



PASTORAL WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY:

- ❖ *Our commitment to be an inclusive church is not based on a social theory or capitulations to the ways of culture, but on our belief that the outstretched arms of Jesus on the cross are a sign of the very love of God reaching out to us all.*
- 2016 Michael Curry Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church
- ❖ *The greatest encouragement throughout the Bible is God's love for His lost race and the willingness of Christ, the eternal Son, to show forth that love in God's plan of redemption. The love of Jesus is so inclusive that it knows no boundaries. At the point where we stop caring and loving, Jesus is still there loving and caring.*
- Aiden Wilson Tozer

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: We come into this sanctuary from many places.

People: We have come as individuals who long to be here and as individuals who are uncertain about who you are or how you are working in our lives.

Leader: We have come into this sanctuary with many different perspectives.

People: Some of us hold fast to the kingdoms of this world. Others are longing for a new kingdom to be made manifest here and around us.

Leader: We come from various races, and languages, and identities;

People: We have come with different ideologies and politics.

Leader: We come seeking acceptance and a place in your kingdom.

People: No matter who we are or what we bring, may we find love and life, O Lord, our strength and our redeemer.

SONG: Lord of the Dance, verses 1-3 (music at end of bulletin)

OUR CONFESSION:

Forgiving God, we come before you as sinners who hate to admit our sin. We are aware that we participate in small crucifixions in our lives, sometimes by remaining silent in the face of injustice. We are quick to point the finger at others' offenses, and we are quick to take offense. We show little grace and yet hope for your grace to be bestowed upon us. We want to be included in the kingdom, but we want others kept out. This season, may we change our ways as we walk the path of repentance. Amen.

Words of Assurance:

In the name of Christ, against whom the greatest offense was given in the midst of his innocence, we are forgiven.

CONFESSION RESPONSE: O Sacred Head Now Wounded
(music at end of bulletin)

READING: Colossians 3:9-11
(from *The Message*)

⁹⁻¹¹ Don't lie to one another. You're done with that old life. It's like a filthy set of ill-fitting clothes you've stripped off and put in the fire. Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with his label on it. All the old fashions are now obsolete. Words like Jewish and non-Jewish, religious and irreligious, insider and outsider, uncivilized and uncouth, slave and free, mean nothing. From now on everyone is defined by Christ, everyone is included in Christ.

GOSPEL: Luke 23:39-43

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

SERMON: "Can Anyone Get In?"

MESSAGE RESPONSE: To Mock Your Reign (music at end of bulletin)

THE PRAYERS

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

THE SENDING OUT:

Leader: May the cross bring you to new depths of God's vision. May you be a disciple of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, even unto the Cross. Go forth to live and love as Christ does, offering to all the grace of the kingdom. **Amen.**

SONG: *Lord of the Dance, v. 4-5 (music at end of bulletin)*

THE DISMISSAL:

Leader: Go in peace and serve the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.



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