

*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.
May we together experience the presence of God*

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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord

Prelude

Welcome



“Living the Spirit Series”

Announcements/Joys & Concerns

The call to come home, the desire to go home, feeling a sense of home all strike at the heart of who we are as human beings. This is why we return again and again to these themes. However, as with most things, Jesus is inviting us to think differently about home and what it means to be at home—not so much the warm and cozy hearth and home, but the relationships and commitments that we have within the human community.

Worship can be a place of celebrating the home we create within the body of Christ. We must consider the connection we have, the support we have experienced, and the acceptance that comes from those we call “brother” or “sister” in Christ. At the same time, we also must consider our openness of the community.

How do we present the church as the home with open doors so that all are gathered up into the family from the moment they enter the space?

Likewise, we consider our home to be among the people who don’t gather with us when we worship. We are in service to the whole world, and our slice of it in our neighborhoods. So, let us avoid thinking of “us and them” and consider everyone we encounter to be a part of our sense of home.

Let us ask for eyes of inclusion and invitation, ways to offer the wider community a sense of home, particularly those on the margins who have felt disconnected and unwanted. Let us ask for strength to risk reaching out and carrying the idea of home with us whenever we engage in conversation. Let us sing about the Christ who claimed us and made us feel at home and the Spirit that sustains our unity of mind and heart. Today we give God thanks for the sense of place and the relationships of mutual love and support that we too often take for granted.

Call to Worship:

God is a God who calls.

We have gathered to worship and to hear that call.

God is a God who equips.

We are here to worship and to be shaped into the body of Christ.

God is a God who sends.

We are here to worship so that we can carry that spirit of worship out into the world where we live.

God is a God who blesses.

We are here to worship and to request a double share of that blessing.

Let us worship God.

Amen!

Opening Prayer (2 Kings 2, Galatians 5)

Holy One, we come before you today:

full of hope, full of desire, full of promise.

Help us take up the mantle of faith

you have laid before us,

that we may use our own gifts of the Spirit

to face the challenges before us.

Help us face the turmoil

within and around us,

that we may face the future unafraid.

Show us your way, your truth,

and your life. Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE, UMH 141 "Children of the Heavenly Father" (4 verses)**

Author: Carolina Sandell (1855)

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSwVH5qDOQ8>

**1 Children of the heav'nly Father
safely in his bosom gather;
nestling bird nor star in heaven
such a refuge e'er was given.**

**2 God his own doth tend and nourish;
in his holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things he spares them;
in his mighty arms he bears them.**

**3 Neither life nor death shall ever
from the Lord his children sever;
unto them his grace he showeth,
and their sorrows all he knoweth.**

**4 Though he giveth or he taketh,
God his children ne'er forsaketh;
his the loving purpose solely
to preserve them pure and holy.**

We Hear God's Word

New Testament Reading..... Galatians 5:1,

13-25

New Revised Standard Version

1 For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence,[a] but through love become enslaved to one another.

14 For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

The Works of the Flesh

16 Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, 21 envy,[b] drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The Fruit of the Spirit

22 By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. 24 And those who belong to Christ[c] have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FAITH HYMN UMH #389 "Freely, Freely"

Author: Carol Owens (1972)

Publication Date: 1989

Copyright: © 1972 Bud John Songs (ASCAP) (admin. by Capital CMG Publishing)

Tune Information

Composer: Carol Owens (1972)

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKs2lGAho_w

**God forgave my sin in Jesus' name.
I've been born again in Jesus' name
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share his love as he told me to.**

**He said 'Freely, freely you have received; freely, freely give.
Go in my name, and because you believe others will know that I live.**

**All pow'r is giv'n in Jesus' name
in earth and heav'n in jesus name
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share his pow'r as he told me to.**

**He said 'Freely, freely you have received;, freely, freely give.
Go in my name, and because you believe others will know that I live.**

“Message”

Pastoral Prayer

Heavenly God, Lord, and Giver of Life, from the moment you created us, you made us free beings, unshackled and having a free will to choose our way, without hindrance or compulsion. We are abundantly grateful and blessed to be the chosen ones of your Gracious Majesty. We bow in reverence and in humility acknowledge our unworthiness, for we have grievously sinned against you, hurting and disobeying our God.

Your new covenant with us was handed to us by Jesus, a covenant of love, which binds us with you, and one to another in love. Your Holy Word tells us of the glory of your Heavenly Kingdom, which you have opened to all believers, making us co-heirs of the rich, spiritual inheritance of the Heavenly places, where we are called to share in your glory. You have given us the Light of the world, Jesus Christ, Who has saved us from darkness and death through bondage to sin.

Jesus has purchased our liberty for us at such a huge price, his sacrificial death, and we pray to you Lord, to shine on us the spiritual radiance of your holiness. Help us to radiate the same to the darkest corners of the earth, through the evangelical commission entrusted to us, through our exemplary living in Christ, our proclamation of the good news of your Kingdom and testimonies of your healing and saving grace. We are free of bondage to age old ordinances and rigid statutes and pray for deliverance of all, in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray the prayer your beloved Son taught us to pray, our Father...

Departing Hymn UMH #402 “Lord, I Want to Be a Christian”

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MXbG8JO1qI>

**1 Lord, I want to be a Christian
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my
heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my
heart.**

**2 Lord, I want to be more loving
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more loving in my
heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be more loving in my
heart.**

**3 Lord, I want to be more holy
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more holy in my
heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be more holy in my
heart.**

**4 Lord, I want to be like Jesus
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my
heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my
heart.**

Benediction (Galatians 5, Luke 9)

May the transforming love of God
work in your lives, today and always.

Go forth into the world with peace, love, and joy.

Follow Christ wherever he leads you.

Fulfill the promise found in the fruit of the Spirit. Amen.

***POSTLUDE**