

October 8, 2023
“Taking the Next Faithful Step”

Joshua 1:9 – *Be strong and of good courage...for the Lord God is with you wherever you go.*



Thought:

Psalm 37:23-24 *Our steps are made firm by the Lord, when he delights in our way; Though we stumble, we shall not fall headlong, for the Lord holds us by the hand.*

Together we walk with Jesus who gives us the guidance, strength and love to take each step into our future. Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going.

The “place” that God calls us is a journey of the heart, stepping forward in faith.

Prelude – Lillian Pinkston

Welcome and Announcements

Prayer Concerns

Sharing of the Peace

P: Faithfully walking with Jesus we reach out for others. Peace for the journey be with you all!

C: And also with you.

Call to Worship

A: Friends, before we even gather in this place, Christ is with us –

C: Calling us, leading us, walking with us and strengthening us as the body of Christ.

A: May the words of our mouths

C: And the meditations of our hearts

A: Be acceptable to you, O God,

C: Our rock and our redeemer.

Stewardship Hymn – “Bless Now, O God, the Journey” ELW #326

<https://youtu.be/jT42Jfx9vdA>

by Golden Ears Church

Blessing of the Prayer Shawls and Lap Blankets

Palm 71:1-3 In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame. In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me and save me. Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Prayer of Confession and Pardon

P: Acknowledging that in our sin we have neglected and rejected gifts that have been provided by God, let us confess our sins together.

A time of silence for reflection

P: God of grace, you have called us to walk with you in our living. Yet, we often change directions following our own desires.

C: Lord, in your mercy. Forgive us.

P: You have given us the gift of time. You give us time to serve, time to learn, time to grow, time to follow and share. We often forget that God has made everything beautiful in its time.

C: Lord, in your mercy. Forgive us.

P: You provide us with opportunity to serve in numerous ways using our talents and abilities we have been given. We hesitate to follow where we have been called.

C: Lord, in your mercy. Forgive us.

P: You have provided even the least among us with more financial resources than most of the world. Let us walk boldly knowing we are never alone.

C: Lord in your mercy. Forgive us.

P: You have provided us with a beautiful creation to enjoy. Let us walk with eyes open in how we might care for what you have given.

C: Lord, in your mercy, forgive us.

Assurance of Pardon

P: While God knows our sin, God also hears our cries. In our sin, God still reaches out to forgive and restore us.

C: “Let us ever walk with Jesus” thanks be to God and Amen.

Hymn of Praise – “Rise Up, O Saints of God!” ELW #669

https://youtu.be/a6Tk_ML6k2w

by St. Paul’s UCC

Prayer of the Day

A: Beloved God, from you come all things that are good.

C: Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to walk with you, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The Word

Taking the Next Faithful Step – 1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁰ Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. ¹¹ Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen

Old Testament reading – Isaiah 5:1-7

He expected it to yield grapes

¹Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.²He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.³And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard.⁴What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?⁵And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.⁶I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;

I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.⁷For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 80:7-15

Tend this vine; preserve what your right hand has planted

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁸**You have brought a vine out of Egypt; you cast out the nations and planted it.**

⁹You cleared the ground for it; it took root and filled the land.

¹⁰**The mountains were covered by its shadow and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.**

¹¹You stretched out its tendrils to the sea and its branches to the river.

¹²**Why have you broken down its wall, so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?**

¹³The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it, and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.

¹⁴**Turn now, O God of hosts, look down from heaven;**

¹⁵behold and I tend this vine; preserve what your right hand has planted.

Epistle reading - Philippians 3:4b-14

Nothing surpasses the value of knowing Christ

[Paul writes:] ^{4b}If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. ⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel – Matthew 21:33-46

https://youtu.be/STqqD1cyUfg?si=HBXN9Cn5Sy_II11t

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you O Lord.**

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes.

[Jesus said to the people:] ³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” ⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’? ⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” ⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

Children of God Time

<https://youtu.be/MoHkc8l-KKg?si=THCQ-UR7388ltmDh>

Message – “Mistaken Identity”

https://youtu.be/nEPE_gdfS-w?si=6AFDIU8NL2wfTgVi

Hymn of the Day - "We Give Thee but Thine Own" ELW #686

<https://youtu.be/IHR1PQ5YwLo>

by URC

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead,
on the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P: Trusting in the transformative power of God's loving Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

A: God of all grace, you are the source of life and joy. Strengthen the resolve of your church throughout the world (*global mission partners may be named*), that together we press on toward the goal of your heavenly call in Jesus Christ. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of all creation, you plant and nourish the earth as your own precious vineyard. Bless fields and orchards and the hands of those who labor in them, that your people are fed with an abundant harvest of good fruit. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of all the earth, you desire peace and justice between nations and peoples. Guide leaders of nations, states, provinces, and cities, that they faithfully govern your people with wisdom, integrity, and compassion. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of all compassion, in Christ, you lovingly poured yourself out like wine for your people. Have mercy on all who mourn, who struggle with their mental health, who cry out for justice, who hunger, and all in any need (*especially*). God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of all steadfastness, you set Christ as the cornerstone and foundation of the church. Build up this congregation as living stones, that it stands in the community as a witness to your enduring faithfulness and love. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: God of all hope, the saints who came before us lived and died with their hearts fixed on you. We give you thanks for their faithful witness, and we wait with hope for the great day when we join their voices in praise. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Gracious God, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your unending love and amazing grace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen

Offering

Offertory Music – “Change My Heart, O God” ELW #801

<https://youtu.be/DwudqCO7mSQ>

by Brian Bontes

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...

Holy God,

We long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Consecration

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.

Distribution

Communion Music – Lillian Pinkston

Post Communion Blessing – Pastor

Post Communion Prayer

A: God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people.

C: **Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Benediction from Numbers 6

Sending Hymn – “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

ELW #733

<https://youtu.be/ErwiBz1QA4o>

by Maranatha! Music

Dismissal

A: Let us take the next faithful step, sharing Christ with others.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude – Lillian Pinkston

