

Community of Grace

Daily Walk for the week of October 12, 2020

Celebration of Grace...
Rejoicing in Salvation
Written by Vernon Mukhlall

Mon Oct 12

God Is Near To The Brokenhearted

“The LORD is near unto them that are of a broken heart; and saves such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivers him out of them all.” Psalm 34: 18 – 19. In this prolonged period of the COVID-19 effect, many of us may be experiencing the pain of grief, loss, sorrow, failure, or that little frustration that punctuates our daily lives. These times of broken-heartedness could really place a heavy burden on us. In times like these, do you feel that God is far away and does not know what you are going through? The Psalmist says that the Lord is close to the broken hearted and will save those who are crushed in spirit. God is omnipresent and is near to everyone at the same time. At the time of our Salvation, God gives us the gift of His Spirit who dwells in us. The Holy Spirit edifies, strengthens, guards, guides, pacifies, and also makes intercession for us. So, our God is always near and in readiness to hear and to help when we pour out our hearts to him. So when you are broken hearted, do not get frustrated with God. Instead, admit that you need His help and thank Him for being by your side. Prayer: Omnipresent God, in this broken world, there are times when I have experienced broken heartedness but through your Spirit, I have overcome. I know that you care and are ready to help those who call upon you for help. I humbly ask that you always walk with me and help me in times of my broken heartedness. Amen.

Tue Oct 13 The Kingdom Of God

“Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came

into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe the gospel.” Mark 1:14 – 15. The Bible speaks a lot about the Kingdom of God (Kingdom of Heaven) which is under the control of Jesus Christ. The moment we repent of our sins and put our faith in Jesus Christ, we moved from the darkness of sin into the light of Jesus’ righteousness and authority. The plan for this Kingdom of God to be established and be under the control of Jesus Christ was made from the very beginning. God used prophets to bring this message to mankind. Then Jesus, Himself, came down to us [our Immanuel - God with us] and gave His life as a ransom to establish this Kingdom. Jesus says, “The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15) . As believers, we are children of God (Romans 8:16) and citizens of heaven (Philippians 3:20). There is a present aspect and a future aspect of God's Kingdom. The present Kingdom resides in our hearts where God's Spirit dwells. He guides, counsels , and empowers us to live as children of God. The future Kingdom will be fully established when God brings into existence the new heaven and the new earth. There and then we will worship Jesus with great joy for all eternity. What do we do with such Good News? We are to share this Good News so that others may be saved and have the assurance of eternal life with Jesus Christ. Prayer: Lord Jesus, you have come down to us to bring the Kingdom of God into our hearts. Help me to live my life worthy to be a citizen of your Kingdom when you would have fully established it. Help me also to spread the message about the Kingdom of God to others. Amen.

Celebration of Grace...

Worship in Action

Written by Vicar Jamie Witt

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2020

“How Great Thou Art”

“For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.”

Psalm 96:4. This week we are continuing to celebrate 20 years as a congregation. We are reflecting on all the times we’ve spent together over the years. Most often we have found ourselves in worship together. We are brought together as the Body of Christ to worship the Triune God and give thanks and praise for all that God has done. We sing, we pray, we share the peace, we hear the Word, and then we go out into the community refreshed and restored by the time spent in worship resting in God’s presence together. How great is our God who brought us together as a congregation through the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst! As we get closer to our anniversary date we need to take time to consider the wonder of how God works and brings us together, and how God continues to keep us in community with one another even when it’s challenging. God always finds a way! *Prayer: “O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the works thy hand hath made, I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder, thy pow’r throughout the universe displayed; Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee, how great thou art! How great thou art! Amen.”*

Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020

“We Plow the Fields and Scatter”

“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.” 1 Corinthians 3:6, 9. There are many ways that we worship together. We generally think of gathering together in the Sanctuary

and singing hymns, hearing the Word read, and a sermon preached, but there are other worshipful activities that we engage in. One is our work in the church garden. We worship God showing love and devotion by caring for God’s creation. We plant and water the garden and then God gives the growth, both in vegetation and faith. There are several people in the congregation who have gifts for working soil and cultivating plants. They do this because they love it, feel called to it, and because it may make them feel closer to God. This is an act of worship—to God and with God. This work also transforms into a blessing to others as vegetables are harvested and food is provided on tables that might otherwise be empty. Worship with whatever gifts you may have, given to you by a loving God. *Prayer: “We plow the fields and scatter the good seed on the land, but it is fed and watered by God’s almighty hand, who sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain, the breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain. Amen.”*

Friday, Oct. 16, 2020

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”

“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.” Psalm 100:1-2.

One of my favorite worship activities would be singing. There are times where music translates how we feel better than spoken words. Hymns are like prayers that we sing to God. I have been grateful that the Holy Spirit created a way for us to still hear and sing music on Sundays in Zoom worship. While it’s not the same as hearing all our voices raised together in one room it is a blessing to have the music fill our ears and hearts; to be able to sing at home and hear the familiar words of praise in song. Perhaps after worshiping you continue to go about your day humming or

singing softly to yourself the hymns that you heard earlier in the morning. Music stays with us and becomes a prayer we can lift anytime. God hears and joins our song. *Prayer: "Joyful, joyful we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love! Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee, praising thee, their sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the gloom of doubt away. Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day. Amen."*

Saturday, Oct. 17, 2020

"Earth and All Stars!"

"O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day."

Psalm 96:1-2. *Earth and All Stars!* is an interesting hymn. This hymn gives thanks to God for a wide range of incredible things that God has orchestrated among human beings. When we sing it we give voice in praise for music (a variety of instruments), engines and steel, classrooms and labs (students and learning), and finally knowledge and truth (wisdom). We were designed to do a multitude of things during our time on earth by a creative God who rejoices in diversity. God creates a way and then inspires human beings to act. We acknowledge God's love for us and work in the world in our worship and in our following God's call. Whatever you have been called to do, or have gifts for in this life, do those things with joy in your heart remembering that you are also one of the marvelous things God has done. *Prayer: "Earth and all stars! Loud rushing planets! Sing to the Lord a new song! Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blowing snowstorms! Sing to the Lord a new song! God has done marvelous things. I too sing praises with a new song! Amen."*

Sunday, Oct. 18, 2020

"Lift Every Voice and Sing"

"We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3. *"Lift Every Voice and Sing"* is a prayer of thanksgiving for faithfulness and freedom. It uses images from Exodus where people were taken out of slavery to freedom and to the promised land. When we worship we pray. We lift prayers asking for God to intercede on behalf of people who are hurting. People who may feel misunderstood, oppressed, or afraid. We put our worship into action when we pray. We pray for God to work in and through us to make the world a place where all people feel loved and valued. This hymn has special significance in the African-American community and we want to honor that, bless it, and lift it up. As Christians, we want to remember to continue to work toward justice. Worship leads to action. In worship we praise God and invite God into our lives and hearts. That invitation is not limited to the worship space. It continues into our everyday lives. We worship, pray, and live in the steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. *Prayer: "Lift ev'ry voice and sing till earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of liberty. Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies, let it resound loud as the rolling sea. Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us; sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us; facing the rising sun of our new day begun, let us march on till victory is won. Amen."*