

October 18, 2020
Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

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PRELUDE

The Glory of God is Upon Us (Jenkins)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.
Sisters and brothers, though there are presidents, rulers, kings, and queens,
GOD is the Lord of all life.

Congregation: **In God we live and move and have our being.**

All: *While we know and believe this, we still sin and fall short by looking to the wrong people and places for assurance. Let us confess our sin and know God will hear, grant forgiveness, and guide us to new life.*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All people: *We are so easily pulled this way and that way by those who would promise instant healing for all the world's woes. We want to have everything whole and happy, but we don't know what to do, so we pay attention to those voices that cry the loudest, whether they are voices of blame or promise. In our fearfulness, we love to place blame for all our woes on the shoulders of a few people and refuse to hold accountable those who are responsible for needless suffering and pain. In our anguish, we seek instant answers from sources that are very unreliable. Lord, help us. Turn us around. Help us to know that you are our Lord and you have provided much for us. You have given to us abilities, and understanding, and ways in which we can be those who would bring peace and justice to the world. You have blessed our lives. Heal and restore our spirits, Lord. Help us to truly place our trust in you and to work in ministries that uplift people. This prayer we offer in Jesus' name. Amen.*

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Hear the good news: If we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Congregation: **Thanks be to God!**

HYMN

How Firm a Foundation

OLD TESTAMENT READING**Exodus 33:12-23**

¹² Moses said to the LORD, “You have been telling me, ‘Lead these people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, ‘I know you by name and you have found favor with me.’ ¹³ If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people.”

¹⁴ The LORD replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”

¹⁵ Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. ¹⁶ How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?”

¹⁷ And the LORD said to Moses, “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.”

¹⁸ Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.”

¹⁹ And the LORD said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ²⁰ But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”

²¹ Then the LORD said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. ²² When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³ Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.”

EPISTLE READING**1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

¹ Paul, Silas^[a] and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

² We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. ³ We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ For we know, brothers and sisters^[b] loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. ⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. ⁷ And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ The Lord’s messages rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your

faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore, we do not need to say anything about it, ⁹ for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 22:15-22

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. ¹⁶ They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. ¹⁷ Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax^[a] to Caesar or not?”

¹⁸ But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius, ²⁰ and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”

²¹ “Caesar’s,” they replied.

Then he said to them, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

²² When they heard this, they were amazed. So, they left him and went away.

SERMON

Rev. Laura C. Bair

PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

All people: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom comes. 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.

OFFERING INVITATION

Liturgist: As a wise soul once said, “If we are to give unto God what is God’s and give unto Caesar what is Caesar’s, there will not be much left for poor Caesar!” The point is that everything is of God and everything belongs to God. We will now observe a full moment of silence to pray and to reflect upon all that God has given us and what we will choose to return to God in gratitude. (A Full Moment of Silent Prayer)

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Liturgist: Please join me in dedicating ourselves and our gifts to the Lord’s service.

All people: God, your image is embedded in everything we have and everything we are. Stir in us, the passion to be your people and thus, honor your name. We give all to

you, as in Jesus, you gave all to us. In thanksgiving for such love, we offer these gifts and the witness of our lives as we dedicate ourselves anew to making your love visible through all we say and do in Jesus' name. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

I'll Walk with God

Gary Knisely, Tenor Solo

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Blessed and redeemed, go forth into this world, linked together, in the knowledge and love of God; and the peace of God, which passes our understanding, will go with us, everywhere, now and forever.

All people: Amen.

POSTLUDE

Lord, How Your Glory Shines (Marks)

407

How Firm a Foundation

*Isa. 43:2-5; 2 Tim. 2:19; Heb. 13:5**"K" in John Rippon's Selection of Hymns, 1787; alt.*

1 How firm a foun - da - tion for you has been laid,
 2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dis - mayed,
 3 "When through the deep wa - ters I call you to go,
 4 "When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way shall lie,
 5 "The soul that on Je - sus has leaned for re - pose,

by God in the Word, in the sac - ri - fice paid!
 for I am your God, I will still give you aid;
 the riv - ers of woe shall not o - ver you flow;
 my grace all - suf - fi - cient shall be your sup - ply;
 I will not, I will not de - sert to its foes;

What more can God say than to you has been said,
 I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand
 For I will be with you, your trou - bles to bless,
 the flame shall not hurt you; for I have de - signed
 That soul, though all hell should en - deav - or to shake,

to you, who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
 up - held by my gra - cious, om - ni - po - tent hand."
 de - liv - er - ing you from your deep - est dis - tress."
 your soul to make pure just as gold is re - fined."
 I'll nev - er, no nev - er, no nev - er for - sake!"