



MEDITATION BEFORE WORSHIP

You ascended before our eyes, and we turned back grieving, only to find You in our hearts.
– Augustine of Hippo

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASTOR MELINDA VEATCH

PRELUDE *Instrumental Music*

KATY KRISTOFFERSEN, PIANO

CALL TO WORSHIP PSALM 93:1-5

TODD SCHROEDEL

Leader: God is ruler! God is robed in majesty and strength. The world is God's throne.

People: O Lord, you have reigned from prehistoric, from the everlasting past.

Leader: The mighty oceans thunder your praise. You are mightier than all the breakers pounding on the seashores of the world!

People: Your royal decrees cannot be changed. Holiness is forever the keynote of your reign.

Leader: Brothers and sisters in Christ, may we bring our attention, our energy, our very lives to this moment.
Let us worship God!

WELCOMING SONG* *A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing!*

CONGREGATION

(The Venerable Bede (673-735); Geistliche Kirchengesäng, Cologne, 1623)

HYMN NO. 322 All Verses

PRAYER OF PRAISE

TODD SCHROEDEL

Holy God, we are people of here and now, but You are God of all time and space. As we gather this morning, we celebrate You, we bring our lives before you, we seek Your Presence. Receive our gratitude and praise for who You are, for Your claim on us, for the life we have in Your Spirit. Help us to rise to that claim and that life, that we would demonstrate your intention for Your creation. Fit our lives according to Your Gracious Will, that we may participate in Your work of wholeness in the world. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¹⁵That is why, ever since I heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and of the love you have for Christians everywhere, ¹⁶⁻¹⁷I have never stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you wisdom to see clearly and really understand who Christ is and all that he has done for you. ¹⁸I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can see something of the future he has called you to share. I want you to realize that God has been made rich because we who are Christ's have been given to him! ¹⁹I pray that you will begin to understand how incredibly great his power is to help those who believe him. It is that same mighty power ²⁰that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in heaven, ²¹far, far above any other king or ruler or dictator or leader. Yes, his honor is far more glorious than that of anyone else either in this world or in the world to come. ²²And God has put all things under his feet and made him the supreme Head of the Church— ²³which is his body, filled with himself, the Author and Giver of everything everywhere.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.

ANTHEM *Alleluia, Give the Glory!* (Ken Canedo and Bob Hurd)

UCSJ CHOIR

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
Where two or three are gathered in my name,
There I am in the midst of them; there I'll be.
I am the Light of the World;
Everyone who follows me will have the light of life.
Come to us, Spirit of God;
Come and fill our hearts with the fire of your love.*

SCRIPTURE READING 2 ACTS 1:1-11 AND LUKE 24:44-53 (Living Bible Translation)

REV. MELINDA VEATCH

Dear friend who loves God:

In my first letter I told you about Jesus' life and teachings and how he returned to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions from the Holy Spirit. During the forty days after his crucifixion he appeared to the apostles from time to time, actually alive, and proved to them in many ways that it was really he himself they were seeing. And on these occasions he talked to them about the Kingdom of God. **(Acts 1:1-3)**

[During one of these meetings] he said, "When I was with you before, don't you remember my telling you that everything written about me by Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must all come true?" Then he opened their minds to understand at last these many Scriptures! And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah must suffer and die and rise again from the dead on the third day; and that this message of salvation should be taken from Jerusalem to all the nations: There is forgiveness of sins for all who turn to me. You have seen these prophecies come true." **(Luke 24:44-48)**

In one of these meetings he told them not to leave Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came upon them in fulfillment of the Father's promise, a matter he had previously discussed with them.

"John baptized you with water," he reminded them, "but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit in just a few days." **(Acts 1:4-5)**

“And now I will send the Holy Spirit upon you, just as my Father promised. Don’t begin telling others yet—stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.” **(Luke 24:49)**

And another time when he appeared to them, they asked him, “Lord, are you going to free Israel from Rome now and restore us as an independent nation?”

“The Father sets those dates,” he replied, “and they are not for you to know. But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power to testify about me with great effect, to the people in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, about my death and resurrection.” **(Acts 1:6-8)**

Then Jesus led them out along the road to Bethany, and lifting his hands to heaven, he blessed them, and then began rising into the sky, and went on to heaven. **(Luke 24:50-51)**

As they were straining their eyes for another glimpse, suddenly two white-robed men were standing there among them, and said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing here staring at the sky? Jesus has gone away to heaven, and some day, just as he went, he will return!” **(Acts 1:10-11)**

And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem filled with mighty joy, and were continually in the Temple, praising God. **(Luke 24:52-53)**

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

SERMON

A Higher Life

REV. MELINDA VEATCH

RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE WITH OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Thank you for your continued support of the church and our mission.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

DOXOLOGY*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen**

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE

TODD SCHROEDEL AND REV. MELINDA VEATCH

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin 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.

SENDING SONG* *Alleluia, Sing to Jesus!*
(William C. Dix, words; Rowland H. Prichard, music; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams)

CONGREGATION

HYMN NO. 320 All Verses

CHARGE

REV. MELINDA VEATCH

Leader: The Way of Christ is the Way of Love.

People: May we shine Christ's love through all we say and do.

POSTLUDE *Instrumental Music*

KATY KRISTOFFERSEN, PIANO

BLESSINGS

REV. MELINDA VEATCH

Leader: May the love of Christ infuse our lives.

People: Let us go out in peace to love and serve the Lord.

***Indicates we stand - if it is comfortable**

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OUR MISSION

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that *respects the dignity and integrity* of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.

WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA ~ THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ~ THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



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