

Prairieland Parish

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 -Announcements

Today we are going to take a look at Hebrews 11 which is often called the faith chapter. It describes how various people responded in faith to what God said to them. But these stories are not told as historical trivia — they encourage us to have faith in our situations, too.

One of the beautiful points of this scripture is that we do not receive all the promises of God in this life. Although we are given eternal life, we still die. But the gift is real, and the promise will be kept.

We have to trust God on it. (We certainly can't bring it about on our own power!) We must look to God, not this world, for meaning and purpose in life. Our current life is a temporary training time. We do not "belong" in this society and culture; our permanent home and allegiance is the kingdom of God, and that is where our hopes should be.

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather, as God's people, bringing our fears and pain, knowing that when our spirits have grown cold,

God rekindles the gift of faith in us.

We gather, as God's people, hanging our broken hearts on the branches of the tree of life. knowing that while friends may turn against us,

God transforms enemies into sisters and brothers.

We gather, as God's people, hungering for healing and hope, knowing that even when life is no picnic,

God prepares a feast for us.

OPENING PRAYER

Spirit of God, enlighten our hearts to the reality of divine presence in our midst. Let our worship be pleasing in your sight, so that our gathering is an experience of deep communion with you and one another. In the name of Jesus Christ, this is our prayer. Amen.

Praise Hymn

We Hear God's Word

New Testament Reading..... Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16
New Revised Standard Version

The Meaning of Faith

11 Now faith is the assurance[a] of things hoped for, the conviction[b] of things not seen. 2 Indeed, by faith[c] our ancestors received approval. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.[d]

The Faith of Abraham

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. 9 By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. 11 By faith, with Sarah's involvement, he received power of procreation, even though he was too old, because he considered[a] him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore."

13 All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, 14 for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. 15 If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better homeland, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

Word of God, For the People of God, **Thanks Be to God!**

Children's Sermon

Faith Hymn

Meditation

Joys/Concerns

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

God of Redemption, You call us to wash ourselves clean, so that our transgressions fall away. May we cease doing evil, learn to do good, and seek justice.

You call us to rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, and plead for the widow.

May we not forget these responsibilities you've set before us.

We are grateful for the reminder from the prophet Isaiah that, though our sins are like scarlet, you'll make us like snow!

Even though they are red like crimson, you make them like wool!

May we be obedient and willing followers, pleasing unto you.

We pray all these things through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray...

Offertory (UM Hymnal 95) Doxology.

Offertory Prayer

God of love and grace, we bring our offerings this day and ask that they might be dedicated to strengthening your church for the making of disciples for Jesus Christ. Your prophet Isaiah reminds us that offering money or possessions is not enough. Isaiah proclaims to the Israelites that unless their offerings are accompanied by a willness to "learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow," the offerings are futile. Open our ears to hear what pleases you and open our eyes to see the opportunities all around us. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

***Departing Hymn**

BENEDICTION

By: Richard Halverson

Wherever you go, God is sending you.

Wherever you are, God has put you there.

God has a purpose in your being right where you are.

Christ, who indwells you by the power of his Spirit, wants to do something in and through you.

Believe this and go in his grace, his love, his power.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen

Postlude