

Gathering Around the Word

Prelude: "When Peace Like A River" Marcy Fehrman & Les Fraaza

Quiet Reflection and Preparation for Worship:

This summer we "Return from Exile" with the people in the Book of Ezra. This is a long journey, not merely a single event. Have you had an experience of exile? How are you called to return to a spiritual life? Return to church? Return to God? What first steps can you take today on that long journey home to Christ?

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship: Psalm 121:1-2, 7-8
I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

***Hymn:** "I Stand in Awe"

***Call to Confession:** Isaiah 59:12
Hear these words from the Book of Isaiah: "For our offenses are many in your sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, and we acknowledged our iniquities." We, too, are aware of our sins this week and come to confess them to God. Please join me in the Prayer of Confession.

*Prayer of Confession:

Lord God, you see us as we truly are. Nothing we have thought, said or done is hidden from your sight. Even before a word is on our tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. So you already know the selfishness that we try to hide. Today, we confess it not only to you, but to ourselves and each other. We have not lived and loved fully for you.

Redeem us again through the power of the cross. As you did of old, win salvation with your own arm and your own righteousness. Then, may we be included among those who fear the name of the Lord Jesus, and revere his glory together. In Christ's name, we pray.

(We keep a moment of silence for reflection)

*Assurance of Pardon:

Isaiah 59:20

Now hear the good news from the prophet Isaiah: "The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jerusalem who repent of their sins." The Redeemer has come! And through his death and resurrection, Jesus has reclaimed us and forgiven us for all our sins. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Children's Message

Period of Fellowship

Proclaiming the Word

Old Testament Reading: Ezra 8 NRSV Bible

Special Music: "Great is thy Faithfulness/The Lord's Prayer" JeHae Kim-Bixby

New Testament Reading: Matthew 25:14-30 NRSV Bible

Sermon: Return from Exile: Perilous Journey Jim Gates

Responding to the Word

***Hymn:** "God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending" (vs. 1,3) #716

Confirmation of our 2020 Class

Affirmation of Faith: Apostle's Creed

Offering

Offertory Music: "Almost Home" Deb & Kent Perrin

Connection Card and giving are available on the live stream web page.

Bearing and Following the Word into the World

Announcements

*Benediction

***Choral Benediction:** "You Are My All in All"