

Prelude & Entrance Hymn

400

*For this land in all its wonder, for each city, farm and town,
For each mountain filled with splendor,
for each place where love is found,
For the freedoms we enjoy here,
God, may thanks to you abound!
God, may thanks to you abound!*

*For your peace and love unending, breaking barriers that
divide;
For the joy of cultures blending
as we live here side by side;
God, we thank you and we pray now:
May we all be unified!
May we all be unified!*

*For your hand to lead and guide us, for your work in history,
For your vision born inside us
of a just society,
God, we thank you and we pray now:
May this vision come to be!
May this vision come to be!*

*May we be a nation seeking ways that are both wise and fair,
May our living and our speaking
serve your purpose everywhere.
May we follow where you lead us;
God, this is our hope and prayer!
God, this is our hope and prayer!*

Greeting

*P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the
communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

C: And also with you.

P: This is the day that Lord has made.

C: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

P: O Come let us worship and bow down;

C: Let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

P: Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth forevermore.

C: From the raising of the sun to its setting the name of the Lord is to be praised.

P: It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to the Most High.

C: To declare the Lord's love in the morning and his faithfulness at the close of the day.

P: Blessed is the One who redeems and saves us.

C: Blessed is our God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray:

C: Great and faithful God, we believe that through your Son you bring us liberation from our sin and freedom from the fears of death. Stir up the Spirit of faithfulness within us this day, that seeing each other and all of life through this new perspective, we will we have the will and the courage to proclaim the freedom of the Gospel by radically manifesting life and liberation for all through what we say and do. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

First Lesson

Isaiah 58:1-12

“Shout loudly! Don't be quiet!
Yell as loudly as a trumpet!
Confront my people with their rebellious deeds;
confront Jacob's family with their sin.
They seek me day after day;
they want to know my requirements,
like a nation that does what is right
and does not reject the law of their God.
They ask me for just decrees;
they want to be near God.
They lament, 'Why don't you notice when we fast?
Why don't you pay attention when we humble ourselves?'
Look, at the same time you fast, you satisfy your selfish desires,
you oppress your workers.

Look, your fasting is accompanied by arguments, brawls,
and fistfights.
Do not fast as you do today,
trying to make your voice heard in heaven.
Is this really the kind of fasting I want?
Do I want a day when people merely humble themselves,
bowing their heads like a reed
and stretching out on sackcloth and ashes?
Is this really what you call a fast,
a day that is pleasing to Yahweh?
No, this is the kind of fast I want:
I want you to remove the sinful chains,
to tear away the ropes of the burdensome yoke,
to set free the oppressed,
and to break every burdensome yoke.
I want you to share your food with the hungry
and to provide shelter for homeless, oppressed people.
When you see someone naked, clothe them!
Don't turn your back on your own flesh and blood.
Then your light will shine like the sunrise;
your restoration will quickly arrive;
your godly behavior will go before you,
and Yahweh's splendor will be your rear guard.
Then you will call out, and Yahweh will respond;
you will cry out, and he will reply, 'Here I am.'
You must remove the burdensome yoke from among you
and stop pointing fingers and speaking sinfully.
You must actively help the hungry and feed the oppressed.
Then your light will dispel the darkness,
and your darkness will be transformed into noonday.
Yahweh will continually lead you . . .

Reader: The Word of the Lord! **C: Thanks be to God!**

Second Lesson

Romans 12-13

St. Paul writes to the Christians in Rome: Have sincere love: despising evils things, clinging to good things, having brotherly and sisterly love in mutual affection for each other, putting first the honor of one another, zealous in faith without timidity, frothing in the Spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, enduring tribulation, persisting in prayer, sharing the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you! bless and do not be cursing them! Rejoice with the rejoicing, weep with

the weeping. Have the same evaluative point of view toward each other. Don't have an evaluative point of view of arrogance but be conditioned by humble things. Don't become overestimated in yourselves. Don't return anyone evil for evil. Show what is good before all people. If this is possible, as it depends on you, be making peace with all people. Do not be avenging yourselves brothers and sisters, but give place for wrath for it has been written,

'Vengeance belongs to me. I will repay, says the Lord.'
(Deuteronomy 32:35)

But,

*"If your enemy is hungry, feed them!
if they are thirsty, give them a drink!
for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads."*
(Proverbs 25:21-22)

Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.

Let each soul be submitted to governing authorities! For there is no authority if not by God, and those who are in authority, are positioned there by God. So, the one opposing the authority is antithetical to God's mandate, and he who antitheticalizes will receive judgment. For, the rulers are not a terror to the good works, but the evil. So, is it your desire to not be afraid of the authority? Do good, and you will have praise from the authority. For, they are God's deacons who direct you into doing good. But, if you do evil, be afraid. For, authority does not wear that sword in vain. For, as God's deacons, they are executors of the righteousness of wrath on the one who practices evil. Hence, there is an obligation to be submitted, not only out of a fear of wrath, but also because of the benefit of awareness of what is good and what is evil. So, because of this, also pay taxes. For those who do God's work are committed to this same thing. Pay back to all the debts owed: to whom the taxes, the taxes; to whom the end, the end; to whom the fear, the fear; to whom the honor, the honor.

Reader: The Word of the Lord! C: Thanks be to God!

Reading _____ **The Declaration of Independence, Paragraph 2**

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the

consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government.

Gospel Acclamation

P: Listen now for the Gospel;

All: Alleluia!

It is God's word that changes us;

Alleluia!

Come, Holy Spirit,

melt and break our hearts of stone

until we give our lives to God and God alone.

Come, Holy Spirit,

root in us God's living word,

that we may show the faithfulness of Christ our Lord.

Come, Holy Spirit,

bind the broken, find the lost,

confirm in us the fire and love of Pentecost.

Listen now for the Gospel;

Alleluia!

It is God's word that changes us;

Alleluia!

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 22nd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord!

Gospel

Matthew 22:16-22

And the Jewish religious leaders sent their disciples to Jesus, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true, and teach the way of God in truth without worrying about anyone else; for you do not "look into the face of humanity." Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to give the tax to Caesar, or not?"

But Jesus knew of their malicious intent and said, "Why do you test me - hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax."

And they brought him a denarius.

And Jesus asked them, "Whose image is this, and whose inscription?"

They said, "Caesar's."

Then Jesus said to them, "Then, give back to the Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

And having heard this, they were amazed; and they let Jesus be and went away.

P: The Gospel of the Lord! C: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

Baited the Question Rose

*Baited, the question rose
from somewhere in the crowd:*

**"Teacher, you truly know God's way;
is paying tax allowed?"**

Jesus perceived their trap:

"Why do you test me so?"

**Bring here the coin the tax requires,
and see what it will show."**

*"Whose image does it bear,
whose names and titles tell?"*

**"Caesar's, of course," they smugly said
and thought they answered well.**

*"Give Caesar what is his;
God, what is God's alone."*

**Strong words, convincing and profound,
like truth already known.**

*May we discern, O God,
your daily gifts of grace;*

**show us your image freshly coined
in every heart and face.**

Help us fit tribute yield

through prayers and hymns we raise,

**but most of all by deeds of love
to give you thanks and praise.**

Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Offering/Offertory

870

*We praise you, O God, our redeemer, creator;
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.*

**We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;
we bless your holy name; glad praises we sing.**

*With voices united our praises we offer
and gladly our songs of thanksgiving we raise.*

**With you, Lord, beside us, your strong arm will guide us.
To you, our great redeemer, forever be praise!**

P: Let us Pray

C: In thanks for all the blessing of life, for work and rest, for food and shelter, for love and laughter, for beauty and harmony, we return these offerings to You, O God. We pray that our thanks is pleasing in Your sight, that what we offer is used again for sustenance and growth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

The Prayers of the Church & Lord's Prayer

Independence Day Song

God bless America, Land that I love

**Stand beside her and guide her
Thru the night with a light from above**

*From the mountains, to the prairies
To the oceans white with foam*

**God bless America
My home, sweet home
God bless America
My home, sweet home**

Benediction

P: May the Lord speak peace to us,

C: May the Lord speak hope to us,

P: May the Lord speak wisdom to us,

C: May the Lord send us out in joy,

P: May the Lord send us out in service,

C: May the Lord send us out in love,

P: And watch over us every day until we come together again in His holy name. The Lord bless you and keep you . . .

Dismissal

P: Let us go in peace to serve our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!