

## Sunday August 20, 2023—Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

Ringling of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship (L=Leader; P=People)

L: We gather for worship seeking rest for our weariness, and strength for our weakness.

**P: Here, in this sacred space, God's love flows freely, renewing our spirits.**

L: So let us give praise to God for all that we have been given!

Opening Hymn No. 370 "Rejoice, The Lord Is King"

1. Rejoice, the Lord is King;  
Your Lord and King adore!  
Rejoice, give thanks and sing  
And triumph evermore  
Lift up your heart; Lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!
2. Jesus, the Savior, reigns,  
The God of truth and love.  
When He had purged our stains,  
He took His seat above.  
Lift up your heart; Lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!
3. His kingdom cannot fail;  
He rules o'er earth and heav'n.  
The keys of death and hell  
Are to our Jesus giv'n  
Lift up your heart; Lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

4. Rejoice in glorious hope!  
Our Lord, the Judge, shall come  
And take His servants up  
To their eternal home.  
Lift up your heart; Lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Unison Prayer of Invocation:

**We praise you, O God, for the love that transforms us, and the grace that redeems us. Renewed in spirit, we come to offer our praises and our prayers. Join us in these moments of worship, and prepare us to carry on all that was begun in Christ. Amen!**

Responsive Scripture: Psalm 133 (W = Women, M = Men)

W: How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

**M: It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.**

W: It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.

**M: For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life forevermore.**

First Reading: Genesis 45:1-15

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and a ruler over all of Egypt.

Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, “Thus says your son, Joseph! God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, and do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.’ And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that is my own mouth that speaks to you. You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.” Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, while Benjamin wept on his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Epistle Reading:

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people . . . for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 15:21-28

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. just then a Caananite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon. But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But she came before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed instantly

Here ends this reading of the Gospel.

Hymn No. 235

“There is a Balm in Gilead”

**Refrain:**

There is a balm in Gilead  
To make the wounded whole,  
There is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.

1. Sometimes I feel discouraged  
And think my work's in vain,  
But then the Holy Spirit  
Revives my soul again.

**Refrain:**

2. If you cannot preach like Peter,  
If you cannot pray like Paul,  
You can tell the love of Jesus,  
And say, “He died for all!”

**Refrain:**

3. Don't ever feel discouraged,  
For Jesus is your friend;  
And if you lack for knowledge  
He'll ne'er refuse to lend.

**Refrain:**

Prayers of the People and the 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen!**

Sermon: “The Healing Balm of Mercy”

Offering

Unison Prayer of Dedication:

**We give you thanks, O God, for gifts of mercy that renew us, and for this ministry of grace that you have entrusted to us. Grateful for all that you have done, we bring our gifts and our lives to you. Receive our offerings with your blessing, that together we may spread the healing balm of your mercy throughout the world. Amen!**

## Closing Hymn No. 639 "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"

1. Dear Lord and Father of mankind,  
Forgive our foolish ways!  
Reclothe us in our rightful mind;  
In purer lives Thy service find,  
In deeper rev'ence, praise.
2. In simple trust like theirs who heard,  
Beside the Syrian sea,  
The gracious calling of the Lord,  
Let us, like them, without a word,  
Rise up and follow Thee.
3. Drop Thy still dews of quietness  
Till all our strivings cease.  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of Thy peace.
4. Breathe thro' heats of our desire  
Thy coolness and Thy balm.  
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
Speak thro the earth-quake, wind, and fire,  
O still small voice of calm!

Benediction

Postludes