

WORSHIP SERVICE
September 13, 2020
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

Prelude

Welcome

* God's Greeting

* We Greet One Another

Christ be with you. And also with you!

* Call to Worship: Psalm 8

*Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens.
Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.*

*When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,*

what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?

You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.

*You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:
all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild,*

the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

* Opening Song: "For the Beauty of the Earth"

Lift Up Your Hearts #19

For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies.

Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this, our hymn of grateful praise.

For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower, sun and moon and stars of light,
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this, our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies,
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this, our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild,
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this, our hymn of grateful praise.

For yourself, best gift divine, to the world so freely given,
agent of God's grand design: peace on earth and joy in heaven.
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this, our hymn of grateful praise.

* Opening Prayer

WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD

God's Will for Our Lives: *Our World Belongs to God*, Sections 8 and 9

(On Creation, from Genesis 1 and 2, John 1, Psalm 19 and 104)

*8. In the beginning, God— Father, Word, and Spirit— called this world into being
out of nothing, and gave it shape and order.*

*9. God formed sky, land, and sea; stars above, moon and sun, making a world of color, beauty, and
variety— a fitting home for plants and animals, and us—*

a place to work and play, worship and wonder, love and laugh.

God rested and gave us rest. In the beginning everything was very good.

Prayer of Confession

**Our Father, forgive us for thinking small thoughts of you
And for ignoring your immensity and greatness.
Lord Jesus, forgive us when we forget that you rule the nations and our small lives.
Holy Spirit, we offend you in minimizing your power and squandering your gifts.
We confess that our blindness to your glory, O triune God,
Has resulted in shallow confession, tepid conviction, and wavering repentance.
Have mercy upon us. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

*Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the offenses of your people?
You do not stay angry forever, but delight to show your mercy.
Once again, you have compassion on us.
You tread our sins underfoot, and hurl our transgressions into the depths of the sea.*

Song of Response: How Great is the Love of the Father" *Lift Up Your Hearts #683*

How great is the love of the Father, The love he has shown to us
so great that he calls us his children,
And children of God we are,
And children of God we are!

The world without God does not know us because it did not know Christ.
Lord, help us to be pure and spotless,
for children of God we are,
for children of God we are.

What we are to be in the future as yet has not been made known,
but when Christ returns, we shall see him,
And then we shall be like him,
and then we shall be like him.

Congregational Prayer

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scripture Reading: Daniel 4:18-37

Narrator: King Nebuchadnezzar, To the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth:
May you prosper greatly!

Nebuchadnezzar: It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me. How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation. I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous. I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me. So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me. When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me. Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him the dream. (He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.) I said, "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream; interpret it for me. These are the visions I saw while lying in bed: I looked, and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous. The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth. Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the wild animals found shelter, and the birds lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed. "In the visions I saw while lying in bed, I looked, and there before me was a holy one, a

messenger, coming down from heaven. He called in a loud voice: 'Cut down the tree and trim off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches. But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field. "Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth. Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, till seven times pass by for him. "'The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of people.' 18 "This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me what it means, for none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you can, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

Daniel Interprets the Dream

Narrator: Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was greatly perplexed for a time, and his thoughts terrified him. So the king said,

Nebuchadnezzar: "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you."

Narrator: Belteshazzar answered,

Daniel/Voice of God: "My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries! The tree you saw, which grew large and strong, with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth, with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all, giving shelter to the wild animals, and having nesting places in its branches for the birds— Your Majesty, you are that tree! You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth. "Your Majesty saw a holy one, a messenger, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump, bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field, while its roots remain in the ground. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven; let him live with the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him.' "This is the interpretation, Your Majesty, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king: You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes. The command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots means that your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules. Therefore, Your Majesty, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue."

The Dream Is Fulfilled

Narrator: All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, he said,

Nebuchadnezzar: "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"

Narrator: Even as the words were on his lips, a voice came from heaven,

Daniel/Voice of God: "This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes."

Narrator: Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like the ox. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.

Nebuchadnezzar: At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. 35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?" At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

Message: "Beauty and the Beast"

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Prayer of Application

Installation of Officers

* Song of Response: "Humble Thyself in the Sight of the Lord"

Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord

Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord

And He shall lift you up higher and higher and He shall lift you up

WE DEPART TO SERVE

* Blessing

* Closing Song "We Will Walk with God"

Lift Up Your Hearts #931

We will walk with God, my brothers; we will walk with God.

We will walk with God, my sisters; we will walk with God.

We will go rejoicing till the kingdom has come.

We will go rejoicing till the kingdom has come.

* Postlude

* Please stand if you are able

Message: Rev. Randy Raak

Worship Leaders: Andrew Friend, Naomi Friend, Rex DeBruin, Eli Hufford