

Paul United Church of Christ
5312 Old Blue Rock Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45247
Allen M. Fluent, Transitional Pastor
Order of Worship for Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
July 11, 2021

(Although we are now holding worship in our building, we are conscious of the ongoing challenge of in-person worship while the coronavirus persists, and the need many feel to avoid the possibility of contagion. Therefore, we will be continuing the practice of sending a worship bulletin to all who are on our mailing lists for email or hard copy. Those who will be worshipping from home and who have computer access will also be receiving a recorded version of the service that will be sent out by email on Sunday afternoon and also can be seen on our Facebook page. We welcome your participation in any way that is convenient for you, and we encourage you to share our worship service with any person you know who may appreciate receiving it.)

Welcome, Announcements and Prayer Concerns

Prelude (recording begins)

Call to Worship

In the morning we gather to worship God, and to give our thanks for presence of friends. Even when the pressures of life oppress us, the aches and pains and struggles of the world, we give thanks for each new morning, and for the Spirit that sustains us in the community of grace.

The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

*Hymn

"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms"

#496

***What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting arms.***

***Refrain: Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.***

***O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day, leaning on the everlasting arms. R***

***What have I to dread, what have I to fear, leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near, leaning on the everlasting arms. R***

A Conversation about Salvation from Ephesians 1:3-14. A Jesus community talks about the blessings it has received:

Speaker 1 (We are chosen to be loved):

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love.

Speaker 2 (We are adopted by God's grace):

He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Speaker 3 (We are forgiven by God):

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us.

Speaker 4 (We have been told the mystery of God's plan to unite us all in love):

With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Speaker 5 (We have an inheritance in Christ, in whom we have placed our hope):

In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.

Speaker 6 (The Holy Spirit confirms the truth of the Gospel of our redemption):

In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people to the praise of his glory.

Opening Prayer (unison)

We thank you, God for these testimonies of joy from an ancient community that saw in their fellowship with you the mysterious outlines of a plan made in heaven, that all people everywhere would one day see that they belong to one family revealed by

God's Spirit and that we have the opportunity to know one another as each of us is known by God. Amen.

*Hymn

"They'll Know We Are Christians"

#595

We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord.

We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord.

And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.

Refrain: And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love

Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand.

We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand.

And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land. R

We will work with each other; we will work side by side.

We will work with each other; we will work side by side.

And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride. R

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come.

And all praise to Christ Jesus, the Holy Son.

And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one. R

Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures: 2 Samuel 6:1-23

David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were deriving the new cart with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark. David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God. David was angry because the Lord had burst forth with an outburst upon Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah, to this day. David was afraid of the Lord that day; he said, "How can the ark of the Lord come into my care?" So David was unwilling to take the ark of the Lord into his care in the city of David; instead David took it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. The ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

It was told King David, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house

of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; and when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. David danced before the Lord with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

They brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the Lord. When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts, and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How the King of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!" David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me in place of your father and all his household to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord, that I have danced before the Lord. I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

Sermon:

"Dancing Naked before the Ark of God"

Pastor Allen

Pastoral Prayer

Divine and Holy Spirit, we rejoice and celebrate the blessings you have bestowed upon our lives. We give you thanks for the message of your eternal love, and for the fellowship of the Spirit that you have blessed in our midst to encourage and support us through the joys and the sorrows of life.

We confess the lack of faith within us that causes us at times to feel unsure of the power of love that you've bestowed upon us. We sometimes doubt your capacity to forgive or to see us as we are. So now we pray for a deeper level of trust, so that we may open ourselves up to you and to the truth that brings the possibility of redemption and renewal to our souls.

May this congregational family bring the joys of faith and trust to all who gather in our fellowship, and may we work together in the guidance of your Spirit to carry out the ministries to our neighbors that we are called to do. Stretch us and teach us, so that all the mission efforts we accomplish may truly serve your purposes for the world, and grant us the humility to know that we serve in the strength of your compassion for the common humanity to which we all belong.

For those who suffer from illness, injury or sorrow, we lift our prayers to you today. For those who suffer injustice, hunger, homelessness, and war, we pledge our commitment to work for what is right.

May your blessings be ever before our eyes, as we confront the troubles of this world; but may we never forget those whose needs are shown to us in Christ.

As Jesus has taught us, let us pray:

Lord's Prayer

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, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

"We Are Called To Be God's People"

#580

*We are called to be God's people, showing by our lives God's grace,
One in heart and one in spirit, sign of hope for all the race.*

*Let us show how God has changed us, and remade us as God's own,
Let us share our life together as we shall around God's throne.*

We are called to be God's servants, working in God's world today;

Taking God's own task upon us, all God's sacred words obey.

Let us rise then to God's summons, dedicate to God our all,

That we may be faithful servants, quick to answer now God's call.

*We are called to be God's prophets, speaking for the truth and right,
Standing firm for godly justice, bringing evil things to light.*

Let us seek the courage needed, our high calling to fulfill,

That the world may know the blessing of the doing of God's will.

***Benediction**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you his peace.

Postlude