

Sunday May 30, 2021
How Can These Things Be?

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Leader: Come into this household of the living God, the Three in One.
Gather in the wonder of the mystery that God has invited us to share in.

People: *(Out loud, but muted)* **We have come as the family of Christ, led by the Spirit of God.**

Leader: Ascribe to the Divine glory and strength; ascribe to God the glory that is due. Worship the Triune God in the Beauty of Holiness.

(Adapted from Psalm 29)

People: *(Out loud, but muted)* **Our hope is that in this time of worship and learning, we might embrace what lies beyond our imagination and understanding.**

Opening Prayer **Unison** *(Out loud, but muted)*

**O God of Mystery,
Within your very self you model the beloved community.
You are the Wisdom within our hearts,
The Word who dwells among us,
The Spirit who calls us beyond ourselves.
Let us know your presence here today
In a new way, that we might celebrate your love
and go forth rejoicing with the Prophet Isaiah,
saying: "Here am I. Send me." *(Isaiah 6:8b)***

Hymn # 277: Holy, Holy, Holy
(Please see separate attachment for the score)

- 1) Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
Early in the morning we praise your majesty.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

- 2) Holy, holy, holy! Saints adore you truly,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim bow before you only,
from the beginning, God eternally.
- 3) Holy, holy, holy! Though we know but dimly,
though the eye of humankind your glory may not see,
you alone are holy; you alone are worthy,
perfect in power, in love and purity.
- 4) Holy, holy, holy, God the almighty!
All your works shall praise your name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Prayer of Confession **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

**Holy One, we acknowledge that too often we try to live
not acknowledging the mystery of your Being.
Even though you have shown us your truth,
we allow ourselves to rest in our own uncertainties.
We find ourselves unable or unwilling to embrace the love
through which you sent Christ to live among us.
We take for granted the grandeur of you as Creator,
of Christ as Redeemer,
and of the Holy Spirit as ever-present sustainer.
We do not live out the beloved community you desire for all.
Forgive us, we pray, and help us give testimony to your love.**

Moments for Reflection and Silence

Assurance of Pardon

We trust in these promises:
that the Triune God, in each of its persons,
promises us newness of life, a gift of new birth.
The Divine Trinity invites us to testify to its Being
as the foundation for reconciliation all of God's people and for Creation.
In these truths we trust and give thanks. Thanks Be to God!

Passing of the Peace (unmute for Passing of the Peace)

Pastor: The Peace of Christ be with you
People: **And also with you!**

Reading

Carol Bellamy

Psalm 29, excerpts (NIV)

29:1 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

29:2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy splendor.

29:3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over mighty waters.

29:4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

29:5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

....

29:8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness ...

29:9 The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, "Glory!"

...

29:11 May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!

Special Music

Carol Bellamy

Gospel Reading

John 3: 1-17 (NIV)

3:1 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.

3:2 He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God."

3:3 Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

3:4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"

3:5 Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

3:6 What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.

3:7 Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.'

3:8 The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

3:9 Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"

3:10 Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

3:11 "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony.

3:12 If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?"

3:13 No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

3:14 And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

3:15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

3:17 "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Musical Interlude

Sermon: How Can These Things Be?

Music for Meditation

Prayers of the People (unmute yourself to offer a request, giving first names only, please)

Hymn #508 Prayer Is the Soul's Sincere Desire (verses 1 and 5)
(sung muted but together)

**Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.
O Christ, by whom we come to God, the Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer you too have trod: Christ, teach us how to pray.**

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer Unison (*Out loud, but muted*)

Offering Invitation

God is the Giver of life, Christ is the Gift sent to share our life,
and the Holy Spirit the power that enables us to continue
in generosity, justice and joy.
Let us open our hearts and our lives to God and one another.

Offering and Dedication Unison (*Out loud, but muted*)

Bless our gifts dear God and may they multiply and bless life. Amen.

Benediction Unison (*Out loud, but muted*)

**And the peace of God which passes all understanding,
will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7, RSV)**