

**ST. DAVID'S (SHERMAN'S) UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

August 22, 2021

8:30 AM & 10:30 AM

WELCOME

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Speak to us, Spirit of God, as we open to one another and to You. Make Your face to shine on us and increase our joy in serving You. Keep us from words and actions that hurt and destroy. May we honor and respect one another, as You have graciously blessed us. AMEN

OPENING HYMN: "Near to the Heart of God"

NEAR TO THE HEART OF GOD

Author: Cleland Boyd McAfee (1903); Tune: MCAFEE
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- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) There is a place of quiet rest,
Near to the heart of God,
A place where sin cannot molest,
Near to the heart of God. | 2) There is a place of comfort sweet,
Near to the heart of God,
A place where we our Savior meet,
Near to the heart of God. Refrain] |
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Refrain:

O Jesus, blest Redeemer,
Sent from the heart of God,
Hold us, who wait before thee,
Near to the heart of God.

- 3)** There is a place of full release,
Near to the heart of God,
A place where all is joy and peace,
Near to the heart of God. **Refrain]**

CALL TO CONFESSION

God has called us, not to a set of beliefs but to a relationship of trust. We are drawn to the Spirit whose will for us is life at its fullest, attuned to all that is good and true. We are embraced by the gospel of peace. We come now to confess that we have looked elsewhere for our salvation.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Alert us now, eternal Spirit, to Your presence among us in this place. Together, we confess that we have been busy with so many things that we have often forgotten You. We have made little gods out of buildings and furnishings and programs. Sometimes our pet beliefs and interpretations have been all-consuming as we do battle to correct others and presume to defend You. We have forgotten that Your love is stronger than any force on earth. Forgive our mistrust of its power, and draw us back into the company of disciples who are learning and growing in love. Hear our silent prayers seeking Your forgiveness. ...

A TIME OF SILENT PERSONAL CONFESSION

UNISON ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God's saving power comes to us, and by God's grace we are forgiven. The Holy One offers eternal life to all who believe. Let us partake of the bread from heaven, offered for our continuing nourishment. Those who eat and drink what Christ offers will know that God abides in their midst and within each one. All praise to our God!

HOLY SCRIPTURES: Psalm 84, Ephesians 6:10–20, John 6:56–69

PSALM 84

For the director of music. According to *gittith*. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.

¹How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty!

²My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

³Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God.

⁴Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.

⁵Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.

⁶As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools.

⁷They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.

⁸ Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty; listen to me, God of Jacob.

⁹ Look on our shield, O God; look with favor on your anointed one.

¹⁰ Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

¹¹ For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.

¹² Lord Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you.

EPHESIANS 6:10-20

The Armor of God

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

JOHN 6:56-69

⁵⁶ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven.

Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”⁵⁹ He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

Many Disciples Desert Jesus

⁶⁰ On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

⁶¹ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! ⁶³ The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life. ⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ⁶⁵ He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.”

⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

⁶⁷ “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

CHILDREN’S STORYTIME

SERMON: “Onward Soldier”

PASTORAL PRAYER 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 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

BENEDICTION

We pray for all God’s saints engaged in ministry. All of us are ambassadors for Jesus Christ. We have good news to share with a needy world.

CLOSING HYMN: "Onward, Christian Soldiers"

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

Author: S. Baring-Gould; Tune: ST. GERTRUDE. Public Domain

1) Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before!
Christ, the royal Master,
Leads against the foe;
Forward into battle,
See His banner go!

2) Like a mighty army
Moves the Church of God;
Brothers, we are treading
Where the saints have trod;
We are not divided;
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity. [**refrain**]

Refrain:

Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before!

3) Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane;
But the Church of Jesus
Constant will remain;
Gates of hell can never
'Gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise,
Which can never fail.

4) Onward, then, ye people,
Join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices
In the triumph song;
Glory, laud, and honor,
Unto Christ the King;
This thro' countless ages
Men and angels sing. [**refrain**]