over the course of millennia to land in your hand just as it is in this moment. We can become so used to seeing stones all around us that we lose perspective that these, too, are part of God's creation. God made them, God loves them, and God uses them for God's purposes in the world.

And so, as you hold your rock, let us pray together:

Merciful God and Creator of All, meet us today in the ordinary times and spaces of our lives.

Guide us as we remember that you made us and are with us in every moment of every day.

Jesus Christ, our Cornerstone, we seek you as the one who gives us new life as God's people.

Hold our hands as we receive the love of God that saves us and transforms us into living stones.

Holy Spirit, Enlivener and Guide, breathe into our hearts and fan the flame of the divine spark that resides in us all.

Help us, your children, live as houses of worship that live out God's purposes wherever we go.

Bless these rocks that they may be reminders of what it means to be your Easter people. May these rocks stir us up to live as your royal priesthood, your living stones that proclaim the excellence of your salvific work in all that we do. Amen.

A Call to Worship

Come, people of God!

Take refuge in the Lord,

who listens when we cry out,

who rescues us when we call,

and who leads and guides us according to his unfailing love.

You are our God;

our lives are in your hands.

Let's worship God together! Amen.

Praise Hymn UMH 368

"My Hope is Built" (verses 1,3,4)

Author: Edward Mote (1834)

Publication Date: 1989

Tune Information

Composer: William B. Bradbury (1863)

**1. 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.**

**3. His oath, his covenant, his blood
supports me in the whelming flood.**

**When all around my soul gives way,
he then is all my hope and stay.**

(Refrain)

**4. 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)

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come before you today in humility and faith. We thank you for all you have given us and the many blessings in our lives. We ask for your guidance and strength. Show us the way and fill us with courage and wisdom. Help us to remember your love and grace and to be faithful in our service to you. Give us the patience and understanding to face life's challenges with grace. We ask these things in your name. Amen.

New Testament Reading..... 1 Peter 2:2-10

2:2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation-

2:3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

2:4 Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and

2:5 like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

2:6 For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

2:7 To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,"

2:8 and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

2:10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Faith Hymn UMH #206 "I Want to Walk as A Child of the Light"

Author: Bryan Jeffery Leech

Copyright: © 1976 Fred Bock Music Co.

Tune Information

Composer: Johannes Brahms

Arranger: Fred Bock

Copyright: Arr. © 1976 Fred Bock Music Co.

1 I want to walk as a child of the light.

I want to follow Jesus.

God set the stars to give light to the world.

The star of my life is Jesus.

Refrain:

In him there is no darkness at all.

The night and the day are both alike.

The Lamb is the light of the city of God.

Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

2 I want to see the brightness of God.

I want to look at Jesus.

**Clear sun of righteousness, shine on my path,
and show me the way to the Father. [Refrain]**

3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ.

I want to be with Jesus.

**When we have run with patience the race,
we shall know the joy of Jesus. [Refrain]**

Gospel Reading..... John 14:1-14 (NRSV)

Jesus the Way to the Father

14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe[a] in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?[b] 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. 4 And you know the way to the place where I am going."[c] 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you know me, you will know[d] my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe[e] because of the works themselves. 12 Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If in my name you ask me[f] for anything, I will do it.

*This is the Word of God, for the people of God, **Thanks be to God!***

Message

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him,
who earnestly repent of their sin
and seek to live in peace with one another.
Therefore, let us confess our sin to God.

CONFESSION AND PARDON

In the act of confession, we acknowledge how we have missed the mark, and we call upon God to save us from the destruction of sin and turn us back toward life. Let us now confess our sin before God and one another.

We confess that we have not loved you as you command us to love.
We have not relied on you as our refuge, choosing instead to seek comfort
in busyness and distractions.
We have not trusted that only when we put ourselves in your hands
can we find peace the peace we crave.

Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

We confess that we have not loved our neighbors as you command us to love.
We buy into the myth that it's every person for themselves.
We ignore the pain of those around us.
We refuse your call to care for the poor and the marginalized.

Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

We confess that we do not answer your call to steward creation.
We look upon the earth as something to consume instead of tend.
We point fingers at others instead of doing what is ours to do.
We choose comfort over responsibility.

Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

Hear these words:
When we call, God inclines an ear to us
and comes quickly to help us.
God's love is steadfast to rescue us and redeem us.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

**In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
Glory to God! Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (for ordinary time)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and earth.
You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.
When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.
You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets, who looked for that day
when justice shall roll down like waters
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream,
when nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.

**And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:**

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

**heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
and to announce that the time had come
when you would save your people.
He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.
At his ascension you exalted him
to sit and reign with you at your right hand.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (God), now and for ever.

Amen.

BREAKING AND SHARING

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Thank you, God, for uniting us with Jesus in this holy mystery.

We are no longer our own, but yours.

So, send us, and put us

to leading and serving in your mission

wherever we go. We come to you this day joining

a one in the prayer your beloved Son taught us to pray.

Our Father...

Offertory/Doxology/ Offertory Prayer

Redeeming God, the gifts we bring to you this day, we dedicate to the work of kingdom building. Even more, we offer ourselves as material for this work. Imperfect as we are, we know with Christ as the cornerstone, you can build your vision of mercy, justice, peace, and compassion here in our midst. In Christ, our rock and redeemer. Amen. (1 Peter 2:2-10)

Departing Hymn UMH 318 “Christ Is Alive “ (verse 1 & 5)

Author (refrain): Robert Lowry (1867)

Publication Date: 1989

Verse 1

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.

His cross stands empty

To the sky.

Let street and homes

With praises ring.

His love in death shall never die.

Verse 4

Christ is alive, and come to bring

Good news to this and every age,

Till earth and all

Creation ring

With joy, with justice, love, and praise.

SENDING FORTH

As you go forth into the world, remember: you are a living stone. In everything you do, you can embody and enact worship. So, living stones, how will you partner with God to build the kin-dom of heaven today and every day? Amen.

Postlude