

Sunday, August 9, 2020

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

Question of the Day:

Reuben did not want to kill his brother: a) Levi b) Judah c) Joseph d) Benjamin

Hymn “Come! Now Is the Time to Worship”

Call to Worship

In faith, Abraham and Sarah set out for a new land.

In faith, we seek to follow God in our lives.

In faith, the church continually seeks to understand what God has set before us at the present moment.

In faith, we gather now to worship, knowing that as we reach out to God,
God will make a way.

**Give us the faith, O God, to go forward
and embrace the future to which you call us.**

Prayer of Invocation

God of our present trouble and promised triumph, by your Holy Spirit open our eyes to see you in the midst of our struggles. Open our ears to hear your words of invitation and assurance. Open our minds to recall your wonderful works and miracles. Open our hearts to glory in your name and seek strength in your Word. With Jesus we pray. Amen.

Genesis 37:2-4, 12-28 *The Message*

This is the story of Jacob. The story continues with Joseph, seventeen years old at the time, helping out his brothers in herding the flocks. These were his half brothers actually, the sons of his father’s wives Bilhah and Zilpah. And Joseph brought his father bad reports on them.

Israel/Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons because he was the child of his old age. And he made him an elaborately embroidered coat. When his brothers realized that their father loved him more than them, they grew to hate him – they wouldn’t even speak to him. . . .

His brothers had gone off to Shechem where they were pasturing their father’s flocks. Israel said to Joseph, “Your brothers are with flocks in Shechem. Come, I want to send you to them.” Joseph said, “I’m ready.”

He said, “Go and see how your brothers and the flocks are doing and bring me back a report.” He sent him off from the valley of Hebron to Shechem.

A man met him as he was wandering through the fields and asked him, “What are you looking for?” “I’m trying to find my brothers. Do you have any idea where they are grazing their flocks?”

The man said, “They’ve left here, but I overheard them say, ‘Let’s go to Dothan.’” So Joseph took off, tracked his brothers down, and found them in Dothan.

They spotted him off in the distance. By the time he got to them they had cooked up a plot to kill him. The brothers were saying, “Here comes that dreamer. Let’s kill him and throw him into one of these old cisterns; we can say that a vicious animal ate him up. We’ll see what his dreams amount to.”

Reuben heard the brothers talking and intervened to save him, “We’re not going to kill him. No murder. Go ahead and throw him in this cistern out here in the wild, but don’t hurt him.” Reuben planned to go back later and get him out and take him back to his father.

When Joseph reached his brothers, they ripped off the fancy coat he was wearing, grabbed him, and threw him into a cistern. The cistern was dry; there wasn’t any water in it.

Then they sat down to eat their supper. Looking up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites on their way from Gilead, their camels loaded with spices, ointments, and perfumes to sell in Egypt. Judah said, “Brothers, what are we going to get out of killing our brother and concealing the evidence? Let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites, but let’s not kill him – he is, after all, our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed.

By that time the Midianite traders were passing by. His brothers pulled Joseph out of the cistern and sold him for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites who took Joseph with them down to Egypt.

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

Time of Prayer

How Is It With Your Soul?

Call to Confession

We profess our faith in God, yet we rely more heavily on our own ingenuity. We say we believe, but our lives seldom show confident trust. We want to care as Jesus did, but we’re often ready, as were Joseph’s brothers, to sell off those we’re angry with. Can God save us from ourselves?

Prayer of Confession

God, we confess that we are dreamers more intent on our own importance than on your vision for us. We like our favored position on this earth, and we are jealous of those who have even more than we. We want to rise above others rather than reaching out with helping hands, that all might be uplifted by you. We pray for pardon, for greater insight, for another chance to live and serve with faithfulness. (Time of silent prayer.)

Assurance

The treachery of some will not wipe out the good God intends. Everyone who calls on God’s name will be saved. Praise God and join Jesus in praying:

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

God, we cannot deceive you with the appearance of generosity. You know how we manage the wealth entrusted to our care. Help us to know the joy of sharing from the abundance you provide. Help us to trust when we feel we do not have enough. We give thanks that you enable us to be givers, not just receivers. May what we offer provide a helpful ministry to many. May what we offer to our families, friends, and co-laborers also be blessed. Amen.

Message “Hard to be Special” Rev. Joyce Rich

Blessing May the generous blessing and favor of our loving, abundant God lift you, sustain you, and send you to the world with the gift of life! Amen. **And Amen.**

Hymn “Spirit of the Living God”

Announcements; For Next Week: Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22; Genesis 45:1-15; Romans 12:9-21

*Liturgical resources drawn from: **Flames of the Spirit**, edited by Ruth C. Duck © 1985 The Pilgrim Press; **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 2**, Kimberly Bracken Long, editor © 2014 Westminster John Knox Press; and **Taught by Love: Worship Resources for Year A**, Lavon Bayler © 1998 United Church Press.*