

Morning Worship—July 12, 2020

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

As the chimes ring in the worship hour,

we invite people to enter a time of personal reflection and congregational worship.

******It should be noted there will be no singing.******

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

“Brethren, We Have Met to Worship”

arr. by Lani Smith

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Praise is due to you, O God in Zion, and to you shall vows be performed.

People: O you who answer prayer!

Leader: When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us

People: You forgive our transgressions.

Leader: Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live in your courts.

People: We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, you holy temple.

All: Let us worship God!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We call you light, O Lord, yet walk in darkness. We call you love, yet despise those who are unlike ourselves. We call you joy, yet live in depression and unhappiness. Forgive us, dear Lord, and convert us to your way. Let the power of your salvation change us into the people we were meant to be, that your light and love may fill our lives forever and we may praise your name with our whole hearts. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: God loves us even at the worst times of our lives.

People: God never leaves us to make it on our own.

Leader: God has promised to forgive us and help us whenever we truly repent and seek his will.

People: God will restore us to the joy of our salvation and strengthen us for living in divine grace.

MUSIC MEDITATION

“The Heart of Worship”

by Mark Hayes

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that as the Scriptures are read and your Word is proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us today. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Romans 8: 1-11 & Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

Romans 8:1-11 The Passion Translation (TPT)

8 *So now the case is closed.* There remains no accusing voice of condemnation against those who are joined in life-union with Jesus, the Anointed One. **2** For the “law” of the Spirit of life flowing through the anointing of Jesus has liberated us from the “law” of sin and death. **3** For God achieved what the law was unable to accomplish, because the law was limited by the weakness of human nature.

Yet God sent us his Son in human form to identify with human weakness. Clothed with humanity, God’s Son gave his body to be the sin-offering so that God could once and for all condemn the guilt and power of sin. **4** So now every righteous requirement of the law can be fulfilled through the Anointed One living his life in us. And we are free to live, not according to our flesh, but by the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit!

5 Those who are motivated by the flesh only pursue what benefits themselves. But those who live by the impulses of the Holy Spirit are motivated to pursue spiritual realities. **6** For the mind-set of the flesh is death, but the mind-set controlled by the Spirit finds life and peace.

7 In fact, the mind-set focused on the flesh fights God’s plan and refuses to submit to his direction, because it cannot! **8** For no matter how hard they try, God finds no pleasure with those who are controlled by the flesh. **9** But when the Spirit of Christ empowers your life, you are not dominated by the flesh but by the Spirit. And if you are not joined to the Spirit of the Anointed One, you are not of him.

10 Now Christ lives his life in you! And even though your body may be dead because of the effects of sin, his life-giving Spirit imparts life to you because you are fully accepted by God. **11** Yes, God raised Jesus to life! And since God’s Spirit of Resurrection lives in you, he will also raise your dying body to life by the same Spirit that breathes life into you!

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23 The Passion Translation (TPT)

13 Later that day, Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeshore to teach the people. **2** Soon, there were so many people surrounding him that he had to teach sitting in a boat while the large crowd stood on the shore. **3** He taught them many things by using stories, parables that would illustrate spiritual truths, saying: “Consider this: There was a farmer who went out to sow seeds. **4** As he cast his seeds, some fell along the beaten path and the birds came and ate them. **5** Other seeds fell onto gravel that had no topsoil. The seeds quickly shot up, **6** but when the days grew hot, the sprouts were scorched and withered because they had insufficient roots. **7** Other seeds fell among the thorns and weeds, so when the seeds sprouted, so did the weeds, crowding out the good plants. **8** But other seeds fell on good, rich soil that kept producing a good harvest. Some yielded thirty, some sixty, and some even one hundred times as much as he planted! **9** If you’re able to understand this, then you need to respond.”

18 “Now you are ready to listen to the revelation of the parable of the sower and his seeds:

19 “The seed that fell on the beaten path represents the heart of the one who hears the message of the kingdom realm but doesn’t understand it. The Adversary then comes and snatches away what was sown into his heart.

20 “The seed sown on gravel represents the person who gladly hears the kingdom message, but his experience remains shallow. **21** Shortly after he hears it, troubles and persecutions come because of the kingdom message he received. Then he quickly falls away, for the truth didn’t sink deeply into his heart.

22 “The seed sown among weeds represents the person who receives the message, but all of life’s busy distractions, his divided heart, and his ambition for wealth result in suffocating the kingdom message and prevent him from bearing spiritual fruit.

23 “As for the seed that fell upon good, rich soil, it represents the hearts of people who hear and fully embrace the message of heaven’s kingdom realm. Their lives bear good fruit—some yield a harvest of thirty, sixty, even one hundred times as much as was sown.”

HYMN OF PROMISE

“In the Bulb There Is a Flower”

Words and Music by Natalie Sleeth

Pastoral Prayer & the Lord’s Prayer

Charge & Benediction

Benediction Response

“Almost Persuaded”

Words and Music by Philip Bliss

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

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

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

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.

Almost Persuaded

Oh, be persuaded! Christ never fails—
 Oh, be persuaded! His blood avails—
 Can save from every sin,
 Cleanse you without, within—
 Will you not let Him in?
 Open the door!
 Be now persuaded, oh, sinner, hear!
 Be now persuaded, Jesus is near;
 His voice is pleading still,
 Turn now with heart and will,
 Peace will your spirit fill—
 Oh, turn today!

Note: Philip Bliss was inspired to write this hymn after hearing a sermon given by a clergyman named Brundage. The sermon was based on Acts, chapter 26, and its conclusion was this: "He who is almost persuaded is almost saved, but to be almost saved is to be entirely lost." Last Sunday, Mack kindly sang the first and second stanzas of the hymn. Today, let us contemplate the third and fifth stanzas as we go forth from this place. Let the words remind us that the peace of Christ will fill our hearts and still our minds during this troubling time, if we remember to open the door.

*The flowers today are given in loving memory of Bill and Tripp Erwin
 by Brackin and family.*