

JULY 19, 2020
SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PRELUDE — *O Savior of the World* - arr. Healy Willan

CALL to WORSHIP

- One: A word of encouragement came from prophet to people,
All: Live a life that is full—build, plant, eat, love, multiply.
One: Pray for communities.
All: Keep God in the center of all that is.
One: We enter into worship today with hope in our hearts,
All: For something happens in worship that reminds us we can live as God desires.
One: God has promised to always be faithful.
All: And that is a promise we can trust. Let us worship God together.

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Merciful God, in the midst of this season of exile, it's easy to grit our teeth and just try to get through it. It's easy to bury our heads in the sand and announce to the world, "wake me up when it's over!" But our indifference betrays our calling. Our avoidance ignores your desire to do something more among us and within us. Forgive us for trying to avoid the calling you have placed upon our lives. Forgive us for the ways we shove aside your hand that seeks to melt us and mold us, content to keep things the way they've always been. Forgive us for worshipping at the feet of the status quo, when you desire to use us in ways we cannot even begin to imagine. Forgive us for thinking only of ourselves when there are so many others living in an exile far darker than our own. Open our hearts to your Spirit. Open our lives to the city you call us to serve, even when it's a city far from home.

(Time for silent prayer and confession.)

PROMISE of FORGIVENESS

- One: Hear the good news: Do not worry; the Lord is near. God hears our prayers with compassion and with abundant, steadfast love. Rejoice, for in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
All: Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen!

SCRIPTURE READING — Jeremiah 29:4-7, 11-14

"Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: "Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease."

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.”

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

AFFIRMATION of FAITH - from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the church. The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth, praying, Come, Lord Jesus!

PAUSE for PRAYER

At this time, we invite you to take out a piece of paper and a pen, or talk with the people you are worshipping with today, and answer at least one of the following questions as we prepare to turn to God in prayer.

- 1) What opportunities do you have right now that you would never have had outside of this strange season?
- 2) What could it look like to consider blooming where you're planted today?
- 3) How might God be molding your heart in new ways during this season?

POSTLUDE — *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout* – Rory Cooney

PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Rev. Rachel Rhodes – Senior Pastor

Rev. Alex Lester-Abdalla – Associate Pastor

Tim Carpenter – Director of Music

Fran Akelewicz – Liturgist

Prelude – Mark Shockey, organ; photos provided by Cindy Moskow

Postlude – Jason Vodicka, organ

Damon Miller – Communications Coordinator

Additional photos provided by: Elizabeth Dugan, Nancy Kernan, Cindy Moskow & Geoff Smith