

Worship Service on Monday, June 27, 2022

Welcome

Greeting God is good **all the time.** All the time **God is good.**

Question of the Day Who is Elisha?

- a) Jesus' disciple b) Ruth's husband c) Ahab's successor d) Elijah's successor

***Hymn** "Days of Elijah"

***Call to Worship**

Call to mind the mighty acts of God.

Remember the wonders God has revealed in your life.

All the ways of God are holy.

Nothing in heaven or earth is so great as God.

God chose us to inherit the mission of the prophets.

We need the prophet's mantle from our God.

We have come to be equipped for our tasks.

We have gathered for renewal of our lives.

***Prayer of Invocation**

As prophets catch fire, as disciples draw flame, as apostles walk in the Spirit, O Holy One, Holy Three, fill us with fervent desire to enter your kingdom. Lead us by your Holy Spirit to live in the love of Christ, now and forever. Amen.

II Kings 2:1-14 New Revised Standard Version

Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far at Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent."

Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent."

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the

water, saying, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” When he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over.

Galatians 5:1, 13-26 *The Message*

Christ has set us free to live a free life. . . .

It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don’t use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that’s how freedom grows. For everything we know about God’s Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That’s an act of true freedom. If you bite and ravage each other, watch out – in no time at all you will be annihilating each other, and where will your precious freedom be then?

My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God’s Spirit. Then you won’t feed the compulsions of selfishness. For there is a root of sinful self-interest in us that is at odds with a free spirit, just as the free spirit is incompatible with selfishness. These two ways of life are antithetical, so that you cannot live at times one way and at times another way according to how you feel on any given day. Why don’t you choose to be led by the Spirit and so escape the erratic compulsions of a law-dominated existence?

It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; and impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. I could go on.

This isn’t the first time I have warned you, you know. If you use your freedom this way, you will not inherit God’s kingdom.

But what happens when we live God’s way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard – things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.

Legalism is helpless in bringing this about; it only gets in the way. Among those who belong to Christ, everything connected with getting our own way and mindlessly responding to what everyone else calls necessities is killed off for good – crucified.

Since this is the kind of life we have chosen, the life of the Spirit, let us make sure that we do not just hold it as an idea in our heads or a sentiment in our hearts, but work out its implications in every detail of our lives. That means we will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse. We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original.

Response: *The Word of God, for the people of God! Thanks be to God!*

Hymn “Thy Word”

Time of Prayer

How Is It With Your Soul?

Call to Confession

When our self-indulgence enslaves, when our arrogant pretensions deceive, when our anxiety enfeebles, God calls us to repent, to lay aside our excuses, to seek pardon and freedom at their only source – the love of God, revealed by Jesus Christ.

Prayer of Confession

O God, we are so self-centered that we cannot be centered selves. We are so preoccupied

with things of little consequence that we cannot appreciate important matters of the heart. We consume other people instead of loving them. We bite and devour while you call us to build relationships and delight in your love. Set us free, O God, from the sin that binds us.

Time of Silent Prayer

For freedom, Christ has set us free to live in love. With our Lord Jesus Christ we pray together:

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. Amen.

Answer to the Question of the Day

Time of Offering *Thank you to everyone for your faithful generosity.*

***Offering Prayer**

Holy God, the blessings that come from you are rich like the fruits of summer.

With our tithes and our offerings we give thanks and praise to you. Amen.

***Song of Offering "Cares Chorus"**

Message "With the Spirit" Rev. Joyce Rich

***Blessing**

God grants true freedom to those who love,
who walk in faithfulness all their days.

We accept the prophet's mantle to empower us.

We receive the Spirit's gifts to guide us.

Amen. **And Amen.**

***Hymn "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"**

Announcements

Read For Next Week: II Kings 5:1-14; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20; Galatians 6:2-10

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